

The Lord's Supper

[Mark 14:22-26](#)



This morning we come in our text of Mark to what is called the “Last Supper.” During the [Passover](#) celebration the Lord takes the elements of the Passover and transforms them to speak of His soon coming death. I see the Lord's Supper as a treasured part of church life—a time when the body of Christ gathers as one to remember our Lord, to think upon His sacrificial death, to consider the weightiness of Christ dying in our place before the wrath of God.



Let's review the prior verses to get the context:

And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was being sacrificed, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare for You to eat the Passover?" (Mark 14:12 NASB)

It is the Hebrew festival of Passover and Jesus sends out Peter and John to find and prepare a room for them to celebrate the Passover.

And when it was evening He came with the twelve. 18 And as they were reclining at the table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me—one who is eating with Me." 19 They began to be grieved and to say to Him one by one, "Surely not I?" 20 And He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who dips with Me in the bowl. 21 "For the Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." (Mark 14:17-21 NASB)

Jesus is talking about His soon betrayal by Judas and He ends this section by saying, ***“It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.”*** Then in the very next verse we have the institution of the Lord's Supper:

And while they were eating, He took some bread, and after a blessing He broke it; and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is My body." (Mark 14:22 NASB)

A question that has often come up and that has been hotly debated is, “Was Judas present at the Lord's Supper?” There is no reason to think he wasn't from what we read in Mark but I would like to surmise what happens in the white spaces between these two verses. If we go to the Forth Gospel we see in chapter 13 this same discussion about Judas betraying the Lord:

When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me." (John 13:21 NASB)

The disciples ask who it is that will betray Him and Jesus responds:

Jesus therefore answered, "That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him." So when He had dipped the morsel, He took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. (John 13:26 NASB)

Now notice what happens next:

And so after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; and it was night. (John 13:30 NASB)

It is my opinion, and it's just that and opinion, that this verse belongs in-between verses [21 and 22 of Mark 14](#). I think that Judas left after the discussion about one of them betraying Jesus and before the institution of the Lord's Supper. Matthew's account of this is pretty much the same as Mark's, but Luke's account puts the conversation of the betrayal after the institution of the Lord's Supper. My only answer to Luke's account is to say that Luke's chronology seems to be out of order. With the exception of Luke, all the Gospels locate the incident of a woman anointing Jesus with precious ointment at Bethany on the eve of Passion Week and make the anointing prophetic of the burial of Jesus.

Luke tells the anointing story in a way that puts it entirely at odds with the three other accounts. He places the story much earlier in Jesus' career ([Lk. 7:36-50](#)), drops the Bethany location and the reference to Jesus' burial, and changes the story to give it an entirely different point. I think it is clear that Luke's anointing story is the same story found in the other three Gospels—a story that Luke moved and adapted for his own purposes of theological teaching. I think that this is what Luke does with this account of the Lord's Supper and the discussion of Judas betrayal.

I'd like to add one more thing that leads me to this view that Judas was gone; one of the stipulations given in Scripture governing the observance of the Passover was that is to be partaken of only by those who have embraced the faith of Israel. No "uncircumcised" person could eat of it.

"But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it. (Exodus 12:48 NASB)

Uncircumcision was a picture of a heart that was not right with God. Though Judas was circumcised physically his heart was not right with God. In the New Testament Paul teaches us that the Lord's Supper is only for believers:

Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ?¹⁷ Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread. (1 Corinthians 10:16-17 NASB)

If we are not part of His body through faith then we should not be partaking of the Lord's Supper—It is only for believers. Therefore I don't believe that Judas was present.

I'll admit, I can't be dogmatic on this point but I believe that Judas left the upper room before our Lord instituted the Lord's Supper. If you have some insight into this issue I'd love to hear it.

