

Eating in Genesis

The verb, *'chl*, “to eat”, is 66 times in Genesis, 21 in the Garden story in Gen 2-3. The noun, *lechem*, “bread,” as synecdoche for “food,” is 24 times in Genesis, 15 in the Joseph story, Gen 37-50.

But there are, perhaps surprisingly, few scenes of actual eating.

Eating that brings together Eating that pulls apart

3.6	So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate.
3.19	“By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground...”
14.24	“I [Abraham to Melchizedek] will take nothing but what the young men have eaten...”
18.8	[Abraham] stood by them under the tree while they ate.
19.3	[Lot] made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.
24.54	Then [Abraham’s servant] and the men who were with him ate and drank, and they spent the night there [at Laban’s house].
25.34	Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way.
26.30	So [King Abimelech] made [Isaac and Rebekah] a feast, and they ate and drank.
27.25	So [Jacob] brought it to [Isaac], and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank.
31.54	Jacob offered a sacrifice on the height and called his kinsfolk to eat bread; and they ate bread and tarried all night in the hill country.
37.25	Then [Joseph’s brothers] sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt.
43.2	And when they had eaten up the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father [Jacob] said to them, "Go again, buy us a little more bread."
43.32	They served [Benjamin] by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians.