

# **“THE LAST PASSOVER” AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

## **LUKE 22:1-23**

REV. CHARLES R. BIGGS

### ***Introduction***

Jesus has told the disciples what to expect at the end of the times as well as the end of the end of the times (see last sermon, Luke 21:5-38). Because Jerusalem had missed the visitation of Messiah (19:43-44), the earthly city would be destroyed.

The temple that stood as the religious and political center of the Jewish life would be destroyed when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple is a reminder to all covenant breakers that God will come in judgment soon.

In our passage from Dr. Luke’s Gospel this Lord’s Day, the Lord Jesus participates in his last Passover meal with his disciples. In the larger context we have learned that the temple in Jerusalem (type) is giving way to fulfillment in Jesus (anti-type, 21:5-6; John 2:19ff), so also the ceremonial feasts (types) of the Old Covenant Epoch are also giving way to fulfillment and reality in Jesus (anti-type) now that he has come to establish the New Covenant.

This is why Jesus institutes the Lord’s Supper to memorialize his death that is imminent and also to feed his Kingdom disciples during the period between His first and second comings. Although this passage has been popularly referred to as “the Last Supper” it would be better to understand it as “the Last Passover”. In reality it was the “last supper” (or first *and last* supper) only for one of the disciples- -Judas, the one who betrayed his Lord.

Jesus will be betrayed by Judas Iscariot, handed over to the Jewish leaders and Romans to be arrogantly mocked, brutally beaten, and then killed, all as part of God’s sovereign decree for His Beloved Son (Luke 9:21-22, 44; Acts 2:23; 4:28).

***In the death of the Son we see the revelation of the final Passover Lamb sacrificed, in the Lord’s Supper we see the revelation of the hope for all sinners who believe!***

### **I. The Kingdom and the Last Passover of the Old Covenant Epoch**

The time of the crucifixion is at hand beginning in chapter 22:1. The first movement of Jesus’ passion begins with the leaders of Israel plotting to put Jesus to death (22:2-6). The end of Jesus’ earthly ministry is at hand, but his death to save his own has begun. As the Apostle John beautifully puts Jesus’ realization of this time:

***ESV John 13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.***

What was the Passover or *Feast of Unleavened Bread*?

Dr. Luke specifically tells us the time of Jesus' betrayal; it was the near the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or the Passover (22:1, 7). This indicates to us as a setting a time when hundreds of thousands of people would be present in Jerusalem celebrating one of the greatest religious festivals of the year (cf. 22:6)! This was a time when crowds would have filled Jerusalem and celebration and thanksgiving was in the air!

The Passover was the memorial meal and celebration that was a reminder of God's salvation mercy in the Exodus (Exodus 12). The Passover was a time when the people of God celebrated God's passing over his people when he saw the blood on the doorposts in the time of the Exodus.

The *Feast of Unleavened Bread* was the term used for the whole period of festivity that revolved around the Passover. By the time of Jesus, the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread were celebrated together (see also Lev. 23:4-8). The reason it was also called the *Feast of Unleavened Bread* was that all the yeast (leaven) that was used in the house had to be removed from the house before the Passover lamb was killed (Deut. 16:4):

***ESV Deuteronomy 16:4 No leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the flesh that you sacrifice on the evening of the first day remain all night until morning.***

After the leaven was removed from the house, unleavened bread was then eaten for seven days:

***ESV Exodus 12:17-20: And you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day, throughout your generations, as a statute forever. <sup>18</sup> In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. <sup>19</sup> For seven days no leaven is to be found in your houses. If anyone eats what is leavened, that person will be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a sojourner or a native of the land. <sup>20</sup> You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwelling places you shall eat unleavened bread."***

***ESV Numbers 28:16 "On the fourteenth day of the first month is the LORD's Passover, <sup>17</sup> and on the fifteenth day of this month is a feast. Seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.***

The unleavened bread and the removal of leaven from the home was a typological picture of the affliction of persecution and slavery in Egypt ("bread of affliction") as well as of the removal of sin. Leaven is primarily used as a picture of sin in the

Bible. You may remember Jesus' earlier saying in the Gospel of Luke: "*Beware the leaven of the Pharisees...*" (12:1; cf. Matt. 16:6, 11-12; 1 Cor. 5:6).

