

Matthew 26:26-29 | John Messerly

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 27 July 2025

Preacher: John Messerly

[0 : 00] Good morning. Well, we have been blessed with being with you at Bethel here for four weeks in a row.! It's a treat for us. We really appreciate our time with all of you.

and I appreciate the opportunity that I've been given this morning to open up the word and continue the study in Matthew. As we talked about last week, we're in Matthew and we're looking at Passion Week right now, is what we're going through the events leading up to the Lord's crucifixion.

So, it started with the triumphal entry to Jerusalem. Then on Wednesday, there was the conspiring of the chief priests trying to find a way to have Judas betray him.

And then on Thursday, Judas went and made his deal to betray him. And now it's Thursday, Maundy Thursday, where they are meeting to have the Last Supper to celebrate the Passover.

And last week, we looked at Judas' betrayal, the start of his betrayal, which fulfilled the prophecy from Psalm 41.9. We looked at, And we saw that he was like the people in John 6, who when Jesus had his saying showing that he was supposed to be the source of everything, and he didn't give them bread.

[1 : 30] Many people left then. That was the same thing that happened with Judas. Jesus is when he, when the bread ran out, when he got his last morsel from Jesus, he got one last piece of bread, then he departed to arrange the betrayal.

And so, where we pick up in Matthew 26 here, verse 26, this is during the Passover feast. So, I'm just going to go ahead and read the passage, and then we'll pray, and then we can get into it. It said, Let's just open a prayer real quick here.

Father, we thank you that we can come to you, and we can open your word. You have so much in it for us to learn of you, Father, to learn of us, to learn of your plans for the way we should be living our lives to glorify you, Father.

And I just pray that you would bless the reading of your word and the exposition of it today. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. So, we know that this is the Passover.

In Luke, it says that, Jesus says, I earnestly desire to eat this Passover meal with you. And here in Matthew 17, it says, The disciples came and said, Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?

[3 : 09] Passover. So, the Passover, I'm going to give a little bit of background on what the Passover was. The Passover was a Jewish feast that was memorializing the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt.

So, if you've read the book of Genesis, You see that Jacob, whose name became Israel, That Israel led his family into Egypt, And his family would become the Israelites.

Israel led his family to Egypt because of the famine that was in the land of Canaan, And because Israel, or Jacob's son, Joseph, was a ruler in Egypt and could provide for them.

And so, the whole family moved down to Egypt. And they were there for 400 years. And it was prophesied to Abraham that his people would go to Egypt and be there for 400 years and be enslaved.

And that is what happened. 400 years after they arrived, the things had changed so much from being, Oh, here's Joseph's family to, We're enslaving these people, making them work for us, Being cruel in their punishments.

[4 : 17] And it says in Exodus that God heard their cry and raised up Moses as a deliverer. And when Moses went to Pharaoh and said, Let my people go, he said, No. And so, as part of the signs that God was using, He brought nine plagues on the Egyptians.

And each plague got worse and worse and worse. And yet Pharaoh still said, No, no, no. And would not let them go. So then the tenth plague came.

And the tenth plague was the worst of all. It was the death angel came to slay every firstborn throughout the whole country. And what Moses told the Israelites was, If you take the blood of a lamb, a spotless, unblemished lamb, You kill it, and you follow these instructions, And you put it on the doorposts of your house, That the death angel who is going to come through slaying every firstborn in the land of Egypt, That the death angel will pass over your house, That the blood on the doorposts will have him pass over, Spare you from that judgment, And will allow you to live, give you life.

And so, this feast was commanded by God to remind his people of their deliverance In Exodus, with the ten plagues and Moses.

So this was in Exodus 13.8, it says, You shall tell your son on that day, saying, It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt. And so that command in Exodus, to tell your children, Say, hey, tell of this great deliverance, tell what happened, Led to many years of rabbinic and traditions in the Talmud And other traditions on how to observe this, How to fulfill this command to tell your children about it.

[6 : 02] And it led to this feast, the Passover feast, Or the Hebrew word for it is the Seder. The Seder is a word that means order.

And so, some of these ties and how the feast should be done, They were tied to scripture tighter than others. Some things had changed, like there was a, In the description of Exodus, it says the meal should be eaten in haste, With your belt girded and ready to go, Because they were going to be delivered and leave.

But by the time of Jesus, it had switched to have this be reclined, Have it be lying down, eating it, In a relaxing, slow thing to remember what was done.

