

# THE LORD'S SUPPER

## LUKE 22:7-23

### ***Introduction***

This is a great passage on the subject of the Lord's Supper.

- I. The great purpose of the Lord's Supper (vv. 7-14).
- II. The great significance of the Lord's Supper (vv. 15-18).
- III. The great meaning of the Lord's Supper (vv. 19-20).
- IV. The great appeal of the Lord's Supper (vv. 21-23).

### ***I. Luke 22:07-14 The Purpose of the Lord's Supper***

The great purpose of the Lord's Supper is threefold.

1. It shows how Jesus fulfilled the great Passover Feast (See *Passover and the Lord's Supper*; Lk. 22:7).
2. It stresses the great need and helps a person to remember the Lord's death. Scripture is pointedly clear about this. The Lord's Supper helps us to keep our minds upon Christ, and at the same time it demonstrates that our minds are upon Him.

***Luke 22:19*** "Do this in remembrance of me." (see *1 Cor 11:24-25*)

***1 Cor 11:26*** For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

The Lord's Supper is to be kept even in the *face of difficulty*. Note the difficulty Jesus faced. There were those who were seeking to find out where He was so they might arrest and kill Him. Even one of His own disciples had betrayed Him and was only waiting for an opportunity to inform the authorities where He was and where He could be quietly arrested. However, despite this terrible difficulty, Jesus was determined to observe the celebration. (What an indictment against *loose attitudes and approaches* to the Lord's Supper! Believers are to be obedient to the religious ordinances despite difficulty.)

3. It stresses the need for cautious preparation in approaching Christ and His death. Note the words "prepared" in all three gospels.

***Luke 22:13*** They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

***Mat 26:19*** So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.

***Mark 14:16*** The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

The point is this: detailed preparations were required for observing the Passover (See *Passover and the Lord's Supper*; Lk. 22:7). The stringent preparations taught that God

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was to be *approached carefully*, exactly as prescribed. Why? Because God is holy, and there is only one way to approach Him — through the blood of the Passover Lamb. Three acts in this passage stress the need for approaching Christ carefully.

- => He went to great pains to keep the Passover despite extreme danger.
- => He had personally made preparations for the observance (v.9-12).
- => The disciples found the arrangements made just as He had said and did their part in preparing the observance.

**Thought 1.** Christ kept the Passover even in the face of death. How few value the Lord's Supper enough! How many observe it too little! How many could care less if it is observed or not! How many place the comfort of home, recreation, and the doing of one's own thing before observing the Lord's Supper!

### LUKE 22:07 PASSOVER AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

*Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. Luke 22:07*

Historically, the Passover refers back to the time when God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage (Exo. 11:1f). He had pronounced judgment, the taking of the firstborn, upon the people of Egypt for their injustices. As He prepared to execute the final judgment, those who believed God were instructed to slay a pure lamb and sprinkle its blood over the door posts of their homes. The blood of the innocent lamb would then serve as a sign that the coming judgment had already been carried out upon the sacrificial lamb. When seeing the blood, God would *pass over* that house. Those who believed God applied the blood to their homes and were saved, but those who did not believe did not apply the blood to their homes, and they were destroyed.

Symbolically, the Passover pictured the coming of Jesus Christ as the Saviour. The *lamb without blemish* pictured His sinless life (see Jn. 1:29), and the *blood sprinkled on the door posts* pictured His blood shed for the believer. It was a sign that the life and blood of the innocent lamb had been substituted for the firstborn. The "eating of the lamb" pictured the need for spiritual nourishment gained by feeding on Christ, the Bread of Life. The unleavened bread (bread without yeast) pictured the need for putting evil out of one's life and household. (See *Feast of Unleavened Bread*, Mt. 26:17.)

In addition to the lamb and unleavened bread, the Jewish Passover Feast was celebrated by using four food and drink items, (1) A bowl of salt water was conspicuously placed on the table to remind the family of the tears shed by their forefathers in their 430 years of Egyptian bondage. (2) A bitter salad-like plate was to remind them of their forefather's bitter experiences of slavery. (3) A paste-like

mixture of fruit (charosheth) with cinnamon sticks was to remind them of their forefather's toil in making bricks from clay and straw for the Egyptian cities and buildings. (4) Four cups of wine were used to remind them of God's four promises in Exo. 6:6-8 to deliver their forefathers from Egyptian slavery.

