

Today we are going to look at the Lord's Supper, often referred to as communion, sacrament or the eucharist. The Lord's supper is in all 4 gospels. I have decided to start with Lukes's account.

Luke 22:1-23

Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might put Him to death; for they were afraid of the people.

And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve. And he went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers how he might betray Him to them. And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. And he consented, and began seeking a good opportunity to betray Him to them apart from the multitude.

Then came the first day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it." And they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare it?" And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house that he enters. "And you shall say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher says to you,' Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples? '" "And he will show you a large, furnished, upper room; prepare it there." And they departed and found everything just as He had told them; and they prepared the Passover.

And when the hour had come He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. " And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes. "

And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood. "But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Me on the table. "For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" And they began to discuss among themselves which one of them it might be who was going to do this thing.

There is so much here. We are not even going to begin to unpack it all. Can you imagine all of what must have been going through the Lord's mind? There is a plot by the religious leaders to kill him. Not only that but one of his own disciples who hung out with him for three years was going to sell him out for a lousy thirty pieces of silver!

In, the midst of that we see divine intervention in the preparations for the meal. I wonder what the disciples thought when Jesus tells them to go find a man carrying a pitcher of water and follow him to large already furnished room. They did not have any phones he did not just call ahead for reservations.

Jesus said "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood. Now for there to be a new covenant there obviously was an old covenant. This is going to end up bringing us all the way back to Genesis.

We are going to first show how this all fits in with the Old Testament and then focus on how it applies to us today. It is also no coincidence that this took place at the time of the Passover. We see in scripture that Jesus is our Passover lamb. First, we will hear from John the Baptist.

John 1:29-30 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold, **the Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world!

Now we will hear from the Apostle Paul.

1 Cor 5:7-8 Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. **For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.**

It is important to understand the Passover. What was it? Why did the Jews celebrate it? How is Jesus our Passover?

We learn about how the Passover originated in Exodus chapter 12. This is when the Lord was using Moses to deliver Israel out of bondage from Pharaoh. They were given specific instructions on when and how to prepare for this meal. These instructions included sacrificing a lamb and putting the blood of the lamb on the doorpost and the horizontal beam of the doorway into the houses where they prepared and ate the meal in the way they were instructed.

Then the Lord would go through Egypt on that night and kill the first born in every house. However, he would **"Passover"** any house that had the lamb's blood on the doorway as instructed. The Israelites were told that day will be a memorial to them, and you should celebrate it as a feast unto the Lord throughout their generations.

Similarly, as the Israelites were spared by the lambs' blood on the doorpost Christians are spared by the blood of Jesus. Whereas God passes over our sins and saves us from receiving his wrath.

Let's read a couple of bible verses that show this.

1 Peter 1:18-19 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, **the blood of Christ**

Rom 3:25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God **He passed over** the sins previously committed;

Rom 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be **saved from the wrath of God** through Him

Rom 6:17-18 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been **freed from sin**, you became slaves of righteousness.

So, we can glean from these text that Jesus is the Lamb of God that was sacrificed on our behalf. Through faith we are justified by his blood and God passes over our sins and we are saved from the wrath of God. Although we still sin, we are not in bondage to sin as before.

The Israelites celebrated the Passover to remember the passing over because of the lamb's blood on the doorpost and they were delivered out of the bondage of Pharoah of Egypt.

As Christians we remember the lamb (Christ) that was slain for us. We escape the wrath of God and are delivered from the bondage of sin.

Ok this is how Jesus is our Passover. Let's review a couple of verses we have already seen before we move on.

Luke 22:19–20 And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

We can glean the following out of this text.
Jesus broke the bread and said it was his body given to us.
He told us to do this in remembrance of him.
He told us the cup was the covenant in his blood,
In verse 18 we seen that the cup contained fruit of the vine

We see a foreshadowing of the bread and wine with a priest in the Old Testament.

A few kings went to war and Abram's nephew Lot, his family and all their possessions were taken. Abram took 318 trained men and rescued Lot and his family and recovered their possessions as well. On his way back he ran into Melchizedek.

Gen 14:18-20

18 And **Melchizedek** king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was **a priest of God Most High**.

19 And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;

20 And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tenth of all.

The text in Genesis does not say specifically why Melchizedek brought out bread and wine but it does seem to be introduced here. We were told that he was a priest of God Most High and Abram gave him a tenth of what he had.

In that culture, sharing a meal held great significance as a symbol of fellowship. This alone is noteworthy. Furthermore, when we consider what he conveys to Abram, the meal he provides, and the similarities Jesus shares with Melchizedek, it becomes clear that there is much more than mere coincidence at play.

