

Title: **WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?**
Text: Exodus 12:15-28
Subject: *The Meaning of the Lord's Supper*
Date: Sunday Evening — November 25, 2007
Tape # Exodus 59
Readings: *Rex Bartley and James Jordan*
Introduction:

Our text tonight is Exodus 12:15-28. In this passage Moses conveyed to the children of Israel the instructions God had given him with regard to the Passover, telling them both of God's promised deliverance of his chosen out of Egyptian bondage and of the way in which they were to observe the ordinance of the Passover throughout their generations.

This whole affair was, by God's design, a type and picture of Christ our Passover, who was sacrificed for us, and of our redemption and deliverance by his blood (1 Corinthians 5:7). Let's read Exodus 12:15-28 together. Then, I will try to set its message before you in shoe leather.

(Exodus 12:15-28) "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. (16) And in the first day *there shall be* **an holy convocation**, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; **no manner of work**

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shall be done in them, save *that* which every man must eat, that only may be done of you. (17) And **ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread;** for in this selfsame day have **I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt;** therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by **an ordinance for ever.** (18) In **the first month,** on the fourteenth day of the month **at even,** ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. (19) **Seven days** shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. (20) Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread. (21) Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and **take you a lamb** according to your families, and **kill the passover.** (22) And ye shall take **a bunch of hyssop,** and **dip it in the blood** that *is* in the basin, and **strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood** that *is* in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. (23) For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and **when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.** (24) And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to

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thy sons for ever. (25) And it shall come to pass, **when ye be come to the land** which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. (26) And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, **What mean ye by this service?** (27) That ye shall say, **It is the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover**, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. (28) And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.”

Let me show a few delightful highlights, which are obvious to anyone who reads these verses with spiritual understanding.

1. As this was the beginning of months to the Jews, the changing of their calendar, **so the experience of redemption and grace in Christ is the beginning of an altogether new life for the believer.** Faith in Christ is a new beginning.

(Exodus 12:2) “This month *shall be* unto you the beginning of months: it *shall be* the first month of the year to you.”

(2 Corinthians 5:17) “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed

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away; behold, all things are become new.”

2. Every man in Israel had to have a lamb of sacrifice (vv. 2-6, 21). The father of each household had to seize a lamb and kill it for his family with his own hands. **Even so we must have a lamb of sacrifice, even Christ the Lamb of God.**

This chapter is bursting with meaning. It is one of those passages where you do not even have to look for Christ. You have to look away to miss him!

- The lamb was selected, provided and slaughtered by the father of the house. — **Our heavenly Father selected, provided and slaughtered his own dear Son as the Lamb of sacrifice for us.**
 - The lamb had to be a male of the first year, in the prime and full vigor of life.
 - The lamb had to be without spot or blemish of any kind.
 - The lamb had to be slain. It had to be slaughtered (A **Violent Death**). It had to be slaughtered **by the father's hand!**
3. **The blood of the paschal lamb had to be applied to every house in Israel.**

This is where most people misinterpret this passage and miss the beauty and glory of it. They talk about the application of the blood as something we do for ourselves. But that is not the case. **The blood was**

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applied by the one who chose and killed the lamb. And it was **applied to the house for which it was provided and slaughtered.** Look at the type and the antitype.

- The blood of Christ is applied to chosen sinners by God himself, by the power and grace of his Spirit, through the bunch of hyssop he has chosen — The Preaching of the Gospel.
 - The blood was applied to none but the children of Israel, to all the children of Israel, and effectually secured the deliverance of all for whom it was spilled.
4. We saw, in verses 7-11, that the paschal lamb had to be eaten.

That is the picture of faith in Christ. Yet, even this faith by which we personally receive and feed upon our Lord Jesus, is not our work, but God's work in us. Faith is the gift and operation of God the Holy Spirit in us (Ephesians 2:8; Colossians 2:12). But that's another sermon. For now, I simply want you to see this blessed picture of faith. **Faith in Christ is eating the Passover** (John 6:53-58).

