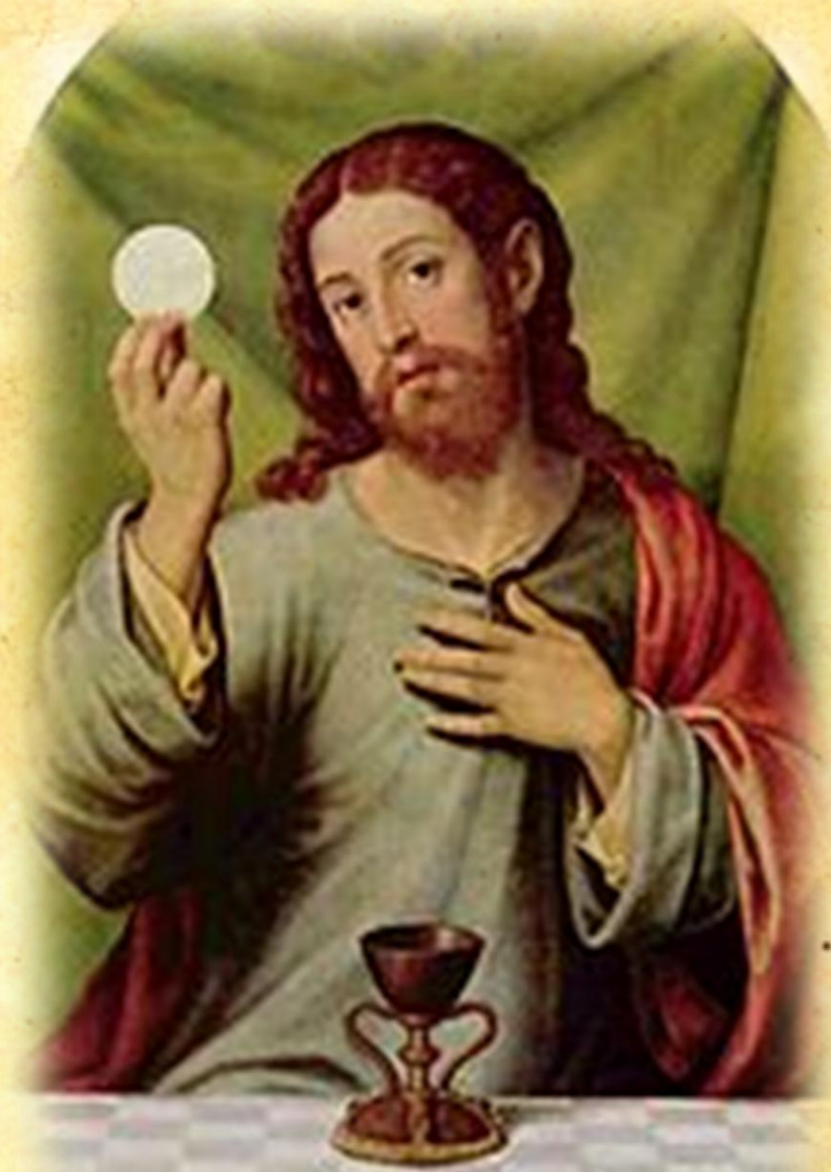


Chapter 14

THE LORD'S SUPPER



Christ with the Eucharist, Vicente Juan Masip, 16th century.

REMEMBER ME!

INTRODUCTION

At the conclusion of the last chapter describing the events in what was to be the final week for our Lord on earth, you were issued the invitation to join the disciples in sharing the Lord's Supper with him. However, in order to better understand the words the Lord spoke to his disciples during these last precious moments in communion together, it is critical to visit the Jewish roots of how the first Passover began in Egypt. In the book of Exodus, you will locate the complete story of how God heard the prayers of the Hebrew people as they pleaded to be brought out of slavery. Answering their cry, he spoke to Moses with the following words: *Exodus 3: 7-10 (NIV) The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering.⁸ So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.⁹ And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them.¹⁰ So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."*

