

Part V: Ratification Ceremony: The Death of the Mediator (Matthew 26-28)

Chapter 26

Passover Identified as the Time for the Passion (26:1–2)

“The reason for the incarnation begins here. God became human flesh and walked Planet Earth in order to die as the atoning sacrifice for our sin. So, this is the true climax of Matthew’s gospel—not just the resurrection but the passion and resurrection as a single event in salvation history. Here, in fact, **the climax of the entire Bible and of God’s plan of salvation occurs. The metanarrative of all of Scripture centers on how God in his gracious mercy overcomes the sin of Adam and brings salvation to humankind.**”¹

Matthew 26:1 When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples,

When Jesus had finished all these sayings.... In each of Jesus’s five major discourses he concludes them with a similar statement: the Sermon on the Mount, Mt. 7:28; the Sermon on Mission, 11:1; the Sermon of Parables, 13:53; the Sermon on Community, 19:1; the Sermon on the End, 26:1. “After this there will not be any extended teaching by Jesus.”² Some outline Matthew around these five sermons. But that is a truncated way of understanding Matthew, especially when you consider that the heart of the gospel is yet to be unfolded.

I’d like to suggest another outline in keeping with the theme that the Book of Matthew is the call of Israel to covenant renewal, indeed a call to initiate a New and better Covenant, the New Covenant initiated at the Lord’s Supper. Matthew’s outline reflects the elements of an Old Testament covenant common in the ancient world. The heart of a covenant is a treaty; what are its origin and history?

Breakthrough insight into the origin and role of the covenant in the ancient Near East were the contributions of Drs. George E. Mendenhall³ and Meredith G. Kline.⁴ In their books, they showed that the form of the Mosaic law, the language of the text, the historical prologue, the requirement of an exclusive commitment to the suzerain (the

¹ Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (vol. 1; Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 941.

² R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co., 2007), 970.

³ George E. Mendenhall (August 13, 1916 – August 5, 2016) was an American Biblical scholar who taught at the University of Michigan’s Department of Near Eastern Studies. Mendenhall graduated from Midland College in Nebraska in 1936, and from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg in 1938. Mendenhall was first an ordained Lutheran minister, and during World War II he served as an intelligence officer in the United States Navy. After the war, Mendenhall obtained a Ph.D. in Semitic languages from Johns Hopkins University and began a career in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical studies as well as related archeology. He was professor at the University of Michigan from 1952 to 1986. The University of Michigan honored Mendenhall by creating the “George E. Mendenhall Professor Emeritus of Ancient and Biblical Studies”.

⁴ Meredith G. Kline (1922-2007). Kline was an influential voice for Covenant theology in the Reformed tradition. He is perhaps best known for his important contributions in the area of Suzerain-Vassal treaties in the 2nd millennium BC. Kline received a B.A., Gordon College; Th.B., Th.M., Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia (1947), and a Ph.D. in Assyriology and Egyptology from Dropsie University (1956). He was an ordained minister in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and had a long career as Professor of Old Testament at various institutions, including Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia; Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary; and Westminster Seminary California.

Lord of the Covenant), the pronouncement of imprecations⁵ and blessings,⁶ and more, all point to the law as a treaty established by God with His people. Hittite treaties common to that era were the models used in the establishment of the Mosaic Covenant. Indeed, “the revelation committed to the two tables was rather a suzerainty treaty (peace treaty) or covenant than a legal code.”⁷

Such a covenant consists of these elements:

Part I: Preamble—Identification of the Covenant Mediator (Matthew 1:1-2:12)

Part II: Historical Prologue—Recounting the Kings Past Deeds that Benefited the Vassal (Matthew 2:13-4:25)

Part III: Stipulations: The Terms of the Covenant Obedience (Matthew 5-7)

Part IV: A Declaration of Sanctions: The Blessings and Curses of Covenant Obedience and Disobedience (Matthew 7:28-25:46)

Part V: Ratification Ceremony: The Death of the Mediator of the Covenant (Matthew 26-28)

Matthew 26:2 “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”

after two days the Passover is coming.... Some estimate that Jesus speaks this late Tuesday evening or by Jewish reckoning, Wednesday. After two days counts the current day and the next one. **Jesus ate the Passover (the Lord’s Supper) with his disciples on Thursday late afternoon; later that night, now Friday, he goes to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. There he is arrested and taken to the High Priest where he is tried by them for blasphemy. The next morning, still Friday, he is taken to Pilot where he is again tried by him for insurrection and again found guilty. He is immediately crucified and before sunset is buried—still Friday. He is in the grave a part of Friday, all of Saturday and a part of Sunday when he is then resurrected.**

Passover.... The word Passover is a transliteration of a Hebrew word meaning “to pass over, spare. The Passover, an exemption, immunity....”⁸ **In Egypt, by means of the Passover blood, families were passed over, exempted, obtained immunity from the death angel as he visited the land.** “Where once the Angel of Death “passed over” the blood on the doorposts of believing *Israel’s* homes, the next three chapters will show how the blood of Jesus shields the Angel of Eternal Death from the doors of believers’ homes *everywhere* (cf. Exod 12 and Matt 26:28).”⁹

⁵ Curses

⁶ Blessings

⁷ Rousas John Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law, Volume One* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1973), 7.

⁸ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

⁹ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 593.

“Passover is the feast prepared for by the sacrificial slaughter of lambs in the late afternoon of 14 Nisan¹⁰ [Thursday afternoon] and celebrated throughout Jerusalem in family or wider groupings after sunset (and so by Jewish reckoning on 15 Nisan). An elaborate meal was built around the eating of the cooked lamb.”¹¹

“According to Josephus, the number of lambs sacrificed at Jerusalem in his time was 256,500. They were slain between the ninth and eleventh hour, which is from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.”¹² That would be 35.625 lambs killed every second. It would have taken a vast number of priests to do this and we in fact read that for this purpose, “A full contingent of priests—twenty-four divisions instead of the usual one—came early to the temple.”¹³ Each lamb would feed an extended family of 10 or more people or up to 2,565,000 people. This was an exceedingly large number and would include all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a vast multitude of visitors from around the Mediterranean world, plus a great number of people in the surrounding villages. “Here we may note, that three million of the Jews were present at the Passover, A.D. 65...”¹⁴

“Each Jew slaughtered his own lamb. The priests stood in two rows, one holding gold basins, and the other silver. After the blood was drained into a basin, it was tossed against the base of the altar (*Pesahim* v.6). While the offerings were going on, the Levites sang the Hallel (Pss. 113–118). Each lamb was then skinned and its fat with kidneys removed for burning on the altar (*Pesahim* v.9f; cf. Lev. 3:3–5). Before leaving the temple, each offerer slung his lamb—wrapped in its own hide—over his shoulder (TB *Pesahim* 65b). He then departed with his company to prepare the Passover meal.”¹⁵

the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.... This is the final statement in a series of prophecies of Jesus coming death.

“From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.” (Matthew 16:21, ESV)

“But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands.” (Matthew 17:12, ESV)

“As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day.” And they were greatly distressed.” (Matthew 17:22–23, ESV)

“And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the

¹⁰ Nisan usually falls in March–April.

¹¹ Nolland John. (2005). Preface. In *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (p. 1044). Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.

¹² Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

¹³ M. R. Wilson, “Passover,” ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979–1988), 677.

¹⁴ Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987).

TB Babylonian Talmud

¹⁵ M. R. Wilson, “Passover,” ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979–1988), 677.

Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.” (Matthew 20:17–19, ESV)

the Son of Man.... This is Jesus favorite title for himself and comes from the Book of Daniel.

“I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.” (Daniel 7:13–14, ESV)

delivered up or handed over.... “Everybody, it seems, is “handing Jesus over” to somebody else: Judas hands him over to the high priests; the high priests hand him over to Pilate; Pilate hands him over to the soldiers; the soldiers hand him over to death.”¹⁶

In addition, “...*these Isa 53 handover passages throw the clearest light on the meaning of the passion:* (1) “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD *has laid on him* [*paredōken*, literally, “has handed over to him”] the iniquity of us all” (Isa 53:6). (2) “He *poured out* his soul to death” (*paredothē*; literally, his soul “was handed over to death”) (Isa 53:12b). And (3) “He bore the sin of many, and *made intercession* for the transgressors” (*paredothē*, the last word in Greek Isa 53, meaning, literally, that “for the sake of their transgressions he was handed over”) (Isa 53:12c).”¹⁷

But even before this, “the great fact of the passion is (1) that *God* handed his Son over to human judgment; this fact’s corollary is (2) that for the sake of human salvation Jesus *let* himself be “handed over”; and it is only of third-rank importance, though it is still important, (3) that *human beings* handed over Jesus to judgment.”¹⁸

“*God* delivered Him up in *mercy* to the human race, *Judas* from *covetousness*, the *Priests* from *envy*, the *Devil* through *fear*....”¹⁹

to be crucified.... God planned the crucifixion. Jesus death was not an unforeseen wrinkle in his plan—it was *his plan!*

Conspiracy in the High Priest’s Palace (26:3–5)

¹⁶ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 594.

