

Text: 1 Kings 19:1-8

Theme: Eat Up!

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation this morning is the Old Testament Lesson of First Kings chapter nineteen verses one through eight.

Good morning boys and girls, how are you doing today? I pray that you are doing well. And are healthy. What do I have here? I have a candy bar, specifically a Snickers. Snickers had a very famous slogan from 2007 to 2009, “You are not you when you are hungry, eat a snickers.” We see a similar event in our text for today, what does Elijah ask for and how does God reply? Ponder that as we hear the rest of the sermon.

In our text for today, Elijah is at a very low point in his ministry. It is a bit ironic, given what happened just before our text for today. That is the famous story of Elijah defeating over four hundred (400) prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel. He proved that Yahweh is God by dousing his sacrifice with water. He prayed to God and fire came down from heaven, ate up the sacrifice, and dried up all the water. Then all of the false prophets were killed with the sword. Jezebel heard about this and swears that Elijah will suffer the same fate in only a single day. Elijah fears for his life and runs down south, out of the reach of Jezebel and her threat. He lays under a broom tree and prays to God that he might now die. What a strange contradiction! Here the man who was destined not to taste of death, flees from death on the one hand and seeks it on the other. Yahweh responds by preparing a cake of bread and a jar of water, then sending an angel who touches Elijah and says, “Arise and Eat.” Elijah eats, falls asleep again, and a second time, the angel touches him and he

eats. Then in the strength of that meal, walks forty days and nights to Horeb, aka Mount Sinai, the mountain where God met with Moses.

We see that in spite of Elijah's despair that Yahweh could do anything, Yahweh shows His faithfulness to His prophet. He provides food that will sustain Elijah for forty days, the very opposite of killing him! What is more, Yahweh will later appear to His prophet, though in a way not expected, and answer Elijah's complaints, though again, in a way not expected. Yahweh's faithfulness to Elijah, mirrors His faithfulness to His people. Israel has been lost in sin and idolatry. They have broken the first commandment, rejected Yahweh to follow false gods and idols, such as Baal and Asherah. Yet, Yahweh is still faithful to His bride. His faithfulness culminates in the ministry of Jesus. In His Son, The God of Israel did decisively initiate His reign among men, though again, not in a way people expected. Shown as Jesus goes to the cross to suffer, bleed, die, and rise again to grant the forgiveness of our sins and reconciliation with God.

In the same way, God the Father will be faithful to us today in spite of our many sins and doubts. How many times have we sinned and doubted that God can act to save and redeem? We fall into sin time and time again. We too break the first commandment, putting our trust in other worldly good rather than in God. We confess that we are trapped in sin in thought, word and deed. We cannot save ourselves and rely upon God to be faithful, to save and redeem us though His Son, Jesus Christ. In Christ God says, arise and eat up, be strengthened once again to newness of life. Forgiven by Jesus' blood, we confess God's great faithfulness to us as we go throughout our lives. Like Elijah, we face the hostility of a world that seeks to do away with us and rejects the Gospel, that does not want to hear that it has to rely upon God's power and faithfulness rather than their own. We face the world sustained by God and His word. Just as He sent an angel to feed and sustain Elijah, so too does He sustain us today and unto the resurrection of all flesh on the last

day. How does He do so? He gives to us not bread and water, but bread and wine in the Holy Eucharistic Feast. He gives us Jesus, His very body and blood, in, with, and under, the bread and the wine to feed and sustain us in the midst of a hostile world. God the Father, gives us His Son, and bids us arise and eat up, for the strengthening of our faith and the forgiveness of our sins, as we join with angels, archangels, and all the host of heaven around the throne of Grace.

Our God gives to us the very sustenance that we need to endure the bad times that hit our lives; when you want to just quit and lay down and die, your Lord and God does have a plan for you. This is a true and faithful statement. But...what does this mean? Does it mean that life will no longer be rough? As a child of God living in this fallen and sinful world, there are going to be—rest assured—trials, tribulations, and pitfalls. There are going to be those times when you do want to just wander off the grid, disappear from sight and call out to God, asking that He would make the pain and suffering stop. Guys: You don't get a pass or immunity from pain and suffering simply because you have your name on a church's roster.

When these things happen (and they will) cry out to your Lord and God in prayer. Call upon Him in times of trouble and He will deliver you. He hears you, and He will care for you, giving you exactly what you need. However, don't be shocked or surprised when you are directed by God's faithful "everyday" common messengers—your family members, your coworkers, your friends, your neighbors...even a perfect stranger; messengers speaking Christ's Word to you, directing you right back here to be fed and nourished by Christ Himself with His eternal and life-giving gifts of Word, Water, Bread, and Wine—His gifts of life that He graciously showers down upon you in abundance each and every week until that blessed time when He does finally call you home to everlasting rest and peace in Him. Until that blessed time, however; until that blessed heavenly homecoming, arise now and eat. Receive the

very Bread of Life Himself in His Word and His Sacraments. Take and eat, for the forgiveness of all your sin...for the very gift of life itself.

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.