Alright so Jesus and His disciples were in Jerusalem having followed all the stipulations and regulations given in Scripture for the observance of Passover. And in the midst of the Passover meal Jesus transforms

it:

And while they were eating, He took some bread, and after a blessing He broke it; and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is My body." (Mark 14:22 NASB)

"While they were eating." The first Lord's Supper was part of the Passover Meal celebrated by Jesus and His disciples. Passover brought back both bitter and sweet memories for the Israelites. The bitter memories focused on their *bondage or slavery to Egypt*. The sweet memories focused on the Lord delivering them from bondage by the plagues, especially the death of the firstborn, and His parting the Red Sea so that they might escape the armies of Egypt. As families gathered to eat the Passover meal, talk about the meaning of each symbol in the meal, and sing the [Hallel](#) [Hebrew: ללה "Praise [God]"] (Psalms 113-118), they thought about redemption and what God provided to deliver them.

"He took some bread"—Part of the Passover meal used unleavened bread. The host would hold the thin loaf of bread and break it, retaining some of it for later in the ritual meal. On this occasion Jesus forever changes the meaning of the bread. Before this, unleavened bread reminded the Jews that there hadn't been enough time for the bread to rise, so sudden was their Exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12:19; 39). Now and forever after it signifies the broken body of our Lord.

When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, the need for observing the annual Passover Feast ended:

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

The bondage remembered was no longer in Egypt but the greater bondage to sin, and death. No longer do we remember the Passover lamb, whose blood was spread on the doorposts of each home among the Jews in Egypt, but we remember "Christ our Passover" who was given for us to deliver us from sin and death—this is redemption.

Redemption is needed only if someone is in a hopeless condition of slavery. In the case of the children of Israel in Egypt, the Passover lamb bore the price of their redemption by offering its life in their stead. For the penitent on the [Day of Atonement](#), it was the blood of a goat that stood in the place of the people to bear their judgment away. But in our place, we have no blood of bulls or goats, which can never take away sin. We have the Son of Man, Jesus Christ as our Redeemer, who through the Incarnation became part of the race that He came to redeem. Being the Son of God gave infinite value to His death for us. Being a human just as we are, gave Him the right to bear away the judgment of God for His brethren.

"For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you. (Exodus 12:23 NASB)

What kept these people from experiencing the same judgment as the Egyptians? It was not a certain level of righteousness or acts of good deeds that they offered to God. It was only as the Passover lamb stood in their place by the sacrifice of its lifeblood that they were redeemed. The substitute provided redemption.

So Jesus took over the Passover meal and gave it a new significance, in line with His teaching in [John 6:52-58](#) where He had indicated that men could only benefit from Him through putting Him to death, that is, by 'eating His flesh'. As He said in:

"I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh."
(John 6:51 NASB)

He was the living (life-giving) bread because He had come to have His "flesh eaten" by men by dying for them. Eating bread or flesh, and drinking blood, was a regular way the Scriptures spoke of killing people. The Psalmist spoke of those who ***"eat up my people like they eat bread"*** (Psalm 14:4; 53:4), and Micah describes the unjust rulers of Israel as *"those who hate the good and love the evil—who eat the flesh of my people"* (Micah 3.3). Thus "eating flesh" or "eating people" signified killing them or doing them great harm.

But Jesus had added a new meaning, the idea of participating in the benefits of His death. Here Jesus was signifying, not that they themselves would kill Him, others would do that, but that they would be able to benefit through His death:

"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day." (John 6:54 NASB)

Compare also John 6:35 where Jesus said He was the "bread of life" which they could partake of by "coming to Him and believing on Him". That was how they would benefit through His death, by coming and believing. Thus it is not meant in any quasi-magical sense. It is a spiritual act.

And while they were eating, He took some bread, and after a blessing He broke it; and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is My body." (Mark 14:22 NASB)

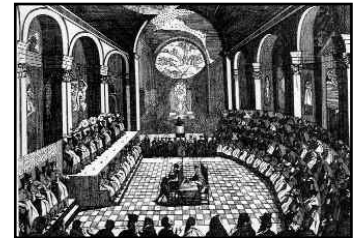
Look at the last phrase, ***"This is My body,"*** this has been the subject of endless debate. There is no contesting what the Lord said, the contesting is what he meant by what He said. There are four major views as to what the Lord meant when He said "this is My body."

