

THE PURITANS ON
THE LORD'S
SUPPER

THE PURITANS ON...

Books in the Series:

The Puritans on Conversion

The Puritans on Loving One Another

The Puritans on Prayer

The Puritans on the Lord's Supper

THE PURITANS ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

Essays by
Joseph Alleine
Edmund Calamy
Richard Vines
Thomas Wadsworth
Thomas Watson

Edited by Don Kistler



Soli Deo Gloria Publications
An imprint of Reformation Heritage Books
Grand Rapids, Michigan

The Puritans on the Lord's Supper
© 1997 by Soli Deo Gloria

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. Direct your requests to the publisher at the following addresses:

Soli Deo Gloria Publications

An imprint of Reformation Heritage Books
3070 29th St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49512
616-977-0889
orders@heritagebooks.org
www.heritagebooks.org

Paperback Reprint 2023

ISBN 979-8-88686-003-0

For additional Reformed literature, request a free book list from Reformation Heritage Books at the above regular or e-mail address.

Contents

1. The Passover	1
<i>Its Significance, and the Analogy between It and Christ our Passover</i> by Richard Vines	
2. The Lord's Supper Is a Federal Ordinance	23
<i>Implying a Covenant Transaction between God and Us, and Supposing a Renewal of Solemn Vows to be the Lord's</i> by Edmund Calamy	
3. The Express Renewal of Our Christian Vows	38
<i>Every Time We Come to the Holy Communion, and Directions about the Right Management of It</i> by Edmund Calamy	
4. It Is Every Christian's Indispensable Duty to Partake of the Lord's Supper	53
by Thomas Wadsworth	
5. Self-Examination	85
by Joseph Alleine	
6. The Fruit and Benefit of Worthy Receiving	110
by Richard Vines	
7. The Mystery of the Lord's Supper	127
by Thomas Watson	

The Passover

*Its Significance, and the Analogy Between
it and Christ our Passover*

by Richard Vines

“For Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven.”
1 Corinthians 5:7–8

The Lord's Supper began at the Passover, at the death whereof, and out of the ashes of it. This sacrament of ours, like another phoenix, arose, for our Lord, at His last Passover, called it His dying Passover. He instituted and ordained this sacrament, which is to live and remain till He comes again, and, as Scaliger and others have observed, the very materials of our sacramental supper were taken out of the Paschal supper; for that very bread which the master of the family used by custom (not by any Scripture command) to bless and give to the family, saying, “This is the bread of affliction which the fathers did eat in Egypt,” and that cup which he blessed and gave them to drink, called “the cup of the hymn,” because the hymn followed after and closed all—that bread and that cup Christ, according to the rite, blessed and gave, saying, “This is My body; this cup is the new testament in My blood.” And so He put a new superscription or signification upon the old metal, and let all blind and bold ex-

positors know that if they do not expound many phrases and things in the New Testament out of the old records of Jewish writings or customs, they shall give but their fancy, and not expound the text.

In handling the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, I begin with the Passover, which was the second (circumcision being the first) ordinary, standing sacrament of the Jewish church, beginning at their going forth out of Egypt and continuing till the death of Christ, when the Lord's Supper commenced or began, and so displaced it. The Passover signified what should be the Lord's Supper, what is fulfilled in Christ.

In the Passover, the sufferings and death of Christ were represented by a lamb slain and roasted with fire. In the Supper, they are represented by bread broken and wine poured forth. The outward symbols or signs differ, but Christ is the same under both. As circumcision was theirs and baptism ours, there are different signs and rites, but the inward circumcision and regeneration are both one. Theirs were both bloody sacraments, for the blood of Christ was to be shed; ours is unbloody, for the blood has been shed.

Our English well translates the word "passover," while the Greek and Latin keep the word "pascha," which gave some occasion to derive it from the Greek word which means "to suffer a mistake." The word is *pesach*, from *pasach*, which is "to leap or pass over." For when Israel, after long servitude in Egypt, was on the verge of being gone, God commanded them in the various families to kill a lamb or kid, to roast it whole, to eat it within doors that night, and

to sprinkle the side and upper door posts with the blood, not the threshold, for Christ's blood must not be trampled on. In so doing they should be safe from the destroying angel who rode circuit that night to kill all Egypt's firstborn. But he passed over all the houses of Israel which were sprinkled with blood, and hence the name "Passover," the origin whereof is given by God Himself in Exodus 12:27. We have the kernel in this shell, the marrow of this bone. We have a passover as well as they, but ours is Christ. "Our Passover is Christ," says the text.