*ESV 1 Corinthians 5:6-8: Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? <sup>7</sup> Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. <sup>8</sup> Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

It is interesting to note that for the Apostle Paul the celebration of the Feast of Unleavened Bread has become the Christian life, the life that one lives in celebration because of their union with Jesus Christ (v. 8). This is how the Apostle Paul interprets the way this celebration and memorial day is to be kept throughout all generations in Christ (see Exodus 12:17).

Passover was one of the three great pilgrim feasts of Israel (with the Feasts of Weeks or Pentecost, and Booths) where many people came up to Jerusalem to celebrate. Passover was in the spring on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan (the 7<sup>th</sup> month in the Jewish calendar).

During the Passover celebration, all Israelite males were to appear before the Lord God with offerings as representative and substitutionary sacrifices for their sins. In Jesus' time the Passover was celebrated with a Seder or a set order of service. The family (and friends of the household) would gather together for a Passover feast and the host interpreted the foods on the table.

The bitter herbs that were eaten recalled bitter slavery; the stewed fruit (because of color and constituency) recalled the miserable making of bricks in Egypt; the roasted lamb was to bring to mind the lamb's blood that was shed to place the blood on the doorposts when the angel of death passed over, and the eating of the lamb symbolized the life that was in the blood that preserved the people as a substitution.

The lamb was slain on the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month of Nisan between 3:00 and 5:00 P.M. At 6 PM (when a new day would begin for the Jews according to the way their calendars worked) on Nisan 15<sup>th</sup>, the Passover Meal was eaten, and this began the full week of the celebration of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Nisan 15-21).

It is significant to note theologically that the first aspect of the entire celebration of God's grace was focused on the substitutionary sacrificed lamb, with the second aspect of the celebration being focused on the unleavened bread that symbolized the removal sin and a holy-consecrated life.

***The Feast of Unleavened Bread symbolized the heart of and the summary of the Christian life in typological fashion.***

It is important to understand that the Passover Supper had historical as well as eschatological implications for God's people. The past was remembered in the great

salvation Exodus event, and the future was anticipated when God again would deliver-redeem-save his people and inaugurate his Kingdom when Messiah came.

The Passover Supper was celebrated with eschatological-Messianic hope; the Jews hoped for a New Exodus, a time of God's deliverance from all of their enemies (like before with Egypt), but there was so much more to be fully understood in the Passover and Feast that Jesus would make clearer to His people.

Jesus announces to His disciples the time of the Messianic Kingdom to be at hand (Luke 22:8ff), and his own death as an ultimate realization of the Passover event (22:15-16, 18-19, 29-30).

At this particular time, this time of the Passover sacrifice, all of the forces of evil unite to put to death God's Beloved Son according to God's sovereign will (22:3-6, 21-22; our passage this morning is flanked on both sides by betrayal and murder). At this particular time, the enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent reaches heightened eschatological intensity (cf. Gen. 3:15). Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples who had walked, talked, and touched the LORD, betrays Jesus for a few coins, as it were (22:5).

Like a murder planned on our American celebration of Christmas Eve when everyone is celebrating the annual yearly event, or like a murder planned on Thanksgiving where all are giving thanks and praise to God for his goodness, a murder of God's Son is being planned at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a time of celebration and thanksgiving in Jerusalem (as it were).

As the Israelites are celebrating life and salvation in Jerusalem, the chief priests, scribes and officers (members of the Sanhedrin) have the death of Jesus on their minds. And although the disciples are told by Jesus that he will be betrayed- -none of them actually knew their own hearts well enough to know who would betray him:

***ESV Luke 22:22-23: For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!"<sup>23</sup> And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.***

This shows that rebellion and the betrayal of Jesus is not so easy to spot by human eyes, and that it can be a temptation that is ever-present in the hearts of men. Even the disciples who were closest to Jesus did not know who would fulfill, according to God's determination, the betrayal of Jesus, v. 22. "They began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this." It is important to note that it was not obvious to the disciples *who would be the betrayer*.

Satan "entered into Judas" (22:3) the bible says, indicating Satan's influence on Judas' fulfilling his betrayal. Judas had already been seduced by the love of Mammon (22:5) that Jesus had warned his disciples about, and Satan sees this as an opportune moment to implement his own scheme against God's Son.