1. **Roman Catholic view:** *says that the bread actually becomes the body of Christ and the wine actually becomes the blood of Christ. This is called Transubstantiation. Roman Catholic scholars, from the time the doctrine of transubstantiation was declared a dogma in A.D. 1215, insist that Jesus means that the bread is in very fact and true reality his body. In other words, they take the verb "is" extremely literally. They contend that though the consecrated bread looks like bread the bread or "host" is in true reality or "substance" the very body of Jesus Christ. That is why they take such care not to drop or spill the elements in the mass and why the devout genuflect before the presence of the consecrated host in a Catholic sanctuary.*
2. **Martin Luther's view:** *he had some problems with the Catholic interpretation and he concluded that the bread was still bread and the wine was still wine but the Lord said "this is my body," so Luther's resolution was the body of our Lord is in, with, under, and around the bread and blood of our Lord is in, with, under, and around the wine. This view is called consubstantiation. This is basically the position of the Lutheran church today.*
3. **John Calvin's view:** *he disagreed with the other two views he didn't believe the bread became actually the body of Christ. And he didn't believe that the blood of Christ was in, with, under, and around the wine. He believed that the Lord was only spiritually present in the ordinance. So that when*

a person partakes of the bread or wine he was not taking part actually of the body and blood of Christ but he was taking part of him spiritually. So the position of Calvin and Calvinists and Presbyterianism down through the ages has been that of the spiritual presence of Christ in the emblems.

4. **Zwingly, the Swiss reformer's view:** *He didn't agree with any of the previous positions. Zwingly said the bread simply signifies the body and the wine is a picture of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. His view was the bread and wine simply signify the body and blood, they are in fact memorials or pictures of the body and blood of our Lord.*

Now which of these views is correct? The Catholic view says when the Priest pronounces the words of consecration the bread and wine are converted into the substance of the very flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. At the [Counsel of Trent](#) in 1546 a curse has been pronounced upon all who do not receive this teaching and also there is no salvation outside of the church which teaches this. Can this view be supported?



Jesus said **“this is my body”** the verb “is” is the Greek word [esti](#). They say the “is” of identity is meant and not the “is” of representation. But “is” often does mean represent. Jesus said, “I am the door, the light, the way. In [Matthew 13:36-43](#) it says **“the field is the world,”** meaning that it represents the world. In [Revelation 1:20](#) it says, **“the seven stars are the seven churches,”** are here clearly means represents. In [1 Corinthians 11:25](#) it says, **“the cup is the New Covenant,”** the cup is not the New Covenant but it “represents, or symbolizes, or pictures” the New Covenant. That is how I believe it is used in [Mark 14:22](#), this is a representation of my body. Christ was in the body when he said this. No one sitting with Christ at the table would have thought he was saying that the bread was somehow a literal extension of his flesh or spirit. Rather the bread symbolized or represented his coming bodily death as an atoning sacrifice.

Practically speaking, you also have to realize that Jesus was alive in their presence when He made this statement. They were not cannibalizing Him. Jesus did not say, “This will be My ...” It’s not future tense; it’s present tense. He is saying, “Right now this *is* ...”—meaning this is symbolic; they weren’t consuming Him.

The Catholic Church forbids the cup from the laity. This is the [doctrine of Concomitance](#)—when you eat the bread you have also drunk the cup. Why? People might spill the blood of Jesus, so only the Priest drinks. But Christ said eat the bread and drink the cup. The Catholic Church also teaches the doctrine of incomplete sacrifice, which is that the Eucharist or mass completes the atoning work that Christ left uncompleted, this clearly contradicts the teaching of Scripture.