Our Passover, Christ, is or was sacrificed for us. Our Passover, Christ, was a true sacrifice, but whether their Passover was a sacrifice or not is in question. The papists swallow it greedily, hoping thereby to prove our Supper to be both a sacrifice and a sacrament as their Passover (they say) was. But there are others, both Lutherans and Calvinists, who do not consider the Passover a proper sacrifice, even though it is so called in Exodus 12:27: "It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover," for so both the Greek and Hebrew words are sometimes generally taken for *mactare* when there is no sacrifice. And they find in Egypt at the first Passover no priest, but the head of the family; no altar, no offering of the lamb to God, no expiation; nor is it necessary that it should *be* a sacrifice to be the *type* of a sacrifice, for the serpent on the pole signified Christ crucified, and so the Passover as a sacrament may represent a sacrifice, as our supper is the commemoration of a sacrifice, but not actually be a sacrifice.

On the other hand, Calvin and some Jewish writers hold it to be a sacrifice and a sacrament, for the

Scripture calls it "sacrifice," and this blood is shed at first by the head of the family, who was a priest (no other being yet consecrated), and in later times by the priests or Levites. The blood was brought to the altar, as it was blood shed for a religious end, a blood preservative from destroying angels, and therefore a proper sacrifice.

What shall we say? I promise not to puzzle you with controversies and disputes, for I would rather set meat before you which you may eat than hard bones to gnaw upon. The truth is, a sacrifice is something offered to God by men; a sacrament is offered and given to man by God to be eaten or used in His name. And so that part of the offering which is offered up to God may be called a sacrifice, and that part eaten or used by man is called a sacrament. The very body and blood of Christ was a sacrifice, not a sacrament. The bread and wine, as used, are a sacrament, not a sacrifice.

The Passover was the figure of a true sacrifice, Christ, and we may call it so because the Scripture does. It follows after "let us keep the feast." What is that? You shall find that after the Passover lamb was eaten, the next day began the feast (Numbers 28:16-17); and the Passover is called a feast too in Exodus 12:14, and that continued seven days, kept in great festivity and solemnity, but with unleavened bread. The Apostle alludes hereunto: "Our Passover is sacrificed; therefore let us henceforth . . ." We who have received the sprinkling of blood, and eaten His flesh by faith, live all our days in a holy rejoicing and thanksgiving, which is a continual feast. And let us cast the incestuous Corinthian out of our so-

ciety, for he is a leaven. 1 Corinthians 5:7: "And let us purge out of ourselves" (malice, wickedness, etc.), for they are leaven (verse 8), that we may be a holy congregation and a holy people. And so the argument of the Apostle stands from the example of the old Passover. Those for whom Christ, the Passover, is sacrificed ought, as holy congregations and holy people, to be unleavened with sin and wickedness, and to walk before God in an unleavened sincerity; but for us, Christ the Passover is sacrificed; therefore "let us keep the feast."

I have explained the words, and now we shall consider this Passover in two ways:

1. As a sacrifice or figure of a sacrifice, and so it refers to Christ our Passover. "Christ is sacrificed for us."

2. As a sacrament, and so it relates to us and shows us our duty upon that sacrifice. "Let us keep the feast." The sacrifice is given *for* us; the sacrament is given *to* us.

1. Our Passover is Christ sacrificed for us. We have a Passover, but it is Christ sacrificed. And here, before I show the analogy or resemblance between the Passover and Christ, we shall note three or four things:

(1) They in the old church of Israel had Christ as well (though not as clearly) as we. In 1 Corinthians 10:4, the Rock that followed our fathers in the wilderness was Christ; the Passover was Christ; the personal types (such as Isaac on the wood) and the real types (the bloody sacrifices) were Christ. He was then in His swaddling clothes, swathed up in

shadows and types, not naked. In the New Testament, those types, being anatomized and un-bowelled, are full of gospel, full of Christ. Christ is the marrow in the bone, the kernel in the shell, "the same yesterday, and today, and forever," the sum and sweetness of all ordinances. Therefore, those who say these types were filled with temporal promises, but had no spiritual promises, derogate too much from them, as if they were swine filled with husks. It is a wondrous paradox that those who had so much faith (Hebrews 11) should have no Christ. We give them the right hand of fellowship, and they were the elder brother, but we have the double portion.

(2) Mark the form of speech: "Christ our Passover," that is, our Paschal Lamb, which is also called the Passover in Exodus 12:21: "Kill the Passover." Now the Passover properly was the angel's passing over the Israelites' houses, and not the lamb; but we must learn to understand sacramental phrases: the sign called is the thing signified, the figure called is the thing figured. The Rock was Christ, Christ our Passover, that is, our Paschal Lamb. Circumcision is called the covenant in Genesis 17:13: "My covenant shall be in your flesh." This understanding will be allowed in every place but one, and that is this one: "This is My body." For in this instance the Lutheran argues for a corporal presence under the signs, and the papist argues for a change of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood. No conferences, no disputes, no condescensions will satisfy them; and yet we say very fairly that the very body of Christ, born of the virgin, who dies on the cross, who sits in heaven, is present in

this sacrament—but not in the bread or wine, but to the faithful receiver; not in the elements, but to the communicants.