¹⁷ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 594.

¹⁸ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 595.

¹⁹ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 596.

Matthew 26:3 Then the chief priests [, the scribes,] and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas,

chief priests²⁰.... The ones ordained to serve for God and for the people—and who did neither.

the scribes.... The Minority Text deletes **the scribes**, the Majority Text preserves the correct reading as is demonstrated in these other verses.

“From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.” (Matthew 16:21, ESV)

“From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.” (Matthew 16:21, ESV)

“Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered.” (Matthew 26:57, ESV)

“So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying,” (Matthew 27:41, ESV)

gathered²¹ or **gathered together, synagogued**.... As prophesied in the Psalms,

“Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, “Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.”” (Psalm 2:1–3, ESV)

palace²².... It could also refer to the court yard of the palace. Earlier we read, “*the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.*” (Matthew 8:20, ESV), but the high priest, the one who is supposed to represent Jesus to the people, lives in a palace.

high priest.... “He above all others was honored with the title of priest, the chief of priests. ... his chief duty was, once a year on the day of atonement, to enter into the Holy of Holies (from which the other priests were excluded) and offer sacrifices for his own sins and the sins of the people, and to preside over the Sanhedrin, or Supreme Council, when convened for judicial deliberations. **It was of course Jesus who was the high priest and as such presented himself as the sacrifice for the sins of his people.**

“According to Mosaic law, no one could aspire to the high priesthood unless he were of the tribe of Aaron and descended from a high priestly family; and he on whom the office was conferred held it till death. But from the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, when the

²⁰ *chief priests* ἀρχιερεῖς “The pl. is used in the NT to denote members of the Sanhedrin who belonged to high priestly families.” Zodhiates, S. (2000). The complete word study dictionary: New Testament. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

²¹ *gathered* συνάγω “to cause to come together, whether of animate or inanimate objects—‘to gather together, to call together.’”²¹ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 197.

²² *palace* αὐλή “...any dwelling having an interior courtyard (often a relatively elaborate structure)—‘dwelling, palace, mansion.’” Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains. New York: United Bible Societies.

kings of Seleucideae and afterwards the Herodian princes and the Romans arrogated to themselves the power of appointing the high priests, the office neither remained vested in the pontifical family nor was conferred on any for life; but it became venal,²³ and could be transferred from one to another according to the will of civic or military rulers. Hence it came to pass, that during the one hundred and seven years intervening between Herod the Great and the destruction of the holy city, twenty-eight persons held the pontifical dignity.”²⁴

Caiaphas.... Joseph Caiaphas was high priest of the years 18–36. The Scripture mentions not only Caiaphas as high priest but Annas as well.

“during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.” (Luke 3:2, ESV)

“with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family.” (Acts 4:6, ESV)

“Annas was deposed by the secular authorities in A.D. 15 and replaced by Caiaphas, who lived and ruled till his death in A.D. 36. But since according to the OT the high priest was not to be replaced till after his death, the transfer of power was illegal. Doubtless some continued to call either man “high priest.” Certainly Annas, Caiaphas’s father-in-law (John 18:13), continued to exercise great authority behind the scenes.”²⁵

As mentioned, “Though the office of high priest had earlier been hereditary and for life, the Romans had taken control of the right of appointment. Pilate’s predecessor had initially repeatedly deposed high priests after a short time in office, but once he had appointed Caiaphas, as far as our sources allow us to determine, he made no further change, and Pilate seems to have left Caiaphas in office for the whole of his own time as governor: Caiaphas knew how to get along with the Roman authorities.”²⁶

Matthew 26:4 and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him.

plotted²⁷ “...we should probably locate the deception in what is being plotted in the intention to make use of half-truths and tendentiously presented evidence to establish Jesus’ criminality.... It may be, alternatively, that the ‘deceit’ involved is precisely keeping the matter away from the public: it is the public who are to be deceived by action taken behind their backs.”²⁸

²³ venal “capable of being bought or obtained for money or other valuable consideration: purchasable; *especially*: open to corrupt influence and especially bribery: mercenary....”

²⁴ Strong, J. (2001). Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

²⁵ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 524). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

²⁶ Nolland John. (2005). Preface. In *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (p. 1047). Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.

²⁷ *plotted* συμβουλευῶ “...to engage in joint planning so as to devise a course of common action, often one with a harmful or evil purpose—‘to confer, to consult, to plot, to make plans against.’” Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains*. New York: United Bible Societies.

²⁸ Nolland John. (2005). Preface. In *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (p. 1048). Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.

stealth²⁹ or **deceit**.... “According to Exod 21:14 crimes committed with evil intent ... are not pardonable.”³⁰ Evil intent is what we have here.

kill³¹.... They may plot to kill him, but his death was preordained from all eternity and was by his own authority.

“For I hear the whispering of many— terror on every side!— as they scheme together against me, as they plot to take my life.” (Psalm 31:13, ESV)

“No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.” (John 10:18, ESV)

This is “a plan that succeeds. Thus, Jesus’ opponents seem to win. But we have read the book’s last page. “Ultimately [Matthew’s] passion narrative serves to demonstrate that God in Christ overcomes the forces of evil when those forces *succeed* at doing their worst”³² This was not the first time the Jewish leaders decided to kill Jesus; it is something that they have wanted to do for some time.

“But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.” (Matthew 12:14, ESV)

Matthew 26:5 *But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.”*

they said.... The tense of the verb is imperfect. “The imperfect tense generally represents continual or repeated action.”³³ They said this often, it was an important point; it must not be during the feast. But for God, it must be during the feast, and it was.

The Sanhedrin wants to wait till the feast is over for fear of a riot. However, Jesus makes it clear *“You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”* (Matthew 26:2, ESV). Jesus *is* the Passover lamb, he must die during the Passover.

“The desire to arrest Jesus was anticipated already at 21:46; there the popular standing of Jesus was identified as the barrier to action against him.”³⁴

²⁹ *stealth* δόλος “...to deceive by using trickery and falsehood—“to deceive, to trick into, treachery.” By deceit. “According to Exod 21:14 crimes committed with evil intent (δόλω) are not pardonable.” Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains. New York: United Bible Societies.

³⁰ Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21–28: A Commentary* (ed. Helmut Koester; Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible; Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2005), 332.

³¹ *kill* ἀποκτείνω “...to cause someone’s death, normally by violent means, with or without intent and with or without legal justification—“to kill.”” Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains. New York: United Bible Societies.

³² Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 598.

³³ Larry Pierce, *Tense Voice Mood* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, n.d.).

³⁴ Nolland John. (2005). Preface. In *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (p. 1048). Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.

“And although they were seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a prophet.” (Matthew 21:46, ESV)

lest there be an uproar among the people.... “...Jesus’ supporters from Galilee might be expected to be outraged. To send a posse to arrest Jesus openly was out of the question. The Sanhedrin agreed that there must not be a *tumult among the people*.”³⁵ Their plan was to avoid a confrontation with Jesus and his disciples, all Galileans, during the feast. God’s plan was that Jesus be that Passover sacrifice. **Judas would intervene, and their plans would soon change.**

“The leaders were right in fearing the people. Jerusalem’s population swelled perhaps fivefold during the feast; and with religious fervor and national messianism at a high pitch, a spark might set off an explosion. They decided to suspend action; **but Judas’s offer to hand Jesus over at a time and place when the crowds were not present was too good an opportunity to pass up (vv. 14–16).** Thus in God’s providence the connection between Passover and Jesus’ death that he had just predicted (vv. 12) came about.”³⁶

Rome was ever ready to attack Israel if they perceived it acted with disloyalty; therefore, there must be no scene. Ironically, “they who would avoid Rome’s wrath must instead incur God’s. They save their lives but lose their souls....”³⁷

“What was to be hid from people’s view becomes the heart of the Gospel, and thence the most frequently told story in the nations. There has been “tumult” ever since.”³⁸

Jesus Anointed by a Woman in Bethany (26:6–13) (Mark 14:3–9; John 12:1–8; [Luke 7:37–39])

There is a similar story in Luke 7 of an anointing of Jesus but it is not the same event as recorded here in Matthew. Although there are some similarities in Luke, there are many differences. The Luke story is much earlier in Jesus’ ministry. It occurred in Galilee, not in Bethany near Jerusalem. It occurred at the home of a Pharisee. Although the Pharisee was named Simon, a common name at that time, it is not likely that he is the same Simon the leper of Bethany. A leper, even a healed one, would not likely be a Pharisee. And the unnamed woman in Luke is identified as a sinner.

