

Mingled Bread and Wine

Proverbs 9:5

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“Come, eat of My bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.”
- Proverbs 9:5.

The is one of the numerous places in thee Book that Solomon uses a device that we might refer to as “Personified wisdom” that in a larger OT sense many have argued to be one of the many things that give and picture of the coming Messiah, that Lord Jesus Christ as the great One Who comes and issues an invitation over in the NT (Mt 11:28–29; cf. Lk 14:15–24). Notice the phrasing that Solomon uses here... “Come, eat ... drink”. There is an interesting mechanism here that we see quite a number of other places in both the OT and in the NT - many have given it the title: “God’s banquet call”.

In Isaiah 55:1–3 we see Isaiah issue “An Invitation to Abundant Life”: In very familiar language we read these words:

55 *“Ho! Everyone who thirsts,
Come to the waters;
And you who have no money,
Come, buy and eat.
Yes, come, buy wine and milk
Without money and without price.*

² *Why do you spend money for what is not bread,
And your wages for what does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good,
And let your soul delight itself in abundance.*

³ *Incline your ear, and come to Me.
Hear, and your soul shall live;
And I will make an everlasting covenant with you—
The sure mercies of David.*

Similarly, in the NT, the Apostle Luke tells us over in his Gospel...
Luke 14:16–24

¹⁶ *Then He said to him, “A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, ¹⁷ and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ ¹⁸ But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’ ¹⁹ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’ ²⁰ Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ ²¹ So that*

servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' ²² And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' ²³ Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. ²⁴ For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.' "

Likewise, in Rev. 22:17 the Apostle John speaking of a final great banquet our Lord will host:

¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Just to think a moment, some have observed that these verses seem to create an awkward break between the invitations of "Wisdom" and "Folly", but perhaps the purpose is to caution that, in contrast with inviting the simple (9:4), inviting *mockers* and *the wicked* is futile at best. Such people have already chosen their path and respond to Wisdom's advice with violence. By contrast, *the wise* appreciate corrective advice; they welcome it and benefit from it.

One of the interesting things about the ideas put forth to the readers of this verse is that this is NOT an invitation per se! Both of the verbs in each phrase of the verbs are put forth in what is known as the "imperative". Solomon, remember that he speaks as a Prophet and thus for our Master, the God of all men, is commanding us to "eat" and "drink" of what is spoken of:

*⁵ "Come, eat of my bread
And drink of the wine I have mixed. (Proverbs 9:5)*

It is, one could say, the duty or responsibility, done in obedience to the God of all men, to eat and drink from the table that God has set before them. "To eat", very obviously, speak of the taking of food and implies that this is done 'with' someone. It can speak of tasting or enjoying what it is that you are eating. In the first phrase, the word for eating and the word for what is eaten come from the same root word; "lhm" (pronounced *lacham* /law·**kham**) and is used 177 times with the majority of those times (149x) being rendered as to fight, make war 8x, "eat" 5x, "overcome" 2x "devoured" 1x, "ever" 1x, and "prevail" 1x. As we can see, there are a fair variety of fashions the word is used. But the basic idea is present in all of them. Depending on the form and context the verb is used, the exact sense is determined.

We should also note that the opening word in the verse, "Come" is also in the imperative mode. Again, it thus in NOT merely an invitation but rather is a command, something that the speaker (Solomon speaking for the Lord) is telling us necessary for us to do. It is needful for us to eat and drink at the table He is

laying before us. We've mention that "eat" is also imperative (drink as well). We are, then, commanded to eat and drink from the table that is set before us.

For instance, eating not just a possibility for obedient ones. Neither is drinking the mixed wine. What this brings up for us is the truth that Solomon, in his capacity as Prophet of God, is not ONLY speaking the act of eating. We've seen several times in Proverbs that basic difference between the fool and the wise person has far more to do with attitude than with intelligence. The wise person is open to advice and correction and welcomes it, while the foolish person rejects counsel, even to the point of directing anger and hostility toward anyone who offers advice.