But all this will not resolve the division. These two prepositions, *con* and *trans* (when put before “substantiation”), have bred more strife and cost more blood since they were born (and neither is six hundred years old) than can be easily imagined.

(3) The Passover prefigured Christ, and yet the Jews ordinarily did not see Christ in it. It is plain that, in their celebration of the Passover, or their rituals, they take notice of and commemorate their Egyptian slavery and their deliverance, and so they were commanded; but of Christ there is not a syllable. It entered not into them that a lamb roasted should prefigure the Messiah, as they had formed Him in their thoughts, and so they held the Passover not looking backwards, but as a type looking forward, with no knowledge except for the faithful who had some glimpse of it. And this is the great fault of men in all sacraments: they mind not the inward meaning of a sacrament, nor look for the kernel. They failed to do so, and we do as well. Is it not rightly discerning the Lord’s body that which makes us guilty of His body and blood? Earthly men see the earthly part. They eat, they drink, but it feeds them not. They eat shells, but the inward things within the bones are marrow, Christ. Christ sets spiritual food before our bodies. He sets corporal food before our souls.

(4) The Passover is Christ sacrificed, not Christ an unspotted Lamb, but Christ a Lamb roasted with fire. And this tells you that the Passover

and our Supper represent Christ crucified, Christ dying or dead. It is the death of Christ, not His resurrection or ascension, that is here set forth. "Ye show the Lord's death till He comes." This is the sight which a sinful soul would see; this is the comfortable spectacle, to see the price paid, the ransom laid down, the thing being done. Hence the soul draws the hope and comfort of redemption; and therefore the bread was broken and the cup was full of blood to represent to the life this life-giving death of Christ. The papists have cheated the people of the blood by a trick of concomitancy, telling them that the bread is His body and His body has blood in it. We have a word of institution of both severally: the life of the representation is the blood shed; the Passover is a lamb slain and roasted, and the blood on the doorpost. And by providence, if the papists will allow all to eat, then we have expressly for the cup Matthew 26:27: "Drink ye all of it."

So that it is the death of Christ here represented, and, which is one step further, it is a sacrificial death, which works and makes atonement. This was what all the sacrifices that the Passover prefigured: a sacrificial death that would deliver and make expiation. "This cup," said Christ, "is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you and many for remission of sins." It is a death, and such a kind of death as in our sacrament is set forth as a sacrificial death; therefore it is said that Christ is "sacrificed for us."

*The Resemblance between the Passover
and Christ Sacrificed*

Now let us come to the analogy or resemblance between the Passover and Christ sacrificed, wherein I shall endeavor to avoid the vanity and curiosity of making too many similitudes, as men often do in handling types, parables, and similitudes. As a string overstretched makes jarring disharmony, such a practice shows more fondness than soundness.

1. The Paschal lamb must be a male lamb without blemish, the son of the first year taken from the sheep or goats (Exodus 12:5). And this resembles Christ Himself and His perfection. There were many blemishes which the superstitious or curious Jews observed, as many as 60 or 70; any blemish disabled a lamb. Christ was without all blemish. Nothing was excepted from other men, in His likeness to them, but sin. He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. He was of masculine perfection, at the perfection of his age, about 33 or 34 years of age, of lamb-like humility and meekness, which are noted in Him as exemplary graces.

He was prefigured in the lamb of the daily sacrifice, in the lamb of the Passover, in Abraham's ram instead of Isaac, in the scapegoat (Leviticus 16:21), and pointed out by John the Baptist under this name: "Behold, the Lamb of God." It is implied (Hebrews 9:28) that He shall appear the second time apart from sin that in His first coming He was not without; but we must distinguish this sin (as being

ours imputed to Him), and so He was made sin for us so as to bear it in His body, which at His second coming He shall not bear or be laden with as He was before. And therefore He is said to come without sin, both His and ours.

2. This Paschal lamb was to be separated from the flock and set apart for sacrifice on the tenth day of the month, but not killed till the fourteenth day in the evening, or, according to that vexed phrase, between the two evenings. In other words, the lamb was to be killed in the afternoon when the sun declined, but before sunset. And it was about that same time of day that our Savior, the true Passover, was slain. But in a further meaning it shows that Christ was set apart and foredesigned of God to be our Passover long before, not in His decree, but in His promise, and the predictions of the prophets which have been since the world began (Luke 1:70). "But now in the end of the world has He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Hebrews 9:26).

He suffered between the two evenings of the world, which was in His declination. When He came, that was our evening; and the latter is to come. The days of His appearance are often called "the last days." And though that has another meaning, showing the unalterableness of the gospel ordinances contrary to those of the law, yet we may affirm that it was past the noon of the world when He came, and the time shall not be so long after unto sunset as before.