According to Josephus, a historian who lived around the time of Jesus, Is that the feast was supposed to be an intimate affair. So it was supposed to be no fewer than ten, So you couldn't just have it with you and your buddy.

You couldn't have more than twenty. So it was a small, tight thing. It was supposed to be an intimate group. And we see the Lord here, He's with His eleven disciples.

[7 : 12] Judas has gone out. And Him. There's twelve of them there. They were supposed to wash their hands. There's several times of washing in the Seder.

That gives an analogy to being cleansed, Being holy to have this. There is food. There's specific food that's involved in this Seder feast.

So there's lamb, roast lamb. It's supposed to be a spotless male in Exodus 12, 5. And then it says that the bones can't be broken in Exodus 12, 46.

And so it had to be, you see often, a shank, A big bone of lamb to show that the bone is not broken, That they're eating. They had vegetables and bitter herbs That were supposed to remind them of their sufferings in Egypt, Their sufferings under sin.

And they had unleavened bread. What is called then and what is called now is matzah. You might have heard of a matzah ball. But matzah is unleavened bread.

[8 : 19] And the way that they prepare it is they roll it out flat, And then they take a tool that looks like something you might see out of a Play-Doh kit. But it looks like a pizza cutter, But then it has little pips coming off of it.

Kind of like a gear, cogs on a gear. And they roll it. And so it makes stripes and holes in the matzah. And they take this matzah and they put it into a bag.

They put three pieces into the bag. One of the pieces is never seen during the whole feast. One of the pieces is taken out, broken in two, Half put back, half wrapped in a linen cloth.

And then it's hid somewhere in the house. And then it either has to be found or the kids will take it. And it has to be ransomed back, depending on the traditions that are there.

And later that piece is eaten by everyone. And the third piece of matzah is used to eat parts of the meal. So there's the three matzahs that are in this bag. And then there's also wine involved.

[9 : 20] There's four cups corresponding to the four promises in Exodus 6, 6 through 7. So I'll just turn there and read that real quick. So all these things, like I say, some are more tied closely to Scripture.

Others are a little more loose. But they've developed quite the tradition in these Jewish seders. So Exodus 6, 6 through 7 says, Say therefore to the sons of Israel, I am the Lord, and hear the I will promises.

I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Then I will take you from my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

And these cups are given different names. The cup of sanctification is the first one. The cup of judgment is the second. The cup of redemption or blessing is the third. And the cup of praise is the last one, the fourth one.

And there's a very specific order, that word seder again meaning order, that all these things happen. And the time we have far outside the scope to cover that, that is a great thing to study.

[10:34] You can even do multiple messages on the parallels in the seder. But I'm just going to kind of touch on that. This feast was observed differently by the Galilean Jews versus the Judean Jews in the south.

So the Galilean Jews observed the Passover starting at sunrise to sunrise. And so that's why on sunrise at Thursday was the start of it. And so they would observe their Passover at the end of the day, as we think of the day on Thursday.

Whereas the Judean Jews in the south, their day was sunset to sunset. And so their day didn't start until Thursday night. That meant that they were eating the Passover lamb at sunset on Friday.

So the Galilean Jews had a Passover that they were celebrating here on Thursday night. This was the Galilean Passover being celebrated. But then all of Jerusalem was going to be celebrating the Passover the next day.

And there's some beautiful things that I'm not really going to be able to touch on there. But basically the lambs would all be sacrificed in that hour from 3 o'clock to 6 o'clock on Friday.

[11:44] And that is when the Lord was crucified. So it's some really cool pictures there of him, the Lord being our Passover lamb sacrificed then.

But because of the Galilean traditions, he was able to celebrate the Passover the night before and able to use it to institute this new feast for the church, this new covenant.

So this is the Lord's Supper. It was the Passover. It was the Seder. But when they ate it that night, it was the last time that it was the Passover, the fulfillment of that covenant.

It was going to be a new covenant. You think about the New Testament, the Old Testament, the New Covenant and the Old Covenant. If you look at your Bible and you flip through, you're going to see New Testament starting at Matthew.

But the reality is that New Testament doesn't start until Jesus is sacrificed. That is when the New Covenant is put in place here, as we're going to see this morning.

[12:49] Like I said in Luke 22, it says, Jesus earnestly desired to eat this Passover with his disciples because his death was going to be the end of the Old Covenant of the Law and the start of the New Testament of grace.