As you recall, due to God hardening Pharaoh's heart, he repeatedly refused to set the Israelites free. Given the fact that the Creator is all powerful and omnipotent, many ask why he didn't just immediately force the issue and bring his people out of slavery. Why did he choose to inflict ten plagues against Pharaoh before persuading him to release the ill-treated Israelites from oppression? Ladies and gentlemen, the plagues served to contrast the power of the God of Israel with the Egyptian gods; invalidating them. In short, he was preparing to show his power so that all creation would know that he truly is the One and Only God! Actually, some scholars have connected several of the plagues with judgment on specific gods associated with the Nile, fertility and natural phenomena. (Blood, Frogs, Gnats, Flies, Livestock, Boils, Hail, Locusts, Darkness, and finally Death of Firstborn)

Since the Passover originated after the plague called death of the firstborn, we will focus on what transpired before and after the event. After releasing nine plagues upon Egypt, and Pharaoh still stubbornly refusing to relinquish the Israelites from his grip, God was getting ready to unleash a mighty blow that would bring the situation to a conclusion; the grand finale. Thus, he sent Moses to the Pharaoh with the following message: *Exodus 11:4-5 New International Version (NIV) "This is what the LORD says: 'About midnight I will go throughout Egypt.⁵ Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son of the female slave, who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well.'*

However, fully realizing the reaction of Pharaoh would be one of resistance, God then instructed Moses to prepare the Hebrew people on how to escape from being touched by the angel of death during that long and horrible night. The following summary from "Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist" by Brant Pitre shows the origination of the Old Testament Passover as follows:

1) Choose and unblemished male lamb.

4) Eat the flesh of the lamb with unleavened bread.

2) Sacrifice the lamb.

5) Every year, keep the Passover as a "day of remembrance" of the exodus forever.

3) Spread the blood of the lamb on the home as a "sign" of the sacrifice.



(Painting by Tissot)

The Passover Instituted

• 12 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ²“This month *shall be* your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you. ³Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household. ⁴And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷And they shall take *some* of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. ⁸Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. ⁹Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. ¹⁰You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. ¹¹And thus you shall eat it: *with* a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It *is* the LORD’s Passover.

New King James Version (NKJV)

Ladies and gentlemen, think what responsibility Moses had in delivering these detailed instructions to the large number of Hebrew people. Does that tell you what God thought about his servant Moses? Although Moses felt incapable of fulfilling the enormous assignment God had described to him, the Lord knew him better than he knew himself! Also, it was an example to all of us how important it is to listen to the still small voice of Christ! In the case of the Hebrew people on this night of Passover, one can be absolutely certain of the consequences for not complying with every word that came out of the mouth of Moses. Given our stiff necks, it becomes frightening, doesn't it?

Additionally, did you note in the Scripture above that the Hebrew people did not have time to prepare bread with yeast, and were to eat their Passover meal standing up with staffs while wearing their traveling garments? This was symbolic of their faith that God was going to live up to his promise and deliver them that night! Then, later on in Scripture, you will read that they were always to celebrate the Feast of the Unleavened Bread in order to remember it was at that very time that God delivered them from death and out of the hands of Pharaoh in Egypt; freeing them from slavery.

Last, it is critical to always recall that Passover was to be celebrated as an act of thanksgiving for deliverance from death. It was not to be an "Open Table", but a **"Covenant Feast"**. **IT WAS TRULY THE LORD'S PASSOVER!** Additionally, only individuals who were circumcised and had become members of the tribe of Israel could partake of this sacred Passover meal.



Let us pause and study carefully the picture above and imagine the conversation around the table as the first Passover is carried out according to God's instructions. As they stood together around the table, what sounds might they be hearing from outside? Do you think they knew when the angel of death passed by their door? Read aloud the Scripture from **Exodus 12: 29-30 (NIV)** that follows for even greater enlightenment: **"²⁹ At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on the throne, to the firstborn of the prisoner, who was in the dungeon, and the firstborn of all the livestock as well. ³⁰ Pharaoh and all his officials and all the Egyptians got up during the night, and there was loud wailing in Egypt, for there was not a house without someone dead."**



Passover: the Death of the First-Born of Egypt by Charles Sprague Pearce

Exodus 12:31-32 King James Version (KJV)

"³¹ And he (meaning Pharaoh) called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said. ³² Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also."