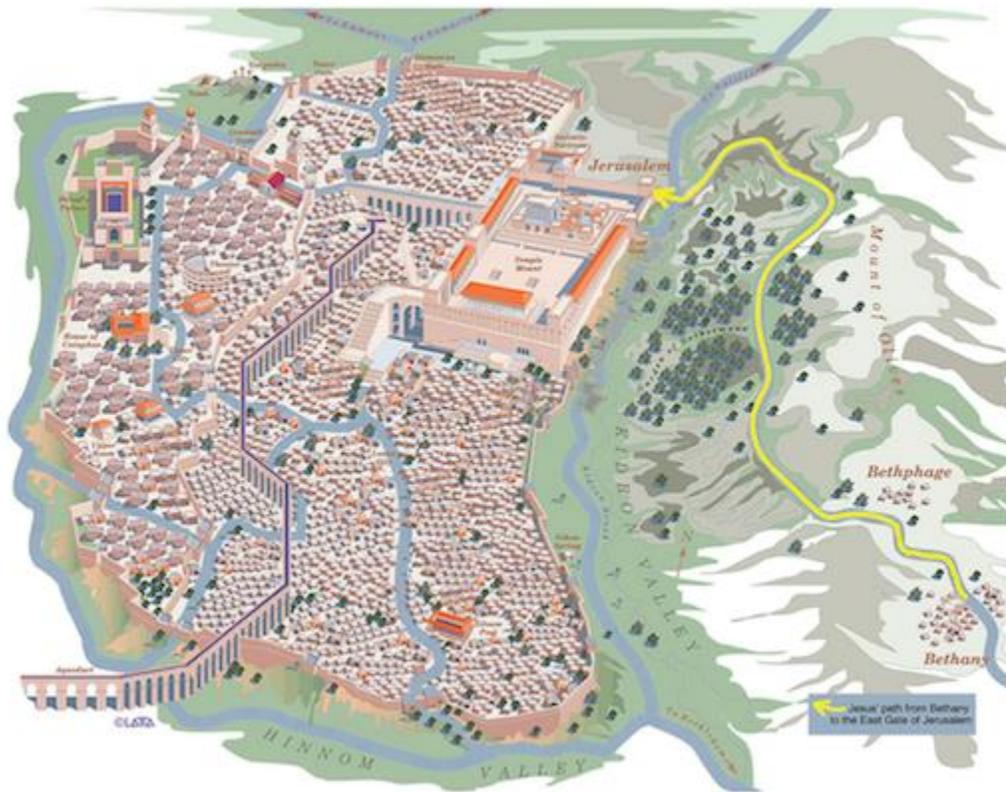
Matthew 26:6 Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,

³⁵ Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (p. 645). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

³⁶ Carson, D. A. (1984). *Matthew*. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 524). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

³⁷ Craig Blomberg, *Matthew* (vol. 22; *The New American Commentary*; Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 384.

³⁸ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 598.



John's version of the story goes this way:

“Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table. Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it. Jesus said, “Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.”” (John 12:1–8, ESV)

In John's account, we are told that this event occurred six days before the Passover. In Matthew 26:2, Matthew states that Jesus tells his disciples that the Passover is in two days.

“You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.” (Matthew 26:2, ESV)

The question is why two different days? It appears that John's account is in chronological context. What Matthew is doing is retroactively recording this story in his narrative—an event that occurred four days earlier for topical purposes. The gospels are only relatively chronological. **It is typical for the authors to discuss several miracles or parables in a given location for the topical and theological benefit of the reader.** That seems to be the case with Matthew; at this point, he finds it appropriate to tell this story. This is rather typical of Matthew. But why here? **“This pericope is deliberately placed**

here by Mark and Matthew to supply a contrast with Judas's betrayal."³⁹ It is the faithfulness of one, a woman who is an outsider, contrasted with the unfaithfulness of another, a man and disciple who is an insider.

the house of Simon the leper.... What house are they in? Here it is clear, "*the house of Simon the leper.*" But John 12 says"

"Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table. Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair.... (John 12:1–3, ESV)

John does not actually tell us in what house this took place, just that Lazarus, Martha and Mary played prominent roles at the dinner. So, it would appear that Simon hosted the dinner, others suspect that Simon was the father of Lazarus, the patriarch of the family. It was common for extended families to live together. Jesus and Lazarus were the special guest.

"When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came, not only on account of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead." (John 12:9, ESV)

Jesus healed several lepers during his ministry and no doubt Simon was one of them.

"And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean."⁴⁰ (Matthew 8:2, ESV)

"Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay." (Matthew 10:8, ESV)

"the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them." (Matthew 11:5, ESV)

"Since people were very fearful of leprosy and had no way of curing it, quarantine was the normal requirement: those with this disease must stay away from other people. Therefore, *Simon* could not have had the disease at this time.... Even after his cure he would have still been known as *the leper*. Jesus was there for a meal, for Matthew speaks of him as reclining at table (v. 7). John tells us that Martha was serving at the meal and that Lazarus was there (John 12:2)."⁴⁰

Matthew 26:7 a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table.

a woman.... A woman began the Christmas story (1:18), a woman now begins the passion story (26:7) and a woman will begin the resurrection story (28:7-10).

John tells us that the woman was Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus.

³⁹ Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (vol. 1; Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 948.

⁴⁰ Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (pp. 646–647). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

“Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.” (John 12:3, ESV)

alabaster flask.... “The word is ἀλάβαστρον, meaning “alabaster” and then what is made of alabaster, “an *alabaster flask* for ointment, a vessel with a rather long neck which was broken off when the contents were used; a container for spikenard ointment” The expensive container would be used only for expensive perfume.”⁴¹

“And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head.” (Mark 14:3, ESV)

From the Psalms we read:

“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.” (Psalm 23:5, ESV)

head.... “According to Matthew and Mark she pours it on his *head* (cf. Ps. 23:5); according to John she anoints his *feet*. There is no conflict, for Matthew and Mark clearly indicate that the perfume was poured over Christ’s *body* (Matt. 26:12; Mark 14:8). Evidently there was enough for the entire body: head, neck, shoulders, and feet. Simon’s house was filled with fragrance.”⁴²

Matthew and Mark address the feet in noting that she anointed his “body.”

“In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial.” (Matthew 26:12, ESV)

“She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial.” (Mark 14:8, ESV)

In any event, various people would tell the story in their own words and although the stories differ, they do not conflict.

Matthew 26:8 And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste?”

indignant⁴³.... “In Matthew the protest against the woman’s act comes from the disciples. They are not ideal figures. They represent Christians as they actually are—people who have small faith (8:26; 16:8), are ambitious (18:1), have an aversion to suffering (16:22–23), doubt (28:17) ... in the passion narratives the disciples cut a particularly bad figure.”⁴⁴ They do not come off looking well here either.

41 Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew*. Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

42 Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew* (Vol. 9, p. 899). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

43 *indignant* ἀγανακτέω “To be oppressed in mind, grieved, resentful. indignant...” Zodhiates, S. (2000). *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament*. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

44 Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21–28: A Commentary* (ed. Helmut Koester; Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible; Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2005), 337.

“But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, ‘Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?’ He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it.” (John 12:4–6, ESV)

“Matthew shows the disciples’ failure to understand what is taking place, not only in the anointing, but also in who Jesus truly is and in the rush of events toward the Cross....”⁴⁵ Mary, however, seemed to understand who Jesus was, what she was doing and what would soon occur to Jesus.

Matthew 26:9 For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor.”

large sum.... It would appear that Mary’s family was a wealthy one; no ordinary family could afford such a gift. Indeed, since no one in the family demurred either, this was probably Mary’s property.

“...the ointment was worth about three hundred denarii—approximately a year’s salary for a working man.”⁴⁶ This was a lot of money to slip through Judas hands and he was most upset about it.

“For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.” And they scolded her.” (Mark 14:5, ESV)

“In ordinary circumstances their objection might well have been apropos, but as Jesus goes on to explain, the present instance was an exceptional one.”⁴⁷

Matthew 26:10 But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, ‘Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me.

she has done a beautiful thing.... “...literally ‘she has worked a good work....’”⁴⁸

Matthew 26:11 For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me.

For you always have the poor with you.... Jesus references an Old Testament passage to make the point; unfortunately, the poor are always with us. However, something most unique is about to take place that is more pressing than the needs of the poor.

“For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.” (Deuteronomy 15:11, ESV)

⁴⁵ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke (Vol. 8, p. 526). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁴⁶ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke (Vol. 8, p. 526). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁴⁷ Hagner, D. A. (1998). Matthew 14–28 (Vol. 33B, p. 758). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

⁴⁸ Nolland John. (2005). Preface. In The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text (p. 1054). Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.

“His followers will always find poor people to help (cf. Deut 15:11); they will not always have the incarnate Jesus with them. Implicitly, the distinction Jesus makes is a high Christological claim, for it not only shows that he foresees his impending departure but also that he himself, who is truly “gentle and humble in heart” (11:29), *deserves* this lavish outpouring of love and expense.”⁴⁹

In no sense is Jesus advocating neglecting the poor. **In his last teaching section before this Passion section began, he gave the highest priority to caring for the poor 25:31-46.** That still stands, however, there is something unique about to happen that takes priority even over that.