“Is” in Mark 14:22 is used as “represents or pictures”. This is how we often use is. I’ll show someone a picture of my granddaughter and say, “This is my granddaughter.” It’s not really my granddaughter; it’s only an image of her. When Jesus said, **“this is my body and blood”** He was saying it signifies my body and blood. It is a picture. It represents the body and blood of Christ. The Lord’s Supper is not a sacrifice, it is a **memorial**. A memorial of the death of Jesus Christ, of his body given and his blood shed.

Luther’s view wasn’t a whole lot different than the Catholic view. What about Calvin and Zwingly who was right? Is Christ spiritually present in the elements or is it just a symbol? I land somewhere between Calvin and Zwingly because when we partake of the Lord’s Supper in faith I believe that it ministers grace to us.

Notice what Luke adds—*“Do this in remembrance of Me.”*

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

"Do" is from the Greek word "[poieo](#)", which is a present imperative. The present tense, indicates continuing action (the Aorist imperative would indicate to do a single action) and could be translated, **"Continue to do this in remembrance of Me."** Jesus intends for us disciples to partake of the Lord's Supper again and again to remind us of Him and the significance of His death. Christians from earliest days have included the Lord's Supper centrally in their worship.

For hundreds of years on this exact night, the 14th of Nissan, the bread would be broken, symbolic of a belief that one day the body of the Messiah would be broken. And on this night Jesus identified Himself as the long awaited fulfillment of the [Passover](#).

Four cups of wine were poured in the Passover Meal at four intervals in the feast. Many scholars speculate that it was at the third cup that Jesus changed the whole complexion of the feast when He took the cup, gave thanks, and then gave it to the disciples, saying,

And when He had taken a cup, and given thanks, He gave it to them; and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. (Mark 14:23-24 NASB)

They didn't have a "white wine"—all their wine was dark red, so it isn't surprising that wine is often used in the Bible as a symbol of blood. The Bible refers to wine as "the blood of grapes" ([Genesis 49:11](#); [Deuteronomy 32:14](#); cf. [Isaiah 63:6](#); [Joel 3:13](#); [Revelation 14:19-20](#)). When Jesus poured red wine into a cup at the Last Supper, He thought of pouring out blood into the cup—a striking image. The very next day his own blood would be poured out.

Just as with the bread, the wine or juice does not become the actual blood of Jesus Christ. He shed His blood for us once, so no new sacrifice is needed to give grace to sinners. Christ declared, "It is finished!" as He died for us at the cross. No more can be added to His bloody death. Yet we are to remember anew the cost of the new covenant relationship that we have with Him.

Moses ratified the [Old Covenant](#) by sprinkling blood upon people after he had read the book of the covenant, the Law, to them:

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!" (Exodus 24:7 NASB)

In order to show that they had covenanted with God to fully obey Him and that the Lord had committed to bless the people *as long as* they kept their covenant promise:

So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words." (Exodus

24:8 NASB)

But the blood of Christ enacted a new covenant, one that is not **bilateral** so that each must keep up his covenant promises, but rather one that is **unilateral** or one-sided. The Old Covenant hinged on the people's faithfulness to keep the Law. Of course, we realize that they failed miserably at that point, just as we too would have done. The Law served its purpose to reveal the depths of human sinfulness. But what we needed was not a new law to save us but grace! Such is the *new covenant* enabled by the blood of Jesus Christ.

And He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.
(Mark 14:24 NASB)

Matthew adds "*for forgiveness of sins*":

for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.
(Matthew 26:28 NASB)

Jesus was explaining his coming crucifixion as a sacrifice for sins. His death on the cross fulfilled the sacrifice of the paschal lamb. "Forgiveness"—echoes Jeremiah 31 where the prophet recorded the words of YHWH concerning the new covenant to be made with the people of God:

"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,³² not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.³³ "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.³⁴ "And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (Jeremiah 31:31-34 NASB)

[YHWH](#) [יהוה] was announcing the foundation of the covenant as, "*I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.*" Jesus, by His words, is pointing directly to the promise of the covenant now being brought to fulfillment even though Jeremiah's passage didn't mention how the forgiveness of the sins of God's people would be achieved.