Therefore, in God's good and perfect time, his chosen people left Egypt with not a hair on their head touched, carrying with them all the provisions they would need for their journey. Picture in your mind the mass exodus that occurred during the middle of the night led by God's faithful servant Moses!



Israelites Leaving Egypt David Roberts (1828)

View the painting above of the Israelites being told to leave Egypt during the middle of the night. Talk about faith! Not only were they accepting the leadership of Moses, an individual they had just met, but were also departing hurriedly under the veil of darkness. This event takes the definition of "FAITH" to a totally new level, doesn't it?

PASSOVER EVOLVES

Since about fifteen centuries passed between the time of the departure of the children of Israel to that of Jesus, Passover changed in various ways. Therefore, in order to add even greater depth to what transpired at the Lord's Supper, it is now important to review some of these developments.

1) Location For Sacrificing Passover Lamb

Deuteronomy 16: 5-7 (Holman Christian Standard Bible) clearly states that God was changing the location in which the sacrificing of the Passover animal was to be accomplished; that being the Temple when Jesus lived on earth. In addition to this, Jewish Law proclaimed that all sacrifices were to be eaten within the walls of Jerusalem. Also, by this time, God had appointed the priestly duties of this type to only the Levites. **“You are not to sacrifice the Passover animal in any of the towns the LORD your God is giving you. ⁶ You must only sacrifice the Passover animal at the place where Yahweh your God chooses to have His name dwell. Do this in the evening as the sun sets at the same time of day you departed from Egypt. ⁷ You are to cook and eat it in the place the LORD your God chooses, and you are to return to your tents in the morning.”**

2) Sacrifice Procedure Changed

Author, Brant Pitre in his book, “Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist”, quotes from (Josephus, WAR 6: 423-27) to provide a graphic description as to what our Lord witnessed regarding the sacrificing of the animals at Passover time in the Temple. Given this quote below, it can be emphatically stated that Jesus would have a permanently engraved image of this event in his mind.

“So these high priests, upon the coming of their feast which is called the Passover; when they slay their sacrifices, from the ninth hour (about 3 p.m.) to the eleventh (about 5 p.m.), but so that a company not less than ten belong to every sacrifice (for it is not lawful for them to feast singularly by themselves), and many of us are twenty in a company, found the number of sacrifices was 256,500; which , upon the allowance of no more than ten that feast together, amounts to 2,700,200 persons.”



THE PASSOVER : SLAYING THE PASCHAL LAMB.—Num. ix.

Given this description, it is understandable why some scholars wrote that lentils were added as a supplement to the Passover meal due to the portion control of the lamb designated per family.

After the blood was drawn from the sacrificed lamb, it was then poured on the altar; an image that had to be forever held in the minds of the Jewish people in Jerusalem.

Then, according to Brant Pitre in his book “Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist,” he quoted the writings of Saint Justin Martyr, a Christian living in the mid-second century A. D. that originated from his dialogue with

a Jewish rabbi named Trypho to show how the process for sacrificing the lambs had changed and would have been the common practice during the time of Christ. It is as follows: *“For the lamb, which is roasted, is roasted and dressed up in the form of a cross. For one spit is transfixed right through from the lower parts up to the head and one across the back, to which are attached the legs of the lamb.”*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THINK ABOUT THE NUMBER OF TIMES JESUS WITNESSED THE LAMB BEING CRUCIFIED IN THE FORM OF A CROSS; ESPECIALLY GIVEN THE FACT THAT HIS DIVINITY WOULD HAVE ALLOWED HIM TO RELATE IT TO THE MANNER IN WHICH HE WOULD DIE, AS WELL. Recalling he was both human and divine, I cannot imagine the battle going on from the point of view of being a mere human! Yet, Scripture states he resolutely walked toward Jerusalem and his date with destiny. Not even at the last minute did he turn away from his responsibility as the Son of God who had come to take away the sins of the world! THY WILL BE DONE!

