complicated. Thus much seems  
clear,—that our Lord blessed and passed  
round *two cups*, one before, the other after  
the supper,—and that He distributed the  
unleavened cake during the meal. More  
than this is conjecture. The dipping of  
the hand in the dish, and dipping and  
giving the sop, may also possibly correspond to parts of the Jewish ceremonial.

**26.] as they were eating,** *during  
the meal*,—as distinguished from the distribution of the cup, which was *after* it.

The definite article is before **bread**in the original, but no especial stress must  
be laid on it; it would be *the bread  
which lay before Him:* see below. The  
bread would be *unleavened*, as the day  
was (see Exod. xii. 8).

**blessed it**,  
and **gave thanks**, amount to the same in  
practice. The looking up to heaven, and  
giving thanks was a virtual ‘blessing’ of  
the meal or the bread. It was customary  
in the Paschal meal for the Master, in  
breaking the bread, to *give thanks* for the  
fruit of the earth. But our Lord did  
more than this: He gave thanks, as Grotius observes, not only for tho old creation,  
but for the new also, for the redemption of  
mankind, regarded as now accomplished.  
From this *giving of thanks for*, and  
*blessing*, the offering, the Holy Communion  
has been from the earliest times also called  
**eucharist** (*eucharistia*, giving of thanks).

**brake it]** It was a round cake  
of unleavened bread, which the Lord  
broke and divided: signifying thereby  
both the breaking of His body on the  
Cross, and the participation in the benefits  
of his death by all His. Hence the act of  
communion was known by the name **the  
breaking of bread**, Acts ii. 42. See 1 Cor.  
x. 16, also Isa. lviii. 7: Lam. iv. 4.

**Take, eat]** Our Gospel alone has both  
words. “*Eat*” is spurious in Mark: both  
words, in 1 Cor. xi. 24. Here, they are  
undoubted: and seem to shew us (see  
note on Luke, ver. 17) that the Lord *did  
not Himself partake of the bread or wine*.  
It is thought by some however that He  
did: e.g. Chrysostom, “*He Himself  
drank His own Blood*.” But the analogy  
of the whole, as well as these words, and  
“*Drink ye all of it*” below, leads us to a  
different conclusion. *Our Lord’s* non-participation is however *no rule for the administrator of the rite* in after times. Although in one sense he *represents Christ,* blessing, breaking, and distributing; in another, he is *one of the disciples,* examining himself, confessing, partaking.  
Throughout all Church ministrations this  
double capacity must be borne in mind.  
Olshausen maintains the opposite view, and  
holds that the ministrant cannot unite in  
himself the two characters. But setting  
the inner verity of the matter for a moment  
aside, how, if so, should an unassisted  
minister *ever* communicate?

**this is  
my body]** **this,** which I now offer to you,  
this *bread*. The form of expression is important, not being *this bread*, or *this wine*,  
but *this*, in both cases, or *this* cup, not the  
bread or wine itself, but the *thing* in each  
case;—*precluding all idea of a substantial  
change*.

**is]** On this much-controverted word *itself* no stress is to be laid. In  
the original tongue in which probably our  
Lord spoke, *it would not be expressed*: and  
as it now stands, it is merely the *logical*  
*copula* between the subject, *this*, and the  
predicate, *my Body*. The connexion of these  
two will require deeper consideration. First  
we may observe, as above of the subject,  
so here of the predicate, that it is not  
“*My flesh*” (although that very expression is didactically used in its general  
sense in John vi. 51, as applying to the  
bread), but **My Body**. The *body* is made  
up of flesh and blood; and although analogically the bread may represent one and  
the wine the other, the assertion here is  
not to be analogically taken merely: *this*which I give you, (is) **my Body**. Under  
*this* is the mystery of my Body: the assertion has a *literal*, and has also a *spiritual*  
or *symbolic* meaning. And it is the *literal*meaning which gives to the spiritual and  
*symbolic* meaning its fitness and fulness.  
In the *literal* meaning then, *this* (is) *my*  
*Body*, we have BREAD, ‘the staff of life,”  
identified with THE BODY OF THE LORD:  
not *that particular bread* with *that particular flesh* which at that moment constituted the Body before them, nor *any*particular *bread* with the *present Body  
of the Lord in heaven: but* **this**, *the  
food of man*, with **my body**. This is  
strikingly set forth in John vi. 51. Now  
the mystery of the Lord’s Body is, that *in  
and by it is all created being upheld: in  
Him all things consist*, Col.i.17; *in Him  
was life*, John i. 4, And thus *generally*,  
and *in the widest sense*, is the Body of the  
Lord *the sustenance and upholding of all  
living*. Our very bodies are *dependent  
upon his*, and unless by his Body standing  
pure and accepted before tho Father *could  
not exist nor be nourished*. So that to all