3. This Paschal lamb must be killed, the blood taken into a barn sprinkled with hyssop. It shall be on every door, the flesh roasted with fire, not eaten

raw or boiled in water, the head, legs, and innards (Exodus 12:7-9, 22). And this may set forth unto us the unutterable sufferings of Christ, both in His soul and body, which the Scripture sets out with such an emphasis of words. I mean especially those of His soul, scorched with the sense of God's extreme wrath, which are expressed by extraordinary words: "sweating like drops of blood, with expression of strong cries and tears." O man, you understand not the sufferings of this Passover lamb roasted with fire, forbidden to be boiled in scalding water, for that does not express the sufferings in extremity. And what is all this for? To make Christ more pleasant meat to you, which, if you feed upon, and with a bunch of hyssop sprinkle this blood, applying it by faith, eating this roasted flesh and drinking this blood poured forth, it will feast your soul and secure you from the wrath of God, which is the next point.

4. The destroying angel, seeing this blood on the doorposts, passes over the house, goes and kills the Egyptians' firstborn, and executes God's last plague upon them. In the meantime the Israelites were safe within the protection of blood (Exodus 12:12-13). And here is the safety of those Israelites: believers who have applied by faith the blood of Jesus Christ, when God shall let loose His last and final plagues upon the world, shall be safe; hell, wrath, and condemnation shall not touch them. "When I see the blood," He said, "I'll pass over you" (Exodus 12:13, 23). Nothing else will save you. God looks at nothing but the blood of Christ upon you. Happy are they who, before God rides His circuit of destruction to

make a cry in all Egypt, have gotten under the sanctuary of blood, for then the plague shall not be upon you when God smites the land of Egypt (Exodus 12:13).

5. After the Israelites had been secured from the stroke of that dismal night, then immediately they marched away and were begged by the Egyptians to be gone. Four hundred and thirty years they were enslaved, and God, being punctual in His times, finished their captivity in that hour and began to fulfill His promises which He had made to them about bringing them into their promised land (Exodus 12:31-33, 41-42). And here we see that when a soul has long lien in the base bondage of sin and the devil, and comes to take hold of Christ and is sprinkled with His blood, and enters into covenant with God in Christ, then he is set free from his bondage and goes out of Egypt. Then all the promises begin to open upon him and he sets upon his heavenly journey, and no Pharaoh can hinder him any longer. All the sweet promises of peace, comfort, and hope begin to be made good to him, for they are all "yea and amen in Christ."

The devil and all his power and instruments cannot hold him; the blood is upon him, and from that hour he is a free man to own no lord but God. And yet still he has a wilderness to go through, but he is miraculously carried as Israel was through it. But it must not be expected that they should eat the Passover and stay in Egypt still; they must go out of their bondage who are sprinkled with this blood of the covenant.

In a similar case, God said, "I have sent out thy

prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water" (Zechariah 9:11). Perhaps this type is yet to be fulfilled in the gospel churches whom the Lord will deliver out of the hands of their oppressing tyrants, be it Pope or Turk—not by the sword, but by ordinances of His covenant. And then, if they shall pursue a people under blood, as Pharaoh did, there will be a red sea to swallow them, horse and man.

And so much for the Passover as referring to Christ our Sacrifice, for that it does so is plain by this: that which is said of the Paschal lamb in Exodus 12:46 is expressly applied to and fulfilled in Christ in John 19:36. So much for the Passover as a sacrifice, or as the figure of our sacrifice and theirs, Christ Jesus.

The Lord's Supper Considered as a Sacrament

Now we proceed to consider it as a sacrament, not ours, but theirs; nor yet a figure of our sacrament in propriety, though often so called in transit, and much contended for by papists. For what Jew could ever have seen our Supper prefigured in that Passover? And in what propriety can our sacrament be the sacrament of another. Christ is the substance of the sacrament, both theirs and ours. There they meet as the inward circumcision and regeneration is the essence of their circumcision and our baptism, but that one sacrament should be the figure of another is absurd and void of reason. As two pictures of one man are both resemblances of that one man, but one is not the picture of another, similarly, because the Passover has the common nature of a

sacrament, it points to the same Christ as our Supper. And from that the Apostle draws an argument from to persuade gospel Christians to holiness. Therefore we shall consider what significance there is in it, for though the signs are not ours, yet the significance is.

1. The Passover or Paschal lamb, as killed and roasted and the blood sprinkled, was a sacrifice; as eaten by the Israelites and feasted upon, it was a sacrament. And in later times, both by Jewish records and by Scripture, it appears (2 Chronicles 35:11 and Ezra 6:20) that the Levites killed the Paschals, the priests sprinkled the blood on the altar, and then they took the lamb to their families or chambers in Jerusalem, and there ate it.