In the book of Hebrews Melchizedek seems to be a picture of Christ. It is said he had had no genealogy, no beginning or ending of days. We also find that Christ is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Heb 5:5-10

5 So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee";

6 just as He says also in another passage,
"Thou art a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

7 In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. 8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

9 And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

10 being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

Heb 7:1-4

1 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him,

2 to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace.

3 Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he abides a priest perpetually.

4 Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoil

We have just touched on it here but a study in Hebrews shows Melchizedek foreshadows Christ: both are kings and priests (Hebrews 7). Both would seem to be eternal with no beginning or ending of days. (Heb. 7:3, Michah 5:2) Melchizedek's offering in Genesis would seem to symbolize divine provision and blessing, pointing ahead to the greater Priest and King who we know as Jesus.

In Hebrews we see where the sacrificial system in the Old Testament comes to an end because it was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The Levitical priesthood along with the sacrificial system after the order of Aaron comes to an end. It is replaced with a new covenant with Jesus as our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek and he maintains this priesthood for all eternity.

Heb 8:13

When He said, "**A new covenant,**" He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

To dig into this deeper one should really study Hebrews chapters 5-11 ought to cover it.

What I am trying to point out here is that the bread and wine were introduced to us in Genesis with Abram and Melchizedek. Then we see in Hebrews that Christ priesthood is also after the order of Melchizedek who seems to be a picture of Christ.

The blood of the lamb on the doorpost was some time before the sacrificial system was introduced in Leviticus. This is where regular sacrifices of lambs took place. Then in Hebrews this system comes to an end as we are told of the new covenant. Are you starting to see a theme here that runs throughout the bible? Mankind's redemption starts in Genesis and ends in Revelation.

The New Covenant that we have seen in Hebrews is introduced by Jesus at the Last Supper.

Luke 22:20 And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

Now a covenant is a promise or contract. A contract with blood reminds me of when the Lord made a covenant with Abram. He had him kill some animals and cut them in half and laid the halves opposite each other. Then the Lord had Abram fall asleep and then he passed between the halves. (Genesis 15)

This was an ancient custom when swearing an oath. The action implied that the same fate that the animals had would be applied to them if the contract or covenant was broken. Since Abram was asleep and did not pass through the halves as the Lord did it meant the fulfilling of the covenant fell entirely on the Lord. Similarly in the new covenant with Jesus' blood our salvation falls entirely on him there is nothing we can do to earn it.

Here with Abram in Genesis 12 and 15 is where God initiated the Old Covenant. Abram later became known as Abraham in Genesis 17.

This covenant or agreement with Abraham was further affirmed when God presented the Ten Commandments to the Israelites at Mount Sinai. Moreover, the Davidic Covenant, described in 2 Samuel 7:12-16, confirmed the lineage of the Messiah and the promise of an everlasting kingdom.

Our understanding of communion and the redemption of mankind really is a theme that runs throughout the entire bible.

After the accounts of the Lords Supper in the gospels the next we see of this becoming practice is in the book of Acts

Acts 2:42-47

42 And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

43 And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

44 And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common;

45 and they began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

46 And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

We start to see here the formation of what we call church. They were devoting themselves to the apostles teaching and participated in prayer, breaking of bread and fellowship. They were still going to the temple in verse 46 where it says they were “continuing with one mind” but the breaking of bread was from house to house. I think it is important to note here that contrary to the way we often think the church is not a building. These same people here “continuing with one mind’ met in the temple and from house to house.

The Greek word ekklesia translated as church or churches simply means meeting, congregation or assembly. In other words, it is the assembly of people. It does not matter where this assembly of people meet. The “church” is the people. At the same time, one cannot ignore that a single Christian is not the church because there is no assembly.

It does not take a large group Matt 18:20 "For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst."

Can communion be taken by yourself? Some will look at this text and take note that the breaking of bread took place in individuals' homes. They will further argue that the communion is with Christ we are remembering him.

Those arguing against this will bring up that when the Lord introduced this there was a group of people there. Additionally, Paul mentioned in 1 Corinthians 11:33. So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

Although partaking of communion seems to be in groups one cannot dogmatically say that one cannot do it by themselves. There is no command or instruction that requires it to be in a group nor is there one to forbid it. The norm was in groups.

There also is no specific instruction as to how often one should do this. The text here in Acts 2:42 says they did it continually.

In the passage in Luke 22 where we started, we learned from Jesus that:

The bread symbolized his body given for us.

We should take part in this in remembrance of him

The cup or fruit of the vine was poured out for us representing the new covenant in his blood.

We receive a little more information and instruction from the Apostle Paul in 1st Corinthians 10 & 11.