3) View Toward Passover Changed

Another fact Pitre points out in his book is what Jewish commentary has to say about the relationship between the original Passover and that of the New Passover they were anticipating; meaning the arrival of the long awaited Messiah. Just as the Israelites were redeemed by God during the night of the original Passover in Egypt, it was believed that on the new Passover night, the anticipated Messiah would redeem them again.

OTHER ELEMENTS OF PASSOVER

1) Manna: Even though Pharaoh finally allowed the Israelites to leave Egypt, their journey took years of wandering on the desert being in a state of total dependence on God. It is important to always recall that a cloud led them by day and a pillar of fire by night; meaning they continuously had a visible sign that he never left or forsook them.

However, Biblical history states clearly that it was during this time in the wilderness, their allegiance to God was tested repeatedly; a challenge that was described as presenting great difficulty for them to pass. During all their trials and tribulations, they were always fed due to the special food that fell from heaven every day; nutritional sustenance called manna. Why is it important to focus on manna in relationship to the Lord's Supper? Answer: Refer to John 6: 35-59 and you will note that during Jesus' discourse describing himself to his disciples as the bread of life, that he brings to their memory the fact that their forefathers ate of this very thing that came from the hand of God. Additionally, this manna that fell daily from heaven and in ample supplies was such an important part of the Jewish Religion, that a jar of it was placed in the Ark of the Covenant along with the Ten Commandments and Aaron's rod that had budded.



Moses and Joshua bowing before the Ark, painting by James Tissot, c.



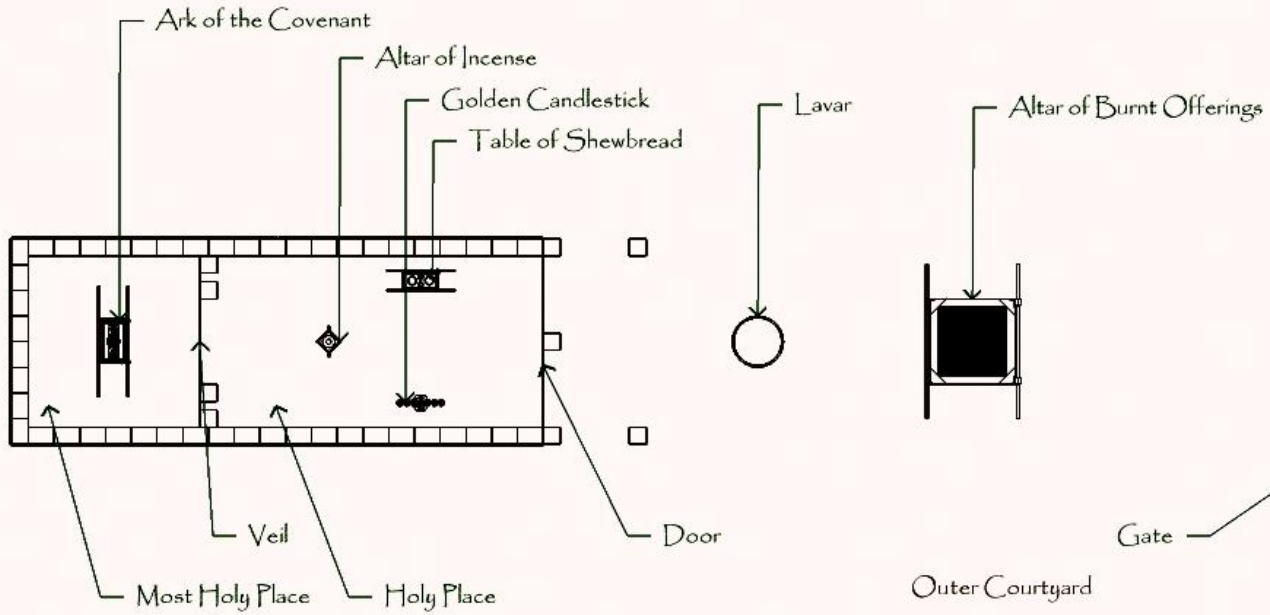
According to the author, Brant Pitre, even today, as we say the Lord's Prayer, and repeat the words, "Give us this day our daily bread," when deciphering the definition of "daily bread", it actually means "supernatural bread"; roots that are traced all the way back to the heavenly manna from the Old Testament.

