



The Lord's Supper



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In the 21st century we have everything being done under the name of Christianity. I spoke to a woman the other day who asked me what religion I belonged to. I first just simply told her that I considered myself to be a Christian, but I went on to tell her that I needed to clarify that with a disclaimer of sorts. You see, the name “Christian” carries a lot of baggage with it today that it did not carry in the first century. When Peter mentioned suffering as a Christian (1 Peter 4:16) he wasn’t talking about suffering for going to a 10,000 member church on Sunday morning and hearing a 15 minute self-motivation speech where sometimes not even one Bible verse is ever turned to.

I explained to this kind woman that the word Christian originally meant someone who followed Christ. I’m not talking about following Christ around meaning walking behind him and making sure your feet walk in step with his footprints. I’m talking about following his example; living a Christ-like life. In other words He is the teacher and I am the student. He teaches me with His words, and as well as with His life. I believe the true follower of Christ should take ample time to read the four gospels where Yeshua’s teachings are found, and where His life is lived out. In this we can truly learn how to be better Christians.

It is sad that today the name Christian doesn’t mean what it did in the first century, but sometimes words take on different meanings, and sometimes these meanings diminish from originally noble titles. My wife and I had our third child delivered by a midwife named Gay. I remember walking into her home-office for the first time years ago and seeing a plaque with her name and the meaning of her name written thereon. This woman was proud of her name, and at the time of her birth, when her Mother named her “Gay” the name was known for its meaning of joyful, merry, happy, etc. Such a noble name has been “drug through the mud” in this day and time. It has come so far to the left that I don’t think anyone would name their child “Gay” in the year 2008. Yet it is a shame that a perfectly good English word given a great definition in Noah Webster’s original 1828 dictionary cannot be used now in a positive manner because of its use by sinful human beings.

People do feel somewhat similar when it comes to the name Christian. I have spoken to numerous people about the Bible and one of the topics that come up frequently by the other party is hypocrisy. They explain to me that the reason they aren’t a “Christian” is because some of the worst people they know are “Christians.” They do not want to get caught up in this hypocritical religion. I can understand the feelings of such people, and this is why I always explain the name “Christian” to those I witness to. However, let me also say that what hypocrites do with this name or with the Bible should not turn us away from the true teachings of Scripture. I’ve read the Bible all the way through once, and continue to read and study it daily. When I compare its teachings with what is going on under the name of Christianity I can boldly say that there is much more to the Bible that what most people think.

Such is the case with our subject at hand. If you picked up this article on the Lord’s Supper you’ve probably double checked by now to make sure you’ve got the right article. What I’ve stated up ‘till now may seem “off course” but it truly is not. There has been much falsity attached to what the Lord’s Supper was originally. You’ve got this church doing this and that church doing that and most of the time no one is checking their Bible to make sure they are doing it according to the Scriptures. Most people may not even believe that it really matters how we view the Supper, or how

often we partake in the Supper. Most people may not even understand the significance of the Supper.

That is why I chose to write this article. I found a lot of sermons and a couple of good articles on the Lord's Supper, but none that I felt really broke down the topic in simplicity. I want to give the reader a fresh look at this ordinance, not relying primarily on what others are currently doing or even on what people did in past times. I want to rather look at the Bible and let it be the guide as to the significant aspects of the Lord's Supper. With this mindset, let us proceed.

A New Covenant Ordinance

I believe that what is called the "Lord's Supper" is an ordinance instituted in the New Covenant. I would define the word ordinance Biblically as that which has been instituted by Yahweh directly or through the mouth of his servants / prophets and has the force of law. Thus the Lord's Supper would be a law, commandment, or teaching that came with the beginning of the New Covenant. We could parallel or illustrate this with New Covenant Baptism. The Bible student knows that water baptism definitely existed during Old Covenant times in the many purification rites of Israel, in the laws of the Priesthood, and even in the Old Covenant days of John the Baptist. After the death and resurrection of Yeshua, water baptism took on a greater significance. Those baptized in the book of Acts were baptized into Yeshua's death (Romans 6:1-4). We could call it the "Christian Baptism." This Baptism did not exist until after the death of Yeshua,¹ thus it was a New Covenant ordinance.

Yahweh² has instituted ordinances along the way. We find this in reading the Scriptures in the Old Covenant. In Exodus 12 we read of how the last plague was placed upon the Egyptian people and how that the Israelites were thrust out of Egypt because of the anger of Pharaoh. These Israelites were thrown out in such a hasty manner that they did not even have the time to let their dough rise for making bread. Thus they had to eat bread that was unleavened. At this time Yahweh instituted an ordinance to commemorate this occurrence. It is called the Festival of Unleavened Bread and is mentioned among the Festivals of Leviticus 23. Of course, a festival commemorating this occurrence could only come *after* the occurrence itself.

We find something similar in the command of Numbers 15:37-41. Just before these verses we read of a man who was desecrating the Sabbath day. The Sabbath was the very fourth commandment in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8-11). The man was put to death because of working on the Sabbath day. Directly after this we have an institution given by Yahweh through Moses to the Israelites. This institution is called the law of the fringes. The Israelites were to make fringes on the four corners of their garment (cp. Deuteronomy 22:12) and place within the fringes a strand of blue to remind them to obey the commandments.

I believe that understanding these institutions of Yahweh at other times will help us understand the institution of Yahweh through His Son Yeshua just before Calvary. This wasn't something that was "man-made" but was akin to the Feast and fringes mentioned above. Yahweh was working through Yeshua to institute a Supper that would commemorate the death of the Son of the Father.

The Name: The Lord's Supper

I have met a few people in the Sacred Name movement that have a problem with the name "The Lord's Supper." I guess this is primarily because many Sacred Name believers do not like using the title "Lord." While I agree that we should not replace Yahweh's name with titles in Scripture, I also believe that some people have taken an unnecessary extreme position on the title "Lord." The word Lord in English has the meaning of ruler, master, owner, boss, etc. and is a perfectly good English

¹ Yeshua is the original Hebrew name of the Messiah in Scripture and is preferred by the author over the English derivative Jesus. For more detailed information visit: <http://ministersnewcovenant.org/Yeshua%20vs%20Jesus.pdf>

² Yahweh is the original Hebrew name of the Father in Scripture and is preferred by the author over the English mistranslations such as LORD, GOD, and Jehovah. For more information visit: <http://ministersnewcovenant.org/Hallowed%20Be%20Thy%20Name.PDF>

translation of the Greek word *kurios* or the Hebrew word *adon*.³ I don't have a problem if someone wants to read "Master" or "Ruler" in place of Lord in the Bible because these words are synonyms to the word Lord anyhow. We must remember though that they truly are synonyms. In other words saying Master is saying Lord; saying Ruler is saying Lord. Thus we ought to be able to see that the name "The Lord's Supper" is not problematic.

The main reason I use this name to describe this ordinance is because the Bible uses this name. The Apostle Paul in writing to the Corinthian Assembly spoke of this ordinance and referred to it as "The Lord's Supper."

¹⁷Now in this that I declare *unto you* I praise *you* not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

¹⁸For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

¹⁹For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

²⁰When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's Supper. [1 Corinthians 11:17-20]⁴

Paul is explaining to these Christians that there are divisions among them and while this does allow the approved in the church to be made known they are nevertheless not practicing things appropriately. One of the matters they had mixed up was (as verse 20 states) the Lord's Supper. Paul's meaning in verse 20 is that when the Corinthian Church came together they were not observing the Lord's Supper properly. He goes on in the chapter to explain what is improper, and I will deal with this at a later time in the article. For now we need to acknowledge that the name – the Lord's Supper – is a Scriptural name, and as we will see, the name applies to the memorial of Yeshua's death.

The word Lord in 1 Corinthians 11:20 is the Greek word *kuriakos* coming from the oft used Greek word *kurios* meaning Lord or Master. *Kuriakos* has the literal meaning of "belonging to the Lord." The word Supper here is the Greek word *deipnon* and is defined by various Greek-English lexicons as "Supper, especially a formal meal usually held at evening." In studying this Greek term I do not believe that the word *deipnon* always carries with it the idea of an "evening" meal, but I do believe we will see that in this context, the context of this memorial ordinance, an evening meal is in view. Literally then, we could say that this is the "Evening meal belonging to the Lord."

Communion

When I grew up in church I always heard the practice of taking in grape juice and bread on Sunday being referred to as communion. I once was part of a class that took of this communion every Sunday morning. At the time I did not ask myself why this practice was called communion or even if communion was an appropriate name for what me and everyone else in the class was doing. After looking at the Scriptures for approval I believe that we can secondarily refer to the Lord's Supper as a communion of the saints. We find such approval in 1 Corinthians 10:15-17.