The covenant, which we enter into by grace through faith in Christ, promises "forgiveness of sins." So, as we drink the cup, we are reminded of the price of our forgiveness, the bloody death of Jesus Christ the Lord on our behalf.

And He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.
(Mark 14:24 NASB)

Notice that Mark says His blood was poured out for "**many**"— This refers back to Isaiah 53:12 where the "many" are described in the context of His life being poured out. "*He poured out His soul to death—He bore the sin of many*" ([Isaiah 53:12](#)).

As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. (Isaiah 53:11 NASB)

So in our text in Mark Christ introduces a new act of eating and drinking by His use of the same bread and wine of the Passover celebration, except now there is a change in meaning. It is now to symbolize His body and the 2nd Testament. The Lord's Supper was instituted in the midst of the celebration of the Passover. That is very appropriate because both of them are a **memorial**. Passover was a memorial of God's physical deliverance of his children from their bondage in Egypt through the blood of the lamb. The Lord's Supper is a memorial of the spiritual deliverance of God's people from their bondage to sin and death. That deliverance is through the blood of the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ. So both of them are a memorial. The Lord's Supper is to be done in remembrance of Him. The Passover was the type, and the Lord's Supper is the antitype.

"Truly I say to you, I shall never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." (Mark 14:25 NASB)

Jesus promises to drink the cup in the Father's kingdom. The word "drink" in the text is continuous repeated action. Jesus says, "I am going to keep on drinking with you in my Father's kingdom." We saw in Mark 13 that the coming of the kingdom of God is tied to the coming of Christ and the end of the Jewish age.

The phrase used here "*that day*" is referring to the eschatological day of the Lord, the second coming of Christ and the end of the Jewish age.

In "*that day*" He will drink it "new." The word "new" is [kainos](#); it means new in quality. Arndt-and Gingrich says the word "new" from *kainos* (Greek), means new in the sense of never having been before, or new as in superior, in contrast to old. In other words, in meaning, worth, or significance.

This word *kainos* is used with reference to the things fulfilled in "[the age to come](#)." In the Scriptures, the prophets looked forward to the day when God would do a new thing. He would make a new covenant with His people ([Jer.31:31](#)). It would produce a new heart and a new spirit ([Ezek. 36:26](#)). In the New Testament, the making of all things new takes place in the New heavens and new earth:

And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." (Revelation 21:5 NASB)

This new age comes to perfection when the old age is ended. It is after the destruction of Jerusalem, the old heaven and earth, that the new heaven and earth is established. The end of the old covenant and the consummation of the new marked the time for Christ's drinking of the new wine with His disciples in the kingdom of God.

And after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. (Mark 14:26 NASB)

At the end of the Passover meal, before the disciples went to the Garden of Gethsemane, they joined with Jesus in singing to one another some psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. The Passover feast always

ended with singing, the prescribed hymns were sung at the close of the meal. These hymns were numbers 115, 116, 117 and 118 in the Hebrew hymnal, the book of psalms.

Note its opening words:

Not to us, O LORD, not to us, But to Thy name give glory Because of Thy lovingkindness, because of Thy truth. (Psalms 115:1 NASB)

Christ was consumed by that. He is the only man in the history of the world who literally fulfilled his chief end, that is, the Lord Jesus glorified God and enjoyed him all his life. So whatever happened on the next day in his arrest, trial, crucifixion, death and burial His overwhelming concern was that the name of God would be glorified.

It is not until Acts and the epistles of the New Testament that the full meaning of “Lord’s Supper” is seen. We know from extra-biblical writings, the writings of Pliny, Justin Martyr, the Didache and other 1st and 2nd century writings that the practice of the early church became then to meet together on the first day of the week for a meeting of the church during which time they kept the ordinance which was the bread and juice.