Then, going deeper, "Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist" by Pitre on the subject of the manna, he describes their teachings that this supernatural bread was kept in heaven; directly in the Temple of God; meaning it was there long before being showered down upon them during their wilderness journey in the desert. Also, it is their feeling that, although their need for it ceased with their arrival into the Promised Land, in the new exodus to come that it will once again appear; thus occurring at the arrival of the messiah (or New Moses).

"(Gathering of the Manna" by Master of the Gathering of the Manna (fl. circa 1470) - from ISBN 978-90-6918-225-4, p. 215.. Licensed under Public Domain via Wikimedia Commons)

2) Bread of the Presence: (Also referred to as Shew-bread) This goes back to the heavenly banquet Moses and the elders participated in on Mount Sinai where Scripture states they ate and drank while seeing God; thus causing it to be referred to as the Bread of the Face of God. As a result, we read in **Leviticus 24: 5-9** where God gave his people specific instructions on how this special bread was to be a part of their religious service by stating, (NIV) "*And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it. Two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake. You shall set them in two rows, six in a row, on the pure gold table before the LORD. And you shall put pure frankincense on each row that it may be on the bread for a memorial, an offering made by fire to the LORD. Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it is most holy to him from the offerings of the LORD made by fire, by a perpetual statute.*" By reading this Scripture, you can immediately see that this was considered as a sacrifice to God.

Result: The Jewish religious ceremony consisted of a "bloody sacrifice" (Lamb) and an "unbloody sacrifice" (bread).



By Gabriel Fink

By published by Jonn E. Potter and Company or Henry Brill - Wikipedia



PROBABLE FORM OF THE TABLE OF SHOW-BREAD (AFTER BERNARD LAMY). PRIESTS REMOVING THE OLD, AND PLACING THE NEW.

Let us think back to the feeding of the 5,000 when Jesus multiplied five loaves of bread and fed that enormous number. This was our Jewish Messiah sending a clear message that he was, indeed, the One! So many signs! So many miracles from Jesus! As mere humans, we get so caught up into the ordinary grind that it is hard to note the wonders around us, isn't it?

3) Wine: Brant Pitre uses in “Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist” the following quotes:

“On the eve of Passover, from about the time of the Evening Offering, a man must eat naught until nightfall. Even the poorest in Israel must not eat unless he sits down to the table, and they must not give less than four cups of wine to drink. (*Mishnah, Peshahim 10:1*)

“On the eve of Passover; from just before the afternoon daily whole offering, a person should not eat, until it gets dark. Even the poorest Israelites should not eat until he reclines at his table. And they should provide him with no fewer than four cups of wine. (*Tosefta, Pisha 10:1*)

Pitre goes on to label the four cups as follows:

1st cup: “Cup of Satisfaction”-- the wine was mixed with a little water and a blessing followed.

2nd cup: “Cup of Proclamation”—mixed with water but not consumed until questions by the father of the household were answered. Through the father’s questions, they remembered the Passover in Egypt. (Meal included: lamb, bitter herbs, unleavened bread, and 4 cups of wine)

3rd cup: “Cup of Blessing”—Food consumed, followed by a blessing over the third cup.

4th cup: “Concluding Rites”—First, the remainder of the Hallel Psalms would be sung. (Psalm 115-118) Then, 4th cup was consumed. This meant the Passover meal was now complete.