Here we must balance the fact that Judas commits the act against the Son of God and is culpable for his sin, although Satan acts to also fulfill his mission through Judas' evil deeds (cf. 22:22: "...*Woe to that man by whom he is betrayed*"). In other words, Judas will be judged for his sin against God; Satan will be judged for his sin against God, but no one can blame the other- -they acted together.

As Professor Green writes: "...The 'opportune time' for which Satan was waiting had begun to take shape, and that the propitious moment Judas seeks for his betrayal of Jesus will coincide with the implementation of Satan's own scheme" (*Luke*, NICNT, pg. 753).

At this time of betrayal and the wicked pursuits of men; at this time when the Adversary, Satan himself is influencing Judas' decision that he has already made with regard to the betrayal of Jesus (22;3); at this time the Last "significant" Passover is celebrated with Jesus and his disciples (22:7-13), and the Lord's Supper is instituted.

Jesus knows the hearts of men, and especially he knows (and is in control) of his coming betrayal which is part of his Divine Messianic Mission. Again, Jesus has known that the reason he has come to Jerusalem is to die as it were ('No prophet should perish away from Jerusalem', he has told his disciples, Luke 13:33-34).

In light of Judas' betrayal, Jesus tells his disciples (as earlier with the donkey's colt) to go and prepare what is needed for the Passover according to God's will (22:10-13). Jesus does not tell all the disciples where the meal is to be located because he must eat the Passover and establish the Lord's Supper and therefore he cannot let all know the location because he knows he will be betrayed. So Jesus prearranges the place and tells Peter and John how they will know they have found the right place:

*ESV Luke 22:10-13: He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters<sup>11</sup> and tell the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'<sup>12</sup> And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there."<sup>13</sup> And they went and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.*

Jesus reveals that he is in control of all of the events as they unfold around him; all that is going on in this passage is an outworking of God's sovereign decree and purposes for His Son- -nothing is a surprise to him.

Even Jesus' death is because God willed it and although those who betrayed and killed Jesus are still culpable (guilty!) for their sins against God and His Anointed One; nevertheless, it is all part of God's sovereign will to save and redeem His people – and to enthrone his holy one upon his holy hill at God's right hand (Psalm 2; Heb. 1:1-4). As Jesus told his disciples earlier in Dr. Luke's Gospel (9:22):

*"The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."*

Although Jesus fully knows that he will suffer (as he has specifically gone to Jerusalem for this very reason). Although Jesus' death will seem the end of the people's Messianic hopes and the failure of the Kingdom of God, there will be victory- because he tells the disciples that he will drink from the vine again in the full manifestation of the Kingdom (22:18). Although there will be the suffering of Jesus Christ, the end for him will not be death, but life—resurrection victory. This victory for Him will be the victory for His people!

*ESV Luke 22:14 And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. <sup>15</sup> And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.*

## **II. From Passover to Lord's Supper**

As the New Covenant replaces the Old Covenant (Heb. 8:13), so the Lord's Supper replaces through realization and fulfillment the Passover Meal (as well as all of the ceremonial feasts of the Old Covenant). What the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread symbolized typologically in the Old Covenant Epoch is being realized and fulfilled in Christ. The salvation-redemption and New Exodus that Israel had hoped for – had finally come in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now a greater Exodus in Jesus Christ was being realized and this included not only the forgiveness of sins, but like the unleavened bread, the removal of sins altogether and a perfect righteousness for sinners that can only be received by faith alone in Christ alone!

*"...And when the hour came..."* (v. 14a) - That is, when the eschatological hour of God's specific timing for Jesus to die had come. It would have been impossible for Jesus to have died before the appointed time given by the Father, which is what makes this "hour" so significant and poignant in redemptive-history.

All of the Old Covenant anticipated typologically this hour- -and the eschatological hour, according to God's sovereign timetable, had come- -Jesus would be betrayed and die according to His Father's will; Jesus would experience the baptism and drink the cup he had spoken to his disciples about earlier in his ministry (9:50):

*I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished!*

### ***Why was the Lord's Supper instituted?***

At least two important reasons: (1) For a memorial of God's faithfulness to his people in Christ ("...Given for you..." -22:19), and (2) To inaugurate and commemorate the New Covenant blood of Jesus.