The one thing to be noted about the Passover celebration is that it is all historical. It is celebrating an act of the past, whereas the Lord's Supper is much more than mere history. It is a celebration of the living Christ in the heart and life of the believer until He returns. It is a remembrance of the potential power of the living Christ within the life of the believer right now — an explosive power that is made possible through the cross (see 1 Cor. 11:26). □

### MATHEW 26:17 FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

This feast is also known as the Passover Feast (see Lev. 23:5-8; Lk. 22:1). However, on the first day of the Passover week, the Feast of Unleavened Bread had special significance. It was the day that all preparations were made to celebrate the Passover. (Exo. 12:1-51, esp. 11-28 for the background of the Passover.) Preparations included securing the lamb and taking it to the temple to be sacrificed. Preparations also included securing the food and drink items necessary for the Passover and arranging the room for the Feast. But there were two preparations for which the Feast of Unleavened Bread received its name.

1. There was the baking of unleavened bread. On the very night of the Passover, God had told Israel to make final preparations for being delivered from Egyptian bondage. But the Israelites did not have time to bake leavened bread. They had to bake bread without leaven because of the time it takes for leavened bread to rise. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was simply one of the Passover ceremonies by which Israel remembered God's glorious deliverance of their forefathers from Egyptian bondage.
2. There was a ceremony by which all leaven within the house had to be removed. It must be remembered that leaven was a symbol of evil to the Jews. Therefore, in removing all leaven, they were picturing the need for putting evil out of their lives and households. There was an actual search made throughout the rooms of the house looking for any crumb of leaven that might have fallen upon the floor or between some furniture. Whatever leaven was found, no matter how small a crumb, it was removed from the house. By removing all leaven from their households, the Jews were saying they wanted to be included among the faithful of their forefathers, the faithful who had cleansed their lives and households for the journey of deliverance from bondage. □

## II. *Luke 22:15–18 The Significance of the Lord's Supper*

The great significance of the Lord's Supper is shown by two things.

1. The Lord's Supper is tied to the Lord's death. Note the Lord's words:

=> "Before I suffer" (v. 15).

=> "I will not eat it again, *until...*" (v.16).

=> "I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine, *until...*" (v.18).

Jesus was definitely tying both the Passover and the Lord's Supper to His death. And, of course, His death is what the Lord's Supper is all about (see *The Lord's Supper and Passover*, Lk. 22:19-20).

2. The Lord's Supper pictures a great supper, a glorious promise (v. 16-18). Note carefully the promise of Jesus. He said He was going to eat and drink again when all things were fulfilled "in the kingdom of God." Jesus was *promising* to celebrate the Supper with His followers in the future. Believers shall sit down with Christ at the great *Marriage Feast of the Lamb* (see Mt. 20:1-16; 20:2). It is the promise of sitting with Christ in His glorious kingdom, of being a part of the new heavens and earth, of being perfected and living forever.

**Rom 8:16-17** *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs - heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

**Col 3:4** *When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

**2 Cor 4:17** *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.*

**1 Pet 5:1** *To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed.*

**2 Pet 1:11** *And you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

## III. *Luke 22:19–20 The Meaning of the Lord's Supper*

The great meaning of the Lord's Supper.

1. There is the meaning of the bread. Jesus took the bread and broke it. This symbolized His broken body. His body was broken, that is, sacrificed, as a victim for man's deliverance (Isa. 53:5). This act was so significant that the early church sometimes called the Lord's Supper simply *the breaking of bread* (Acts 2:42, 46; 1 Cor. 10:16). Under the Old Testament the broken bread pictured the sufferings of the Israelites. Now, under the New Testament, the bread was to picture the broken body of Christ (1 Cor. 11:24).

Note: Jesus said His body was broken and given for us. He suffered and died *for us*: in our behalf, in our stead, in our place. He bore the judgment of God against sin by dying *for us*.

