

We welcome those joining us by livestream or over the phone. You cannot eat and drink, because the Lord's Supper symbolizes us being together. We are thankful that at least the message of the gospel of grace can travel to where you are through God's gift of this technology.

For those here in person – I remind you that The Lord's Supper is not about the quality of the elements, but about the meaning of the elements. Our biggest question is not whether we will enjoy the wafer and cup, but whether we are reconciled with God! We get THE SAME CHRIST, even with a diminished bread and cup.

Message: the people of God were trapped and waiting. Before God bought His people out of Egypt, He started a special meal called the Passover, that would be repeated later. The purpose of the Passover was to remind the people of God's grace in rescuing them.

God had already protected His people from all 10 plagues on Egypt. In the final plague, the firstborn of Egypt were threatened with death. But if God's judgment required the death of sinners, how could God's people survive? Surely they were sinners too. An atoning sacrifice of a lamb was required. If a lamb died, that household could live through the night.

God commanded that each household choose a lamb. It had to be a spotless, perfect lamb. We read how the Passover got named in Exodus 12:27, "*It is the sacrifice of the LORD's Passover, for He passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when He struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.*"

The lambs were slaughtered and the blood sprinkled onto the outside doorpost of each home. That night that the angel of death killed the firstborn of each Egyptian home, but passed over the homes of those with the blood on the doorposts. The lambs died so the people of God could be spared. The smearing of the blood onto the doorposts signaled purification from the stain of guilt. God saw the blood and His justice was satisfied for sparing sinners in Israel while killing sinners in Egypt.

In the same way, we need a sacrifice because of our sins. Not because of just "a little sin" here or there, but rather because in our hearts we have constantly rebelled against God. Yet our God, because of His great love for us, provided a perfect, sinless sacrifice, so that the rebellion in our hearts might be removed.

In the New Testament age of God's kingdom, the Passover lamb is not provided by the families; instead, God Himself has provided the Lamb.

Jesus Christ was the true Lamb provided by God. The physical purity of the Passover lambs is mirrored in the spotlessness of the life of the perfect

obedience of Jesus. The words of Jesus is one that we know His sterling character, such as in John 4:34, when Jesus said, “*My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.*” A spotless lamb!

The apostle Peter testifies to the stunning character of the Lamb of God in 1 Peter 2:22, “[*Jesus*] committed no sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth.” How much value would we put on a person like that? When Peter urged us to appreciate what was given for us, Peter resorted back to the familiar Passover lamb language. in 1 Peter 1:18-19, “...*you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*”

How valuable is human life to us? Irreplaceable. How valuable is the perfect life of Jesus? One of a kind irreplaceable. From all eternity past, God the Father had infinite delight in His treasured Son. Once Jesus came to earth and did the work of Messiah, He had fulfilled all the Father’s will. Thus Christ’s lifeblood was precious to God the Father, as only His own Son’s lifeblood could be. The sacrifice perfectly satisfied all God’s requirements for us who are marked by the blood of the Passover Lamb Jesus.

For the ancient nation of Israel, the Passover lamb was a sacrifice for sin and a peace offering. Their feast of blessing and joy rested on the sacrifice that the Lord made for them. God was reconciled.

After that, year after year, God reminded the people of the sacrifice that had been made for them, with the Passover feast. The meal included bitter herbs in order to renew the bitter memory of living under the domination of foreign gods. The Passover testified that they owed their existence as a people, and all their blessings in Canaan, to the grace of blood-bought redemption.

In Mark 14:22-25, (ESV), after Jesus Himself had celebrated the Passover meal with His disciples, something amazing happened, that had never happened before in all the years of the Passover meals.

“*As they were eating, [Jesus] took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, ‘Take; this is My body.’ And [Jesus] took a cup, and when He had given thanks [Jesus] gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And [Jesus] said to them, ‘This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.’*”

This bread and this cup are the signs of the blood-bought redemption that the Passover lamb Himself promised. We read in 1 Peter 2:24, “*He*

*Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.”*

Receive these two signs of Christ’s atonement. Eat the body of the Lamb, and drink His blood with joy today. By means of this Lamb, Your God has redeemed you. He is reconciled. You have forgiveness from the past and freedom for the new life in Christ. Enjoy, by faith, His gracious fellowship.

To parents of young children, we say please wait until the children have reached the age to understand these things, in consultation with the elders.

To visitors, we say **If you are a Bible-believing Christian and you are walking with God and with your church, we lovingly invite you to partake in this blessing with us.**

OPEN THE BREAD.

That we may now be fed with the true heavenly bread, Christ Jesus, let us not cleave with our hearts unto the external bread and wine, but lift our hearts up on high in heaven where Christ Jesus is our Advocate at the right hand of His heavenly Father.

*[Please now peel back the top layer of your cup, so that the bread wafer is ready.]*

*Pray, thanking God for the body of Christ, represented by this bread.*

The bread we break together is the communion of the body of Christ.

Take, eat, remember, and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for a full pardon of all our sins.

*[Please now peel back the next layer of your cup, so that the juice is ready.]*

*Prayer of thanks for Jesus’ blood, represented, sealed, & applied by this cup.*

The cup of blessing which we drink is the communion of the blood of Christ.

Take, drink, remember, and believe that the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for a complete cleansing of all our sins.

Let us pray, “Merciful Father, we thank You for this holy sacrament, which shows forth His death. Enable us to live always for Him who gave Himself for us, even Jesus Christ, through whom we ask, Amen.

Blessing from 1 Peter 1:8-9, “*Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. Though you do not now see Him, you believe in Him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*” Amen.