¹⁵I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

¹⁶The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

¹⁷For we *being* many are one bread, *and* one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

³ All Hebrew and Greek words and definitions are taken from Strong's Exhaustive Concordance / Brown, Drivers, Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon / Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon.

⁴ All quotations from Scripture are taken from the King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

Notice carefully here that the “cup” is referred to as the communion of the blood of Christ, and likewise the bread is referred to as the communion of the body of Christ. Specifically this word communion is in reference to a sharing of the saints. The Greek word for communion is *koinonia* and refers to fellowship or the sharing and participation one has in a particular thing. In this case the saints share in fellowship of the body and blood of Yeshua as they partake in the Lord's Supper. For these reasons I do not believe it is erroneous to call the Lord's Supper communion, however, I do believe the primary name for the practice as seen in 1 Corinthians 11 is the Lord's Supper.

I would like to make a special note here on something I will delve into later in the article. This is that the meal in 1 Corinthians 11 is not given the name Passover. I am not of the persuasion that the Supper the night before Yeshua's death was a partaking in the Passover meal. At this point I will just point out that in neither 1 Corinthians 10 or 11 do we read of this Supper being referred to as the Passover.

Origin & Meaning

I've already written many words in this article and have yet to speak of the origin of the Lord's Supper as well as the true intent and meaning. I'm of the mindset that most reading this will be somewhat familiar with the Lord's Supper and already understand Yeshua's institution to some degree or another the night before His death. I do want to look at the origin of this institution and in doing so glean the original meaning behind the ordinance.

¹⁴And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

¹⁵And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

¹⁶For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

¹⁷And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves:

¹⁸For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

¹⁹And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

²⁰Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. [Luke 22:14-20]

First let me make sure to let the reader understand that this occurrence took place the night before Yeshua's death. This is easily proven by just continuing to read the gospel according to Luke; the next day Yeshua was crucified. Remember that Paul referred to this remembrance in 1 Corinthians 11 as an “evening meal” when He used the Greek word for Supper. I believe he did so because of the actual time the meal was instituted. Yeshua and His disciples were gathered together at night when Yeshua stated His words found Luke 22:14-20.

In verses 17-18 we see that Yeshua gave thanks and told the disciples to have their share in the contents of the cup. Literally this dividing means to distribute; the disciples distributed the contents between themselves.

When we examine the other synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark) of this same account, the order in which the two elements (bread, cup) are taken is (1) the bread, and (2) the cup. Verse 17 here is simply a distribution of the cup and not a partaking of the cup before the bread. In keeping with the ordinance's original institution, the Lord's Supper should be a partaking of the bread first and the cup second as we will see.

Thus verse 19 has the eating of the bread. Of this bread Yeshua states, “This is my body,” a phrase I will deal with in technicality later on. For now let me just state that it is my belief that the meaning here is that the bread is representative of His body. He tells His disciples to do this in remembrance of Him.

Verse 20 concerns itself with the drinking of the cup. The cup is said to be the blood of the Messiah, and just as with the body, the cup represents the Messiah's blood. According to 1 Corinthians 11:25 the *Do this in remembrance of me* declaration stands not only for the bread, but also for the cup. In other words both the bread and cup are to be taken in remembrance of Yeshua's body and blood.

Matthew's Account

I would like to briefly look at and mention this same account as recorded in the gospel according to Matthew.

²⁶And as they were eating, Yeshua took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

²⁷And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

²⁸For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. [Matthew 26:26-28]

Notice first of all that the order here as recorded by Matthew is the bread and then the cup, corroborating with Luke's account. Secondly we see that the bread stands for the body and the cup stands for the blood. Finally a reference is also made to the covenant, as in Luke 22:20, and obviously is a reference to the New Covenant (2 Corinthians 3:5-6; Hebrews 8:8-10). As I mentioned formerly, it would make complete sense that such an ordinance would commence after the New Covenant was established. Yeshua was giving preparatory teaching concerning this New Covenant ordinance. In taking the bread and the cup we remember the body and blood of our Lord.

The Time of Partaking

Now that we have considered the origin of the institution we must consider at what time we are to partake of the bread and the cup. According to 1 Corinthians 11:25-26 it was a practice of the early New Covenant assembly to obey the words of Yeshua and do what He instituted in remembrance of Him, but when was this to be done?

I guess the most common time chosen by churches today is on Sunday morning. This is primarily because most churches who proclaim to follow the Bible gather on Sunday morning for corporate worship. Passages such as Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 are usually listed as reasons for this time of worship. In many instances we also find that the Pastors of these churches say that under the New Covenant we are called to worship on the day of Christ's resurrection. Such resurrection took place on the first day of the week, thus we worship on the first day of the week.

Without getting into whether Sunday is really the first day of the Scriptural week,⁵ let me say that there isn't a single verse in the Bible that tells us to have corporate worship on the day of Christ's resurrection. I agree that Yeshua rose on the first day of the week,⁶ but no author in Scripture stated this to be a reason for coming together with other believers for preaching, singing, etc. on the first day of the week.

⁵ I make brief reference here to the original, Biblical calendar instituted by Yahweh in Genesis 1:14-18. For more information concerning this calendar and detailed study about the days of the Scriptural week visit: <http://ministersnewcovenant.org/Lunar%20Sabbath%20Book%20Final.pdf>

⁶ Many sabbatarians have taken the position that Yeshua resurrected on the Sabbath. Such a position however does not have the backing of Scripture. For more information concerning this debated topic visit: <http://ministersnewcovenant.org/Sign%20of%20Jonah.PDF>

Acts 20:7

⁷And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

We immediately learn from the text that the disciples came together to break bread and that Paul spoke to them. We also learn that this took place on the first day of the week. Most Sunday or first day keepers point out the phrase “break bread” and contend that this has the meaning of eating the Lord's Supper, but I believe that this is an inaccurate assertion. The breaking of bread was done on a daily basis (Acts 2:46). This refers to merely sharing in a common meal and not partaking in the Lord's Supper. We have seen that the phrase “break bread” can refer to the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 10:15-17) but this does not mean that it always does.

With this being the case let me explain why I do not believe the phrase “break bread” has the meaning of the Lord's Supper in Acts 20:7. At this point a comparison chart will be used so as to illustrate the differences between Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:17-34.

Acts 20:7	1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:17-34
The phrase “break bread” is not accompanied by anything in regards to Christ's body.	(10:16) Breaking of bread is referred to as the communion of Christ's body.
Simply says, “when the disciples were come together”.	(11:17) Says, “When ye come together in the church”
Simply says, “to break bread”, does not call it the Lord's supper.	(11:20) Calls the meal the Lord's Supper.

The breaking of bread in Acts 20:7 actually did not take place till after midnight (Acts 20:11), and is associated with the verb “eaten” implying hunger. Paul was hungry after speaking that night and needed to satisfy his hunger. The Lord's Supper was not a meal eaten to satisfy hunger at all (1 Corinthians 11:17-34). One *could* say that the disciples *coming together* in Acts 20:7 means that it was the Lord's Supper, but the disciples could come together to eat a common meal too. There is nothing wrong with coming together with brethren to eat a common meal and talk about the Bible.

The True Time

If the breaking of bread in Acts 20 on the first day of the week was not the Lord's Supper, and if we are not to partake in the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week, when should we partake? The key text to examine here is found in (1) remembering the time of the institution, and (2) 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

First let's remember back to what we've covered in Luke 22 and Matthew 26. Yeshua instituted this meal on the night of his betrayal. After the Supper Yeshua would leave the room and pray to His Father just before the kiss of Judas and the arrest by the Roman soldiers. The next day He would be crucified and die. Wouldn't it make logical sense for the remembrance to take place year after year at this same time?

Not only does this make logical sense, it most importantly makes Scriptural sense. When we look at the other remembrance ordinances in Scripture we see that their remembrance is to take place on the same day of the institution year after year. This is seen in the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Tabernacles, and many other Feasts in ancient Israel (Leviticus 23). Yeshua being an Israelite and being trained in the Hebrew Scriptures would undoubtedly follow in the way of His fathers. Ultimately this would be following in the way of Yahweh; establishing an ordinance, and

having its remembrance occur on the same day of its institution year after year. This is what we read of in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25.

²³For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Yeshua the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread:

²⁴And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

²⁵After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

Paul here states that he received something of the Lord and delivered this something to the assembly at Corinth. What he received is then spelled out for us: Yeshua – the same night in which he was betrayed – took bread. Here, in the instructions for the Lord's Supper we have a direct reference to the night of Yeshua's betrayal, as well as Paul speaking of delivering something to the assembly. In other words, Paul was delivering the ordinance of the Lord's Supper to the assembly and the ordinance was to be done on the same night of His betrayal.

