



**Celebrating
Together
At the
Lords Table**

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Prologue

The Lord's table is a perfect act of love and service but is too often received in a very limited and religious way. We are going to look into the Old and New Testament and see more clearly the freedom, service, and majesty revealed when we celebrate at the Lord's Table. The problem with looking into the Old Testament Law is that even the reading of it often draws us back into the rituals that pointed to Jesus instead of to Jesus himself. That is just the opposite of the liberty that is in the Lord's table. We must see that the Law pointed to Christ and the New Testament is to a great part a bible study on the old. When we look back and see the eternal wisdom of God, who ordained all things to point to Jesus Christ from the foundation of the world we can find freedom, love, and joy.

2Co 3:15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. 2Co 3:16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. 2Co 3:17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 2Co 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

There are two tables in the Law that point us to their New Testament counterpart. First and most importantly is the Passover Dinner and then the Table of Shewbread. We will focus on the comparison in the Passover dinner primarily and look at the Table of Shewbread in the Tabernacle in a confirming way.

The Lord's table is often considered the communion service but we need to understand it in a broader way. The communion is the center and points to the Lord's substitutional death and the power of his

resurrection but the night Jesus celebrated it with his disciples it was in the context of a complete dinner, the Passover dinner, with clearly defined parts. These parts are also seen in the tools of the tabernacle surrounding the unleavened bread on the Table of Shewbread. I believe these parts relate spiritually to the New Testament ministry gifts seen in 1st Corinthians and Eph ch 4. In this short booklet I will endeavor to show this and in doing so encourage spiritual liberty in the Body of Christ.

Chapter 1; *The Lords Table and its history*

The night when Jesus was taken to be crucified the Jewish people were celebrating the Passover. Jesus being from the tribe of Judah was gathered with his disciples for this celebration. He had miraculously acquired the upper room for the dinner and told them that he had looked forward to this dinner with them for a long time. The Passover celebration was given by Moses so that Israel would always remember when the Angel of the Lord killed all the firstborn in Egypt and spared all who put the blood of a lamb on the doorpost of their houses. When the Angel saw the blood he passed over their house and spared the firstborn in that house. All that had faith and obeyed were delivered, the will of Pharaoh was broken, and he set the people of God free. What was to be eaten in this dinner was clearly defined and though they have made a few cultural changes the basics of this dinner is still adhered to by Jewish people today.

Exo 12:3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: Exo 12:4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Exo 12:5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: Exo 12:6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. Exo 12:7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. Exo 12:8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened

bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Exo 12:9 Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. Exo 12:10 And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. Exo 12:11 And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover.

They drank wine with this meal and we are told in Leviticus that they were to offer a drink offering with the Lamb. As time went on a piece of hidden unleavened bread representing the Messiah was included but not to be eaten. So probably on the Table that Jesus and the disciples sat at was the Wine as the Drink offering and the Hidden unleavened bread as well the Lamb the bitter herbs the common wine and unleavened bread, which made up the dinner.

When Jesus took the bread, probably the hidden unleavened bread, and said this is my body broken for you he was saying I am your Messiah and Passover. When he took the wine it was probably the cup of the drink offering and when he said concerning this wine this is my blood, he was saying he was pouring his life out for us. This Passover was fulfilled in Jesus Christ and whenever we take the bread and cup of remembrance we are saying we are one bread (body) and we have been purchased by his blood. But what about the rest of the dinner is there a message in it for us? We will focus on this a little later.

After the resurrection we see brethren coming together daily and breaking bread and though we are not told specifically this was communion it only makes sense for them to celebrate this new Passover. Jesus Christ was with them by the Holy Spirit and they remembered his love and sacrifice in the bread and the wine. We are not sure if they celebrated the whole Passover meal but we know that about 20 years later the Corinthians were celebrating a meal with communion and many were eating and drinking to much and were reprovved by Paul for losing the true meaning of this meal. After this the brethren stopped including the meal and for the most part focused on the spiritual side of the Lord's Table. But the spiritual side of the Passover meal and the table of shewbread continued with the early church. Though not clearly

defined in the bible I believe we see them in the ministry gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Through the next few centuries the brethren suffered much persecution but continued celebrating the Lord's Table, ministering one to another in love. Often they would meet in homes and the ministry gifts of the Holy Spirit would work with the Lord's supper, it truly was the communion of the Spirit.

Then there was a political breakthrough, emperor Constantine became a christian and the Roman catholic church took its place in history. To control the people the mass was instituted and the Lord's Table was usurped by religious and political people. If you disagreed with the leaders you would be ex-communicated. The Lord's table had become a religious sacrament and was being used as an instrument of control. This continued until the reformation and then to varied degrees communion came back to the people of God to celebrate as the Lord led. Now I believe the full expression of the Lord's Table is available to all of the Body of Christ. It is our decision to celebrate it together or not. I believe the Lord wants to gather with us as he did with his first disciples as a matter of fact I believe he has looked forward to it for a long time.