And this covenant sealed by his bloody death on the cross. And the Lord Jesus, in using this Passover Seder, he used the elements to illustrate truths of this new covenant.

So you've got to think there's two systems. There's two covenants at hand here. There's the old one, the law, that is being put to an end, and grace is about to start.

So he's taking this feast. And there are lots of implied truths. 1 Corinthians 5:7 says that Christ is our Passover. And we see lots of beautiful things in the Seder that he repurposes.

So, for example, they all wash their hands before they ate to picture that they need to be clean. But what does Jesus do? Well, in John, we read that he doesn't just wash their hands, that he washes their feet.

[13:51] And when Peter says, Lord, wash my hands and my head, too, he says, no. You just need to wash your feet. And that's a picture of confession. The importance of confession and receiving God's forgiveness and grace when we come into this new covenant.

That it isn't through things that we've done, but it's that when we've been saved, when we've been washed, we're clean all over, but our feet get dirty. They need to be washed. We need to have that for that communion with God.

The lamb that they ate in the Seder, well, we know that Christ is our lamb. We know that Christ is the one who would be sacrificed. That he was spotless. He would die without a bone being broken, unlike the others that would be crucified.

They broke the legs of the people next to him on the cross. His legs were unbroken. The matzah was unleavened bread. Did not have any leaven. Leaven is a picture of sin in the Bible. There's no leaven in the bread. And this tool that they used to make the matzah, it makes lines and holes, stripes and piercings.

[14:54] Isaiah 53, 5, it says, he was pierced for our transgressions, and by his stripes we have been healed. It's the picture, even in that bread. And the bread itself, there's a picture of the Trinity there.

That there's three pieces that go into this bag. One is never seen, like God the Father, no one has seen the Father. The middle one, a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ taken out, broken, his body broken for us.

And one piece taken, wrapped in a cloth. Like he was wrapped in burial clothes, put in the ground, but later brought back and distributed among all.

Not broken and fractured among all, but distributed that all may eat, that all may consume it. And the third one, the third matzah that's used to help eat the rest of the Passover meal, to eat those bitter herbs and whatnot, it's a picture of the Holy Spirit that helps us now and is there to be with us. So he took these things that were implied truths that we can look back and say, wow, that's cool, that's really neat. The picture of the wine, you know, a picture that it was crushed.

[16:09] A picture of God's judgment. And it was red like blood. But the third cup was the cup of redemption or blessing. And that cup, it says that, that's the one that it says in verse 27 here.

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. And based on the meal having been finished, as we read in the other Gospels, the meal was finished, that's when they take the third cup, the cup of redemption.

And he drank the cup of redemption. He drank the cup of blessing. But the cup of praise, he said, I'm not going to do this. I'm not going to drink this cup of praise. I'm not going to celebrate until I'm with you in my kingdom.

And so many beautiful implied pictures there. But the explicit truths we see are that there's this new covenant in my blood. And this is what we see every Sunday when we come here, is that the bread is prayed for, it's blessed, and then it's taken first.

A picture of the body broken. And then the wine is prayed for, blessed, taken second. The blood of the covenant that takes away our sins.

[17:26] And at the risk of being over on time, I just really wanted to read about this covenant from Hebrews. I think I could go through and explain it, but the author of Hebrews does such a good job of explaining it.

So I just want to read this to you in a translation that I think is a little easier to follow. It says, The day is coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when they took them by the hand and led them out of the land of Egypt. They did not remain faithful to my covenant, so I turned my back on them, says the Lord.

But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, You should know the Lord, for everyone from the least to the greatest will know me already.

[18:57] And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins. That's a quote from the book of Jeremiah. It's a prophecy that is now being shown to us about this old covenant, the new covenant.

It says, That first covenant between God and Israel had regulations for worship and a place of worship here on earth.

There were two rooms in that tabernacle, and the first room was a lampstand, a table, and sacred loaves of bread on the table. This room was called the holy place. Then there was a curtain, and behind the curtain was the second room called the most holy place, or the holy of holies.

And in that room were a gold incense altar and a wooden chest called the Ark of the Covenant, which was covered with gold on all sides. Inside the Ark were a gold jar containing manna, bread, Aaron's staff that sprouted leaves, and the stone tablets of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

Above the Ark were the cherubim of divine glory, whose wings stretched out over the Ark's cover, the place of atonement. But we can't explain these things in detail now. There's a lot you can study on the tabernacle, and maybe you've covered that in the years here at Bethel.

