

NOTES

~ Communion ~

- **Definition:** Sharing; intimate fellowship or rapport (Merriam-Webster).
- **Introduction:** What do Christians so intimately share and why? Today, we'll explore *communion* as it was and is meant to be.
- Overview of the **communion components:**
 - The **bread:** from the Passover, and as our 'bread of life' – Jesus.
 - The **wine:** blood the Passover Lamb and Jesus shed for salvation.
- **Old Covenant/Passover fulfillment:**
 - The **bread** – matzo – had no yeast and represented the urgent departure of the Israelites from Egypt. Its holes and stripes represent OT prophecies about the piercing and beatings our Christ would endure (Isaiah 53:3-5).
 - The **wine** represented the blood of the old covenant between God and Israel. Today, Jews celebrate the Passover with a Seder meal that includes matzo and four cups of wine: Sanctification, Deliverance, Redemption/Blessing (1Corinthians 10:16-17), and Hope – usually associated with the return of Elijah.
- **New Covenant fulfillment:**
 - The **bread** represents the 'bread of life' (Jesus) broken for us to offer salvation to the world (John 6:35-58).
 - The **wine** represents the blood Jesus shed for salvation as our 'Passover Lamb' (Matthew 26:27-28; 1 Corinthians 5:7). It is the Seder Cup of Blessing and the covenant cup (like in a traditional Jewish wedding).
- **Wedding fulfillment:** God called Israel His 'bride'. We are called the 'Bride of Christ' because He and we have been fulfilling the marriage covenant since Jesus' time on earth. No other relationship between humans should be as close as that of a husband and wife, so the comparison makes sense. Here are but a few steps that have, and will be, completed:
 - Selection of the bride for the groom (2Corinthians 11:2).
 - Contract (covenant) – first cup of wine (Matthew 26:27-28).
 - Separation and the building of a home (John 14:2-3).
 - Marriage and second cup (timed by the groom's father) (Matthew 26:28-29) (Matthew 24:21-36) (Revelation 19:5-9)
- **Unsuitable** ways to take communion:
 - With an impure heart (1Corinthians 11:23-28).
 - For the wrong reasons (1Corinthians 11:20-22).
- **Summary:** Jesus' sacrifice of flesh and blood mirrored the Passover Lamb of the old covenant with God and paved the way for the salvation of *all* mankind in a new one. Followers of the Christ remember His sacrifice and the new covenant by taking symbolic bread and wine together.

~ *Communion* ~

Define – sharing

Definition: Sharing; intimate fellowship or rapport (Merriam-Webster).

Intro: what we'll learn

Introduction: What do Christians so intimately share and why? Today, we'll explore *communion* as it was and is meant to be.

- Beginning in
Passover

What you'll discover is that our communion ritual has its beginnings in God's covenant with Israel and the Passover celebration – something we're certainly encouraged to participate in. In fact, Jesus was celebrating the Passover Seder when He announced that His body would be broken and His blood shed for a new covenant. Jesus then encouraged His disciples to remember His coming sacrifice whenever they partake of the Passover elements – probably because of their fulfillment with His coming, death, resurrection, and salvation.

- Passover bread &
wine: significant
then and now . . .

The Passover flat bread and lamb's blood had significance then . . . and now.

- Overview: bread

Overview of the **communion components:**

- Overview: wine

- The **bread:** from the Passover, and as our 'bread of life' – Jesus. We'll discuss the bread from an old covenant Passover point of view as well as the fulfillment of the Passover 'dress rehearsal' by Jesus.
- The **wine:** blood the Passover Lamb and Jesus shed for salvation.

Passover fulfillment

Old Covenant/Passover fulfillment:

- Bread

- The **bread** – matzo – had no yeast and represented the urgent departure of the Israelites from Egypt. Its holes and stripes represent OT prophecies about the piercing and beatings our Christ would endure (**Isaiah 53:3-5**).

- Wine
- Cups:
Sanctification
Deliverance
Redemption
Hope

- The **wine** represented the blood of the old covenant between God and Israel. Today, Jews celebrate the Passover with a Seder meal that includes matzo and four cups of wine: Sanctification, Deliverance, Redemption/Blessing (**1Corinthians 10:16-17**), and Hope – usually associated with the return of Elijah.

The sacrificial lamb, 2000 years ago, had to found to be blemish-free after inspection (four days in the annual Passover celebration Jesus would've participated in).

New Covenant

- Bread
 - Broken & hidden
 - Holes & stripes

- Wine
 - Cup of covenant in the wedding process

New Covenant fulfillment:

- The **bread** represents the 'bread of life' (Jesus) broken for us to offer salvation to the world (**John 6:35-58**).