We might note that Deuteronomy also looks forward to a time with no poor.

“But there will be no poor among you; for the LORD will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess— if only you will strictly obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all this commandment that I command you today.” (Deuteronomy 15:4–5, ESV)

It is not uncommon that obedience to God’s word brings prosperity.

Matthew 26:12 In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial.

It is not entirely clear if Mary did this because she consciously understood that this was a burial ointment, after all we had a similar story in Luke 7 that was not for a coming burial. But if she did not do this in anticipation to his death, then why did she do it? We don’t really know. The woman in Luke 7 did something similar and in that story, we are not told why she did that either. There it appears that it was simply an act driven by sorry and gratitude for Jesus’ saving grace. Other than that, we don’t know. The same is true here with Mary. Was her action driven by reasons similar to Luke 7? We are not given her reasons, but we are given Jesus interpretation and application.

It is important to note that ointments before death were only provided for criminals—and Jesus was about to die the death of a criminal. “Verse 12 may also point forward to Jesus’ execution as a criminal, preventing a later chance for proper burial ceremonies.”⁵⁰

“The anointing does not designate Jesus as Messiah but “prepares” him for his burial after dying the death of a criminal, for only in that circumstance would the customary anointing of the body be omitted....”⁵¹

Although this woman may have reasonably assumed that Jesus would receive no proper burial from the Jesus, the Father intervened.

“Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. So they took

⁴⁹ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke (Vol. 8, p. 527). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁵⁰ Craig Blomberg, *Matthew* (vol. 22; The New American Commentary; Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 385.

⁵¹ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke (Vol. 8, p. 527). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.” (John 19:39–40, ESV)

Unaware of Nicodemus service in this matter, others attempted to do the same thing.

“When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him.” (Mark 16:1, ESV)

Matthew 26:13 Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.”

this gospel.... “...for Jesus to speak of a continuing proclamation of “this good news” immediately after reflecting on his own impending death must indicate that his death is not the end: if Jesus were to remain dead and buried, where would the “good news” be?”⁵² Jesus new there would soon be good news.

Judas Arranges to Betray Jesus (26:14–16)
(Mark 14:10-11; Luke 22:3-6)

“The devotion of the unnamed woman is sharply contrasted with the treachery of one of Jesus’ inner circle, and her uncalculating generosity with his sordid bargaining.”⁵³

Matthew 26:14 Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests

Then.... “...right when Jesus honored the emotional woman, “then” Judas....”⁵⁴ We are reminded here why Matthew placed the anointing of Jesus here instead of its earlier context—as a contrast with Judas’ behavior.

one of the twelve.... “one of this sacred number, one who was raised so high by Christ, one who was destined for one of the twelve apostolic thrones in heaven....”⁵⁵

Judas Iscariot.... “The rebuke Judas had received (see on v. 6), may have brought to a crisis those wrong feelings towards the Master which he had more or less consciously entertained for a long time. (John 6:70 f.)”⁵⁶

Matthew 26:15 and said, “What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?” And they paid him thirty pieces of silver.

⁵² R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co., 2007), 976.

⁵³ France, R. T. (2007). *The Gospel of Matthew* (p. 977). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co.

⁵⁴ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 606.

⁵⁵ Lenski, R. C. H. (1961). *The Interpretation of St. Matthew’s Gospel* (p. 1011). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House.

⁵⁶ Broadus, J. A. (1886). *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (p. 521). Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society.

What will you give me.... “Matthew makes it clear that Judas is motivated by greed. John 12:6 says Judas was a thief who, as treasurer of the apostolic band, often stole from the common purse.”⁵⁷ Jesus earlier had said:

“No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.” (Matthew 6:24, ESV)

“Naturally the chief priests “were glad” (Mark 14:11) when they heard these words. Here, just when they were in a quandary, thinking perhaps that the crowds of Jewish Passover pilgrims were rather solidly on the side of Jesus, this man—one of the twelve closest companions of him whom they considered their enemy—volunteers his services! The chief priests must have considered this an answer to their prayers.”⁵⁸

“All the Gospels speak of Judas’s important role in Jesus’ death (cf. Mark 14:10–11; Luke 22:34); but none explains what motives prompted his treachery. Like most human motives, his were mixed and doubtless included avarice and jealousy combined with profound disappointment that Jesus was not acting like the Messiah he had expected.”⁵⁹ “In Judas’s view Jesus was acting less and less regal and more and more like a defeatist on his way to death. ...Judas may also have been smarting from Jesus’ rebuke.”⁶⁰

thirty pieces of silver.... Mary paid 300 denarii for the perfume to anoint Jesus, ten times the wage Judas received to betray him. Zechariah has a passage that reminds us of the prophetic nature of this betrayal.

“Then I said to them, “If it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them.” And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver.” (Zechariah 11:12, ESV)

“The sum paid to Judas is mentioned only by Matthew, who will use it in 27:9–10 as the basis for a formula-quotation which consists of Zech 11:12–13 (where the same phrase occurs) and related texts. The same text is presumably alluded to here, inviting the reader to compare the “price” of Jesus with that of the rejected shepherd in Zech 11:4–14, who is a paradoxical messianic figure.”⁶¹

Matthew 26:16 And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him.

“...the value of the betrayer consisted in his capacity to identify Jesus’ location to the authorities at a time when he was with the disciples. In this way the actual arrest could be kept from the public gaze and, though the public would find out soon enough, the particular flashpoint situation created by the move to take Jesus into custody avoided.”⁶²

⁵⁷ Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (vol. 1; Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 955.

⁵⁸ Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew* (Vol. 9, p. 902). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

⁵⁹ Carson, D. A. (1984). *Matthew*. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 528). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁶⁰ Carson, D. A. (1984). *Matthew*. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 528). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁶¹ France, R. T. (2007). *The Gospel of Matthew* (pp. 978–979). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co.

⁶² Nolland John. (2005). Preface. In *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (p. 1059). Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.

Arrangements for the Passover Meal (26:17–19)

Matthew 26:17 Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?”

first day of Unleavened Bread.... This would be:

“In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.” (Exodus 12:18, ESV)

Unleavened Bread was a weeklong celebration that began the first day of Passover—which was 15 Nisan.

The Jewish recognition of days went from sunset to sunset. Sunset ended one day and began a new one. The first day of Unleavened Bread technically began at sunset on Friday—Nisan 15. In practice as you can see from Exodus 12:18, it began on the evening of Thursday the 14 of Nisan of the Passion Week—before the sun went down. This “early start” was necessary because of the time it took to get all the leaven out of the house before the sunset and to prepare the Passover meal.

At sunset, it would become 15 Nisan or Passover (Thursday evening to Friday evening). This would last until sundown on Friday, at which point it would then become 16 Nisan or the Sabbath (Saturday). This Sabbath would end Saturday evening at sunset and would then become 17 Nisan or their start of Sunday.

the disciples came to Jesus.... We do not know that all the disciples were present; it is possible that some, especially Judas, was not present at this time.

Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover? It may be that Jesus had kept this information to himself in order to avoid alerting Judas as to his whereabouts until after the Passover meal.

“Presumably nothing had been said about the location until now as part of the way Jesus and his little group kept themselves out of the way of the enemies who were trying to arrest him and put him to death.”⁶³

Matthew 26:18 He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.’ ”

Mark’s account is similar:

“And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us.” And the disciples set out and

⁶³ Morris, L. (1992). The Gospel according to Matthew (p. 654). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.” (Mark 14:13–16, ESV)

“Mark says that he sent two of the band, and Luke that they were Peter and John. Jesus had evidently made the arrangement and kept it secret so that, for example, Judas would not be able to betray him prematurely.”⁶⁴

a certain man.... It is likely that this was a person that Jesus and the disciples knew—and trusted.

“...Jesus was concerned to avoid detection by the authorities prior to the Passover meal with his disciples. ... not until after the Last Supper would Judas be in a position to give away Jesus’ location. For Matthew it is enough that it is in fact sometime after the Supper that Judas slips away to enact his betrayal.”⁶⁵

The Teacher.... Using this term “the” teacher instead of “a” teacher suggest that this unknown person was himself a disciple and Jesus was his teacher as well.

My time is at hand.... “This man will apparently understand who “the teacher” is and recognize the signal..., “my time is near.”⁶⁶

Matthew 26:19 And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover.

Jesus direction “prepares the way for the Last Supper and Jesus’ death and demonstrates that he is quietly and consciously taking the steps to complete his mission of tragedy and glory.”⁶⁷

The Passover Meal (26:20–35)

Matthew 26:20 When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve.

evening.... Or the beginning of Friday. “When evening had come’ marks the transition from 14 Nisan to 15 Nisan and thus the beginning of Passover day and the time for the celebration.”⁶⁸

Matthew 26:21 And as they were eating, he said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.”

One is reminded of a prophetic statement from the Old Testament:

“Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.” (Psalm 41:9, ESV)

⁶⁴ Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (p. 654). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

⁶⁵ Nolland John. (2005). Preface. In *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (p. 1062). Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.