What is its significance for Christ's people?

### ***The SIGN-ificance of the Lord's Supper***

The Lord's Supper is a memorial of the past, but part of an eschatological event as the end progressively is revealed. In Jesus the Kingdom of God has been inaugurated, we witness to His Kingdom as His people, but we await the full manifestation of His Kingdom when he returns in power and glory (21:27ff).

*"For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God"* (22:16). It is SIGN-ificant that Jesus abstains and refrains from Passover and wine until the full consummation of the kingdom is manifested with his return (22:18). Jesus' refusal to eat such a festal meal until the consummation signals a new stage in God's plan (Bock, Vol. II, pg. 1720). From now on, the Lord's people are to look forward to the Coming of Kingdom when Jesus Christ returns. We learn of this great eschatological banquet and supper of the Lamb elsewhere in Scripture:

*ESV Matthew 8:11 I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven...*

*ESV Luke 13:28 In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out. <sup>29</sup> And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God.*

Until Jesus returns, we remember as a memorial the Lord's death for sinners; we thank God for the final and consummate Passover lamb that was slain for our sins. We also anticipate in every Lord's Supper event the coming of the Lord Jesus in power and glory to fully manifest and establish His Kingdom (cf. 1 Cor. 15:21-26).

As Professor Green notes: "...The celebration of Passover had a field of vision that encompasses past, present and future, so that the feast anticipated eschatological deliverance, a second exodus, so to speak" (NICNT, pg. 759).

### ***What do we specifically see realized from Passover to Lord's Supper?***

- a. From the Old Covenant Passover Lamb to the New Covenant Passover Lamb (cf. 1 Cor. 5:7). All of the Passover lambs of the Old Covenant could never permanently remove sins; only in Jesus do we have the final Passover Lamb and the sins that take away the sins permanently of all who believe:

*Hebrews 9:28-10:4,10: ...So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. <sup>2</sup> Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? <sup>3</sup> But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin every year. <sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins....*

***And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.***

- b. From the Old Covenant celebration of being spared God's wrath on Egypt, to the New Covenant celebration of being spared God's wrath on the world because of the cross of Christ.

***John 3:17-18, 36: For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. <sup>18</sup> Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God..... Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.***

- c. From the Old Covenant ceremonial Feast of Unleavened Bread to the taking away or removal of sin in Jesus Christ! On the one hand the unleavened bread represented the bread of affliction in Egypt (Deut. 16:3), on the other hand the unleavened bread represented the removal of sin. It is interesting how both of these aspects come together for us in Christ:

From God's perspective, the bread is the bread of affliction because Jesus experiences God's wrath and affliction on the cross for us; from our perspective, the bread is the unleavened bread of the removal of sin because of Jesus' affliction for us on the cross. God's people in Christ are those who have been made unleavened by faith in Jesus (1 Cor. 5:7).

- d. Two covenants (old and new); one people of God.
  - i. Two Cups in Luke: Dr. Luke mentions two cups. One cup, the first one was the cup that Jesus uses to show the unity of believers with himself and each other; after Jesus gave thanks he showed that what he was about to establish was a covenantal communal meal that was for unity in His people; this was a single cup for all to drink together:

***<sup>ESV</sup> Luke 22:17 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves.***

The concept-name of "The Eucharist" comes from this verse (and verse 19). *Eucharistasas* [εὐχαριστήσας] is the Greek verb used here translated "had given thanks".

- ii. Bread/Body: In the Passover, the host would say with regard to the unleavened bread: "This is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate when they came out of the land of Egypt."/ Jesus takes the bread as the host and says "...This is my body." ("I AM the Bread of Life"- John 6)



Many Passovers had been celebrated throughout the many years since the Exodus. Many hosts had sat at the head of the table, but no host until Jesus said that the bread represented his own body!

What does the “is” mean as in “This is my body”? The verb *is* indicates representation not identification (Bock, Vol. II, pg. 1724).