So in our Supper, there is a sacrifice slain and offered up for atonement, and that is Christ's body and blood. And then there is an eating and drinking of this sacrifice in the sacrament of bread and wine, as in many sacrifices of the law there was first an offering up to God and then a feasting on the remainder. We have a true sacrifice, Christ, offered up to God for us. We have a true sacrament, as that sacrifice is eaten and drunk by us. The oblation belongs to God to propitiate and redeem; the communication belongs to us to be refreshed and nourished. Their eating the Passover was no sacrifice but a sacrament; their killing and roasting the lamb made it eatable. Christ's sacrificing Himself for us renders Him fit nourishment for us. Had He not been a sacrifice offered up for us, what profit would there have been in eating and drinking sacramentally and spiritually that body and blood?

This consideration is of special remark: you feast upon a sacrifice; you feed upon a sacrifice. The mouth eats the sacrament; the eye of faith discerns the sacrifice. The sacrament is no sacrifice, but the commemoration and communication of a sacrifice. And here it must be observed why God instituted their Passover and our answerable sacrament to consist of meat and drink, eating and drinking. I conceive that it was the most proper way to partake of a sacrifice; for how else can it be? Therefore we eat and drink by way of preparation of our sacrifice. Hence the phrase "living upon the altar, eating of the altar" (Hebrews 13:10). And thus, if we carry our eye to the earthly part in the Supper, and to the heavenly part, that is to the sacrament and the sacrifice represented, and feed upon the sacrifice represented as well as the sacrament it represents, we then "discern the Lord's body."

2. Their Passover was instituted as an ordinance forever, for a memorial of their deliverance in Egypt and their education out of it. It was a commemoration to be observed forever, that is, in all succeeding generations as long as their polity and religion stood (Exodus 12:14, 24, 42). And we read about some of this in Jewish writers.

What do you mean by this service, that in every company of Passover communicants there was someone who rehearsed and made commemoration, the history of the Passover? God would have the sacrifice of Christ for our sin, that greatest work of His, and our deliverance thereby from worse than Egypt or a destroying angel, to be observed and kept in mind by a lasting trophy or monument, our

Supper. The Apostle, in alluding to their custom, uses a word in 1 Corinthians 11:26 ("as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come") that means "to commemorate," or "with thanksgiving and affection to set it forth." And as theirs was forever till Christ's first coming, so ours is forever till His second coming. As long as their church continued they were charged with this ordinance. As long as the gospel church continues, we are charged with this ordinance; and therefore neither the doctrine of the gospel nor the doctrine of the sacraments shall anyone remove or alter till Christ comes.

3. Their Passover in Egypt was eaten in their various families or societies, a lamb per house, except if it was too little (Exodus 12:3-4); and in later times when this was repealed (Deuteronomy 16:6-7), and was confined to the place that God would choose, and so to Jerusalem, then, though the lamb might be slain in the holy court and the blood sprinkled on the altar, yet they carried it home to their hired chambers and there ate in companies, not less than ten in a fraternity, nor above twenty, but never a man alone. Though Christ is our sacrifice, once offered upon the cross as a sacrifice to God, yet our Supper brings Him home to us into our churches and into our souls. There an application of Him is to be made, the blood sprinkled on our doors, and the Paschal brought home to our own house. "Take ye, eat ye, drink ye."

God comes to particulars with us, and the application of the sacrifice is the life of the sacrament. We must eat and drink at home in our own souls.

Christ comes home to us, and yet this Supper ought, like the Passover, to be eaten in societies. I know no reason for one to eat it alone. There must be a company, for it is a communion. One person does not make a communion. The Apostle said, "When you come into a meeting, when you come together, tarry for one another" (1 Corinthians 11:20, 33-34). Hence it has been anciently called "a meeting, a congregation." Arthur Hildersham, in his commentary on John 4, said, "It's God's ordinance that the Lord's Supper be administered in public assemblies. How can there be a communicant without a communion? Not that the walls of a church make it a communion, but a meeting of believers."

4. Their Passover was eaten with unleavened bread and sour or bitter herbs (Exodus 12:8). There are many circumstances and ceremonies found in the Jewish authors about the searching out of all leaven, yea, with candles at noonday, and an execration of all leaven if any should remain unsound, and the bitter herbs were in constant use. The unleavened bread reminded them in what haste they went out of Egypt (Exodus 12:33), and the bitter herbs what affliction and bondage they had suffered, and further than that they did not see.

The Apostle interprets leaven as malice and wickedness, and unleavened bread as sincerity and truth (1 Corinthians 5:8), and so it teaches us how Christ is to be received by us, and what manner of persons we ought to be who apply and receive Jesus Christ. We must remember our bondage under sin, not with delight, but bitterness, and feel the sour taste of our former ways, as contrite and broken sin-

ners. Bitter herbs are good sauce for the Paschal Lamb. Sin felt sets an edge on the stomach like vinegar. Christ relishes well to such a soul.