We know that the Passover lambs in Israel were killed on the 14th day of Aviv, between the two evenings, which would be around what we call 3:00 p.m. (Exodus 12:6; 2 Chronicles 35:1, 14). The Messiah, our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7-8) was killed at the same time (John 19:14, 31). Seeing that the Messiah died around 3:00 p.m. on the 14th day of Aviv, this means that he ate the last Supper (which Paul calls the Lord's Supper) at the beginning of the 14th day of Aviv, in the evening. This is when the Lord's Supper is to be eaten today according to 1 Corinthians 11:23. A good point to bring up here in relation to what we've discussed in Acts 20:7 is this: Paul and company sailed away from Phillipi *after* the days of unleavened bread (Acts 20:6) which were in turn after the slaughtering of the Passover lamb (Leviticus 23:4-6). Seeing that Passover had already taken place, Paul and the disciples did not eat the Lord's Supper in Acts 20:7. They had already eaten the Lord's Supper on the same night in which He (Yeshua) was betrayed.

Let me briefly mention that in verses 24 and 25 the bread and the cup are mentioned as remembrances of Yeshua's body and blood. Paul also echoes the words of Yeshua when he mentions the cup of the New Covenant; Paul knew full well of Yeshua's institution. Paul refers to the blood of the Covenant as well, showing forth that the ordinance is one which remembers the blood of Christ, and not the blood of bulls and goats.

As Often as You Eat and Drink

I've talked with a few people who believe 1 Corinthians 11:26 is a reference to taking the Lord's Supper weekly. I don't see how one could read the text and come up with such a belief. I believe this interpretation of the text stems from and already held presupposition that the Lord's Supper should be taken the first day of the week. If this presupposition was not already in place I honestly do not believe anyone would read 1 Corinthians 11:26 and conclude that the Lord's Supper should be taken weekly.

²⁶For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

If we read the above verse with (with the above misunderstanding in mind) what's to stop us from taking the Lord's Supper daily? Wouldn't this be *often* too? I know of churches that take the Lord's Supper weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, once a year, etc. I once drove by a church sign that said "Drop-In Communion" and then stated the time communion would be served. It's truly amazing how people can disregard sacred Scripture and rather keep their own human tradition.

What we need to see here is that by recognizing the time of the institution as recorded in the gospels, and in realizing what Paul delivered to the assembly in 1 Corinthians 11:23, we have in our

grasp the time in which the Lord's Supper should be taken. Does this harmonize with the phrase "as often" in verse 26?

There is a passage we can go to in the book of Hebrews and learn that the word "often" does no injustice to a yearly taking of the Lord's Supper. Hebrews 9:24-26 states:

²⁴For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

²⁵Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

²⁶For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Here we read that Yeshua offered himself one time to put away sin. He did not have to offer himself often like the high priest did every year on the Day of Atonement when the two goats were sacrificed; one living, one dead (Leviticus 16). The point here is that the word often is used in reference to a yearly occurrence, and thus we should be able to see that the word often poses no problem in taking the Lord's Supper once a year. As often as you do it means every year that you do it, and as 1 Corinthians 11:26 states, we show forth the Lord's death every time we do it, until He comes.

The Seriousness and Importance of the Supper

At this point in the article, one should have no problem seeing that a memorial Supper of the body and blood of the Lord has a great amount of importance within it. The sacrifice of the Son of Yahweh is a pinnacle as far as essential doctrines of Scripture are concerned. Yeshua's offering was ultimately in the Father's plan from all eternity (John 1:1; 1 Peter 1:18-20; Revelation 13:8). Yeshua was Yahweh's means of bringing salvation to His people (Matthew 1:21; 1 John 4:14). The seriousness and importance of the ordinance is further seen by reading 1 Corinthians 11:20-22 and 27-34.

²⁰When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper.

²¹For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

²²What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not...

²⁷Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

²⁸But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.

²⁹For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

³⁰For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

³¹For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

³²But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

³³Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

³⁴And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

In this passage Paul tells the Corinthian Christians that when they are coming together to eat the Lord's Supper they are actually *not* doing so at all. This is because they are doing it wrong. We ought to learn much from this exhortation. The ordinances of Yahweh are to be done as He prescribes in the Holy Scriptures, through the mouth of His holy prophets and apostles. To make attempts to disassociate a divine ordinance from its original practice or intent is to remove the proper observance of the ordinance altogether. The Corinthians had gone so far away from the Lord's Supper that the Apostle here explains to them that they weren't even keeping it anymore.

The main problem occurring seems to be one which had to do with eating and drinking to satisfy hunger. Paul admonishes these people that they have houses to eat meals in; they can go home if they want to satisfy their hunger. The Lord's Supper was not to be such a meal, but rather a memorial Supper signifying the precious body and blood of Yeshua the Messiah. For the assembly to partake of this Supper at various times, not waiting for all the members of the body, was to bypass the communion or sharing that the saints (Christians) had with one another. I believe this is the primary reason that Paul mentioned eating and drinking in an unworthy manner. He was explaining to the Corinthians that there is a correct way to eat the Lord's Supper and they weren't doing it correctly. Their incorrect manner was one which was unworthy, and so unworthy that it was causing sickness and even death in the assembly. This most assuredly should show us the great importance of the Supper.

Verses 33 and 34 corroborate the understanding I've given so far. Paul tells the brethren that when they come together to eat (the Lord's Supper in context) they should tarry one for another, and not be eating all the bread or drinking the entire cup at various and sundry times. He goes on to mention the home again in the context of eating to satisfy hunger. If a man is hungry such hunger should be satisfied at home and not at the Lord's Supper. Such satisfaction at this memorial meal will lead a person into condemnation.

Before moving on I would like to mention more concerning Paul's mention of self examination. Verses 31-32 of the above give us an admonishment to examine ourselves prior to eating and drinking. Does this mean that we are to be sinless before partaking? I do not believe so; the Bible makes it clear that there is only one man who is sinless.

While I believe the main thrust of the self examination has to do with what I've already written I do believe an examination of our spiritual life, our Christian life, should be done prior to the eating and drinking of the memorial. You may ask yourself questions like, "Have I been giving my all to follow the teachings of the Messiah?" or "Have I been truly seeking to love Yahweh and my fellow man?" Such questions should obviously be asked throughout the year, but there is no harm in doing so shortly before the yearly observance of this ordinance. This is a time when you need to realize that you are actually going to remember the sacrifice of Yeshua in the manner *He* prescribed. Such a remembrance needs to be taken by a clean heart, and not by a heart entrenched in licentiousness.

Who Should Partake?

Next we come to the issue of the partakers. I would like to deal with this issue in two installments, the first of which will address the question of infants or children partaking in the Lord's Supper.

The Bible does not explicitly tell us that infants *should not* partake of the Supper. However, neither does the Bible explicitly tell us that infants *should* partake in the Supper. This is one of those issues that we must diligently look into and make the best possible choice with implicit references in Scripture. Surely, we do not want to dismiss anyone from the Supper that has the lawful right of participation and communion. I believe that if we think scripturally for a while we can rightfully know the answer to this question.

First let's parallel the other New Covenant ordinance of Baptism. I know some people are thinking that this isn't going to do any good for there is also a debate concerning the baptizing of infants. Some denominations that profess Christianity believe that infants are to be baptized (or at least sprinkled or poured). Generally the argument is that during the Old Covenant, the sign of the covenant (circumcision, Genesis 17) was administered to infants. If the sign of the Old Covenant was rightfully administered to the infant children of followers of Yahweh, should there be a

departure from applying the Covenant sign to infants under the New Covenant? In other words, shouldn't the New Covenant sign of Baptism be administered upon the infants of Christian parents?

This argument lies heavily upon applying the same or similar principle to the New Covenant as was done to the Old Covenant. I will be one of the first Bible students to tell you that there are many commandments, ordinances, and principles that applied under the Old Covenant that have a continuing relevance and application under the New Covenant. Such is the case with laws against murder, theft, adultery, etc. These are Old Covenant laws which we know still have force or authority under the New Covenant.

We do see differences within the covenants as well. We see that the Old Covenant was ratified or inaugurated with the blood of animals (Exodus 24), but the New Covenant with the blood of Yeshua the Messiah (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 10:10-14). Is there discontinuity between the covenants in applying the sign of the covenant to infants? I believe the answer is yes. In reading the New Covenant epistles we see Baptism inextricably linked to such things as faith, repentance, confession, etc. (Acts 2:38; Acts 16:31-34; 1 Peter 3:21). We also see that those who are baptized are able to be taught before being baptized (Matthew 28:19-20). While physical circumcision is said to be administered to infants explicitly (Genesis 17), we cannot say the same when it comes to Baptism. To try and parallel the two ordinances in every respect actually leads to showing contradictions between the two practices. For example, circumcision was only administered to infant boys, and was done on the eighth day of the child's life. Should we then administer infant baptism to only little boys, and only on the eighth day? Weren't the daughters of the Old Covenant Israelites part of the Covenant family as well? Asking these questions leads me in the direction of straying away from applying the particulars of circumcision to the New Covenant ordinance of Baptism into Christ.

