

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

THE PASSOVER

REPLACED

BY THE

LORD'S SUPPER

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Living Stream Ministry
Anaheim, CA • www.lsm.org

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In Luke 22:7-23 the Man-Savior instituted His supper as a replacement of the Old Testament Passover. In the Old Testament the Passover was a great matter, a matter that may be considered equal to God's creation. In the Old Testament we first have the record of God's creation. Then we see that the man created by God fell and eventually went down into Egypt. When God was about to save His people from bondage in Egypt, He ordained the feast of Passover. The Passover was the time when God's people were saved and brought back to their right, which had been lost. The observance of the Passover lasted for more than fifteen hundred years, from the time of Exodus 12 until the night in which the Man-Savior had the last Passover with His disciples.

Luke 22:7-23 is a crucial section of the Word, for it marks the ending of the Old Testament Passover. Here we see that the Man-Savior instituted His supper, the Lord's table, to replace the Old Testament Passover. From this we see that

the night in which the Lord instituted His supper was a time of transition. A transition was taking place from the Old Testament Passover to the New Testament supper of the Lord. This matter is of great importance.

In Luke 22 we must see the distinction between the Passover and the Lord's table. Verses 7 through 18 are concerned with the Passover, and verses 19 and 20, with the Lord's instituting His supper so that the disciples may participate in His death. Verse 7 says, "And the day of Unleavened Bread came, on which the Passover must be sacrificed." The feast of Unleavened Bread is a feast of seven days (Lev. 23:6). It is also called the Passover (Mark 14:1). Actually, the feast of the Passover was the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread (Exo. 12:15-20).

Luke 22:7 speaks of the day on which the Passover was sacrificed. In the Jewish calendar, which was according to their Scripture, a day began with the evening (Gen. 1:5). In the night of the last Passover day, the Man-Savior first ate the Passover feast with His disciples and then instituted His supper for them. Following that, He went with the disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane at the Mount of Olives. There He was arrested and brought to the high priest, where He

was judged by the Sanhedrin late in the night. In the morning of the same day, He was delivered to Pilate to be judged by him and was sentenced to death. Then He was brought to Golgotha and crucified there at the third hour (today's nine o'clock) in the morning, remaining on the cross until the ninth hour (today's three o'clock) in the afternoon ([Mark 15:16-41](#)), for the fulfillment of the type of the Passover ([Exo. 12:6-11](#)).

In [Luke 22:15](#) the Lord said to His disciples, “I have earnestly longed to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” The Greek words translated “I have earnestly longed” literally mean “with longing I have longed.” The Lord longed to eat the Passover with the disciples before He suffered, that is, before He went to the cross. The eating and drinking in [22:15-18](#) were the keeping of the last feast of the Passover before the institution of the Lord’s supper in [verses 19 and 20](#).

ONE FEAST IN THREE STAGES

In [verse 16](#) the Lord goes on to say, “For I tell you that I shall by no means eat it anymore until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” The pronoun “it” refers to the Passover in [verse 15](#), which will be fully fulfilled in the coming kingdom of

God, when the Savior will feast with the over-coming saints ([v. 30](#); [13:28-29](#)).

God has a complete plan to redeem His people into His jubilee. The feast of the Passover is a sign of God's full redemption, and this full redemption is the bringing of God's chosen people into the full enjoyment of Himself. This enjoyment is a matter of the jubilee covered in the Gospel of Luke as the fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah and the type in [Leviticus 25](#). The jubilee is actually the enjoyment of God through His redemption. The feast signifying the jubilee was first the feast of the Passover in the Old Testament and then the Lord's table in the New Testament.

The feast of the Passover was not completely fulfilled in the Old Testament. The Lord's table, which also is a feast, replaces and continues the feast of the Passover. But not even this New Testament feast has been completely fulfilled; it will be fulfilled completely in the coming kingdom.

If we read the Bible carefully, we shall see that a feast is spoken of both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. This feast began in [Exodus 12](#), and it continued for more than fifteen centuries until the night in which the Lord Jesus replaced it with His table. Today in the

church life God's people are attending this New Testament feast. However, this feast will not be fulfilled completely until the feast in the coming kingdom. This means that the feast in the kingdom will be the fulfillment of both the feast of the Passover and the feast of the Lord's table.

Seemingly there are three feasts: the feast of the Passover, the feast of the Lord's table, and the feast in the kingdom. Actually, these are not three feasts. On the contrary, this is one feast in three stages. God has established one feast through His redemption for our full enjoyment of the jubilee in three stages, and these stages are the Old Testament stage, the New Testament stage, and the kingdom stage.

We may say that the Passover was the Old Testament jubilee. When the Passover was established, the oppressed Israelites were released from bondage in Egypt, released from the tyranny of Pharaoh. The Israelites had been captives in a condition of slavery. On the negative side, the Passover set them free from that bondage. On the positive side, the Passover brought them into a feast to enjoy the lamb, which is a symbol of Christ as the embodiment of God. On that day the children of Israel were brought into the enjoyment of God; they enjoyed the lamb and the

Passover. Later, in the wilderness, they enjoyed manna. After they entered into the good land, they enjoyed the riches of the land, which is a type of Christ in His all-inclusiveness. Now we can see that the Passover set the Israelites free from bondage and brought them into the enjoyment of God. However, they eventually lost this enjoyment and were carried away again into captivity.