⁶⁶ Hagner, D. A. (1998). *Matthew 14–28* (Vol. 33B, p. 764). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

⁶⁷ Carson, D. A. (1984). *Matthew*. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 533). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁶⁸ Nolland John. (2005). Preface. In *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (p. 1065). Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.

Jesus himself has made it clear to his disciples what is in his near future. However, it does not seem his disciples fully understood him.

“As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men,” (Matthew 17:22, ESV)

“See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.” (Matthew 20:18–19, ESV)

“You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.” (Matthew 26:2, ESV)

Matthew 26:22 *And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, “Is it I, Lord?”*

very sorrowful.... “Depression is not always as unhealthy as happiness-obsessed culture or false religion wants us to believe. On the contrary, not to be depressed when confronted with the depressing is unnatural.”⁶⁹

In fact, James recommends depression in some circumstances:

“Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.” (James 4:9, ESV)

Unbeknownst to many people, sometimes God encourages depression! The disciples feared that the cause of Jesus death might be theirs, so they were **“very sorrowful.”** Having failed to *“Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”* (James 4:8, ESV)—then we have much reason for depression as well and should be *“wretched and mourn and weep.”* It is recommended in God’s Word! The disciples were being proactive by asking the right question **“Is it I, Lord?”** When facing crises in life, this is a good question for us to ask as well; **it’s not always the other person!**

There is holy power in *self-examination*.

Matthew 26:23 *He answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me.*

“Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.” (Psalm 41:9, ESV)

“...they have been in the habit of sharing meals together, where each dipped his bread into a common dish to scoop up the sauce and herbs. “The one who” is thus general rather than specific; it could be any one of them.”⁷⁰ But the point is—it was one of “them.”

⁶⁹ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 614.

⁷⁰ France, R. T. (2007). *The Gospel of Matthew* (p. 990). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co.

It is clear that the disciples did not know who the betrayer was even though Jesus gave them many hints and “we may reasonably assume that if Judas had been clearly identified the others would have tried to prevent him.”⁷¹ But Jesus did not want anyone to stop him; Judas must be allowed to do this.

“Many people have been betrayed by persons they trusted, even by “bosom friends” to whom they entrusted their whole lives—one thinks of many divorced persons and broken homes. The Gospel wants all such betrayed people to know that Jesus, the with-us God, was betrayed, too, and knows the anguish of betrayal. “Because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted” (Heb 2:18 RSV).”⁷²

Matthew 26:24 The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”

The Son of Man.... One overlooked or misunderstood passage that could be sited here is in Daniel. Jesus said in Matthew: “*The Son of Man goes....*”

goes⁷³.... This makes reference to his death, resurrection and ascension to the Father.

Daniel earlier said:

“I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came [goes] one like a son of man, and he came [goes] to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.” (Daniel 7:13–14, ESV)

as it is written of him.... “Jesus does not cite any particular passage, but indicates that his death will be in accordance with prophecies made centuries before.”⁷⁴ But Isaiah 53 quickly comes to mind.

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.” (Isaiah 53:7–9, ESV)

⁷¹ France, R. T. (2007). The Gospel of Matthew (p. 990). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co.

⁷² Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 616.

⁷³ goes ὑπάγω.... “...to go away, particularly under cover, out of sight, with stealth. ... it denotes going out of the world, dying....” Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

⁷⁴ Morris, L. (1992). The Gospel according to Matthew (pp. 656–657). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed.... “Divine foreknowledge does not make the traitor’s sin less.... When Jesus believed his descent into death was divinely predicted by Scripture, it did not lead him to believe that the human agents of his descent were exempt of responsibility....”⁷⁵

It would have been better for that man if he had not been born. “...sin robs life of its worth....”⁷⁶

“...divine sovereignty and human responsibility are both involved in Judas’s treason, the one effecting salvation and bringing redemption history to its fulfillment, the other answering the promptings of an evil heart.”⁷⁷

Matthew 26:25 Judas, who would betray him, answered, “Is it I, Rabbi?” He said to him, “You have said so.”

Is it I? (μήτι εἶμι).... Interestingly the question anticipates a very strong negative reply. “Certainly, it is not me, is it?” One wonders what Judas was thinking to speak this way. Was he still trying to deceive Jesus?

“You have said so.” (Σὺ εἶπας) ““Thou sayest” is not an idiom which conveys a simple affirmation or consent, but means “*thou* (and not I) hast said it,” denoting “those are your words, not mine.””^{78 79}

Yet, “This is a way of expressing an affirmative. Jesus is saying in effect, “It is just as you have said.””⁸⁰ This is the same phrase used in 26:64 when Jesus responded to Caiaphas and the high priests question “*tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.*”

“Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”” (Matthew 26:64, ESV)

⁷⁵ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 617.

⁷⁶ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 618.

⁷⁷ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 534). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁷⁸ Jerome H. Smith, *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge: The Most Complete Listing of Cross References Available Anywhere- Every Verse, Every Theme, Every Important Word* (Nashville TN: Thomas Nelson, 1992), 1088.

⁷⁹ ““Thou sayest” is not, as is generally supposed, an idiomatic expression, conveying merely a simple affirmation or consent.

The fact is that εἶπας (*eipas*) already means “thou saidst,” for the pronoun is included in and forms part of the verb. If therefore the pronoun σύ (*su*), *thou*, is used as well, it makes it very emphatic; and indeed it places all the emphasis upon the pronoun (*thou*) instead of on the verb (*sayest*) and causes the phrase to mean “*thou* (and not I) *hast said it*,” or *It is thou that madest the statement*; or *Thou hast said it thyself*. So clear is this emphasis that the words “*and not I*” are often added. So, too, σὺ λέγεις (*su legeis*), *thou thyself dost allege*.

See, e.g., Matt. 26:25: “Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said., Master, is it I? He said unto him, *Thou hast said it thyself*,” not I. Thou hast taken the fatal word “traitor” on thine own lips.”

Ethelbert William Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* (London; New York: Eyre & Spottiswoode; E. & J. B. Young & Co., 1898), 847.

⁸⁰ Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (p. 657). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

Later, Jesus would say something very similar to Pilate when asked, “*Are you the King of the Jews?*” “*Jesus said, “You have said so.”*” (Σὺ λέγεις)

It has been suggested that the answer is rather vague and not certain, and maybe Jesus is not really giving an affirmative answer. And perhaps now, 2000 years later, and after being spoken in Aramaic, written in Greek and translated into English, we cannot be sure. **But the main point that helps to clarify what Jesus said is simply this, what did Judas, Caiaphas and Pilate understand that Jesus was saying? In all three cases, it was “yes.”**

It is because “Jesus made Judas aware of the fact that he knew him for a traitor that precipitated the events leading to the crucifixion. We have already seen that the authorities wanted to wait until the feast was over (v. 5); with Judas on their side as their secret ally they would then be able to arrest Jesus quietly and put him to death at their leisure. But now Judas knew that he was exposed. He had to act quickly if he was going to betray Jesus at all.”⁸¹

The Bread and Wine of the Covenant (26:26–29)

(cf. John 6; Mark 14:23–26; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Cor 11:23–25)

One should read John 6 for a greater understanding of the Lord’s Supper. One should especially note that these comments by Jesus took place at the feeding of the 5,000 which itself took place during the Passover (John 6:4)!

Matthew 26:26 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.”

as they were eating.... The Lord’s Supper took place during the Passover meal, the eating of a lamb. It was common for the early Church to place the ceremony during a meal as well. Even today it is sometimes a part of one called a love feast.

bread⁸² This loaf was unleavened (cf. Exod 12:15; 13:3, 7; Deut 16:3), that is without the addition of yeast to cause it to rise. Without the yeast it would be more like flat bread than loaf bread.

blessing it.... “He then gives thanks, probably with some such traditional formula as “Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who bringest forth bread from the earth.”⁸³

broke it⁸⁴.... “As the bread has just been broken, so will Jesus’ body be broken; and just as the people of Israel associated their deliverance from Egypt with eating the

⁸¹ Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (p. 658). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

⁸² *bread ἄρτος....* “...a relatively small and generally round loaf of bread (considerably smaller than present-day typical loaves of bread and thus more like ‘rolls’ or ‘buns’)—‘loaf of bread.’” Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains*. New York: United Bible Societies.