All this is not to say that children should never be baptized. I've often expressed to others that if one of my children approached me on their own accord explaining to me that their heart was pricked to be baptized I would baptize them. This is because there would be a belief or faith present in their heart and mind. Such would not exist if the child was not able to comprehend the gospel message. As of today (April, 2008) none of my children have done so. My eldest daughter is almost 10 and very astute in the Scriptures. I do look for her to approach me on this issue within the next few years, but as I've stated I want her to approach me. I could surely approach her and she would obey her Daddy and be baptized, but would she truly believe with all *her* heart? I want her and my other children to enter into the New Covenant with a belief that flows from a regenerate heart.

I realize that these few paragraphs do not even scratch the surface of the debate on infant baptism, but that is not the intent of this article. I merely point out my basic reasons for believing in *Believer's Baptism* so as to show a parallel to the New Covenant ordinance of the Lord's Supper. It should be apparent to you by now that I do not believe infants should partake in the Lord's Supper. Both are New Covenant ordinances, and both are similar in the respect that the rites belong to those professing a personal faith and hope in Christ.

Think back to 1 Corinthians 11's mentioning of examining one's self. Can an infant examine his or her self? Can a small three year old child examine his or her self? I truly believe the answer is evident, thus I believe the question of infant's partaking in the Lord's Supper is not a difficult one to answer.

This does not mean that infant's or small children are shoved aside in the plan of Yahweh under the New Covenant. Parents should teach their children the Scriptures and let them partake in anything which sacred Scripture teaches they should. There are many commandments which children are seen to participate in throughout the Bible. Training our children up in these practices of Scripture will lead them to one day have a profession of faith in the Messiah, be baptized, partake in the Lord's Supper, and continue to follow through in those practices meant for mature Christian believers.

On the heels of what I've just covered I should mention that the Lord's Supper is for believers in the assembly. It is a communion of saints and not sinners. Yes, I recognize that all have sinned (Romans 3:23), but what I mean is that the Lord's Supper is for those who have surrendered their life

to Yahweh through Yeshua the Messiah; those who are in Christ and are seeking to live their lives in accordance with His teachings.

The Elements

I remember when I first studied on the issue of the Lord's Supper. It was several years ago that I was reading a discussion on the internet where people were promoting their view of the Lord's Supper. In the midst of this discussion there were people arguing about what was to be taken. What I mean is that they were primarily arguing over whether the "cup" had grape juice or wine in it.

One thing is for sure; the church that I took "communion" with as a teenager never used wine, and always used unleavened wafers. Let me address the issue of the bread before going into the contents of the cup. I enjoy talking about the contents of the cup partly because it is (1) controversial in nature (yes, I do enjoy a good theological controversy) and (2) because I believe it is extremely easy to determine whether the assembly should use grape juice or wine. That being said, I would like to go ahead and deal with the first element taken in the Supper, the bread.

A few years ago I would have taken the position that the bread used in the Lord's Supper was leavened bread. This may come as astonishment to those reading. I would venture to say that most people who have ever partaken in any form of "communion" have used bread that was without leaven, i.e. unleavened bread. Why in the world would I even posit the possibility that the bread used for the last Supper, and thus the Lord's Supper, was leavened?

It was simply because of the Greek word used for bread in the context of the Supper. Everywhere the Supper is mentioned the Greek word *artos* is used. Greek-English lexicons define this word as being the traditional, common word for bread in the Greek language; I'm talking about a raised loaf like you would buy from your local grocery. This is the most common used word in the Greek New Testament for bread.

On top of this there is an entirely *different* word for unleavened bread in the New Testament. This word is *azumos*, and is used about nine times throughout the text of the Greek New Testament, none of which are found in direct relation to the last meal of Yeshua with His disciples or in the context of the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 10 or 11. However, if we look a bit deeper we should be able to see that although this information is correct it is not complete. This is because of the account of Luke 24:30-35 which reads:

³⁰And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

³¹And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

³²And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

³³And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

³⁴Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

³⁵And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

Verses 30 and 35 specifically mention bread, and the person who took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to the men was none other than our Messiah, Yeshua. The word for bread here is the word *artos*, but what is so significant about this account? Isn't this just another occurrence of the word *artos*, and can we not conclude that the bread here is leavened bread?

The problem with such a conclusion is that this account takes place on the first day of the week (Luke 24:1, 13) and this first day was the day of Yeshua's resurrection from death. If you are familiar with the Passion account you will know that Yeshua's death took place on Passover with the Sabbath quickly approaching (John 19:14, 31). What came after Passover was the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:4-6). If we put "two and two together" we should see that Yeshua's discussion with the

two men as recorded by Luke 24 took place *during* the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The conclusion then must be that the word *artos*, although generally referring to leavened bread, can also refer to unleavened bread.

Does this mean that Yeshua and His disciples ate unleavened bread on the night of His betrayal? I don't believe one can conclusively say. Of course there are those who believe that Yeshua was eating the Passover with His disciples just before He instituted the memorial Supper. For these people the answer would undeniably be that Yeshua *did* eat unleavened bread with His disciples. For those of my persuasion, that Yeshua's meal with His disciples *was not* the Passover, the conclusion is not that readily ascertained. I will deal with the Passover question later in the article, but for now let me conclude that personally, I do not believe one can conclusively say that unleavened bread or leavened bread was eaten that night. Attempts are often made to point out the texts in Scripture assigning bad typology to leaven, like in the leaven of the Pharisees (Matthew 16:6-12), but this overlooks the Scriptures that call unleavened bread the bread of affliction (Deuteronomy 16:3). Neither texts prove that either leavened bread or unleavened bread are always mentioned in a negative light, but only that they can at times be mentioned in a figurative, negative way. Both can also be used in a positive way, and such is the case with unleavened bread (the bread of sincerity and truth, 1 Corinthians 5:7-8) and leavened bread (likened unto the kingdom of heaven, Matthew 13:33).

Before I address the contents of the cup let me conclude this "bread section" by saying that I now take the position that either leavened or unleavened bread may be used. This is only because I do not know for certain which was used. If anyone feels they can shed further light on this issue please let me know.

I had mentioned before of an internet discussion I'd read concerning the elements of the Lord's Supper. Within that discussion there was one person who went so far as to use Coke and chocolate chip cookies for the Supper. Needless to say I believe such is not acceptable. We definitely can know for sure that Yeshua did not use Coke and cookies that night long ago; therefore we should not try to partake of the Lord's Supper using them today.

But did Yeshua use grape juice that night? I'm speaking of grape juice as we would call it today; unfermented grape juice. Of course we know that *Welch's* didn't exist in the first century A.D. but I'm sure that grape juice did. To show that it existed though does not prove that it was what was inside the cup of the New Covenant.

On this matter I believe I can write with much more certainty than on the matter of the bread. I believe wholeheartedly that Yeshua instituted the Lord's Supper by using fermented grape juice, what we would call wine today. The reason I believe this is because of what is written in 1 Corinthians 11:20-21.

²⁰When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

²¹For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

In the above verses we have Paul reprimanding the Corinthians for a misuse of the Supper. The improper taking of the Supper has already been dealt with but at this time let's take a closer look at the word "drunken" in verse 21. Take special care to recognize that Paul nowhere condemns the Corinthians for the contents of the cup, but only for the *abuse* of the contents of the cup. He makes a point to say that they are becoming drunk with the cup. The same can be pointed out concerning the bread. As verse 21 says, some people were hungry and others were drunk. In other words there were those in the assembly who were showing up for the Lord's Supper to satisfy their hunger. Such people were both eating and drinking way too much. Paul tells these over indulgers to eat and drink for hunger purposes at home. This was not the purpose of the Lord's Supper. The Supper was for a memorial, not for a hunger satisfaction.

The word for drunken here is the Greek word *methuo*. The word undoubtedly means to drink to the point of intoxication, or to get drunk. One example of this word is found in the account of the

Feast of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-15. As the gift of languages fell upon certain believers that day, every man heard them speaking in their own language, proclaiming the wonderful works of Yahweh. Some people there remarked that those persons speaking were full of new wine. Apostle Peter's response to these people was that the speakers were not drunken (*methuo*) seeing it was but the third hour of the day which would correspond to what we consider around 9 a.m. It is easily seen that "full of new wine" and "drunk" are used in relation to one another.