THE LORD’S SUPPER

Now that the stage has been set with a foundation by providing a brief history of the origination of the first Passover, it is time to gather at the table with our Jewish Messiah and share precious fellowship and communion with him. A quote from Brant Pitre’s book, “Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist” says it best by stating, “In other words, the Last Supper was a Jewish Passover meal. But it was no ordinary Passover. It was the new Passover of the Messiah.” Every aspect of the new Passover the Jewish people anticipated had been unfolding right before their eyes with only a limited number recognizing it. However, it was due to those who did believe in Jesus as their Messiah that the Christian Church exists today. That meager beginning allowed Paul, a devout Jew who had an encounter with the Savior on the road to Damascus with the mission of persecuting the people of The Way, the opportunity of spreading the news of the kingdom; and becoming the author of 13 books of the New Testament.

1) Preparation for the Passover

Let us open with the directions Jesus gave on the day of Unleavened Bread to Peter and John regarding the Passover preparations; a description that fits like a glove into the history of the same as required by God when delivering his people from slavery out of Egypt. It also sends a clear message that the title, “MY JEWISH MESSIAH” was chosen accurately for the name of this collection because of the Lord’s specific instructions that reverted back to his religious teachings as a devout Jew.

Luke 22: 7-13 (NIV)

“Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. 8Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover.” 9“Where do you want us to prepare for it?” they asked. 10He replied, “As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, 11and say to the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ 12He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished. Make preparations there.” 13They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.”(Since women ordinarily carried the water from the well, not the men, this would have been a highly visible sign for the two disciples.)

2) The Lord’s Supper

“The Last Supper” painting by James Tissot



Luke 22: 14-19 (NASB)

14When the hour had come, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. 15And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." 17And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; 18for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes." 19And 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."

Ladies and gentlemen, think back to the preparation and consuming of the Passover lamb as described in the first part of this chapter. Compare the difference between this procedure and what Jesus has stated to his disciples. He has just told all of us that he is to become the sacrificial lamb.

Additionally, let us review an earlier incident in Scripture from chapter 6 in John when the Jewish leaders disagreed that Jesus had come from heaven. The crowds had just witnessed the miracle of feeding the 5,000 out of just a few loaves of bread; the wondrous supernatural bread that our Lord provided that must have made the leaders terribly uncomfortable. In fact, they requested Jesus show them even more miracles based around the manna from heaven God had fed their people with on their journey through the desert. (Again, a reference to their belief in the new exodus) Instead, Jesus continued speaking about himself being the bread of life that had come from his father in heaven. Then, getting to the point of ridiculous in the minds of the religious leaders, Jesus continues, *"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."* (John 6: 56-59) (NIV) At this juncture, many declared this teaching to be too hard to accept; prompting Jesus to even ask his disciples if they want to leave, too. However, dear sweet Peter exclaimed, *"We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."* John 6: 69 NIV; it is at this point that Jesus even prepares the disciples (without their understanding) that one of them would betray him. (Meaning Judas) Also, think about the teachings of the Jewish religion on the blood being the very life of the animal and to be treated in a sacred manner; this served as a roadblock for believing the claims of Jesus, for sure. (ARE YOU NOW SEEING THE VIVID DEPARTURE FROM THE ORIGINAL PASSOVER AND THAT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER?)

3) Drinking the Wine

Luke 22: 20 then states: "In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, *"This is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."* Did you note the words, the new covenant? (Again, refers back to the belief of the Jewish people in the new exodus) However, for us, it means the beginning of what we call the Second Covenant; that of all mankind being given the opportunity of accepting Christ as our Savior because he died on the cross for us; an act of grace and gift of eternal life.

As you read the description of the Lord's supper in the gospels, you will note that as they were eating, Jesus dips bread into the bowl and proclaims that he will be betrayed by one of them; meaning Judas. However, none at the table thought anything of the fact that Judas left to fulfill the mission of betrayal as prophesied in Scripture; probably because it would have been normal as keeper of the funds to always be conducting business matters. (Even though Jesus had told them about him earlier.)



Judas Iscariot (right), retiring from the Last Supper, painting by Carl Bloch, late 19th century

Then, continuing on with the Lord's Supper, Scripture states, **'Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom."** (NIV) Jesus is letting everyone know that he will not drink the fourth cup of wine until his Father's kingdom is completed.