**John 6:50-51** *“But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”*

**1 Cor 11:24** *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.”*

**Isa 53:5** *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.*

2. There is the meaning of the cup. Jesus identified the cup as His blood of the New Testament. He simply meant that His blood establishes a new covenant with God; His blood allows a new relationship between God and man. Note the Lord's exact words.
  - a. “This is my blood”: His blood, which was shed or poured out from His body, was to become the sign or symbol of the new covenant. His blood was to take the place of the sacrifice of animals.
  - b. “The new covenant”: His blood, the sacrifice of His life established a New Testament, a new covenant between God and man (see Heb. 9:11-15). Faith in His blood and sacrifice is the way man is now to approach God. Under the Old Testament, a man who wanted a right relationship with God approached God through the sacrifice of the animal's blood. The Old Testament believer believed that God accepted him because of the sacrifice of the animal. Now, under the New Testament, the believer believes that God accepts him because of the sacrifice of Christ. This is what Jesus said: “This is my blood of the Covenant, which is poured out for many” (Mk. 14:24. See Mt. 26:28; Eph. 1:7; 1 Jn. 2:1-2; Heb. 9:22.) A man's sins are forgiven and he becomes acceptable to God by believing that Christ's blood was shed for him (1 Jn. 1:7).

**Eph 1:7** *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.*

**1 John 1:7** *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*

**1 John 2:1-2** *My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence — Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.*

**John 6:54-58** “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever.”

### LUKE 22:19–20 THE LORD’S SUPPER AND PASSOVER

Note the words “in remembrance of me.” By fulfilling the Passover with the shedding of His own blood, Jesus was tying the Lord’s Supper to the Passover Feast. In instituting the Lord’s Supper, Jesus was showing His disciples that He was, first of all, the great Liberator. A *liberator* differs from a *deliverer*. A deliverer might deliver a person into something as bad or even worse than that which enslaves him, but not a liberator. A liberator sets a person free from whatever bondage grips him. As the disciples partook of the Supper, they were to:

1. Remember how God liberated Israel from Egyptian slavery.
2. Remember how the Lord’s blood liberated them from earthly and sinful slavery. The Lord’s Supper is to remind the disciples how the blood of the Lamb keeps them safe from the terrible hand of God’s judgment.
3. Remember how the blood of Christ makes it possible for Him to return and to liberate them into the eternal presence of God’s glory. □

#### IV. **Luke 22:21–23 Judas Iscariot**

The great appeals of the Supper. Jesus used the Supper to make three appeals.

1. Jesus used the Supper to appeal to a sinner. Judas had forsaken Jesus. He thought his sin was hid and unknown, but Jesus knew. He had seen all, everything that Judas had done.
2. Jesus used the Supper to warn the sinner. “*Woe* to that man,” Jesus said. The word “*woe*” means wrath and sorrow, anger and pity. It was a grieving denunciation, a heartrending pronouncement of judgment. Terrible judgment was a sure thing for the sinner Judas, and it broke the heart of God.

**Thought 1.** Jesus knows the destiny of the sinner, the terrible fate that awaits him. It would be better never to be born than to deny and betray Christ. Note the grace of God in warning the sinner of judgment.

- (1) The sinner is told in *advance*, before judgment ever comes or is ever pronounced. Judas was told. The sinner can still repent when he *first* hears about judgment. He can still be saved as long as he is living. It is God’s grace that warns us of the consequences of our sin, of coming judgment.

(2) The sinner is never compelled to repent of his denial or betrayal of Christ. Judas was not forced to turn from his evil; neither is any other sinner. It is God's grace that respects our will and desires. God loves and cares, warns and speaks frankly, but He never forces obedience.

**Luke 13:3** *"I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."*

**Acts 3:19** *Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.*

**Acts 8:22** *Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart.*

3. Jesus used the Supper to stir the searching of hearts. The disciples were stirred to ask, "Surely not I?" (Mt. 26:22; Mk. 14:19). They looked at themselves. They were not accusing one another; rather each one feared lest he be so weak he might fall.

**Mat 26:41** *"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."*

**1 Cor 10:12** *So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!*

**1 Cor 16:13** *Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.*

**1 Pet 5:8** *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ■*