If the Corinthians had of been using unfermented grape juice at the Lord's Supper how on earth could they have ever become intoxicated? The answer is that they couldn't and thus they must have been using wine. Maybe there are those who would make an attempt to explain how grape juice can make you drunk. Such attempts, I believe, stem from someone wanting to protect a man-made doctrine rather than seeking to follow what is written in Scripture.

What about the references to the fruit of the vine in the gospels (Matthew 26:19; Mark 14:24-25)? This poses no problem for wine *is* the fruit of the vine. Wine is generally made from fermented grape juice which is made from grapes that grow on vines. Both fermented and unfermented grape juice can be rightfully called the fruit of the vine. However, which was used for the Lord's Supper by the early church? When we scripturally answer that question we will know what liquid to use for the Lord's Supper today.

Transubstantiation

Some people I've met not only have a difficult time understanding the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, but also have a difficult time even pronouncing such a word. Don't let the big word scare you though; it is just a theological way of describing the Roman Catholic position on what takes place during the Lord's Supper. Literally transubstantiation means the changing of one substance into another. In view of the Lord's Supper, Catholicism believes that the bread and wine actually change from that substance into the substance of the body of Christ and the blood of Christ.

A similar view yet held distinct by such Protestant Reformers as Martin Luther is consubstantiation. While Luther did believe that the bread and wine were the body and the blood of Christ, he also maintained that bread and wine were actual bread and actual wine. In other words there was a coexistence of the two. Both substances existed at the same time in the partaking of the Lord's Supper.

I believe both positions above are inaccurate beliefs. The Bible just does not teach either of the two. What sacred Scripture does teach is that the Lord's Supper is a memorial or a showing forth of Christ's death until He comes. In short, the bread and the wine are representative of the body and blood of Christ; they are symbols which aid to remind us of the sacrificial death of our precious Savior. Of course there are those that would disagree with my assertions, and we need to understand why the disagreement exists. Why is it that Rome and even Lutherans maintain that the body and blood of Christ are *literally* there at communion?

I have in my possession here in my office a little pamphlet entitled, "Why Does the Church Teach That?" subtitled, "Biblical Answers to Questions about Catholicism." This pamphlet is printed by *Saint Joseph Communications* a Catholic ministry out of California. I do not seek to misrepresent the Catholic teaching, so allow me to quote directly from the portion of the tract that deals with this particular issue.

Why do Catholics believe that the Eucharist is really the body and blood of Jesus Christ?

Catholics believe that the Holy Eucharist is the actual Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ because that is what Christ said It is, "This is my body ... This is my blood" (Matt. 26:26-28; Luke 22:19-20; Mark 14:22-24). Also, because Christ said, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you ..." (John 6:48-52; 54-56), and because this is what the Apostles believed, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16).

Finally, Catholics believe that their Holy Communion is the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ because that is what all Christians believed until the advent of Protestantism in the 16th century.

Should we argue with Scripture? After all, the Catholics here site numerous Scriptures to back up their beliefs in this doctrine. Why would we want to argue with plain Scripture?

The fact is that it is not Scripture that I would argue with, but rather the Catholic understanding and perception of the verses quoted in the above paragraph. What did Christ mean when He said, "this is my body ... this is my blood."

I definitely will not argue with the words of Yeshua, but I will argue that Yeshua did not mean what the Catholics argue He meant. Let's deal first with the partaking of the last Supper just before the betrayal of Yeshua by Judas Iscariot. Passages such as Matthew 26:26-28 record Yeshua making the statements "this is my body ... this is my blood."

We need to recognize from the get go that Yeshua was alive while making this statement. It was He who uttered the words and it was He who was giving the bread and wine to His disciples. Furthermore Yeshua was a Hebrew, a Judahite-Israelite.⁷ Each disciple was also a Judahite-Israelite. Knowing the beliefs of Israel cause us to know that in a Hebrew context the disciples would have never believed that they were drinking the actual, literal blood of their Messiah. This is because their law specifically prohibited the eating/drinking of blood (Leviticus 17:11-14). The fact that (1) Yeshua was alive in the presence of the disciples when making this statement, and (2) the Hebraic context in which the statement was made, completely dismantles the idea that what Yeshua meant was that the bread and wine were actually, literally His body and blood. What He rather meant was that the bread and wine were *representative* of His body and blood, and the words "this is my body..." do no damage to this understanding. This was a common idiomatic or Hebraic way of stating that this item represents this other thing or item.

Allow me to illustrate this. Do you remember the story of Joseph? Joseph had been sold into slavery by his brothers and eventually ended up in prison for being falsely accused of adultery. While in prison his fellow inmates were astonished at his ability to interpret dreams and because of this ability Joseph would ultimately be placed in front of the Pharaoh of Egypt to interpret a dream about seven scrawny cows and seven fat, healthy cows (Genesis 41:1-8). Joseph, in interpreting this dream stated the following:

²⁵And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh *is* one: God hath showed Pharaoh what he *is* about to do.

²⁶The seven good kine *are* seven years; and the seven good ears *are* seven years: the dream *is* one.

²⁷And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them *are* seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine.

²⁸This *is* the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God *is* about to do he showeth unto Pharaoh.

²⁹Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt:

³⁰And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land;

³¹And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it *shall be* very grievous.

⁷ I use the term Judahite-Israelite because of Yeshua being of the tribe of Judah (Hebrews 7:14) and thus from one tribe within the nation of Israel. While many people as well as Bible translations use the term "Jew" a much better rendering is Judahite. This rendering allows the reader to understand that a reference to someone from the tribe, house, or geographical location of Judah is being spoken about.

³²And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; *it is* because the thing *is* established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass. [Genesis 41:25-32]

Notice that Joseph (a Hebrew) said in verse 26 to Pharaoh, “The seven good kine are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years...” Were the good cattle being equated with the good years? Yes, but not in identity; only in representation. In other words the seven good cattle were *representative* of the seven years of plenty. We could likewise say that the seven scrawny cattle were the seven years of famine. This does not mean that they actually were identical, but rather that one represented the other.

Maybe a second illustration will make this clearer. King David is a well known historical person in Scripture, but the fact that David had mighty men to battle for him is not as well known. 2 Samuel 23:10 tells us that one of these men was such a fierce warrior that he battled so long with the Philistines causing his hand to grow weary and cleave to his sword. What a warrior!

2 Samuel 23:14 begins to report an account for us concerning one battle these mighty men were in. We will pick up the story here.

¹⁴And David *was* then in an hold, and the garrison of the Philistines *was* then in Bethlehem.

¹⁵And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which *is* by the gate!

¹⁶And the three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto Yahweh.

¹⁷And he said, Be it far from me, O Yahweh, that I should do this: *is not this* the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighty men. [2 Samuel 23:14-17]

Here we see that David's warriors went to fetch their King a drink of water, but in doing so risked their lives for the King. David makes the statement “Is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?” Of course we know what David meant when he said this; he never thought that the cup given to him was literal blood, but in a manner of speaking the cup *represented* the lives of his mighty men, i.e. their blood. Idioms as this are found time and time again in the Hebrew Scriptures, it would do us well to understand this Hebrew background of the Hebrew Messiah, Yeshua.

As mentioned previously Catholics also argue from John chapter 6. I once got into a discussion with a Catholic gentlemen and this chapter was brought to the forefront. His plea to me was that I could not have eternal life without eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son. John 6 was the Scripture he referenced. After all, his words echoed the words of the Savior in John 6:54-56.

The gospel according to John not only records Yeshua saying these words but it also records Yeshua making other statement such as, “I am the door of the sheep...” (John 10:7) and “I am the vine, ye are the branches...” (John 15:5). Are we to believe that Yeshua is a literal door replete with hinges, a knob, and a lock? At the same time are we to also believe that Yeshua is a literal vine and His disciples were really branches hanging off of the vine? Ridiculous you say, yes, but these points thoroughly show the utter nonsense that some theological positions support.

To understand Yeshua's words in John 6 properly we must go back to the statements He made prior to uttering these words.

³⁵And Yeshua said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Here Yeshua states that coming to him fulfills hunger and believing on him fulfills ones thirst. In other words “eating Yeshua” means that you *come* to Yeshua; “drinking Yeshua” means that you

believe upon Yeshua. This backdrop let's us know why Yeshua made statements like, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." (John 6:53) These verses are not even dealing with the Lord's Supper but rather with accepting Yeshua for who He really is. Coming to Him and believing upon Him and all that He stands for.

Roman Catholics sometimes point out that the Judahites hearing Yeshua that day in John 6 took Him literally because they said He spoke a hard saying (John 6:60). They seem to not even give the option that these men could have misunderstood Yeshua. Even Yeshua's disciples misunderstood Him when He told them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees (Matthew 16:6-7). They thought He was speaking about literal bread, but of course He was not.