Notice what Paul teaches us in:

and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." (1 Corinthians 11:24-25 NASB)

1 Corinthians was probably written prior to any of the four gospels. This is most likely the first written account of the Lord’s Supper. Paul said he received this from the Lord. Paul was not present when Christ gave the Lord’s Supper, and the gospels weren’t written yet, so Paul clearly means that the One who told him what went on in the Upper Room on that dark betrayal night was Jesus himself. Paul had **received** this from the Lord and not from man.

This memorial was certified by the Lord’s words, “*do this,*” which is the Greek present tense “this keep on doing” it is also an imperative in the Greek which means it is a command. You and I can go through our lives remembering the Lord many ways and at many times but you’ll never observe the Lord’s Supper without calling to mind the fact that He died for you.

“In remembrance of me” This is the one major goal of the Lord’s Supper: To elicit remembrance of the person and work of Jesus Christ. The Lord’s Supper is a **Memorial**, which is something as a structure or custom, serving to honor or keep alive a memory. Some synonyms would be remembrance, commemoration. It is sad that we are prone to forget even the things that are very important to us, and things that had a great impact on us. This is why God gives memorials throughout the scriptures.

As a society we have memorials to help us remember things that we don’t want to forget. There is a monument in WASHINGTON, D.C., in honor of persons in the American armed services who died in the VIETNAM WAR. The memorial is a large black marble wall at the WASHINGTON MALL. The names of the dead are inscribed in the wall.

There is a sad verse in Jeremiah that reminds us how forgetful we really are:

"Can a virgin forget her ornaments, Or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me Days without number. (Jeremiah 2:32 NASB)

Lest we forget, here is a memorial that will weekly remind us of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our weekly observance of the Lord's Supper will make Jesus Christ the center of our corporate worship. This memorial is no morbid memorial, we are not having a funeral service, it's no tragedy that we are remembering it's a triumph we're remembering. It's not a time for morbid melancholy retrospection. It's rather a time for rejoicing and thanksgiving where we give thanks to him for his love and sacrificial death on our behalf. It's a joyous memorial in remembrance of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Lord said, ***"do this in remembrance of me."*** Isn't it remarkable that of all the things you and I can do to worship and praise God the only one in which He has given us explicit instructions and directions is the Lord's Supper. That act of worship has been described with specific detail from our Lord. That tells you how important it is to remember the Lord through this ordinance, it is an act of obedience, it is an act of worship that He has commanded us to do.

We at Berean Bible Church hold to a preterist view of eschatology we also practice the Lord's Supper weekly. This causes questions to arise in the minds of some. Questions like, ***"Why, as preterists, do we still observe the Lord's Supper? Didn't Jesus say we were only to, "Do this till I come?"*** Since Jesus has already come, why do we still observe the Lord's Supper?"

First, let me say that the Bible does not say, ***"Do this till I come."*** It is amazing to me how many folks think the Bible says that. Let's look at what it does, in fact, say.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. (1 Corinthians 11:26 NASB)

Now, the problem arises over the word **"until."** If this word "until" meant that something stopped at that point, what would stop would be—the proclamation of the Lord's death through the Lord's Supper, and not the Lord's Supper itself. Was the only purpose of the Lord's Supper to proclaim His death? No! The Lord very clearly said, ***"This do in remembrance of me."*** He did not say, "This do to proclaim my death." Now, in doing it, we show the Lord's death, but that is not why we are commanded to do it. The word "until" does not mean that something stops at that point, but if it did, it still wouldn't mean that the observance of the Lord's Supper stopped.

What does the word "until" mean? The Greek phrase used here is ***hos achri [ach-re]***. This phrase is only used **four times** in the New Testament and means: "even unto a point." Thayer says, ***"It is used of things that actually occurred and up to the beginning of which something continued."*** It is a point of **reference** and not a point of **cessation**. Let's look at its other three usages in the New Testament, which I hope will help you understand this Greek phrase.