The bread (22:19): “*This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me...*” Jesus’ body has become the “bread of affliction” (or what it represented); Jesus’ body given for His people will be afflicted and his body will bear the sins of God’s people. What was symbolized in the Feast of Unleavened Bread every year became realized in Jesus Christ as Isaiah wrote:

*ESV Isaiah 53:6-10: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. <sup>7</sup> He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. <sup>8</sup> By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? <sup>9</sup> And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. <sup>10</sup> Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; <sup>1</sup> when his soul makes <sup>2</sup> an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.*

- iii. Wine/Blood: Jews understood the wine of Passover to represent the blood of the paschal lamb (Mishnaic Tractate Pesahim 10:6). The second cup is Jesus’ blood: “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant which is given for you in my blood” (22:20).

The cup (22:17-18): “*This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood...*” (22:20).

*ESV Leviticus 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.*

*ESV Leviticus 17:14 For the life of every creature <sup>1</sup> is its blood: its blood is its life. <sup>2</sup> Therefore I have said to the people of Israel, You shall not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every creature is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.*

### ***What does this teaching of Jesus symbolize for us?***

1. Ratification of the eternal covenant (cf. Exodus 24:8 with the blood of the old covenant and the covenantal meal).

*ESV Exodus 24:5-8: And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. <sup>6</sup> And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. <sup>7</sup>*

*Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." <sup>8</sup> And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."*

2. Fulfillment of Jeremiah's promise of New Covenant:

*Jeremiah 31:31-34 <sup>31</sup> "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup> not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. <sup>33</sup> But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup> And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."*

In Christ we find a better covenant, one that Christ has kept for us. In Christ we find obedience by his grace to be possible as we have God's Law written on our hearts. We find the fulfillment of the covenant promises that in Christ God will be our God and we will be his people. We find in Christ the true knowledge of God and the forgiveness of sins before God's holy throne.

All that was greatly anticipated in the Old Covenant shadows and types has been realized-fulfilled in the coming of Christ and His blood that was shed to inaugurate and ratify the New Covenant, and that we commemorate when we feed on Christ by faith.

As the host of the Passover Meal would interpret each part of the meal as it was eaten, so Jesus very specifically interprets the Lord's Supper for His people.

3. Wine was symbolic of covenant blessings (Deut. 28), as well as the bitterness of Christ's cross. Wine has always been used in the Lord's Supper up until the 1800s in America.
  - e. Perpetuity of the Lord's Supper: "For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes" (22:18).

**Application:** the LORD's love and accommodation to his covenant people.

## II. **The Presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper**

- a. Real, yet Spiritual Presence/A sacrifice
- b. Errors and Orthodoxy:
  - i. **Roman Catholic:** Transubstantiation

- ii. **Memorial** (Zwinglian): Mere Memorial- Believer’s dedication to God rather than God’s covenant declaration and covenant seal to believers. A “real absence” of Christ?
- iii. **Lutheran**: “In, with and under”
- iv. **Reformed** (Calvinistic) Understanding
  - 1. Spiritual presence of Christ, yet true and real presence received by faith.
  - 2. A Memorial more than a mere “remembering” as mental recollection (“Do this as my memorial”).
- c. We truly eat of his humanity as well as his deity. Calvin says: “It is not only a matter of being partakers of his Spirit; it is necessary also to partake of his humanity, in which he rendered complete obedience to God.”
  - i. **1 Corinthians 10:16** <sup>16</sup> The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a *participation in the blood of Christ*? The bread that we break, is it not a *participation in the body of Christ*?
- d. **Electricity Analogy**: The body of Christ which is locally present in heaven is analogous to a power plant or electrical generator. The divine life of God is analogous to the electricity. The Holy Spirit is analogous to the power lines that transmit the electricity and connect the power plant to millions of individual homes, while the sacramental signs are analogous to the individual light switches in those homes. The individual communicants in the church are analogous to the millions of light bulbs that receive the electricity from the plant, and the individual communicant’s faith (or lack thereof) is analogous to the filament in the light bulb (either broken or whole).

### III. **The Benefits for Believers in the Lord’s Supper**

- a. Sign and Thing Signified: Not virtually equivalent (Roman Catholicism); Not bare empty signs with no spiritual reality (Memorialism/Evangelicalism); but signs that represent Holy-Spiritually what they signify. They *are* spiritually what they truly represent.
- b. Not a sacrifice (Hebrews 9:24-28) of Christ, but a sacrificial meal *with Christ*.
- c. **“Do this in remembrance of me” (22:19): What does this mean? First a memorial to God; Secondly a memorial for us:** God “remembers”: the memorial he has given us reminds God of his faithfulness to his covenant promises because of the body and blood of Christ.

i. *Exodus 12:11-14* <sup>11</sup> *In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's Passover.* <sup>12</sup> *For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.* <sup>13</sup> *The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.* <sup>14</sup> **"This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.**

ii. "My Memorial" or "In Remembrance of Me"? Memorial is something God remembers first; it is an offering to God that pleases him and causes him to "remember" (cf. Exodus 2:23-25).