To close out this section let me make the point that Yeshua's sacrifice was made once and for all time, and is not a sacrifice that gets repeated over and over again every time a "Priest" says the words "this is my body ... this is my blood." The author of Hebrews makes it very plain that Yeshua was sacrificed and that it was a one time event.

²⁴For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

²⁵Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

²⁶For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

²⁷And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

²⁸So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. [Hebrews 9:24-28]

¹¹And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

¹²But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

¹³From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

¹⁴For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. [Hebrews 10:11-14]

Let the uses of the words "one" and "once" permeate in your mind. The Catholic mass seeks to have a continual, more than once offering of the body of Yeshua in their doctrine of communion. This directly contradicts the epistle to the Hebrews, as well as the Hebraic roots of Yeshua's words the night before He was crucified.

Was the Last Supper the Passover Meal?

The last issue I would like to address in this article is whether or not Yeshua ate the Passover with His disciples before He suffered. My simple answer to this question is no, but to answer in this way and not give an explanation will only lead to further confusion in the body of the Messiah. This is because I *can see* how someone could read the synoptic gospels and come to the belief that the last Supper *was* the Passover meal.

What I want to do here is first list several reasons I believe Yeshua's meal was a preparatory meal before the Passover meal. After listing my reasons I will then deal with the opposing side's argumentation.

Reason #1: The Rehearsal of the Passover

When we read of the festivals commanded in Scripture there are meanings attached to them both in retrospect as well as in the future. In other words they remind us of past happenings or we could say they are memorials of what has already taken place. However they also pointed the Israelites (and us Israelites now) to things that would take place in the future. One of my favorite ways to show this is by pointing out the Hebrew word used in Leviticus 23:2. The English translation given in the verse is holy convocation (KJV). I've talked with some people who have replied, "What is a holy convocation?" I love it when this question is asked to me because it grants me the opportunity to explain something beautiful about the festivals of Yahweh; the fact that they are rehearsals of future things and not only memorials of past events.

The phrase "holy convocation" is taken from the Hebrew words *qodesh* and *migra*. The word *qodesh* literally means to separate or set apart for sacred use. The word *migra* has to do with a calling out or a public gathering, but it also carries with it the idea of a rehearsal. The definition of rehearsal reveals that these festivals of Leviticus 23 are themselves rehearsals of future events. Within them we find types of what will eventually occur in the ultimate plan of Yahweh. Within the Passover type we do find an anti-type. This fulfillment of the rehearsal as far as the Passover is concerned is found by looking at Yeshua our Messiah.

Yeshua is specifically referred to as the Passover in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 and I believe the passage teaches us that He is the ultimate fulfillment of all that the Passover lamb stood for. Just as the Israelites who applied the blood to their doorpost and lintel escaped from the final plague Yahweh would bring upon the land of Egypt, so also we escape from death by applying the blood of Yeshua to our hearts and lives through belief in Him and confession of who He really is.

In ancient Israel, the Passover lamb was always slaughtered on the 14th day of the 1st month, the month of Abib (Exodus 12:1-2; 13:1-4). Leviticus 23:5 tells us that the lamb was slaughtered on the 14th day of the month at a time in Hebrew known as *beyn ha erebim*. Literally this phrase means between (*beyn*) the (*ha*) evenings (*erebim*), and is basically the afternoon portion of the 14th day of the month. Evidence for this timing is most readily seen in that it is the same time that the "evening sacrifice" was slaughtered. Numbers 28:3-4 speaks of the evening sacrifice in this way:

³And thou shalt say unto them, This *is* the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto Yahweh; two lambs of the first year without spot day by day, *for* a continual burnt offering.

⁴The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even.

The above is what we can call the daily sacrifice. The Levite Priests were to offer this sacrifice continually, day after day. One lamb was to be offered in the morning and the other lamb "at even" or literally in the Hebrew "between the evenings." The word here for *one* is the Hebrew word *echad* while the word here for *other* is the Hebrew word *sheniy*. When any child today learns the Hebrew language, they will learn how to count their numbers by saying these two words in that particular order: *echad*, *sheniy*, and so on. This is because these are the words for "one" and "two" in Hebrew. Specifically then Yahweh is commanding in Numbers 28 that two lambs are to be offered every day continually; the number one lamb (first lamb) is to be offered in the morning, and the number two lamb (second lamb) is to be offered between the evenings. Carefully take note that the second lamb had to be offered before the day ended. This means that although it was offered after the morning sacrifice it had to be offered prior to the ending of that day which by default would be the beginning of the next day. Biblical days end at evening (Exodus 12:18; Leviticus 23:32; Nehemiah 13:19) so the second sacrifice had to be accomplished during the afternoon portion of any given day. This is the exact same time frame in which the Passover lamb was sacrificed.

Further evidence of this time being the correct time for the Passover sacrifice is found in 1 Kings 18 and the account of the contest between Elijah and the priests of Baal. The best thing for anyone

to do in regards to this passage is stop reading this article for a second, get your Bible, and read the entire 18th chapter of 1 Kings. Recognize in reading all of the events that took place “at the time of the evening sacrifice.” This chapter thoroughly shows that the period of “between the evenings” was in the afternoon of the day.

The significance of this is that for hundreds of years the Passover lamb was sacrificed in Israel. Each occurrence of the sacrifice was a *migra* or rehearsal of a future event. That future event is found in the sacrifice of Yeshua our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7-8). Just as the literal lambs were slain on the 14th day of the 1st month, between the evenings, so also was Yeshua put to death at this time as the Passover lamb sacrificed by His Father Yahweh. The Israelites rehearsed this for many years, and Yeshua's death was the culmination of this rehearsal.

If what I am saying is true, then there is no way that Yeshua's meal with His disciples could have been the Passover meal; the Passover lambs had not yet been sacrificed. That year Yeshua would *be* the Passover lamb.

Reason #2: John 13:1-4

We've discussed at great length the ordinance of the Lord's Supper in this article. At this point we need to remember back to the origin of the Supper, remembering that the initial occurrence that “sparked” the memorial took place the night of Yeshua's betrayal. We read of this Supper in John 13:1-4.

¹Now before the feast of the Passover, when Yeshua knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

²And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him;

³Yeshua knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

⁴He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

In this account the initial Supper is referenced (verses 2 and 4) and we also see that this Supper is described as being “before the feast of the Passover” (verse 1). If the Supper *was* the feast of the Passover how could it also be *before* the feast of the Passover? The feast of the Passover describes the eating of the lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs (Exodus 12:8-14), and according to this passage (John 13:1-4) the feast had not yet taken place.

Reason #3: John 18:28

I once was involved in a discussion with a group of men who believed that Yeshua kept different festival dates than His contemporary Judahite kinsmen during His life. What I mean is that they believed the Judahites mentioned in the New Testament writings kept the feast days, but kept them on different days than Yeshua. Their “proof” was that passages like John 5:1 called certain feasts “a feast of the Jews.”

Let me say that I believe such reasoning is not correct. A phrase like “a feast of the Jews” does not necessarily imply that the feast being spoken of was not a feast of Yahweh. We must remember that the term Jew in the Bible predominantly is a reference to the southern House of Judah consisting primarily of the tribes of Benjamin and Judah (1 Kings 12). The Judahites were Yahweh's people, thus saying, “a feast of the Jews” means that this is the feast of Yahweh given to the people of Israel.

John 4:22 finds Yeshua making a similar statement when He told the Samaritan woman that salvation was of the Jews (more correctly Judahites). In other words the Judahites (and thus Israelites) were the chosen people of Yahweh. Yahweh gave His law to Israel. Psalm 147:19-20 tells us He did not give His law to any other nation.

We should also take note that in a passage like John 5:1 we not only read of “a feast of the Jews” but we also immediately read that Yeshua went up to Jerusalem at this time. Why I might ask? Could it be that He was going to celebrate the commanded festival of Yahweh? I believe this is precisely the reason. John 7:2-8 records Yeshua telling His disciples to go up to the “Jews feast of Tabernacles.” Obviously then Yeshua kept the same feasts as His people; they were not on different time schedules (see Luke 2:41-43; John 2:23; 6:4; 11:55; 12:1).

I bring this up because of what is stated in John 18:28.

²⁸Then led they Yeshua from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover.

When reading John chapter 18 we find that the “they” mentioned in verse 28 must have been the Judahite officers mentioned in verse 12. These Judahites would not go into the Roman hall of judgment for a specific reason – they would become defiled (see Numbers 9). Why is it that they did not want to be defiled? It was because they wanted to eat of the Passover. I ask you, if the Passover had been eaten by the Judahite nation the night before, why did these men not know about it? They hadn't eaten the Passover yet, and I believe this proves that the Passover had not taken place yet.