After the Lord's Supper had been finished, Jesus then taught his disciples a lesson in a way that only he could deliver; one that would leave a lasting impression upon his followers regarding servitude to others. Wrapping a towel around his waist, followed by pouring water into a basin, he bent down and began to wash his disciples feet; an act that certainly prompted a loud objection from Peter because of Jesus behaving like a slave rather than master. At this point in the evening, Jesus was not only teaching his disciples the lesson of humbly serving others, but all of his believers, as well. In the words of Jesus, **"Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."** John 13: 17 (NIV)

Jesus Washing Peter's Feet [Ford Madox Brown](#) (1821–1893)



So many lessons for the disciples to understand in such a short amount of time; teachings that went against the very grain of all their religious instruction handed down generation after generation; totally changed in three short years. Are you feeling their pain? Here they are, folks, partaking of their final supper with their best friend in the world, the man they believe to be the long awaited Messiah, and now he has turned their familiar Passover meal into something radically different; that now being the Passover of the Messiah. On the way to Jerusalem, they had tried to understand the words of their Lord when he said, **“Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.³² For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on:³³ And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again,³⁴ ^(KJV) without success, and now all these happenings!** The usual Passover meal had become all about sacrifice; one where their

Lord had replaced both the “*bloody and unbloody*” offering with himself as being the lamb as well as the bread; and additionally, referring to the wine as his blood.

Time For Contemplation

Since this was the Last Supper the Lord would eat with his disciples, let us try and imagine the array of emotions he personally experienced as his eyes soaked in their precious faces one last time before the impending separation. Although he knew one day they would once again be reunited, just like a hen with her chicks, he hated the challenges they would endure for his sake. During the three years together, so many things had been shared because of being able to forgive one another’s flaws. They had been rejected, spat upon and persecuted by even the important teachers of the day, and yet recovered with a strength that deeply touched the Master’s heart. This close-knit family consisting of rag-tag, common men had welded together in spite of their differences. They had forded streams of rushing waters, found their way out of deep valleys, and climbed the highest mountains of doubt walking hand in hand.

Yet, tonight, he had to reveal to them that this would be their final time together; a message incredibly difficult for the compassionate Messiah to deliver. He could already see the waves of confusion, sadness, and fear sweeping across their faces as the evening approached its conclusion.

Regardless, this meal shared together in the upper room, although filled with angst, provided the foundation on which the church still rests; the words, “This do in remembrance of me,” would forever matter not only to the eleven, but to all Believers; always and forever.

Although our Lord was truly a devout Jew beyond measure, and held his people in great esteem, he still had the courage to change the Lord’s Passover as described in Old Testament Scripture to that of “THE PASSOVER OF THE MESSIAH.” Even though this meant restructuring the highly revered Passover he had celebrated all his life, in his usual manner, our Jewish Messiah was up for the task. Why? All because he loved his creation so much that he wanted to draw them back to him. The covenant God had instituted with his chosen people prior to bringing them out of Egypt now had been changed into a covenant that included all mankind. It had been restructured from being exclusive and for only a few, to including Jews and Gentiles alike; The Lord’s Table was now open to all.

In the next chapter, before we depart for the Garden of Gethsemane with Jesus and the eleven disciples, we will gather around the Lord one last time, as he touches us to the core with his High Priestly Prayer; words spoken to the Father on behalf of all who believe. All we have to do is follow the advice of Jeremiah 29: 13, “You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart.” I am willing to do that, dear friend. Are you? Come. Let us sup together as God’s precious children and accept his invitation when he said, “Remember Me!”



Sources:

- 1) "Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist" by Brant Pitre (Highly recommended for your library)
- 2) "His Finest Week" by James Roy Smith
- 3) "The Last Supper: John" by Scott J. Toney
- 4) NIV Life Study Bible
- 5) "In The Footsteps of Jesus" by Jean-Pierre Isbouts



GROWING IN THE WORD



1) Begin your time together by listening to the hymn, "My Jesus I Love Thee" played by Bradley Jent, organist, located on the home page of devotionalembers.com hymnal.

2) Passover Seder Plate



Each of the six items arranged on the plate has special significance to the retelling of the story of [the exodus](#) from [Egypt](#), which is the focus of this ritual meal. The seventh symbolic item used during the meal — a stack of three [matzos](#).