*ESV Exodus 13:7-9: Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days; no leavened bread shall be seen with you, and no leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory.* <sup>8</sup> *You shall tell your son on that day, 'It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.'* <sup>9</sup> *And it shall be to you as a sign on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth. For with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt.*

iii. Words "Memorial" and "Remember"; Remembrance is not merely saying "Oh yeah, that's nice I remember Jesus loves me and died for me"; rather remembrance in the bible carries with it the connotation of a memorial. That is, we memorialize, or we don't merely remember, but the past memory is something that informs us and encourages us and teaches us and still transforms us as we remember (like when we truly celebrate the significance and remember what it means to celebrate Christmas Day, or Easter, or American holidays such as Memorial Day or Independence Day):

God speaks of "remembrance" as a memorial- -more than a mere memory of what God has done, but a memory to inform, enlighten, encourage and equip you to press on by God's grace to the New Heavens and the New Earth.

*Exodus 12:14* <sup>14</sup> **"This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.**

*ESV Leviticus 24:7 And you shall put pure frankincense on each pile, that it may go with the bread as a memorial portion as a food offering to the LORD.*

***Psalm 70:1 Psalm 70:1 TO THE CHOIRMASTER. OF DAVID, FOR THE MEMORIAL OFFERING. Make haste, O God, to deliver me! O LORD, make haste to help me!***

***Hosea 12:1-6 Ephraim feeds on the wind and pursues the east wind all day long; they multiply falsehood and violence; they make a covenant with Assyria, and oil is carried to Egypt. <sup>2</sup> The LORD has an indictment against Judah and will punish Jacob according to his ways; he will repay him according to his deeds. <sup>3</sup> In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove with God. <sup>4</sup> He strove with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought his favor. He met God at Bethel, and there God spoke with us- <sup>5</sup> the LORD, the God of hosts, the LORD is his memorial name: <sup>6</sup> "So you, by the help of your God, return, hold fast to love and justice, and wait continually for your God."***

***Acts 10:4 <sup>4</sup> And he stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God.***

- d. Means of Grace: God in Christ spiritually feeds and sups with us at the table as we receive him by faith.

"In his rich mercy, God "made us alive together with Christ . . . and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:4-6). It is from this position that we come to the Lord's Table, and "they that worthily communicate in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, do therein feed upon the body and blood of Christ, not after a corporal and carnal, but in a spiritual manner; yet truly and really, while by faith they receive and apply unto themselves Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death" (Westminster Larger Catechism, answer 170).

- e. Christ and the Believer: Union with Christ

***ESV 1 Corinthians 10:16 The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?***

- i. Marriage Union (Ephesians 5)
- ii. Fleshly Union (Head and Body, Eph. 4:11ff; 1 Cor. 12)
- iii. Organic Union (Vine and Branches, John 15)

- f. Sanctification: In the Lord's Supper, the believer is nourished and sustained, and his communion and union with Christ is strengthened and increased. The Lord's Supper is intimately tied to the believer's ongoing sanctification and growth in grace (Calvin).

- g. The Believers with one another (1 Corinthians 10).

- h. A real blessing as well as a curse (1 Corinthians 11): There was a betrayer at Jesus' table - and the disciples were perplexed as to who it might be. Jesus pronounced a woe upon him for his evil heart plotting against him (22:22ff).

And so there will be betrayers at Jesus' table now. What we should understand about "preparing our hearts" for the Supper weekly, or in our "discerning the body and blood of the LORD" is at least about making sure that we are truly united to Jesus Christ by faith. Judas serves as a reminder of the fact that in the visible church there will be apostates.

The occasion of the Lord's Supper should be a time when all who desire to partake in the table repent of their sins against God, of God's keeping them from full betrayal and reconciling them to himself because of His mercy; it should be a time when we all consider our unity with Jesus and each other and pray that God would continue to work in us that which is good and pleasing to him through our obedience to him and our response of faith to his grace.