1 Cor 10:14-22

14 Therefore, my beloved, **flee from idolatry.**

15 I speak as to wise men; you judge what I say.

16 Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a **sharing** in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a **sharing** in the body of Christ?

17 Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.

18 Look at the nation Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices **sharers** in the altar?

19 What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything?

20 No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become **sharers** in demons.

21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? We are not stronger than He, are we?

This context of what we just read here really started at the beginning of chapter 8. Where Paul addressed the eating of meat that was sacrificed to idols. A lot of the meat in the market came from animals that were sacrificed to idols or false gods by the pagans. Paul told them that although there were so-called gods or false gods eating the meat from the market was OK because these gods were not real at all. However there needed to be a line drawn. Just because you can eat the meat from the market does not mean that you can participate with these people in their practices or rituals. The idol may only be a piece of wood, but often what lies behind them is actual demons.

The word Sharers here in verse 16, 18 & 20 is from the Strong's # 2844 koinwno. The Greek word from the Strong's 2842 is from that koinonia which a Greek word many will recognize. Both of these Greek words can be translated as fellowship or partner. It is a close relationship we are not to have with non-believers. What fellowship does light have with darkness. (2nd Cor. 6:14-17)

By attending the ritual where the meat was sacrificed, they are no longer just eating meat that was sacrificed to a piece of wood or stone. Now they were fellowshiping with the pagans in their idolatry.

Paul called this a cup of blessings. When we take communion, we are accepting the blood and body of Christ sacrificed for us quite literally. It is the blood of Jesus alone, that cleanses from sin and gives access to the presence of God and we are assuming the benefits of his sacrifice on the cross. When we do this together, we become united as one body. This is much more than a simple act of eating bread or drinking wine or juice. It is a binding commitment.

This may be a strange way of relating, but as a kid have you ever, with a close friend cut yourselves and mix your blood to become blood brothers?

When we take communion, we are accepting and acknowledging a spiritual bond with Jesus Christ as well as with other Christians. In bible times eating a meal together was a symbol of fellowship unity and covenant. The Lords Supper when consumed together is a little deeper than that.

As Paul was saying in this text the contrast for them by sharing in a religious practice to a false god is fellowship with demons.

Participating in communion is not a matter that should be taken lightly! The Lord has judged some in the past for this and some got sick, and others died.

1 Cor 11:23-34

23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

25 In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

27 Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly.

30 For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.

31 But if we judged ourselves rightly, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord in order that we may not be condemned along with the world.

33 So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

34 If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you may not come together for judgment. And the remaining matters I shall arrange when I come.

(This was from the NASB)

Here we can glean from Paul that he received his information from the Lord about this.

When we partake of the bread and the cup, we are continuing to proclaim all that happened when Jesus was crucified on our behalf. We will continue to do this until he returns.

Since we are making this proclamation, we must examine our own hearts before partaking. Should we approach this matter negligently while partaking of that which symbolizes his body and blood, we are in a way bringing judgment upon ourselves. The Corinthian church was being negligent regarding the Lords Supper.

In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he addresses a serious issue: Certain members arrived ahead of time, indulging in their own bread and wine, while the less fortunate and late arrivals were left hungry. What was intended to be the Lord's Supper was instead becoming a communal feast, rather than a sacred act of remembrance. What was supposed to bring them together was bringing judgment upon themselves. This is what he touched on again in verse 33-34.

In verse 26 we are to proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Well then what? Then comes the Marriage Supper of the Lamb!

The Lord's Supper is a "foretaste" of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. In each communion service we look back to Christ's sacrifice and look forward to his return and the heavenly feast Rev. 19:1-9

Well, I hope that what I have conveyed in this subject is that communion is a profound act of remembrance, unity, and covenant, rooted in the entire biblical narrative from Genesis to Revelation.

Practical Application: Do not approach the Lords table in a half hazard manner! Take this seriously. Examine yourself beforehand.

Do you have unrepentant Sin? – Examine your heart (v. 28). If you harbor known, unconfessed sin, confess first

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Do you have a serious conflict with a brother or sister? If so, seek reconciliation.

Matt 5:23-24

23 "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,
24 leave your offering there before the altar and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

As you contemplate partaking of the bread and the cup. **Remember your deliverer.** Just as Israel remembered Egypt, we must never forget our own bondage to sin. Communion reminds us that Christ has delivered us by His blood. We will commit to him and proclaim what he did for us on the cross until he returns.

Do you have a lack of Faith – Communion calls for faith in Christ's atoning work. If you doubt or reject the gospel, you must first believe. The bread and cup are not for unbelievers.