[20 : 23] But it's a beautiful study. It says, So during the Old Covenant, that holy place, the most holy place, access to God was not possible because of this sin.

This is an illustration pointing to the present time. For the gifts and sacrifices that the priests offer were not able to cleanse the consciences of the people who brought them.

For that old system dealt only with food and drink and various cleansing ceremonies, physical regulations that were in effect only until the better system could be established. So Christ has now become the high priest over all the good things that have come.

He has entered that greater, more perfect tabernacle in heaven, which was not made by human hands and is not part of this created world. With his own blood, not the blood of goats and calves, with his own blood, he entered the most holy place, the holy of holies, once, for all time, and secured our redemption forever.

That's our new covenant. One sacrifice. The Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. One sacrifice in the holy tabernacle for all time done.

[22 : 08] Under the old system, the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer could cleanse people's bodies from ceremonial impurity. But just think how much more the blood of Christ, the God-man, the blood of Christ, will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that now we can enter that holy of holies and worship the living God.

For by the power of the eternal spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins. That's why he is the one who mediates this new covenant.

He is our great high priest between God and the people so that all who are called can receive the eternal inheritance God has promised them. For Christ died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant.

The first covenant established a penalty. The penalty was death, was separation. But Christ died to set us free. Now when someone leaves a will, this is my area, wills, last testament, last will in testament, testament, covenant, will, all the same thing.

When someone leaves a will, it's necessary to prove that the person who made it is dead. Wills don't take effect. That's why you talk about your last will in testament because you can make multiple wills in testaments and each one is your last, but then the next one you make is your last.

[23 : 30] And the next one you make is your last. That's why they have probate court. So you have to go and find which is your actual last will in testament. But when somebody leaves a will, it's necessary to prove that the person who made it is dead.

The will goes into effect only after the person's death. While the person who made it is still alive, the will cannot be put into effect. That is why even the first covenant was put into effect with blood, the blood of an animal.

For after Moses had read each of God's commandments to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats along with water and sprinkled both the book of God's law and all the people using hyssop branches and scarlet wool and said, this blood confirms the covenant God has made with you.

And the same way he sprinkled blood on the tabernacle and everything used for worship. In fact, according to the law of Moses, nearly everything was purified with blood. For without the shedding of blood, there's no forgiveness.

That's why the tabernacle had everything in it, which were copies of things in heaven, had to be purified by the blood of animals. But the real things in heaven had to be purified with a far better sacrifices than the blood of animals.

[24 : 34] For Christ didn't enter into a holy place made with human hands, not the real tabernacle, which is only a copy of the true one in heaven. He entered into heaven itself to appear now before God on our behalf. And he did not enter heaven to offer himself again and again like the high priest here on earth who enters the most holy place year after year with the blood of an animal.

Because if that had been necessary, Christ would have had to die again and again ever since the world began. He would constantly have to be on that cross. But now, once for all time, he's appeared at the end of the age to remove sin by his own death as a sacrifice.

And just as each person is destined to die once, and after that comes judgment. Also, Christ was offered once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He'll come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him.

This feast that we do is only until he comes again for us. We're looking forward to that. When we have this communion, it's not a death, that's it.

We're looking forward to him coming again. The old system under the law of Moses was only a shadow. It was a dim preview of the good things to come. It wasn't the good things themselves. The sacrifices under the old system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who come to worship.

[25 : 51] If they could have provided perfect cleansing, the sacrifices would have stopped, for the worshipers would have been purified once for all time, and their feelings of guilt would have disappeared. But instead, those sacrifices actually reminded them of their sins year after year, for it's not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

That's why when Christ came into the world, he said to God, you didn't want animal sacrifices or sin offerings. You've given me a body to offer. Christ took on flesh.

The God-man had a body to offer. Then I said, Jesus said, look, I've come to do your will, O God. It is written about me in the scriptures. He cancels the first covenant in order to put the second into effect.

I've come to do your will. I've come to do your testament. Cancels the first covenant, puts the second into effect. For God's will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all time.

Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins. But our high priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time.

[27 : 03] Then he sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand. There he waits until his enemies are humbled and made a footstool under his feet. For by that one offering, he forever made perfect those who are being holy.

And the Holy Spirit also testifies that this is so. For he says, this is the new covenant I will make with my people on that day, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts and write them on their minds.