When you come to eat His Supper, bring your own sauce with you, bitter herbs, and refresh yourself on the memory of your old ways and former lusts. That's the sauce; the bread is unleavened bread. You cannot eat the lamb and leaven together, as a secure hypocrite, a filthy swine not purged from sin. You cannot think to have Christ and your sin too, to be pardoned and not purged, to be saved and not sanctified. Away, and never think to eat this Lamb with leavened bread. You may come with bitter herbs, with contrition for sin, but you may not come with and in your sins, for that's eating with leavened bread. Therefore, search it out and let your sins be searched out as with a candle, and let them be execrable to you so that God may see your hatred *of* them and your loathing of yourself *for* them.

5. Their Passover in Egypt was to be eaten with loins girded, with shoes on feet, and with staff in hand. They were to eat in haste (Exodus 12:11), and therefore standing as ready to be instantly on their march to leave the land of Egypt and go seek their promised country. This signifies to us that we must receive Christ and His blood with intent and purpose to leave the dominion of Pharaoh, the kingdom, service, and bondage of sin, and the devil. And from that hour we are to set forward towards our heavenly country. This is that hard doctrine of the gospel. This makes men neglect and refuse Jesus Christ, because they cannot part with sin. They will not resolve to quit the former course, just as the man

who “went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.” So men will not be saved, but will go away sorrowfully, for they have powerful, pleasing, and profitable lusts. And, as it may allude to our Supper, let it teach us to come to the table of the Lord with staves in our hands and our loins girded up, like men resolving to march and begin a new and holy life. “Henceforth we should not serve sin” (Romans 6:6).

6. In their Passover, they had to eat and roast a whole lamb, and nothing of it was to remain till the morning. If any did remain, it had to be burned with fire (Exodus 12:9–10), the flesh was to be eaten, and not a bone of it broken (Numbers 9:12). This shows that Christ is all meat. There is no waste in Him. There is a variety of nourishment for all our uses—righteousness, peace, comfort, and contentment to fill our capacities, relieve our temptations, pardon and purge away our sins. We must not divide Him, but take Him whole—His merit and Spirit, His salvation and sovereignty. Christ is our Way, our Truth, and our Life.

What an unhappy doctrine is that of the papists who take the blood from us and will not let the people drink! It is as if they should not allow our Passover to be a whole lamb. And just as unhappy are they who not only rend His coat, but break His bones by depraving the fundamentals of gospel doctrine and tearing the Creed article from article until nothing is left, for in the morning light of the gospel all those shadows shall be abolished and disclaimed. Rivet says that sacraments are not sacraments except in their use, and only while they are

used, as the bread and wine after their use are not sacraments. A mere stone is a boundary in its place; remove it and it is a stone, not a marker.

7. No uncircumcised person may eat the Passover (Exodus 12:44, 48), nor any unclean person (Numbers 9:7), where the instance is of one made unclean by the dead, but it extended to other uncleannesses, such as a leprous or menstruous person. Yet there was provision made for the unclean that they might keep the Passover in the second month, as they did in Hezekiah's Passover (2 Chronicles 30:13). But for the uncircumcised there was no provision, and this sets forth to us two sorts of men who are incapable of worthily coming to the Lord's Supper:

(1) The uncircumcised who are strangers and foreigners to the church, and who are not initiated by the first sacrament of baptism. No person of whatever condition who is unbaptized can come to the Supper, for he is not entered and admitted into church fellowship or communion by the first sacrament. He is not one of the house or of the fraternity where the lamb is eaten, and out of the house the Passover must not be carried. Those who are out of the church have no right to the privileges of the church, just as those who are not freemen have not the privileges of the city. It was never known in the old church that an uncircumcised person, nor in the gospel church that an unbaptized person partook of either of the suppers, theirs or ours, for both of them are second sacraments, not first. The way to the Table has ever been by the font or laver of washing.

(2) The domestics of the house who were circumcised Israelites, yet if they at the time of the Passover were unclean, were not to eat it. This case came into question when some who were unclean put the case to Moses. He delayed the decision till he had asked of the Lord, and the Lord judged that he should be put off to the Passover of the second month. And this tells us, by way of allusion, that a baptized member of the church, yea, a true believer, may be unfit at some particular time to come to the Lord's Table and may eat and drink unworthily. Were not the Corinthians such men and in such a case (1 Corinthians 11)? Were they not punished for their unworthy coming, even though, doubtless, some of them were godly and all professing Christians?

8. There were in the first Passover in Egypt, used and commanded by expressed words, certain rituals for that occasion only which, as Jewish writers and practice show, were omitted and not used in later times. These included eating in dispersed houses, but later in Jerusalem only; the taking up the lamb four days before, which we read not of afterwards; the striking of the doorposts with blood; not going out of the house that night, which in later times Christ and His disciples did; eating in traveling posture with staves, whereas we find that our Savior, and the Jews, in another posture of discumbrance, ate lying on beds. These, or at least some of these, were occasional at first, and, the occasion ceasing, custom ruled otherwise without offense.