⁸³ Carson, D. A. (1984). *Matthew*. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 536). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁸⁴ *broke it κλάω* “In the NT, used only of the breaking of bread which was made in thin cakes, not in loaves....” Zodhiates, S. (2000). *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament*. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

paschal⁸⁵ meal prescribed as a divine ordinance, so also Messiah's people are to associate Jesus' redemptive death with eating this bread by Jesus' authority."⁸⁶

gave it to the disciples.... The Lord's Supper is for ***disciples***, not for those that make no claim on Jesus as Savior and Lord. Traditionally, one had no access to this meal before baptism—that rite of entrance into the covenant community. It was never open to the public. In fact, in the early church, the public was often dismissed from the service before the rite was taken.

this is my body.... "The words "*this is my body*" had no place in the Passover ritual; and as an innovation, they must have had stunning effect...."⁸⁷ Jesus is here saying something different from what one would normally say at a Passover meal. **Through the use of bread and wine, Jesus is identifying himself with the sacrificial lamb.** The lamb bleeds, its body is broken, part is sacrificed, and part is eaten by the worshippers. Earlier, at another Passover, Jesus had said:

"So Jesus said to them, "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 you." (John 6:53, ESV)

"Imagine the startled response of the disciples when the host, taking the *matzah*⁸⁸ [unleavened bread], made no mention of the ancient exodus but instead solemnly declared, "*This is my body.*" Implicit in this radical reinterpretation of the Passover *matzah* may be seen the announcement: "**By means of my imminent death a new exodus will occur.**"⁸⁹

The Elements of the Lord's Supper

God gives *rites* in order to communicate *realities*. The Passover rite and the rite of the Lord's Supper communicate in visible and material form the reality of deliverance from death—Salvation. In experiencing the sight, touch and taste of the elements, the rite is to remind us of the realities behind these symbols, the death of the Lamb of God and the salvation this death purchased. These *visible* signs, embraced by faith, convey *invisible* grace.

Most of us are aware of the loud debate common in the last two hundred years between those that dip in baptism, Baptists, and those that sprinkle or pour in baptism—which was pretty much the totality of the Church of Jesus Christ for the last 2000 years (Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Church of England, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregationalist, Mennonites and others). What we may not be aware of is that **before**

⁸⁵ *Paschal*, Passover, "early 15c., "of or pertaining to Easter," from Old French paschal (12c.) and directly from Late Latin paschalis, from pascha "Passover, Easter," from Greek pascha "Passover," from Aramaic pasha "pass over," corresponding to Hebrew pesah, from pasah "he passed over." (cf. Passover). Pasche was an early Middle English term for "Easter". <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/paschal>

⁸⁶ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 536). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁸⁷ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 536). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁸⁸ *Matzah*, unleavened flatbread, "Matzo, matzah, or matza (Yiddish: מצה *matsah*, Hebrew: מצה *matsa*; plural matzot; matzos of Ashkenazi Hebrew dialect) is an unleavened flatbread that is part of Jewish cuisine and forms an integral element of the Passover festival, during which *chametz* (leaven and five grains that, per Jewish Law, can be leavened) is forbidden." <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matzoh>

⁸⁹ Douglas R. A. Hare, *Matthew* (Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching; Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1993), 297.

this controversy on baptism, there was another one just as divisive if not more so. It was concerning the Lord's Supper.

This controversy came to the forefront at the time of the Reformation. As a part of this controversy, over the years certain words were used by various denomination to describe what happens to the elements in this rite of blood and wine during this rite.

The Roman Catholic Church uses the word **transubstantiation**⁹⁰ by which they mean that the blood and wine *materially*, physically, turn into the body and blood of Jesus.

The Lutheran Church uses the word **consubstantiation**⁹¹ by which they mean that the bread and wine are materially unchanged, but that Jesus' body is materially in, around and through these elements—but the elements always stay bread and wine.

Zwingli followed by the Baptist see the blood and wine as **symbols**⁹² of the death of Jesus and nothing more, much like Jesus statement "... *I am the door*" (John 10:7, ESV)

Calvin and the Presbyterian Church, not denying the symbolic element, believe Jesus' body and blood are really present in the elements of the rite but **spiritually** so, not materially so. To them the rite is more than a symbol, but it does not involve a change in the material elements of bread and wine or even the material presence of Jesus. You ask, then how is the bread the body of Jesus? It is so, because he says it is so. "This bread *must* be Jesus' body simply because Jesus says it is, not because we can understand how this can be."⁹³ In other words, it's a mystery and we don't know. We spiritually feed on the body and blood of Jesus. As we physically are strengthened by eating bread and wine, so we are spiritually strengthened when we, "...*eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood....*" (John 6:53, ESV)

The Proper Word?

In addition, a variety of "special" words have been used in the Church to describe the Lord's Supper. In some sense, each makes a claim as the proper word to be used to describe this rite.⁹⁴ We should look at them:

⁹⁰ "Transubstantiation is, according to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, the change of substance or essence by which the bread and wine offered in the sacrifice of the Eucharist during the Mass, become, in reality, the body and blood of Jesus Christ."

<https://duckduckgo.com/?q=transubstantiation&t=hg&ia=definition>

⁹¹ "Consubstantiation is a Christian theological doctrine that describes the Real Presence in the Eucharist. It holds that during the sacrament, the substance of the body and blood of Christ are present alongside the substance of the bread and wine, which remain present."

<https://duckduckgo.com/?q=consubstantiation+&t=hf&ia=web>

⁹² Zwingli, for "the Swiss reformer the Lord's Supper involved no real, physical participation in the corporeal body and blood of Jesus Christ (185). For Zwingli, the position of Christ's body at the right hand of God makes it clear that his body cannot be spread throughout the Christian world to be eaten at Communion (186). Key for this interpretation of the supper was his understanding of sign and signified."

<https://pursuingveritas.com/2014/07/15/luther-and-zwingli-on-the-lords-supper/>

⁹³ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 625.

⁹⁴ rite -

1a: a prescribed form or manner governing the words or actions for a ceremony

1b: the ceremonial practices of a church or group of churches

2a: ceremonial act or action initiation *rites*

Sacrament

The word *sacrament* appears to have been used first for this ordinance by Augustine of Hippo who saw the ordinances of the Church as “**an outward sign of an inward grace that has been instituted by Jesus Christ. Sacraments signify God's grace in a way that is outwardly observable to the participant.**”⁹⁵ That has been a very popular phrase in the Reformed and Presbyterian Church.

However, from time to time you will hear a Baptist make a big point about how the Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the Church (I Corinthians 11:2) but not a sacrament. They note that “The English word “sacrament” is derived indirectly from the Ecclesiastical Latin *sacrāmentum* ... (“sacred, holy”). This in turn is derived from the Greek New Testament word “mysterion”.⁹⁶ This Greek word translated *mystery* or *secret* in the New Testament is not used of baptism or the Lord's supper in the New Testament. Therefore, they say, it is not proper to use the word for the rite of the Lord's Supper.

Interestingly and confusingly, Baptists take offense at the idea that a sacrament is defined as conveying grace. “A sacrament, however, is a practice or ceremony thought to supply a certain amount of grace or holiness to the one who keeps it. Historically, it [the sacraments] have been a part of **works salvation** for Roman Catholicism **and for Protestant churches that have not been able to cast off this teaching.**”⁹⁷

Therefore, those that use the word sacrament are automatically identified by Baptists with those that believe in a **works salvation**. There is no effort made to determine if that is indeed correct or not—for instance, does the Reformed church really believe in a works salvation? As far as they are concerned, if you use the word sacrament, then in some sense you must!

But one must ask, “what is so offensive by the supply of grace in the ordinances of the Lord's Supper?” Again, for Baptists grace is found only in salvation and not in sanctification. Therefore, if grace is supplied in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper then this sacrament is a means of salvation. They tend to think disjunctively in a rather strict “either/or” approach. Reformed people on the other hand are more nuanced, thinking conjunctively - often seeing things as “both/and.”

Several things can be said about this: 1) grace is as necessary for living the Christian life as it is necessary for obtaining a true salvation. It is not a one or the other option. All of life is by grace. 2) Some theologies have expressed a conviction that the sacraments (some concerning Baptism and others concerning the Lord's Supper) are a necessary element of salvation. This is indeed false, they are not. But because they are in error doesn't mean that everyone is in error that suggests that grace is conveyed in the Lord's Supper—saving grace is not conveyed in this rite of the Church, living grace, sanctifying grace, is.

“But,” they say, “the word sacrament is not used in the New Testament for ordinances.” But, we should note that the word ordinance, is used only *once* in the New Testament

3a: division of the Christian church using a distinctive liturgy. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rite>

⁹⁵ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacrament>

⁹⁶ Μυστήριον <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacrament>

⁹⁷ <http://www.learnthebible.org/partaking-of-the-lords-supper.html>

for the Lord's Supper and is not used as a theological term for the Lord's Supper; it simply means tradition.

Ordinance

But if this word, ordinance, is indeed so important, we should give it a special look; perhaps it does have a unique claim to be the only proper term for this New Testament rite.

So, let's talk about this word ordinance⁹⁸ that Baptists are so fond of. In fact, it does not have a meaning unique to the Lord's Supper. The word simply means *tradition* and is used 13 times in the New Testament, 12 times in contexts that have nothing to do with the Lord's Supper.

Matthew 15:2 "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat."

Matthew 15:3 He answered them, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?"

Matthew 15:6 he need not honor his father.' So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God.

Mark 7:3 (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands properly, holding to the tradition of the elders,

Mark 7:5 And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?"