(John 6:53-58) "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. (54) Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. (55) For my flesh is meat indeed, and

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my blood is drink indeed. (56) He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. (57) As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. (58) This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.”

- Eat it roasted with fire — being convinced of sin, righteousness, and judgment — Sin punished — Righteousness established — Judgment finished — by the doing and dying of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.
- Eat it with unleavened bread. — Sincerity and Honesty before God.
- Eat it with bitter herbs. — Repentance!
- Eat it not raw, nor sodden with water. — No Compromise!
- Eat it all. — The Whole Christ!
- Eat it in expectation, with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand.
- Eat it in haste! *“Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts!” “Behold, Today is the day of salvation!”* Judgment is coming! (See verse 12.)

(Exodus 12:12) “For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am*

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the LORD.”

5. **The most important aspect of this whole affair was the blood, the precious life blood of the paschal lamb** (vv. 13, 22-23).

(Exodus 12:13) “And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are*: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy *you*, when I smite the land of Egypt.”

(Exodus 12:22-23) “And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that *is* in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. (23) For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite *you*.”

- “*The blood shall be to you for a token*” — **A token of what?** — Righteousness Established! — Justice Satisfied! — Sins Forgiven! — A Covenant Fulfilled! — Love Infinite, Eternal, Unchanging!
- “*When I see the blood, I will pass over you!*”

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6. This was **an ordinance to be kept forever** by the children of Israel perpetually, throughout their generations, in remembrance and celebration of their redemption and deliverance out of the land of Egypt (vv. 14-17).
- A Memorial Feast in Celebration of Redemption!
 - A Hopeful Feast in Anticipation of The True Passover!
 - A Covenant Feast — Celebrating Redemption Accomplished at God's Appointed Time! (See verses 40-42.)

(Exodus 12:40-42) “Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, *was* four hundred and thirty years. (41) And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. (42) *It is* a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: *this is* that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.”

- A Sabbath Feast — “*No manner of work shall be done*” (v. 16).
- A Family Feast — “*There shall no stranger eat thereof*” (v. 43). “*All the congregation of Israel shall keep it*” (v. 47).

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Then, in verse 26 we read, “*And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?*”

Tonight, we have come together, as we do every Lord's Day evening, to celebrate the redemption and deliverance of our souls by the blood and grace of our all glorious Christ, the true Passover, in the observance of the Lord's Supper. What a blessing it would be if our children would show enough interest in the worship of our God to ask, “*What mean ye by this service?*” The title of my message is — **WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?** — What is the meaning of this blessed ordinance of divine worship? Let me show you why that question is so important.

In spiritual worship everything must be understood. Those who worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth. And we cannot worship him in truth unless we understand what we are doing in our acts of worship. The mere religious ritualist is content with the form and ceremony, with mere acts of outward worship, the form of godliness. **The believer worships with understanding.** Our understanding is neither perfect nor complete; but we worship God our Savior with spiritual understanding, discerning the body of Christ, knowing our need of him and knowing what he has done for us as the Lamb of God.

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The Jews, with the many outward symbols of carnal ordinances, had a terrible tendency toward empty, meaningless, religious ritualism. Therefore the Lord carefully instructed them on the meaning and significance of their ordinances. We have the same problem. **We all naturally gravitate toward ritualism, ceremonialism, and idolatry.** But this tendency must not be tolerated. The observance of any ordinance merely as a religious ritual without recognizing and understanding the meaning of the ordinance is nothing less than idolatry, and will never be accepted by God (Isaiah 1:10-14; 66:3).

(Isaiah 1:10-14) “Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. (11) To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. (12) When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? (13) Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; *it is* iniquity, even the solemn meeting. (14) Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear *them.*”

(Isaiah 66:3) “He that killeth an ox *is as if* he slew

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a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, *as if* he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, *as if he offered* swine's blood; he that burneth incense, *as if* he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.”