Chapter 2

Passover and Comunion Gatherings primarily A Smaller Meeting

For the most part in the modern church we see Comunion as a large corporate meeting conducted by a few people upfront. We don't see this in the New Testament nor in the biblical Passover. In the book of acts and throughout the New Testament we see that the brethren came together and celebrated communion

together in one another's homes and sometimes in separate buildings as it was in the upper room but the groups did not appear to be huge. In the upper room when the Lord was there there was probably Jesus and the 12 Apostles it wasn't a huge gathering in the temple. In the book of acts when they waited for the Holy Spirit there were 120 together and it's very possible that they celebrated the Lord's Communion. After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit there was a great revival and thousands were saved then they began gathering in one another's homes and the communion table was shared in that setting.

If we look at the example of the Passover dinner in Exodus we see that it was a gathering made up of family and friends in individual homes. This was essential because every family had to make an individual commitment. God was calling for each family each individual to choose him and be covered by the blood of the lamb. This dinner was also a time of preparation preparing their hearts and preparing Egypt for the great Exodus, The great escape and exit from Egypt. The result of calling for this was that the people of God would be engaged in receiving him and ministering one to another.

In our day we need to look to these examples. It is time to begin coming together with our neighbors and our families and break all barriers as we celebrate together at the Lord's table. In the book of acts they were people from many different lands, of many different races, and languages. Yet because of the presence and grace of Jesus by the Holy Ghost they gathered together in one accord in one another's homes worshiping and rejoicing at the Lord's table.

Chapter 3. The difference between the Lord's Table and Communion.

The difference between the Lord's Table and communion is very clear, when you think of someone's table you think of a physical table in which you place things on or a complete meal, a table of food. The Bread and wine of the communion does fulfill the idea of a table of food because Christ is truly all we need. Yet we have the Passover dinner to show us a table that will feed us for the journey of life. The people were to eat the Passover dinner as the last meal before beginning their Exodus from Egypt. I believe there is a foreshadow of Christ in the dinner as well but in addition to that there is a foreshadow of the ministry gifts.

In Ephesians chapter 4 we see that Jesus, our Passover, ascended into heaven after his death and that he gave gifts to the Church to sustain it and strengthen it. We also see the call for the body to be one in this chapter as Paul points out in I Cor. that we are one bread. If we compare the gifts to the food in the Passover dinner we can see a direct comparison. In the Passover dinner there are four elements beside the Messianic bread and wine. All four point to Jesus because he is the fulfillment of all ministry but they also point to ministry gifts. The slaughtered lamb points to Jesus our Apostle but also points to apostolic forerunners, those that lay down their lives as they present the vision of the Kingdom. These are those with a missionary hearts, Ambassadors in our midst. Then you have the Bitter Herbs which are the seasoning this seems to represent the important part of prophetic ministry. Thirdly you have the common wine which reminds us of those who have a primary call to preach the blood of Christ, the Evangelists. Finally you have the common unleavened bread and this points to the Pastors and teachers. These ministry gifts as the food are essential for us to enjoy all of the benefits of the Lord's Table. We always have Jesus and can and should celebrate communion when there are two or more gathered in his name or even alone with Jesus but the blessing of the full table is something I

believe is to be desired and joined in together, for the edification and strengthening of the body of Christ

Eph 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, Eph 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Eph 4:3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Eph 4:4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Eph 4:7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Eph 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Eph 4:9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? Eph 4:10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Eph 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: Eph 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; Eph 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: Eph 4:16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

The Table of Shewbread also confirms these ministry gifts in the Lord's Table as well. The Table of Shewbread was located in the tabernacle of congregation and held instruments used in the offerings as well as the Shewbread placed in the center of the table. The showbread was unleavened bread and both a type of Christ and the communion fellowship. Like the Passover dinner there were parts, four kinds of

instruments. The dishes for the presentation of the offering which, I believe represents the apostles, the spoons for the bitter herbs for the Prophets, the bowl for the blood sprinkled on the alter representing the Evangelists, and finally the covers which can be seen in the protection of the pastors and teachers.

Num 4:7 And upon the table of shewbread they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put thereon the dishes, and the spoons, and the bowls, and covers to cover withal: and the continual bread shall be thereon:

Chapter 4. More than a Religious Act

We began this study focusing on the liberty we have as we celebrate in the Lord's Table so it is very important that we don't enter into the attitude that we are under some religious obligation to do some ritual and adhere to a rigorous form. What we do when we take communion is we are joining together with all the saints that have ever eaten it and rejoicing in the presence of Jesus by the Holy Ghost remembering the love of God towards us that was expressed by the death on the cross of Jesus Christ. What an amazing opportunity, we should rejoice in it as often as we can!

We also have the Lord's Table to share in. It's like a spiritual potluck with Jesus giving all of the food and allowing the participants to bring these glorious gifts he has prepared. In 1 Corinthians 12 -14 we see clarification on what celebrating at the Lord's Table should look like. We see that we each can bring what the Lord has given and share, one at a time in turn, the encouraging and corrective words that we have received from the Holy Spirit. God will do miraculous works through some. Those that are proven in Christ will oversee not as lords but as facilitators. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers will all bring their ministry gifts to the meal. All is to be done in love not putting ourselves first but preferring others over our own desire to be

seen or heard. In this environment we can hear from the Lord in the mouth of two or more witnesses and be edified and changed.

At the same time we are rejoicing in God's presence and work we must guard our heart with the knowledge of the Bible and sound doctrine. We are in the last days and the enemy has worked hard to take away from our fellowship with one another and with the Lord Jesus. In 1 Corinthians 10-11 Paul speaks on receiving the Bread and Wine in remembrance of the Love of Jesus and says not to take it lightly but to let it impact your life. He even goes so far to say 1Co 10:21 "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."

We that are alive today are a blessed generation because we are so near to the Lord's return. We are like a bride right before the wedding day. It is very important that we get ready for that day and keep ourselves pure because of our love for our Savior. It is in this spirit in which we need to come together and celebrate at the Lord's Table.

Chapter 5. Differing Gifts

One Body, One Bread

Another name for the table of shewbread seen in more modern translations is the table of presence. There wasn't just one loaf of bread but there were 12 which represented the whole of Israel. We know that he was in the midst of Israel so you see the presence of God in the midst of his people. This is significant because we know him as the bread and the church is considered one bread according to Paul in First Corinthians. We are not many denominations we are one people unto God. As the people of God we

need God in each member to work through us using the varied gifts that he's given us. There have been many divisions over whether God gives the same kind of gifts he gave before. Does he still heal? Does he give us spiritual insights? Does he give us teaching? There are also those that say they received supernaturally unknown tongues. All of these things are seen in the Bible and I believe there's nothing wrong with anybody taking advantage of all that's in the Bible. So when we come to the Lords table let's except one another and be one bread feeding on another the things of God.

I have focused on the "ministry gifts" and this may seem lofty but it's really not. Because all these mystery gifts are gifts given to people so that God can minister to his church in love. It's not just for one person or a few people but for everyone that's in the body of Christ. We can minister one to another in love; In small groups, in large groups, and when there's just two or three. We can minister one to another the spiritual gifts because he is in our midst. The text that shows this more clearly than any other I believe is Romans chapter 12 Paul says we are one body and that we as one body should all minister to one another but we should wait on the Lord for those ministry gifts and be diligent to let God work through us and humbled because he does.

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having

then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.”

Romans 12:3-16 KJV

Chapter. 6. What should we do?

Celebrating the Lord’s Table is an event but it is much more than an event, it is an example of to us. Even when the the Messianic bread and cup are not present in our gatherings Jesus is. We need him to be the center and then minister one to another in love. The most important thing is to capture the Lord’s heart in these things and understand his love for his church. Pray for the body of Christ and come together to build one another up in the faith.

I do believe we should begin by getting together with other believers in homes and in places apart from the “church building”. As members of

various churches we can speak to pastors about incorporating the Lord's Table into their services. You may want to speak to people responsible for the church buildings about using the facility for separate gatherings. This is a call to oneness in Christ not to divide brethren. We don't need to worry about designating ministries it is the Lord that gives gifts. Jesus called the early disciples back to the upper room by the Holy Spirit after telling them to wait in Jerusalem for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. He provided a place for them then told them to wait on him. They continued in prayer and breaking bread together and waited on the Lord. The Holy Spirit came like a mighty outpouring of fire, wind, and rain. God is no respecter of persons if he did it for them he will do it for us.

Chapter 7. The Communion of the Holy Ghost restored

It is the Lord's desire that we would live in unity and that unity is much more than social, religious or political unity. It is the unity that is the result of each of us becoming one with Jesus Christ. We are one with Jesus because he has come to live within us by the Holy Spirit. When he died in our place he cleansed our spirit so that he could be spiritually joined with each of us and a new person would replace the old. In this we have the unity of the Spirit and oneness with Christ, but for now we carry this new man in the temporal body. Until we see the Lord Jesus and receive our new body, which will perfectly subject to God, we must keep this flesh under subjection to the new Spirit man in us. Things like celebrating the Lord's Table help us in that we are humbled when we remember his sacrifice and our need to minister one to another.

In I Tim chapter 2 we are told that there is only one mediator between man and God.

1Ti 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; 1Ti 2:6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

In 1st John chapter 2 we are told that we have no need for any man to teach us but the anointing would teach us all things. If we know Christ dwells in us we know he will teach and lead us but because of our flesh he that lives in all the brethren ministers to us through one another in love as well as his personal ministering to us. That is why he gave spiritual gifts unto men. A mediator is a reconciler and the great reconciler lives in us if we believe in the Lord Jesus unto salvation. We are all called to reconcile men unto God so we need to take the responsibility of allowing the Lord to minister through us and that is an emphasis in the Lord's Table. As we come together let's ask the Holy Spirit to speak to us and he will use us as a body to; intercede, evangelize, prophecy, teach, do signs and wonders, comfort and console, and physically serve others. Thus he will reconcile all men unto himself.

Eph 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: Eph 4:16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

With the Lord first and a heart for the Kingdom of God we can celebrate together at and in the Lord's Table, the communion of the Holy Ghost.

2Co 13:11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. 2Co 13:12 Greet one another with an holy kiss. 2Co 13:13 All the saints salute you. 2Co 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

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By His grace; Steve Andrews