Mark 7:8 You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men."

Mark 7:9 And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!"

Mark 7:13 thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do."

1 Corinthians 11:2 Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you.

Galatians 1:14 And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.

Colossians 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

2 Thessalonians 2:15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

⁹⁸ Ordinance, παράδοσις "...the content of traditional instruction—"teaching, tradition."⁹⁸

2 Thessalonians 3:6 Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us.

So, in fact the word ordinance or tradition is used only once in the New Testament for the Lord's Supper. But even in this one verse one cannot find a theology of the Lord's Supper called "ordinances," one that is theologically superior to other terms used in the New Testament.

Communion

There is another word used for the Lord's supper, Communion. This word is found 19 times in the New Testament.

Acts 2:42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Romans 15:26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem.

1 Corinthians 1:9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 10:16 The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

2 Corinthians 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?

2 Corinthians 8:4 begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints—

2 Corinthians 9:13 By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others,

2 Corinthians 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Galatians 2:9 and when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

Philippians 1:5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

Philippians 2:1 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy,

Philippians 3:10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,

Philemon 6 and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ.

Hebrews 13:16 Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

1 John 1:3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

1 John 1:6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

You may notice that of the 19 times this word is used in the New Testament it is only used twice in one verse for the Lord's Supper.

Eucharist

The word eucharist meaning "give thanks" actually comes right from the institution of the Lord's Supper by Jesus.

"And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you," (Matthew 26:27, ESV)

It is found 39 times in the New Testament. This word is used in three ways:

For the Lord's Supper:

Matthew 26:27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.

Mark 14:23 Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave *it* to them, and they all drank from it.

Luke 22:17 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide *it* among yourselves;

Luke 22:19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

Acts 27:35 And when he had said these things, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken *it* he began to eat.

1 Corinthians 11:24 and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

For the Feeding the 5000:

Matthew 15:36 And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke *them* and gave *them* to His disciples; and the disciples *gave* to the multitude.

Mark 8:6 So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and gave thanks, broke *them* and gave *them* to His disciples to set before *them*; and they set *them* before the multitude.

John 6:11 And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed *them* to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.

John 6:23 however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks—

For Other Uses:

Luke 17:16 and fell down on *his* face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

Luke 18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.

John 11:41 Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up *His* eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

Acts 28:15 And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

Romans 1:8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

Romans 1:21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Romans 7:25 I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Romans 14:6 He who observes the day, observes *it* to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe *it*. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks.

Romans 16:4 who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

1 Corinthians 1:4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus,

1 Corinthians 1:14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,

1 Corinthians 10:30 But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for *the food* over which I give thanks?

1 Corinthians 14:17 For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified.

1 Corinthians 14:18 I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all;

2 Corinthians 1:11 you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift *granted* to us through many.

Ephesians 1:16 do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:

Ephesians 5:20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Philippians 1:3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

Colossians 1:3 We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

Colossians 1:12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

Colossians 3:17 And *whatever* you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

1 Thessalonians 1:2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers,

1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

2 Thessalonians 1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,

Philemon 4 I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers,

Revelation 11:17 saying: “We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.

We see that on six occasions the word is used in the Lord’s Supper; on four others it is used of the feeding of the 5000, a miracle symbolic of the Lord’s Supper. In the rest of the verses it is used in a more generic sense.

Based on the number of times this word, Eucharist, is used in addressing the Lord’s Supper, it would seem that it has the greater claim for use in addressing the Lord’s Supper.

The Lord’s Supper

There is one other term that has special claim as the proper word one should use to refer to this rite—although used only once in the New Testament.

“When you come together, it is not the Lord’s supper that you eat.” (1 Corinthians 11:20, ESV)

So, it appears that **Sacrament** and **Eucharist** and **Ordinance** and **Communion** and **the Lord’s Supper** are all useful and Scriptural terms one could use in discussing the rite of the Church often called The Lord’s Supper. Some may suggest a greater authority for one word or another for addressing the Lord’s Supper, but certainly Ordinance is *not* in that group.

But I think we must ask one additional question: what is the purpose of the Lord’s Supper? There are many useful responses to this question, but I’d like to make one that may be helpful.

If we look at the Lord’s Supper as one of two rites unique the New Testament Church, together they suggest a common answer. Christian baptism is the rite of initiation into the community of faith not unlike circumcision in the Old Testament. In both circumcision and baptism, one enters God covenant by means of these rites. If one is not circumcised in the Old Testament or baptized in the New Testament, then that person is outside the community of God.

The Lord’s Supper continues this thought in that it is a rite of covenant renewal, in it we renew our commitment to Jesus Christ first made in our baptism.

Both rites identify two different God ordained behaviors that are designed to instruct us in how to enter and in how to live in covenant community with God. Baptism is a symbol of justification; the Lord’s Supper is a symbol of sanctification. In both God conveys grace.

In the Lord’s Supper, we spiritually feed on the body and blood of Jesus. As we physically are strengthened by eating bread and wine, so we are spiritually strengthened when we, “*...eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood...*” (John 6:53, ESV)

Matthew 26:27 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you,

A covenant was ratified with the shedding of the blood. The Passover meal and the Mosaic covenant are examples of this.

“And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.” (Exodus 24:8, ESV)

cup.... During the Passover meal four cups of wine were offered. “...this “cup” ... is probably the third, the “cup of blessing.””⁹⁹ This is known as the Holy Grail in various books and movies.

given thanks¹⁰⁰.... It is from this Greek word, *give thanks*, that we get our English word Eucharist, which is often used for the whole ceremony called the Lord’s Supper. “Some Protestants have avoided the term because of its associations with the traditional Roman Catholic mass, but the term itself is surely not objectionable.”¹⁰¹

Drink of it, all of you.... “We should also note that at the Seder [Passover meal] everyone had their own cup, whereas Jesus has the disciples drink from the same cup, emphasizing the community in unity that has been formed. From this verse the participation of every believer in this sacrament has become part of every church’s liturgy.”¹⁰²

all of you.... In fact, in the Roman Church *all do not* drink of it. “The Reformation, under the banner of Jesus’ command “*drink from this, all of you*,” hotly contested the Roman church’s giving *only bread to the laity*. “Communion in *both* kinds,” for *both* laity and clergy, was important to the Reformers simply because of Jesus’ clear command that his gifts were for “all” at his table....”¹⁰³

Matthew 26:28 for this is my blood of the (new) covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

blood of the (new) covenant.... “The “blood of the covenant” alludes to Exod 24:8 (cf. Zech 9:11; Heb 9:19–22; 10:29; 13:20), where the covenant was sealed with half the blood poured around the altar and half sprinkled on the people. Jesus is inaugurating a new covenant (cf. “new covenant in my blood” in Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25), in which the expiatory¹⁰⁴ blood of the Messiah is “poured out” for the liberation of the sins of God’s people.”¹⁰⁵ He therefore in this rite establishes a new, better and eternal covenant.

⁹⁹ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 536). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

¹⁰⁰ *given thanks* *εὐχαριστέω* “...to express gratitude for benefits or blessings—‘to thank, thanksgiving, thankfulness.’” Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains*. New York: United Bible Societies.

¹⁰¹ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 536). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

¹⁰² Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (vol. 1; Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 967.

¹⁰³ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 630.

¹⁰⁴ *expiatory* “In biblical terms, it has to do with taking away guilt through the payment of a penalty or the offering of an atonement.” <https://www.ligonier.org/blog/two-important-words-good-friday-expiation-and-propitiation/>

¹⁰⁵ Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (vol. 1; Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 968.

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jeremiah 31:31–34, ESV)

“And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.” (Luke 22:20, ESV)

“In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”” (1 Corinthians 11:25, ESV)

This phrase **blood of the new covenant** “...means that Jesus understands the violent and sacrificial death he is about to undergo ... as the ratification of the covenant he is inaugurating with his people, even as Moses in Exodus 24:8 ratified the covenant of Sinai by the shedding of blood.”¹⁰⁶

“The event through which Messiah saves his people from their sins (Mt 1:21) is his sacrificial death, and the resulting relation between God and the messianic community is definable in terms of covenant, an agreement with stipulations—promises of blessing and sustenance and with threats of cursing **all brought here into legal force by the shedding of blood.**”¹⁰⁷

“She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21, ESV)

poured out for many.... “...the force of the *present* tense of our verb (“*is being poured out*”) ... suggests that there “is the same potency in the Holy Supper, as if *ever in that same moment* the body of Christ were given, and his blood shed.”¹⁰⁸ **It has the same force for us as it had for them.**

many¹⁰⁹.... This word and verse has been used by many Reformed theologians (not all) to add support to the doctrine of *limited atonement*—better understood as Christ’s *purposeful atonement*, meaning, he died only for the elect. Logically that is a true statement, but some are not sure that it is addressed in this verse.

¹⁰⁶ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 537). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

¹⁰⁷ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 537). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

¹⁰⁸ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 632.