Stephen, recounting Israel's history before the High Priest, says this:

"But as the time of the promise was approaching which God had assured to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt,¹⁸ until THERE AROSE ANOTHER KING OVER

EGYPT WHO KNEW NOTHING ABOUT JOSEPH. (Acts 7:17-18 NASB)

The word “until” in verse 18 is *hos achri*. Does this mean that when the King, that didn't know Joseph, took the throne that the people didn't multiply any more? No, of course not! It is a point of reference. It can be proven that "until" here does not mean termination by looking at [Exodus 1:6-8](#). So if "until" used by Stephen in Acts, means cessation or termination then the children of Israel would no longer increase or multiply. The new King did in fact try to stop their growth. The king commanded the midwives to kill the male Israelites at birth but they would not and so the children of Israel continued to multiply.

So God was good to the midwives, and the people multiplied, and became very mighty. (Exodus 1:20 NASB)

This is after the new king, who didn't know Joseph, did every thing in his power to stop them from growing. The people multiplied and became very mighty! So, I hope you can clearly see that the Greek phrase *hos achri* does not mean cessation or termination but is a point of reference.

Let's look at another use of *hos achri*.

For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. (1 Corinthians 15:25 NASB)

Does Christ ever give up His reign? Will there ever be a time when Jesus Christ will not reign? No! Never!

and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end." (Luke 1:33 NASB)

He reigns even unto the point that all his enemies are put under His feet. It is a point of reference. His reign will never end ([Daniel 7:13-14](#); [Micah 4:7](#); [Hebrews 1:8](#)). Christ's rule never ends. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and so is His reign. So, *hos achri* here is clearly not cessation. There is one other use of *hos achri* in the New Testament besides our text and that is in [Galatians 3:19](#) where it is clearly used as a reference point and not a point of cessation. I think that should answer the "until" question. The Corinthians were to eat the Lord's Supper and there by proclaim the Lord's death, even unto the time of His coming. [see [Preterism and the Lord's Supper](#)]

I believe that the Lord's Supper just like the Passover was not consummated until they entered the promised land. The Passover began with the sacrificing of the Passover lamb introduced in [Exodus 12](#) while Israel is still in bondage. They ate the first Passover while they are still in Egyptian bondage. In [Numbers 9:5](#), they eat of it again while they are wondering in the wilderness. And then in Joshua, they entered the land:

Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." So the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day. ¹⁰ While the sons of Israel camped at Gilgal, they observed the Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month on the desert plains of Jericho. (Joshua 5:9-10 NASB)

Throughout the history of Israel the Passover recalled not only the sparing of the houses marked with the blood of the Passover lamb, but also Israel's subsequent deliverance out of slavery in Egypt; a deliverance that was **consummated forty years later** in the crossing of the Jordan River. Once their redemption was

consummated by their being in the Promised Land, Passover did not stop; it had now reached its perfection. Now, and only now, were they truly redeemed from Egyptian bondage. [*The forty year wandering* was a type or the transition period. It was only as the transition period ended that we were truly redeemed from Old Covenant bondage.]

When their reproach is rolled back, they ate of the Passover. The Passover typifies the Lord's Supper. Both are redemption feasts. The Passover is the redemption feast of Israel's freedom of bondage from Egypt. The Lord's Supper is the New Covenant feast of redemption from sin. The Passover had meaning in Egypt and the wilderness, but it took on a qualitative newness when they entered the land. Like wise with the Lord's Supper, it had significance prior to the coming of the kingdom of God, it had significance in the wilderness, and **it has a qualitative newness in the kingdom of God.** The newness is a celebration of deliverance rather than an anticipation of deliverance.

[The second coming of the Lord in A.D. 70](#) did not bring an end to the Lord's Supper, it perfected it. Redemption is complete; we are now dwelling in the promised land of the [New heaven and earth²](#), in the very presence of God. As we observe the Lord's Supper, we celebrate a completed redemption.

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