The six traditional items on the Seder Plate are as follows:

- [Maror](#) and [chazeret](#) — Bitter herbs, symbolizing the bitterness and harshness of the slavery the Hebrews endured in [Egypt](#). In Ashkenazi tradition, either [horseradish](#) or romaine lettuce may be eaten in the fulfillment of the [mitzvah](#) of eating bitter herbs during the Seder. Sephardic Jews often use curly parsley, green onion, or celery leaves.

- [Haroset](#) — A sweet, brown mixture representing the mortar used by the Hebrew slaves to build the storehouses or pyramids of [Egypt](#). In [Ashkenazi Jewish](#) homes, Charoset is traditionally made from chopped nuts, grated apples, [cinnamon](#), and sweet red wine.

- **Karpas** — A vegetable other than bitter herbs, which is dipped into salt water at the beginning of the Seder. **Parsley**, **celery** or boiled potato is usually used. The dipping of a simple vegetable bounces into salt water (which represents tears) mirrors the pain felt by the Hebrew slaves in Egypt. Usually in a **Shabbat** or **holiday** meal, the first thing to be eaten after the **kiddush** over wine is bread. At the Seder table, however, the first thing to be eaten after the kiddush is a vegetable. This leads immediately to the recital of the famous question, *Ma Nishtana* — "Why is this night different from all other nights?" It also symbolizes the spring time, because Jews celebrate Passover in the spring.
- **Z'roa** — Also called Zeroah, it is special as it is the only element of meat on the Seder Plate. A roasted lamb or goat **shankbone**, chicken wing, or chicken neck; symbolizing the *korban Pesach* (Pesach sacrifice), which was a lamb that was offered in the **Temple in Jerusalem**, then roasted and eaten as part of the meal on Seder night. Since the destruction of the Temple, the *z'roa* serves as a visual reminder of the Pesach sacrifice; it is not eaten or handled during the Seder. Vegetarians often substitute a **beet**, quoting *Pesachim 114b* as justification; other vegetarians substitute a **sweet potato**, allowing a "Paschal yam" to represent the Paschal lamb.
- **Beitzah** — A roasted hard-boiled egg, symbolizing the *korban chagiqah* (festival sacrifice) that was offered in the **Temple in Jerusalem** and roasted and eaten as part of the meal on Seder night. Although both the Pesach sacrifice and the *chagiqah* were meat offerings, the *chagigah* is commemorated by an egg, a symbol of mourning (as eggs are the first thing served to mourners after a funeral), evoking the idea of mourning over the destruction of the Temple and our inability to offer any kind of sacrifices in honor of the Pesach holiday. Since the destruction of the Temple, the *beitzah* serves as a visual reminder of the *chagigah*; it is not used during the formal part of the seder, but some people eat a regular hard-boiled egg dipped in saltwater as the first course of the meal. (*Wikipedia*)

Using the Seder plate above and the descriptions below it locate each item and connect it directly to the Lord's Passover in the Old Testament.

3) For fun, you might desire to put together a plate and have your group members taste each item as you read about it.

4) Then, using the plate, review together the changes Jesus made when he turned it into The Lord's Supper.

5) If you are able, invite a qualified individual into your class and have communion.

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear Lord, thank you for enlightening us by comparing the original Passover to your Last Supper as our Messiah. Please accept our gratitude for coming to dwell among us and drawing us back to you. It was so incredibly hard to hear your words when you described yourself as being the replacement for the bloody and un-bloody sacrifice; all so that we might have the opportunity of being forgiven of our sins and accepting the gift of eternal life. The composure and compassion you demonstrated as you prepared your disciples for the events yet to come were breath taking, indeed. Even though you had stored in your mind the visual image of the crucified lambs being sacrificed repeatedly at the Temple in Jerusalem, you still resolutely walked toward your destiny with the cross. We bow in humble adoration at your feet as the only way we have left to honor you. We feel so unworthy, yet, so loved. Amen!