¹⁰⁹ *many* πολὺς “a relatively large quantity of objects or events—‘many, a great deal of, a great number of.’” Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 594.

“Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.” (Isaiah 53:12, ESV)

for the forgiveness of sins. This is the purpose of Jesus death, this forgiveness of sins. He did not die to be an example or an inspiration to humanity. He died to save them from their sins by atoning¹¹⁰ for those sins. In agreement with this idea the writer of Hebrews says:

“Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.” (Hebrews 9:22, ESV)

“The believer is able to live rightly because Jesus’ atoning sacrifice has made it possible for us to become part of God’s family and find the strength in Christ to live an obedient life....”¹¹¹

“It appears, then, that Jesus understands the covenant he is introducing to be the fulfillment of Jeremiah’s prophecies and **the antitype of the Sinai covenant**. His sacrifice is thus foretold both in redemption history and in the prophetic word. The Exodus becomes a “type” of a new and greater deliverance; and as the people of God in the OT prospectively¹¹² celebrated in the first Passover their escape from Egypt, anticipating their arrival in the Promised Land, so the people of God here prospectively celebrate their deliverance from sin and bondage, anticipating the coming kingdom... ”¹¹³

“Our deepest single need is the forgiveness of sins. Our main block in fellowship with God, others, and ourselves is our sin and our consciousness of sin (guilt). We feel certain that God must hate our evil thoughts, acts, and words even more than we do, and that, consequently, God must have a profound aversion to us. The Lord’s Supper continually reminds us, “On the contrary!” Communion must conquer consciousness. Our consciousness of sins—*which is not false consciousness since we do in fact sin, and sin does indeed offend God*—is, nevertheless, a trumped and outbid consciousness, a consciousness that is no longer the last word on our case. **Jesus’ blood over us is the last word about our status with God. We are covered.**”¹¹⁴

Matthew 26:29 *“I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”*

¹¹⁰ *Atonement* “In western Christian theology, atonement describes how human beings can be reconciled to God through Christ’s sacrificial suffering and death. Atonement refers to the forgiving or pardoning of sin in general and original sin in particular through the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus, enabling the reconciliation between God and [his creation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/His_creation).” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atonement_in_Christianity

¹¹¹ Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (vol. 1; Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 968.

¹¹² *prospectively* “relating to or effective in the future...likely to come about...EXPECTED...”

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prospective>

¹¹³ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 538). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

¹¹⁴ Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28* (vol. 2, Revised and Expanded Edition.; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 633–634.

fruit of the vine.... “The wine was not grape juice, though it was customary to cut the wine with a double or triple quantity of water.”¹¹⁵ But, the cutting of the wine with water was more common in the daily consumption of wine—which they used like water—than with its use for special occasions like **weddings or holy days**.

“and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.””
(John 2:10, ESV)

It is thought that Jesus inaugurated the Lord’s Supper with the drinking of the third cup—the cup of redemption.¹¹⁶

I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until.... In the Passover meal four cups of wine were drunk in keeping with the fourfold promise of Exodus 6:6-7. They were:

“Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘I am the LORD, and

- 1) I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and*
- 2) I will deliver you from slavery to them, and*
- 3) I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.*
- 4) I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.”* (Exodus 6:6–7, ESV)

It is with this phrase that Jesus stops drinking from the cup. He will drink this fourth cup ***“when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”*** This is the cup that says, *I will take you to be my people.*

And when he actually does take us home to be with him forever, then he will drink the fourth cup *with us*.

It is not that Jesus is saying in some generic sense that he will not drink wine until this last day, **he is being more specific, he is saying he will not drink this particular ceremonial cup, the fourth cup, until that last day. And what was that fourth cup? It was the cup that celebrated Exodus 6, “I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.”** (Exodus 6:6–7, ESV)

His comments assure us that there will be a fourth cup awaiting him and us. We will one day drink it *with him* in the **Father’s kingdom**. One day he will come and take us to himself for all eternity, then **he will drink it new with us**.

“On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

¹¹⁵ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke (Vol. 8, p. 536). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

¹¹⁶ *redemption* ἀπολύτρωσις “The recalling of captives (sinners) from captivity (sin) through the payment of a ransom for them, i.e., Christ’s death.” Spiros Zodhiates, The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” (Isaiah 25:6–9, ESV)

“The disciples will keep this celebration till Jesus comes (cf. 1 Cor 11:26); but Jesus will not participate in it with them till the consummation, when he will sit down with them at the messianic banquet....”¹¹⁷

“Thus Jesus is simultaneously pledging that he will drink the “bitter cup” immediately ahead of him [cups 1-3] and vowing not to drink the cup of consummation, the cup that promises the divine presence [cup 4], till the kingdom in all its fullness has been ushered in. Then he will drink the cup with his people. This is a veiled farewell and implies a sustained absence (see on 24:14, 25:5, 19). The Lord’s Supper therefore points both to the past and to the future, both to Jesus’ sacrifice at Calvary and to the messianic banquet.”¹¹⁸

The Lord’s Supper “helps us to look “*backward*” to the finished act of salvation on the cross that provides an anchor for our lives, “*forward*” to our future in the consummation of history, “*inward*” as we examine (1 Cor 11:27–28) our heart and lives and confess our sins before God, “*upward*” as we realize he is now at God’s right hand, enabling us to “set [our] minds on things above” (Col 3:1–4), “*around*” as we realize the community that makes corporate worship possible, and “*outward*” as we “proclaim the Lord’s death” (1 Cor 11:26) to a world dying in sin.”¹¹⁹ **The Lord’s Supper is a visible presentation of the Gospel.**

When I See the Blood

By John G. Foote
Elisha A. Hoffman

- Christ our Redeemer died on the cross,
Died for the sinner, paid all his due;
Sprinkle your soul with the blood of the Lamb,
And I will pass, will pass over you.
 - Refrain:
When I see the blood,
When I see the blood,
When I see the blood,
I will pass, I will pass over you.
- Chiefest of sinners, Jesus will save;
As He has promised, that He will do;
Wash in the fountain opened for sin,
And I will pass, will pass over you.

¹¹⁷ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke (Vol. 8, p. 539). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

¹¹⁸ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke (Vol. 8, p. 539). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

¹¹⁹ Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (vol. 1; Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 970.

- Judgment is coming, all will be there,
Each one receiving justly his due;
Hide in the saving sin-cleansing blood,
And I will pass, will pass over you.
- O great compassion! O boundless love!
O loving-kindness, faithful and true!
Find peace and shelter under the blood,
And I will pass, will pass over you.

with you in my Father's kingdom. Matthew starts his gospel with references to the kingdom and to with you (us).

“From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4:17, ESV)

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).” (Matthew 1:23, ESV)

He now draws near the end of his story with his last reference to the kingdom and a reference to with you (us).

Matthew 26:30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

when they had sung a hymn.... “It was sung antiphonally:¹²⁰ Jesus as the leader would sing the lines, and his followers would respond with “Hallelujah!”¹²¹

This is the only place in the Bible in which we are told that Jesus sang a song. It was no doubt deeply moving to the disciples and should be to us as well.

Psalm 118 (ESV)

1 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!

2 Let Israel say, “His steadfast love endures forever.”

3 Let the house of Aaron say, “His steadfast love endures forever.”

4 Let those who fear the LORD say, “His steadfast love endures forever.”

5 Out of my distress I called on the LORD; the LORD answered me and set me free.

6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?

7 The LORD is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.

8 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man.

9 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

10 All nations surrounded me; in the name of the LORD I cut them off!

11 They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side; in the name of the LORD I cut them off!

¹²⁰ antiphonally “Occurring or responding in turns; alternating....”

<https://www.thefreedictionary.com/antiphonally>

¹²¹ Carson, D. A. (1984). Matthew. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 8, p. 539). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

12 They surrounded me like bees; they went out like a fire among thorns; in the name of the LORD I cut them off!

13 I was pushed hard, so that I was falling, but the LORD helped me.

14 The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation.

15 Glad songs of salvation are in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD does valiantly,

16 the right hand of the LORD exalts, the right hand of the LORD does valiantly!"

17 I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the LORD.

18 The LORD has disciplined me severely, but he has not given me over to death.

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

20 This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.

21 I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

22 The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

23 This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

24 This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success!

26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD.

27 The LORD is God, and he has made his light to shine upon us. Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar!

28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God; I will extol you.

29 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!

Mount of Olives.... "The apostolic band has undoubtedly planned to spend the night in the olive grove, as the rules said they must stay in the environs of Jerusalem during Passover Week (Bethany was too far away)."¹²² *Judas knew this.*

Here "Jesus predicts the failure of the rest of the disciples (vv. 31–35), prays in Gethsemane (vv. 36–46), and then is arrested (vv. 47–56)."¹²³

¹²² Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (vol. 1; Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 969.

¹²³ Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (vol. 1; Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 971.



These ancient olive trees stand silent watch in the garden of the Church of All Nations at the foot of the Mount of Olives. Their age is measured in centuries...