We must know the meaning of what we do; otherwise our worship and observance of the ordinances of God are no more than the blessing of an idol! That is exactly the meaning of Isaiah 66:3.

Proposition: In order for us to truly worship our God in the observance of the Lord's Supper, we must know why we observe it. — We must understand its spiritual significance.

Therefore, I want to bring this message to a conclusion by answering this question from the Word of God — “*What mean ye by this service?*” I want us to look into the Word of God and see what the Holy Spirit has recorded in the Sacred Volume about the meaning of this ordinance of public worship. Let me make nine statements. You might want to write them down, keep them handy, and go over them frequently, as you prepare to observe this blessed ordinance week by week.

1. **The Lord's Supper is not a sacrament.**

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Sacraments are part of the pope's tapestry. We do not keep sacraments. There are no sacraments mentioned anywhere in the Bible. The only place you find sacraments is in the church of Rome and in the creeds and confessions of those who are her children.

The word "sacrament" means "a visible sign of inward grace, "a means of grace," or "that by which grace is conferred." Protestant, Reformed, and Reformed Baptist churches all refer to the ordinances of Christ as sacraments because they really do believe that keeping the "sacraments" is a means by which grace is conveyed to the soul! Any sensible person must see that such rubbish is contrary to the gospel of the grace of God. But that is typical Catholic, Protestant, and Reformed doctrine.

- Baptism is not a sacrament by which grace is conferred, but an ordinance by which redemption is confessed.
- The Lord's Supper is not a sacrament by which grace is given, but an ordinance by which the sacrifice of Christ is remembered.
- These gospel ordinances do not speak of inward grace; but of accomplished redemption, redemption without grace could never come to, be conferred upon, or bestowed sinners.

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2. **The eating and drinking of the bread and wine at the Lord's Table is an act of obedience to our Master** (1 Corinthians 11:24-25).

(1 Corinthians 11:24-25) “And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. (25) After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.”

- It is to be observed by all believers.
 - It is to be observed regularly.
 - Our worthiness to observe this ordinance is Christ.
3. **The Lord's Supper is a memorial feast** (1 Corinthians 11:24-25).

In memory of the Savior's love,
We keep the sacred feast,
Where every humble, contrite heart
Is made a welcome guest.

4. **The Lord's Supper is an exhibition of our Savior's death as our Redeemer and Substitute.** — “*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come*” (1 Corinthians 11:26).

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- The unleavened bread symbolizes our Savior's holy humanity, his body.
 - The bread broken portrays the crushing of his body under the horrid fury of God's holy wrath, when he was made sin for us.
 - The wine represents his blood, his precious, sin-atonement blood.
 - The bread and the wine separated, his body and his blood separated speak of certain death.
5. **The Lord's Table is a table of communion** (1 Corinthians 10:16-17).

(1 Corinthians 10:16-17) "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? (17) For we *being* many are one bread, *and* one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

6. **The Lord's Supper is a token of his covenant** (Matthew 26:27-28).

(Matthew 26:27-28) "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; (28) For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

7. **This is also a feast of thanksgiving** (Luke 22:15-20).

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(Luke 22:15-20) “And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: (16) For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. (17) And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: (18) For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. (19) And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. (20) Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.”

8. **The Lord's Supper is a picture of faith in Christ**
(John 6:53-58).

(John 6:53-58) “Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. (54) Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. (55) For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. (56) He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. (57) As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. (58) This is that bread which

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came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.”

9. **The Lord's Supper is a symbol of hope** (1 Corinthians 11:26; Exodus 12:11).

(Exodus 12:11) “And thus shall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it *is* the LORD'S passover.”

(1 Corinthians 11:26) “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.”

(Exodus 12:24-28) “And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. (25) And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. (26) And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? (27) That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. (28) And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did

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they.”

Amen.