**Application:** Importance of examining oneself before coming to the Lord's table:

**WLC 171** How are they that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper to prepare themselves before they come unto it? A. They that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper are, before they come, to prepare themselves thereunto, by examining themselves (1) of their being in Christ, (2) of their sins and wants; (3) of the truth and measure of their knowledge, (4) faith, (5) repentance; (6) love to God and the brethren, (7) charity to all men, (8) forgiving those that have done them wrong; (9) of their desires after Christ, (10) and of their new obedience, (11) and by renewing the exercise of these graces, (12) by serious meditation, (13) and fervent prayer. (14) / (1) 1 Cor. 11:28 (2) 2 Cor. 13:5 (3) 1 Cor. 5:7 compared with Exod. 12:15 (4) 1 Cor. 11:29 (5) 1 Cor. 13:5; Matt. 26:28 (6) Zech. 12:10; 1 Cor. 11:31 (7) 1 Cor. 10:16,17; Acts 2:46,47 (8) 1 Cor. 5:8; 1 Cor. 11:18,20 (9) Matt. 5:23,24 (10) Isa. 55:1; John 7:37 (11) 1 Cor. 5:7,8 (12) 1 Cor. 11:25,26,28; Heb. 10:21,22,24; Ps. 26:6 (13) 1 Cor. 11:24,25 (14) 2 Chron. 30:18,19; Matt.

#### **IV. The Perpetual Blessing and Covenant Renewal in the Lord's Supper**

- a. Compared to Baptism, it is perpetual. Baptism is initiatory.
- b. Word and Sacrament should be together. Not sacrament without word (Roman Catholicism); Not word without sacrament (Evangelicalism); but Word *and* Sacrament: Word is verbal; sacraments are visual. Word declares verbally; sacraments proclaim the Lord's death visually.
- c. Another aspect of being "ashamed of the gospel" in evangelical church-Growth churches? Cannot present sinners in the hands of an angry God,

with the grace of Christ, then inviting so-called “seekers” to the table of the LORD. Not a seeker-sensitive thing to do!

- d. A blessing of all five of our senses!
- e. “...Until you eat with me in the Kingdom of Heaven”
- f. Psalm 37 says: “Taste and see that the LORD is good”
- g. Psalm 78 asked the question: “Can God prepare a table in the wilderness?” The answer is a resounding and thankful “Yes”!

***Welcome to a communal memorial meal for the covenant family of God.***

***Luke 14:11-15*** <sup>11</sup> *For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.* <sup>12</sup> *He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid.* <sup>13</sup> *But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,* <sup>14</sup> *and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. You will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."* <sup>15</sup> *When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"*

***Revelation 3:20*** <sup>20</sup> *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*

Our great hope for the future as the people of God *until he comes* (1 Cor. 11:26):

***Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.*** <sup>7</sup> *Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready;* <sup>8</sup> *it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"- for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.* <sup>9</sup> *And the angel said<sup>1</sup> to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."*

Thanks be to God for His Word! Thanks be to God for His Christ!

CRB

[www.aplacefortruth.org](http://www.aplacefortruth.org)

**Bibliography- *For Further Reading***

**Beale, G. K. and D. A. Carson.** Editors: *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament.* Baker, 2007.

**Bock, Darrell L.** *Luke: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, Volumes 1-2,* Baker, 1994.

**Bromiley, G.** Editor: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)*, Volumes 1-4, Eerdmans, 1982.

**Geldenhuys, Norval.** *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke (New International Commentary on the New Testament, NICNT)*, Eerdmans, 1952.

**Green, Joel B.** *The Gospel of Luke (NICNT)*, Eerdmans, 1997.

**Green, McKnight, and Marshall.** Editors: *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. IVP, 1992.

**Hughes, R. Kent.** *Luke, Volumes I-II (Preaching the Word Series)*, Crossway, 1998.

**Marshall, I. Howard.** *The Gospel of Luke (The New International Greek Testament Commentary)*, Eerdmans, 1978.

**Morris, Leon.** *Luke: The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, IVP Academic, 1988.

**Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman.** Editors: *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, IVP, 1998.

CRB