In our Supper the Lord celebrated and instituted it at night, in or at the end of the Paschal and com-

mon supper. He used unleavened bread. It was late at night. He was in a gesture of leaning or lying down (John 13:25). It was in the chamber of a private house. There was no woman present. He blessed and consecrated the bread and wine apart. They sang a hymn at the close of all, as was usual. And these, or many of these, were occasional circumstances by reason of the custom and rite of the Paschal supper, or the particular exigency of the time.

And what, then? Do they oblige to a hair's breadth all later ages? Do those who impose any one of these themselves hold to all of them? Shall we be supercilious and superstitious in observing all occasional or local customs? Why do we not appear in sackcloth at our feasts? As the Apostle said about the length of hair, so I say, "If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor the churches of God." If Christ had celebrated the Supper with His loins girded and staff in hand, we would not have been bound to it. Yet we must not follow this freedom too far, and, under color of disregarding an occasional circumstance, change or mutilate the real substance, as the Papist does who takes away the cup which Christ blessed and breaks not the bread as He did, and who, of a sacrament, makes a sacrifice. The matter and form, the intended analogy between the sign and the thing signified, will guide us in our distinguishing substance from incidental features.

The Lord's Supper Is a Federal Ordinance

*Implying a Covenant Transaction
between God and Us, and Supposing a
Renewal of Solemn Vows to be the Lord's*

by Edmund Calamy

We are often to renew with great solemnity the sacred memorials of our dearest Savior who gave His life as a ransom for us, and sealed with His blood that covenant of grace and peace that is between God and us. Our vow in baptism indeed binds us fast to God, and our owning its obligation on us tends to increase its force. Yet God thinks it fit to require and take new security of us, and orders us to come to His table that we may there strengthen our obligations, and not only own again and again that we are His by right, but be guided by the awful and affecting considerations there presented to us to new resolutions and engagements and solemn vows to lead a life of holy devotedness. And in requiring this of us, He very much considers our benefit.

That I may handle this matter to the best advantage, I will:

1. Make it appear that the Lord's Supper is a federal ordinance, that it naturally implies a covenant transaction between God and us, and therefore supposes renewed vows on our part—vows being ever an

essential part of such transactions.

2. Show that the more expressly the Christian vow is renewed by us every time we come to the Lord's Table, the more effectually and plentifully we are likely to reap the benefits of that ordinance.

3. Give some directions for the right management of the renewal of our vows at such a time, and endeavor to give some help in reducing this matter to practice.

The first of these particulars is the subject of this chapter; the other two of the next.

The Lord's Supper is, in its own nature, a federal ordinance, which implies a covenant transaction between God and us and supposes a renewal of our vows to be the Lord's. This is that which I am now to discuss, to which undertaking I am the more inclined because I imagine there are multitudes who sit down time after time at the Lord's Table who don't sufficiently consider this matter. They look on that sacred festival as an ordinance instituted to keep up the remembrance of Christ and what He has done and suffered for the recovery of a lost world, and therefore, when they come to it, they endeavor to think affectionately of His incarnation, passion, and crucifixion; and thus far indeed 'tis well. But when they stop here and go no further, they leave out a main thing, which lies in that covenant transaction between their God and Savior and them, which is thereby designed.

Withal, there are many others who indeed look on themselves as obliged to renew their covenant and repeat their solemn vows every time they come to this ordinance, who yet know not why they are

obliged to it then any more than at another time. They know not on what to base this apprehension of theirs, which they have received from others and take for granted without any examination of its grounds. I shall therefore, from the following considerations, make it appear that a renewed covenanting is one aspect of this ordinance necessary to be taken into account by those who would rightly conceive of it; and that 'tis not without cause that persons are ordinarily pressed hereto.

First, therefore, consider the mutual action in this ordinance of giving and taking between God and us, and you will see plain evidence in the nature of the thing of a covenant transaction. Giving and taking are the first obvious actions in this solemnity. Giving is God's part and taking is ours. God gives us bread and wine by His delegated officer; we receive them from the minister as from His representative. Now, pray consider a little what it is that is given and taken at that time. "'Tis plain, simple bread and wine," you'll say. And 'tis true, no more falls under the view of sense. But what is it that is thereby signified? Is it not a bruised, nay, a broken Christ, giving His soul as an offering for sin, and shedding His blood to make atonement? 'Tis Christ with all His benefits that there is given to the believing soul.

As certainly as bread and wine are put into the devout communicant's hands, so certainly is he invested in all gospel benefits. God gives Himself, His Son, His Spirit, His grace, His favor, and all that can be reasonably desired or truly wanted to the believing soul. This is on one side.

On the other side, the believer takes. With his hands he takes the distributed bread and wine, and receives with all his heart what is thereby portrayed and represented. He receives an offered Christ in his arms and into his heart. In short, God actually makes over, makes a delivery, as it were, of all that He promises in the covenant of grace on His part. We, by taking then what He gives, naturally engage to all that in that covenant He has made our duty. This is the more evident in that a firm disposition and bent of heart, to the performance of all such duty, is a prerequisite to the actual conveyance of those benefits.