Reason #4: John 19:14

Seeing that I believe Yeshua ate the last Supper before the feast of the Passover, I would also believe that the next day was the day of the Passover sacrifice. This was a very busy day. The lamb had to be slaughtered, skinned, roasted whole, etc. In short, the meal had to be prepared. We read of such preparation in John 19:14.

¹⁴And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

Notice the time frame here. Yeshua was just about to be placed upon the torture stake at this time (John 19:16-30). This day is called here the “preparation of the Passover” and carries with it the meaning of preparing the Passover for the soon approaching feast-meal of the Passover.

Reason #5: John 19:31

After the Passover is sacrificed it is eaten that night with unleavened bread and bitter herbs (Exodus 12:8-14). This night (or evening) begins the days of unleavened bread (Exodus 12:18), the first of which is spelled out to be a special annual Sabbath day on Yahweh's calendar (Leviticus 23:6-7; Numbers 28:17-18), and John 19:31 references this day.

³¹The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

Here we again have the day of the crucifixion being called “preparation” but we also have the soon approaching day being called a “high day.” The text is clear that the day coming next was a

Sabbath day; this is why the Judahites wanted to remove the bodies. So what we have is a Sabbath day approaching, and this particular Sabbath was a high day.

The word for "high" here is the Greek word *meGas* from where we get our English word mega. The basic meaning of the word is "great" and ranges in such meanings as mass, extent, measure, height, weight, etc. The word is used of Yeshua as the "high" Priest over the house of Yahweh in Hebrews 10:21, and is even translated once into English by using the word "exceedingly" in Mark 4:41.

At any rate what we see here is that this Sabbath day that was approaching was also the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, making the day "big" or "great." This shows that Yeshua was crucified on the 14th with the 15th approaching at evening proving that the Feast of Unleavened Bread (and thus the Passover meal) had not yet taken place (see also Matthew 26:1-5).

Reason #6: Exodus 12:22

When we celebrate the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread today we do so as a memorial. This memorial is not only one which remembers the happenings of Exodus 12, but also Yeshua's death as the Passover lamb of Yahweh. Exodus 12:14 after mentioning several rites and/or ordinances of the Passover states that the feast is to be kept for a memorial. In other words, every year when the season "rolls around" we "mimic" the first Passover to the best of our ability. Sure, Yahweh doesn't literally pass over the houses in my hometown of Conyers, Georgia, nor do my family and I leave our homes in and go into the wilderness, but we do memorialize the observance in any way possible. We do this by recognizing what happened that first Passover many, many years ago.

Once such ordinance given to the people of Israel that night is found in Exodus 12:22; I believe it is an ordinance that is overlooked by the majority of feast-keepers today.

²²And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that *is* in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.

The Israelites were to take the blood of the lamb and strike the lintel and the two side posts of the house. The house that was struck by each family was then stayed in until the morning. Yahweh makes it very clear here that no one was to leave the door of each house until the morning.

When we read the gospel accounts of Yeshua's last meal with His disciples we also read where He and His disciples left the room before morning. I do not disagree with the position that the word "morning" can refer to the night time hours before daybreak, but when reading the gospels they strongly suggest that Yeshua left the room prior to these early morning hours. In other words, they exited the room late at night.

If Yeshua left the room at night wouldn't He have broken the memorial of remaining in His house all night until the morning? Some may say that this doesn't apply anymore, but I am inclined to disagree. If those of us that believe in the observance of the Festivals under the New Covenant start trimming away at particular ordinances how far are we going to take it? First we forget the ordinance of staying in our homes, but what's next? Maybe we can forget about eating the bitter herbs as part of the meal, or maybe it doesn't matter if we eat the meal with our shoes off? I believe that such reasoning will lead to a complete removal of the memorial festival and leave us with nothing but a memory in the mind that will soon be forgotten by future generations of Israelites. Memorializing the Passover each year keeps a fresh yearly reminder of what happened that day and night long ago. I firmly believe that this includes remaining in the house all night until the morning. I am persuaded that Yeshua understood this too.

Reason #7: Artos and Azumos

If you think back to earlier in the article I dealt with the issue of two Greek words: *artos* and *azumos*. *Artos* (if you recall) is the general word for leavened bread while *azumos* most assuredly refers to bread which is unleavened. It is quite probable that *artos* can at times refer to unleavened bread, but the majority of the time it is a reference to a raised loaf.

My point here is this. The word *artos* is used in the passages that give us the account of Yeshua's last meal with His disciples. If there is any possibility of *artos* meaning either (1) leavened bread or (2) unleavened bread, how can we know for sure that this last meal was the Passover meal? All ambiguity would vanish if the word *azumos* appeared in the text, and in my opinion such a usage would lend strong validity to the position that Yeshua's last meal was the Passover meal. However, such usage is missing. I feel that the use of *artos* in the Lord's Supper context is worthy of being brought into this discussion because of its general meaning of a raised loaf of bread.

Concluding Reasoning

I have a brief article by a man named David Zachary that lists several comparisons between the Passover meal of Exodus 12 and the last meal of Yeshua the Messiah. In this chart Mr. Zachary points out some very unique differences between the two. He asks the question, "How did Yahshua's last meal match up with the ordinances of the Passover as laid out in Exodus 12?"

Exodus 12	Yahshua's Last Meal
Each household took a lamb	No family present, just men
Lamb/goat without blemish	No lamb/goat mentioned
Kill lamb between evenings, 14 th	Prepared between evenings, 13 th
Eat with loins girded	Yahshua laid aside his garments
Shoes on your feet	Shoes off to wash feet
Eat in haste	Disciple reclining on Yahshua
None go out of house until morning	All went out to Gethsemane
Child to ask questions	No mention of children present
Eat flesh at night	At night; no mention of flesh
This day, memorial, leave Egypt	Memorial of Yahshua's blood and body
Keep feast to Yahweh	Feast not yet started, still 14 th
Keep throughout generations	As often as you do this
Keep feast forever	Feast not yet started, still 14 th
7 days eat unleavened bread	Bread was not called unleavened
1 st day holy; 7 th day holy	Holy day not yet come, still 14 th
No work done on 1 st or 7 th days	Disciple thought Judas buying food
All congregation to eat it	Chief priests not eat till next day
A night to be much observed	Disciples kept falling asleep
No stranger shall eat thereof	No strangers there – Correct
Foreigner/hired servant not eat	No foreigners/hired servants there – Correct
Eaten in one house	Eaten in upper room of one house - Correct
Uncircumcised may not eat of it	All were circumcised – Correct
All other ordinances	No mention

Although Mr. Zachary does list some of the agreements between the commandments in Exodus 12 and the meal on the night of the betrayal of the Messiah, he concludes by saying: "There are a number of glaring differences between the behavior of Yahshua and his disciples and in the commanded behavior for the Passover observance. Since Yahshua kept the law perfectly then either

the Passover law was done away or this was not the Passover meal that Yahshua ate the night of his betrayal.”

The Synoptic Gospel Accounts

I mentioned at the onset of this closing section that I can understand how someone could read the gospel of Matthew, Mark, or Luke and come to the belief that the last meal of Yeshua was the Passover. This does not mean I believe these gospels teach such, it is just an acknowledgment that those taking this position are doing so because they truly believe the Bible teaches this. Based upon the reasons I have already mentioned, and based upon a close examination of the synoptic gospels, I cannot take such a position. For starters let's begin with Matthew 26:17-20.

¹⁷Now the first *day* of the *feast of* unleavened bread the disciples came to Yeshua, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?

¹⁸And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples.

¹⁹And the disciples did as Yeshua had appointed them; and they made ready the Passover.

²⁰Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

As I said, one may (at first glance) read this and conclude that it has to be the Passover meal Yeshua was eating before being put to death. Such a reading though is not an exegesis of the passage, but a reading that is only surface deep; looking intently at the specifics of the passage leads to a much different conclusion.

Right at the onset we have a reference to the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Having knowledge of the commandment concerning the Feast one would already know that the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the 15th day of Abib (Leviticus 23:6; Numbers 28:17). I ask you, why would the disciples wait until the 15th day of Abib to begin to ask Yeshua about the Passover meal? No Feast-keeper I'm aware of believes we should wait until the after the 15th begins and then start making preparations for the Passover meal. Both positions I'm acquainted with have the meal being prepared prior to the beginning of the 15th. Therefore we must look for another understanding.

One understanding is that the first day of Unleavened Bread is a reference to the 14th day of Abib. Even though this particular understanding recognizes that the feast does begin on the 15th, they believe that during the 1st century the 14th was in some way attached to the Feast and thus could be called the 1st day of Unleavened Bread. This “camp” also teaches that the Passover was to be eaten at the beginning of the 14th rather than at the end of the 14th. This surely fits better than believing Matthew 26:17 is speaking of the 15th but it still begs a question. If the disciples were going to eat the actual Passover meal with Yeshua at the beginning of the 14th, why wait until the 14th had begun to go and ask him about proper preparations for the meal? Wouldn't that be a bit off schedule? In this reckoning, you should be *eating* the meal at the beginning of the 14th rather than *asking* about where you're going to hold the Festival; such falls too short of a proper understanding in my estimation.