The matzo bread was broken and hidden in a specific manner during the Passover celebration. Jesus did this and made His comments about being broken for the forgiveness of sins while conducting the Seder.

Again, the matzo holes and stripes reflect the suffering Jesus experienced on our behalf as prophesied by Isaiah hundreds of years before Jesus' time on earth. God asked Him to do this and He accepted the assignment: inhabit a human form, live a perfect life as a blemish-free sacrificial lamb, and then be sacrificed at the exact time the Passover lambs were to be sacrificed.

- The **wine** represents the blood Jesus shed for salvation as our 'Passover Lamb' (**Matthew 26:27-28; 1 Corinthians 5:7**). It is the Seder Cup of Blessing and the covenant cup (like in a traditional Jewish wedding).

One of the many prophecies and 'dress rehearsals' Jesus fulfilled was that of a traditional Jewish bridegroom. As such, we were selected for Jesus as a pure bride, we enter into a covenant with God through Him and remember it by drinking of the covenant cup, exchange vows, receive the gifts of righteousness and the Holy Spirit from our groom, and continue to wait in betrothal for the building of our home and eventual gathering for the marriage.

Let's look at these things in greater detail.

Wedding fulfillment

- Selection of the bride
- Covenant cup

- Separation & home building

- How long?
God's
timing . . .

Wedding fulfillment: God called Israel His 'bride'. We are called the 'Bride of Christ' because He and we have been fulfilling the marriage covenant since Jesus' time on earth. No other relationship between humans should be as close as that of a husband and wife, so the comparison makes sense. Here are but a few steps that have, and will be, completed:

- Selection of the bride for the groom (**2Corinthians 11:2**).

The father of a potential groom would search for a wife for his son.

- Contract (covenant) – first cup of wine (**Matthew 26:27-28**).

When a suitable bride had been found, the two families would meet to discuss the potential union. If the young man and woman agreed, they would essentially say, "I will be yours if you will be mine!" This is akin to what God said to His bride, Israel.

To cement the deal, the couple would drink from a cup of wine titled the "cup of covenant".

- Separation and the building of a home (**John 14:2-3**).

After vows, the giving of gifts, and ceremonial bathing (like the baptism we experience), the couple would separate. The boy and his father would prepare a home for the couple.

This betrothal separation would normally last a year in a traditional Jewish wedding process; however, we continue to wait. Why? Because God's timing is His timing, and He'll wait until the number of those who'll accept His mercy has been met.

- Final cup: Cup of the Seven Blessings taken in Heaven

■ Timing of the groom's father

Unsuitable ways to commune

- Impure heart: unfaithful bride

- Wrong reasons: glutton

Summary

- Marriage and second cup (timed by the groom's father) (final Seder cup and the second covenant **cup** in heaven: **Matthew 26:28-29**; the **gathering** for the marriage: **Matthew 24:21-36**; the **marriage**: **Revelation 19:5-9**).

The father of the groom, at a time known only to him, would summon the groomsmen to announce that it was time for the marriage ceremony, which consisted of a supper and second cup of wine. The groomsmen made their announcement with shouts and trumpet calls.

Unsuitable ways to take communion: Remember that drinking the cup of covenant serves as a reiteration of our vow to 'be a faithful bride' until our groom returns.

- With an impure heart (**1Corinthians 11:23-28**).

Taking the cup during communion while practicing sinful behavior is a contradiction and a lie. This is why we must be careful!

- For the wrong reasons (**1Corinthians 11:20-22**).

In this case, some of the people in Corinth were using the communion table for eating and drinking – even getting drunk! This was a total abuse of the ritual, which is meant to remember Jesus' sacrifice and our covenant. It also reeked of gluttony . . .

Summary: Jesus' sacrifice of flesh and blood mirrored the Passover Lamb of the old covenant with God and paved the way for the salvation of *all* mankind in a new one. Followers of the Christ remember His sacrifice and the new covenant by taking symbolic bread and wine together.

He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. Isaiah 53:3-5.

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

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. . . . I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh. . . . Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever." John 6:35-58.

And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins." Matthew 26:27-28.

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

For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. 2Corinthians 11:2.

". . . for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins." Matthew 26:27-28.

"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. +If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also." John 14:2-3.

"for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." —Matthew 26:28-29.

"For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. . . . Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. . . . For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man. . . . But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. . . . But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone." Matthew 24:21-36.

And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great." Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready. It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." Then he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" . . . —Revelation 19:5-9.

. . . the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. —1Corinthians 11:23-28.

Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you. —1Corinthians 11:20-22.