The point here, then, is that it is not open to discussion about what's on the table one way or the other. The wise man will simply "sit down" at that table and partake of the meal set before him. It is the fool, the rebellious one who rejects the counsel and advice of the wise who are around him. Along this line, we see that the call goes out to the simple (cited earlier suing the Hebrew word "*mi-pe'ul*"; given in the NIV as, "who are simple"), and also spoken of as given to those "who lack judgment" (the Hebrew word *h^asar-lēb*), rendered to turn aside to wisdom (v. 4). The idea here (in verse 5) carries the figure of eating forward, and the writer is inviting people to eat the food and drink the wine, i.e., clearly that it necessary for them to appropriate the teaching of wisdom. This acceptance would necessarily prompt the simpleton to abandon the "simple ways" (*p^etā'yim*) and live (v. 6). Some translations have interpreted this plural (used throughout this entire section) as simpletons - with the idea that we must not keep company with simpletons. The proper direction is on the way of understanding. This is, indeed one of the central themes of the entire Book! Solomon comes back to again and again.

Actually, there are many who, quite legitimately I think, take the picture here (of bread and wine) (given here and throughout the whole Book) as being a picture of how men MUST respond to the obedience required and fulfilled in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Men, by nature, are rebellious and foolish. But in order to avoid the judgment and punishment that sin demands from sinners, they MUST take the wise road and "dine" at the table of the Gospel which God, mercifully, has set before them and partake of the bread (speaking in type of the Body of the Lord Jesus Christ) as well as the wine (a picture of His shed blood). And, as we have said, this is NOT optional. It is imperative both in the sense of being mandatory AND in the sense of being pressing and essential. This one of the great pictures of Christ as the One Who will come and provide all that we need to survive before the Lord. We, as those who have some info given us from the Word and the Spirit of God, ought ALWAYS choose in the direction of obedience and definitely head in the direction of obey and "partaking" of that bread and wine which Christ has provided for us. It is the ONLY thing that will do for us that which God has mandated be done in order that those who are by nature rebellious and foolish, be enabled to wise. We should remember that this is not our nature as the descendants of Adam (see Romans 1 and 2). We need to be transformed and enabled to be what honors God.

Rehashing, in brief, the interpretation and conclusion of the passage - Wisdom's house is the Church of Christ. The chapter can be seen as a whole and we can observe that "Seven" is the number of completeness (ver. 1), and the Church is built upon foundations all-sufficient (Eph. 2:20). A sacrificial feast is made (ver. 2), which men are invited (remember that these are all in the imperative and it is MUCH stronger than a mere invite) to partake of. Messengers (ver. 3) - a pure ministry - are sent forth with the invitations. They are proclaimed in the ears of those who need wisdom, "*the simple and without understanding*" (ver. 4). "*Bread and wine*" are offered (no contradiction to the sacrifice alluded to, ver. 2); and who can fail to observe in this a remarkable correspondence with the Savior's own words (John 6:55), explained subsequently (Luke 22:19, 20), "*My Flesh is meat, indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed*"? Of the feast of the Lord's Supper - a feast upon a sacrifice (and more) - these words, like the parable (Luke 14:15-24), may very well be explained though not limited thereto.

As always, there are some illustrations to consider to help make clear what is meant here:

- Were not the Apostles to begin with "*simple and without understanding*" (Matt. 15:16; Luke 24:25)?
- Were not they invited to eat of the bread which Christ brake, and to drink of the wine which He mingled?
- Did they not thereby become partakers of His Own Body and Blood which He had offered in sacrifice to God?
- Did they not continue to partake of this Table, and grow more and more in wisdom and true understanding?
- Did they not become messengers to invite others, and found a pure ministry to hand down the invitation?

Just to think in the way of application -

- Can I doubt that I ought to heed the voice of Jesus, heard above His ambassadors, inviting to His Table? There for me, a sinner, is a feast of reconciliation with God. There for me, a needy one, is wisdom, understanding, holiness, grace for all my need.
- What bread can nourish like that under which lies hid the mystery of Christ's Body?
- What wine can cheer like that which conveys the virtue of Christ's Blood? Nor need I doubt that the invitation is for *me*, if only I know myself to be in want of a Savior; if only I am willing to "forsake the foolish and live."
- Indeed, I may not continue to "eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence," if I would be fed from Christ's table. Let me give up all that unfits for this heavenly banquet.
- Then I *may* come, because invited, and He will count me worthy who bade me, and will Himself sup with me, and nourish my soul and body unto eternal life.

*My soul, the King invites; make thyself ready to enter into His
banqueting house, where His banner over thee will be Love (Cant.
2:4)!*