In Luke 4 the Man-Savior proclaimed a further stage of the jubilee—the New Testament jubilee. The New Testament jubilee also has a symbol or sign, and this symbol is the Lord's table. The Lord's table is a sign of the jubilee that sets us free from bondage and brings us into the full enjoyment of the Triune God. The Lord's table is not only a replacement of the Old Testament feast of Passover; it is also a continuation of that feast.

The New Testament feast of the Lord's table will be replaced and continued by the feast in the coming kingdom. The feast in the kingdom will be the feast in the third stage. This coming feast, which will be a replacement and continuation of the Lord's table, will also be a symbol of the jubilee. At that time God's chosen and redeemed people will be freed from all occupations,

bondages, and slaveries and will be brought into the enjoyment of the Triune God in the kingdom age.

THE CUP OF THE PASSOVER

Luke 22:17 and 18 say, “And having received a cup, when He had given thanks, He said, Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you, I shall by no means drink from now on of the produce of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” Certain readers of this chapter may think that this is the cup of the Lord’s table. However, this is the cup of the feast of the Passover, not the cup of the Lord’s table. In [verse 16](#) the Lord and His disciples ate the Passover feast, and in [verse 17](#) they drank the cup of that feast. [Verses 19 and 20](#) speak of the Lord’s table. We need to make a clear distinction between the two feasts in [22:7-23](#). It may be helpful to mark our Bibles to indicate that the feast of Passover ends with [verse 18](#) and the Lord’s supper begins with [verse 19](#).

THE LOAF AND CUP OF THE LORD’S TABLE

Luke 22:19 says, “And having taken a loaf, when He had given thanks, He broke it, and gave

it to them, saying, This is My body which is given for you; do this unto the remembrance of Me.” The loaf in [verse 19](#) is not the loaf of the Passover; it is the loaf of the Lord’s table. Furthermore, in this verse the Lord said, “Do this unto the remembrance of Me.” Thus, it was not a remembrance of what took place in [Exodus 12](#). Taking the bread of the Lord’s table is done in remembrance of the Man-Savior.

In the Passover the main thing enjoyed by God’s chosen people was the lamb. The meat of the lamb was for them to eat. But in the Lord’s table the main item for us to enjoy as New Testament believers is not a lamb; the main item for our enjoyment is bread.

When the Lord Jesus was offered to God for our redemption, He was offered not as bread but as a Lamb. However, the outcome is not the Lamb but bread. The Lamb was a single entity, but bread is something corporate. It is not possible for a single grain of wheat to form a loaf of bread. A loaf is a corporate entity, something composed and constituted of many grains. With the feast of the Passover there is not the concept of feasting on something that is corporate in nature. But with the Lord’s table the symbols, especially the loaf, bear a very significant

characteristic, and this characteristic is that of a corporate entity, a corporate body. It is very important that we realize this.

The loaf in the Lord's table points to something that comes after the Lord's death; it signifies something that issues from the Lord in His resurrection. What is signified by the loaf is not something before the Lord's death, but something after His death and in His resurrection. Before His death, the Lord Jesus was a single, individual Lamb. But what issues out of His death in resurrection is a corporate entity. This entity is the loaf, the bread, which signifies a corporate body.

In the Gospel of Luke, of course, we do not see much development concerning the bread of the Lord's table. We need to remember, however, that Luke's impression of this came from Paul's revelation. Regarding the bread, we should go from [Luke 22](#) to Paul's word in [1 Corinthians 10:17](#): "Seeing that we who are many are one bread, one Body; for we all partake of the one bread." Here we see that the bread signifies not only the physical body of the Savior; it also signifies His mystical Body, which is the church. This is not a matter of an individual; it is a matter of a corporate Body.

We are all one bread, one Body, because we all partake of the one bread. Our joint partaking of the one bread testifies that we all are one. This indicates that our partaking of Christ makes us all His one Body. The very Christ of whom we all partake constitutes us into His one Body.

[Verse 20 of Luke 22](#) says, “And similarly the cup after they had dined, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is being poured out for you.” Once again, this is not the cup of the Passover; rather, this cup is the new covenant in the Lord’s blood.

God made a covenant with redeemed Israel in [Exodus 24:3-8 \(Heb. 9:18-21\)](#), which became the old testament, as a base for Him to deal with His redeemed people in the dispensation of law. The Man-Savior came to accomplish God’s eternal redemption for God’s chosen people by His death, according to God’s will ([Heb. 10:7, 9-10](#)), and with His blood instituted a new covenant, a better covenant ([Heb. 8:6-13](#)), which became the new testament after His resurrection ([Heb. 9:16-17](#)), as a base for God to be one with His redeemed and regenerated people in the dispensation of grace. This new covenant replaced the old covenant and simultaneously changed God’s old dispensation to His new dispensation. The

Man-Savior wanted His disciples to know this and live a life based on it and according to it after His resurrection.

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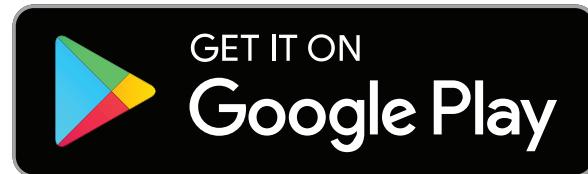
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