Further, we may observe how customary it has been, and is among men, by giving and taking the smallest things to ratify compacts of the greatest consequence. A man may among us give away all he has by the delivery of a flagon, which custom considered may answer the objection which the appearing meanness of the things given and taken at the Lord's Supper, compared with the great things thereby represented and made over, might give occasion to. The giving and taking but of sixpence to strike up a contract lays as fast hold of a man as ten thousand pounds in hand. Much more, then, does this solemn giving and taking of bread and wine, which Christ has made a part of His religion, and whereby He is so closely represented, bind us as fast to Him as if we should repeat every word that He has said and profess our hearty consent unto it.

Observe further under what notion Christ is given at that ordinance to every truly hungry and thirsting soul. "Behold," says God there to all such

persons, "here's a Christ for you, to be taken by you, as your Prophet, Priest, and King." Whereto the prepared soul naturally replies, "Lord, I am ready to take Him as Thou offerest Him to me. I'm for a whole Christ, in all the parts of His saving office. I'll take Him for my Prophet, and credit Him in all things; for my Priest, and in Him I'll put all my trust; and for my King, to whom, Thy grace enabling me, I'll yield a sincere, preserving obedience." This is plainly a renewed covenant, a short summary of the Christian vow.

Second, consider also the actions of eating and drinking, and you'll see further evidence of a covenant transaction. At this holy Supper we come to eat and drink with the blessed God. He is indeed invisible to us, but has designated one in each Christian assembly to represent Him, and in His name and stead to entertain those who come to Him as His guests. He spreads a table, and provides us food so that, eating and drinking, we may receive nourishment for our spiritual life and supports for our spiritual welfare. Now, eating and drinking and feasting together, we may observe in Scripture history, were the usual appendages of compacts or covenants, as we may see in Genesis 26:30 and 31:44-46, where we find Isaac and Abimelech, Jacob and Laban concluding their compacts with a feast.

The same is evident in many other places. The eating and drinking together of those who were at variance implies an antecedent agreement, for it is a token of friendly familiarity not wont to be afforded to enemies. Abimelech hated Isaac, and would not have eaten and drunk with him, but upon supposi-

tion they were agreed. Nor would Laban have done the like with Jacob, whom he pursued with a design of destruction, but upon the same supposition. It is an axiom in the civil law that if anyone does but drink to another against whom he has an accusation of slander or other verbal injury, he loses his action because he is now assumed to be reconciled to him. The Hebrew word that signifies a covenant, or any federal communion between parties, is derived from another word that signifies "to eat," because it was the constant custom of the Hebrews, and other oriental nations, to establish covenant by eating and drinking together.

Now by nature there is a great variance between God and us on account of our hereditary apostasy: Sin, as it sets us against God, so it sets Him against us. Where sin therefore reigns and bears sway, it is plain there is a great unfitness for eating and drinking with God at His table. That is a solemnity that supposes a person's peace first to be made with God through Christ; otherwise he is not likely to be a welcome guest. But even where a person's peace is actually made, there are frequent falls for which there must be a renewed repentance; and God's admitting us from time to time to feast with Him at His table, notwithstanding our manifold failings and defects, is a sufficient argument of His readiness to pass them by and to be reconciled anew. Whenever therefore we come to eat and drink with Him, we are to renew our self-dedication. There's none, not even the best, but what between one sacrament and another do enough to forfeit all their interest in the divine favor, were God so severe

as to mark iniquity. Eating and drinking, therefore, with God after such renewed offenses supposes us anew to make our peace with Him, to devote ourselves to Him afresh, as ever we would keep His favor; for which we at no time have such an advantage as at His Table.

This will be further evident from a third consideration, which is taken from that which we feast upon at the Lord's Table: the memorials of the great Christian sacrifice. The most general and proper notion of the Lord's Supper, the notion to which all that relates to it may very aptly be referred, is this: It is a solemn feast upon the memorials of the sacrifice of infinite virtue that was offered by our Savior upon the cross for sin (this is excellently explained by the learned Dr. Cudworth), which notion is too large to be here distinctly handled, and therefore I shall meddle with no more of it than what concerns my present purpose. It is easy to observe how commonly covenants between God and man were attended with sacrifices. Thus it was in Noah's case; 'twas the same in Abraham's case (Genesis 8–9 and 15). So also sacrifices accompanied the covenant God entered into with the Israelites all in a body (Exodus 24:5, 8), and by such sacrifices offered the covenants made were confirmed.

It may be further observed that sacrifices were founded upon a covenant. The covenant God entered into with the Jews required them to offer up the several sacrifices prescribed in the Law, which, had they not been founded on a divine covenant, would have been in no way likely to have been accepted. But suppose the covenant once settled that