Jeremiah again. He says, I will never again remember their sins and lawless deeds. And when their sins have been forgiven, there's no need for any more sacrifices. And so, dear brothers, we can boldly enter heaven's most holy place because of the blood of Jesus.

So what are we doing here? By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the holy of holies. And since we have a great high priest who rules over God's house, let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him.

For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean. Our bodies have been washed with pure water. Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.

[28 : 12] Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is approaching.

I know that was a lot to read, but it's the old covenant and the new covenant. When he says, this is the covenant in my blood, he was instituting a new way.

So this is our salvation when we take the cup. When we remember this, how often do we do it?

Well, we see that the disciples did it. It seems like they did it every time they came together.

It says in 1 Corinthians 11, 18, it says, whenever you come together as a church, whenever you come and do this feast, there's parallels for this feast to awake. When somebody dies and they have awake, when they have the visitation, it's common to have stories shared about that person, to talk about, oh yeah, remember how Bob did that?

Remember how he always liked fishing? Remember that time he once did that? That's what our breaking of bread is. That is what our communion is. It's remembering the one who made this way, who created our salvation.

[29 : 22] But unlike awake, he's here. He's in our midst. And unlike awake, he's coming again. We're going to see him one day. We look forward to that day. We're drawing near to worship God.

When we take communion, we're drawing near through that new way. What's the qualification for participation? Well, we talked about that confession, washing your feet. In 1 Corinthians, it says that a man must examine himself.

When we come to eat this, when we come to have this communion, we don't want unconfessed sin in our lives. And that includes baptism. Baptism is a commandment, right? It's a commandment for every believer. If you haven't been baptized, and you come and you take the Lord's Supper, that is disobedience in your life.

That is unconfessed sin. Now, I'm not saying that God's grace can't cover that sin. It can cover that sin. But we need to be realizing that we're supposed to examine ourselves, come here with confession, because we're partaking with God.

And again, it's not the physical stuff. In 1 Corinthians 10, it talks about how this is a sharing in the blood of Christ, a sharing in his body of Christ. It isn't the actual blood.

[30 : 32] It isn't the actual body. It's not about the bread. It's not magic bread. It's not magic juice. That's the way that some other churches, they guard that.

They say, you can, you know, you've got to take this, and we can't trust you even with the cup. I have to drink the cup in case somebody would spill from it. But it's not that the stuff is magical, but it's a communion.

It's a fellowship. It's partaking with our Lord and Savior. It's realizing this new covenant that's been made, reminding ourselves that our access to God does not come from things we do, does not come from compliance with the law, but it's that one sacrifice that has opened the way for us so we can be together with Christ forever.

That's why we do it as often as we do it. We're connecting with our Savior. And the duration of this, as I mentioned, it's only until he comes.

Verse 29 here says, I will not partake of this until I do it again in my Father's kingdom. That's at the marriage supper of the Lamb. There's that parallels to John, the wedding in Cana, where what happened?

[31 : 44] Jesus turned the water into wine. What type of wine? The finest wine. And people are saying, hey, normally at a wedding, you serve the best wine first, and when everybody's, you know, drunk, you bring out the cheap wine and keep the party going.

But it says, you've saved the best for last. We're looking forward to that day when we celebrate the Passover, not as a picture of what is to come, but with our Passover Lamb.

When we celebrate that marriage supper, when we take that cup, the fourth cup of praise, with our beloved. And instead of the best coming out first and slowly getting worse, God is going to give us greater and greater and greater things.

He has given us everything in the Lord Jesus Christ. We commune with Him every week or as often as we do it. His body had to be broken.

His blood was shed to ratify the new covenant, the new way of grace. How amazing is it that we can have our sins completely forgiven? We don't have to remember what's there.

[32 : 54] It says, there's sins I will remember no more. That is the grace we have. That is the covenant we celebrate. When we take this communion, it's a picture.

It's remembering and looking forward to what He has done. Let's just close in prayer. Our God and Heavenly Father, we thank You for what You've done with Your work on the cross, Father.

That old covenant was flawed. We can never be saved under it, Father. We're imperfect. But Jesus, Your Son, was perfect. He fulfilled the covenant. He brought the new covenant.

We're so grateful for that. Father, we pray that every time we take of Your feast, as we take of this communion, Father, that we would look to Your Son, look to that new covenant, and rejoice in that, Father.

We thank You. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen.