

## The Eucharist: *Both Symbol and Substantial Presence*

### I. THE EUCHARIST AS THE NEW MANNA IN JOHN 6:49-51 – “The bread that I will give...is my flesh”

- A. **The Miraculous Nature of the *Old Bread from Heaven* (John 6:49-51; cf. Exod. 16:16-20; Joshua 5)** – always measured out an omer’s worth (3.64 liters – Jewish Study Bible says 2.3 liters), and it never lasted more than a day.

### II. REASONS FOR A LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF JESUS’ WORDS “EAT MY FLESH...DRINK MY BLOOD”

#### A. Reason #1: Jesus Affirmed his Audience’s Realistic Understanding of his words “Eat my flesh...drink my blood”

##### 1. Evidence that Jesus’ Audience Understood his teaching in a realistic way

- a. The Jews Quarrel Among Themselves (John 6:53)
- b. The Disciples Quarrel (John 6:61)
- c. The Disciples Walk Away (John 6:66)

##### 2. Evidence that Jesus Affirmed the Literal Thoughts of his Audience

- a. Specifically Affirms the Jews’ Literal thinking
  - i. Reiterates 6xs in 6 verses (vv.53-58)
  - ii. Intensifies the language with *trogo* (v.54 ff)
- b. Specifically Affirms Disciples’ literal thoughts
  - i. Jesus affirms the difficulty by appealing to his ascension (v.62)
  - ii. Jesus let's them walk away (v.66)
  - iii. Jesus asks apostles if they will leave (v.67)
  - iv. Affirms the Literal thinking of the Disciples by *not* offering any sort of correction, which is Dissimilar to His Normal Practice (cf. John 4:8, 32-34; Matt. 16:5-12)

#### B. Reason #2: Jews Already had Metaphorical Meaning for “Eat Flesh” and “Drink Blood” - Ps 27:1-2, Is 9:18-20, Is 49:26, Micah 3:3, 2Sam 23:15-17, Rev 17:6, Rev 17:16.

1. **Revelation 17:6:** “And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.”
2. **Revelation 17:16:** “And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the harlot; they will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire.

#### C. Protestant Objections to a Literal Interpretation of John 6

##### 1. Objection: The “Flesh is of no avail” & “My Words are Spirit and Life” argument (John 6:63)

- a. **Response #1: Jesus’ competence would have to be called into question** – Disciples leave after the alleged clarification.
- b. **Response #2: “Spirit” isn’t a synonym for symbol** (John 4:24; Heb. 1:14)
- c. **Response #3: Jesus said “the flesh” & not “my flesh”** (see John 8:15)

### III. TYPOLOGICAL PRECURSORS OF LAST SUPPER

- A. **Precursor #1: “blood of covenant” calls to mind Sinaitic Covenant (Ex. 24:8)** - If Jesus used merely wine to ratify the new covenant at the last supper, then the new covenant would be inferior to the old. Why? According to Leviticus 17:10-11, the Jews understood blood to be sacred because in it lies the life of the being.

- B. **Precursor #2: “take and eat” calls to mind the flesh of the Passover Lamb (Exodus 12:8)**

#### IV. ST. PAUL'S THEOLOGY OF THE EUCHARIST

##### A. 1 Corinthians 10:16-21

1. Detail #1: The motif of *Participating* in the Body & Blood of Jesus
2. Detail #2: Parallel with Communing with Demons

##### B. 1 Corinthians 11:27-30

1. Detail #1: The "guilt of blood" (v.27)
2. Detail #2: Eternal consequences (v.29)
3. Detail #3: The Necessity to "Discern the Body" (v.29)

#### V. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

"I have no taste for corruptible food nor for the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, who was of the seed of David; and for drink I desire his blood, which is love incorruptible." [*Letter to the Romans* 7, ca. A.D. 107].

"They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they confess not the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, which [his flesh] suffered for our sins, and which [his flesh] the Father, of His goodness, raised up again. Those, therefore, who speak against this gift of God [his flesh], incur death<sup>9</sup> in the midst of their disputes. But it were better for them to treat it [his flesh] with respect, that they also might rise again." [*Letter to the Smyrneans* 6-7, ca. A.D. 107]

#### VI. THE EUCHARISTIC MIRACLES

- A. **The Miracle of Lanciano, 8<sup>th</sup> century** – heart tissue; AB positive type human blood.
- B. **The Miracle of Buenos Aires, 1996** – see [reasontobelieve.com](http://reasontobelieve.com); muscle tissue with vital white blood cells.
- C. **The Miracle of Sokolko, Poland (2008)** – cardiac muscle tissue; muscle fibers interwoven with fibers of host.