I believe a much better understanding is found in a different, yet appropriate translation of Matthew 26:17. Notice first that there are two italicized words in the verse. Bible students know that when words are italicized in the King James Version it means that such words are added for clarification but are not in the actual Greek text from whence the New Testament was translated. A removal of these added words leaves us with the following:

¹⁷Now the first of the unleavened bread the disciples came to Yeshua, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?

Next we come to the word “first.” Once again we must realize that if this was the Passover meal Yeshua was going to eat, the disciples were approaching their Master way too late “in the game.”

The Feast had already begun, thus questioning about beginning to prepare for the Passover would be inappropriate.

I should point out that the word “first” can legitimately be translated “before” in this text. I wouldn't normally translate this Greek word into English as “before” but seeing that it (1) can be translated this way, and (2) fits much better with the Tanak,⁸ context, and sentence, I believe such is legitimate. The Greek word here is *protos* and is actually translated “before” (KJV) in both John 1:15 and John 1:30 in reference to Yeshua ranking above John the Baptist. The word is also translated “former” (KJV) in both Acts 1:1 and Revelation 21:4. Also note that a closely related Greek word (*proton*) is translated “before” in John 15:18. Given this knowledge of the Greek text we may translate Matthew 26:17 as follows:

¹⁷Now before (or prior to) the (feast of) unleavened bread the disciples came to Yeshua, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?

Such a translation is (1) legitimate with the Greek text, and (2) in harmony with the commands of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread found in the Old Testament. This translation causes us to realize that *before the Feast began* the disciples of Yeshua came to Him and asked Him about preparing for the Passover; but doesn't this still sound as though Yeshua would eat the Passover meal with His disciples?

If the Passover meal was to be eaten at the beginning of the 14th we still must ask ourselves at what time were the disciples coming to Yeshua and asking Him about these preparations? If it was before unleavened bread was it on the 14th or possibly the 13th? I believe the parallel gospel of Mark gives us the answer.

Mark 14:12 speaks in extremely similar language as Matthew 26:17. Understanding the correct translation we've already covered in Matthew lets us know to apply the same understanding to the first part of Mark 14:12, but Mark adds a bit of information that helps us in determining what day the disciples came to Yeshua asking Him these “preparation questions.”

¹²And the first day of unleavened bread (*properly “before the day of unleavened bread”* – *Matthew 26:17*), when they killed the Passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover?

Notice Mark's reference here to “when they killed the Passover.” Everyone I know is in agreements that the Passover was to be slaughtered on the 14th day of Abib. This is truly what the Scriptures teach. Therefore, the disciples came to Yeshua (1) before unleavened bread, and yet (2) on the day the Passover was to be killed. This means that at the earliest we would have Yeshua's disciples coming to Him at the beginning of the 14th day (13th at even) asking Him these questions.

Think about this for a moment. If the Passover was to be eaten at the beginning portion of the 14th (as some believe) wouldn't the disciples have asked Yeshua about Passover preparations before the beginning of the 14th? I mean, they should already be eating it at this time. After asking Yeshua they would have to kill the lamb, and then skin, clean, and roast the lamb. These considerations lead me away from believing the Passover was eaten at the beginning of the 14th.

An alternate understanding taken by some theologians today is that the disciples came to Yeshua on the 14th and asked Him about Passover preparations that would lead up to eating the Passover at the end of the 14th. In other words, Yeshua's last meal was at the end of the 14th and thus the beginning of the 15th. I know this may be getting a little confusing for you, but please bear with me. Sometimes I still get confused about all the positions and I've been studying this for quite some time!

⁸ The word Tanak is taken from the acronym TNK and stands for the Torah (law), the Nevaim (prophets), and the Ketuvim (writings). This word is used by Hebrew speaking people today in reference to what Christians commonly call the Old Testament.

While this is a possible solution, it does present an additional problem. If Yeshua ate the Passover with His disciples at the end of the 14th this would mean that He was crucified the following daylight period, on the 15th. This would (1) not align itself with the “rehearsal” point I’ve already discussed, and (2) not align itself with passages like John 19:14, John 19:31, Mark 15:42, and others. These passages refer to the day of the crucifixion as the preparation and specifically the preparation *of the Passover*, i.e. the day in which the lamb is slaughtered. According to these texts (as well as the anti-type fulfillment) Yeshua was crucified on the 14th day of Abib, not the 15th.

So what can we make of the texts of Matthew and Mark? I believe it is best to understand them as saying that the disciples came to Yeshua at the beginning of the 14th (end of the 13th) and asked him about Passover preparations. The following daylight period (still the 14th) Yeshua was crucified with the Sabbath/High day thereafter (John 19:31). However, we are still faced with the dilemma of the texts seemingly insinuating that Yeshua’s meal would be the Passover. Remember, Mark 14:12 states, “Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover?”

Examining the texts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke lead me to believe that the disciples were asking about simply preparing a place for the Passover which would take place the night thereafter. It appears that they were not fully aware that Yeshua would have to die the next day, and thus they questioned Yeshua about proper Passover preparations, and even eating the Passover. That night (the beginning of the 14th) Yeshua and His disciples came together to prepare themselves in somewhat of a purification. Luke records for us a statement of Yeshua that somewhat “ties the knot” on this understanding of the last Supper.

¹⁵And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

¹⁶For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. (*King James Version*)

¹⁵And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

¹⁶for I say unto you, I shall not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. (*American Standard Version*)

15. And He said to them: I have longingly desired to eat this Passover with you before My suffering;

16. However, I tell you that I shall not eat of it, until it can be administered in the Kingdom of God. (*Ferrar Fenton's, The Holy Bible in Modern English*)

I give three translations here to show forth that there are some translators or translation committee’s that translate the passages in such a way as to teach that Yeshua *did not* eat the Passover the night of His betrayal. The texts say that he fervently or longingly desired to eat the Passover with His disciples but He would not until a future time period.

The Greek words for the phrase “with desire I have desired” here are *epithumia epithumeo*. Both words are frequently used in the Messianic Scriptures for unfulfilled desires. In other words, the phrase can refer to a fervent desire that a person has, but cannot be fulfilled. A few Scriptural examples here are in order.

¹⁷For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have **desired** to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*. (Matthew 13:17)

²³For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a **desire** to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better (Philippians 1:23)

⁶And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall **desire** to die, and death shall flee from them. (Revelation 9:6)

²¹And **desiring** to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. (Luke 16:21)

When one realizes that Yeshua's words "with desire I have desired to eat this Passover" can be understood as an unfulfilled desire, it causes everything to harmonize perfectly. Yeshua did fervently desire to eat the Passover that year with His disciples, but He knew He would be unable to. He realized that this Passover He would be crucified. He had enjoyed many Passovers before during His life, but this one would be one He would have to endure for the sake of His people (Matthew 1:21).

I might add that there are theologians and scholars that take the same position that I have presented, but this doesn't mean that the position is correct. There are scholars who take other varying positions as well. We should all diligently look into the matter and seek to gather all the Scriptural information on the issue, harmonizing everything to the best of our finite ability.

Final Conclusion

In this article we have covered these particular points in regards to the Lord's Supper:

1. It is the "Evening Supper Belonging to the Lord."
2. It is a communion of saints.
3. The bread represents the body of the Messiah.
4. The cup represents his blood and is a sign of the new covenant.
5. We are to do this on the night in which Yeshua was betrayed.
6. In doing so we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again.
7. This is a memorial Supper, and not a meal to satisfy hunger. Everyone should partake or share together in this at one time.
8. Although we do not have to be sinless to partake we should examine our spiritual life prior to partaking.
9. It appears that by looking at the other New Covenant Ordinance (Baptism) as well as the exhortation of examination in 1 Corinthians 11, that infants or small children should not partake.
10. Only members of the assembly should partake. This does not mean anyone who sits in a building, but those that have followed in the plan of salvation and seek to live the life of Christ.
11. The elements include bread (not definite) and cup (fermented grape juice / wine.)
12. This is my body must mean this *stands* for my body because of (1) Christ was alive when he said this, and (2) Christ was crucified only once, in contrast to the many sacrifices year after year on the Day of Atonement.

13. Yeshua's last meal was not the Passover meal, but rather a preparatory meal the night before the Passover sacrifice.

My hope is that this article has shed more light for the reader concerning this issue. I pray that it will bring more unity to the body of the Messiah.