

Roots

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

Date: 20 November 2016

Preacher: Philip Wells

[0 : 00] So what I'd like us to look at this morning on this subject of communion, I thought quite a bit how to approach it. I think it's a great subject, but it's a rather intimidating subject. I think where do we begin? What's the best way of trying to get a grip of it?

So I think what I'm going to do is, like with a jigsaw puzzle, to get all the pieces, the sky bits and the forest bits and the town bits and sort of arrange them into piles and get them ready to assemble into a jigsaw.

I don't think we'll see the finished article, but we'll do a little bit of sorting out this morning. I really want you to be involved and to help. So if you're feeling a little bit sleepy, just try and wake up. I mean, if you want to go to sleep, I wouldn't want to disturb you.

So why this subject? Our aim is rightly to understand and to appreciate and respond to the Lord's Supper.

So I want us to understand as best we can. I think there's always more to understand. Let's get our thinking right about this. To appreciate. So that's more than understanding. That's to value.

[1 : 11] To have a right sense of the value of the Lord's Supper. And to respond to it. Because as a church, we're conscious there's some practical things that we could be doing.

Maybe changing the time. Maybe doing it in different ways. That we are responding rightly to the Lord's Supper. In order to, in order that our church life, and order our church life to please the Lord as much as possible.

So it's really saying, what does the Lord Jesus want of us in this? What would please him? So that's really what we're thinking about. We said this at the members meeting, that we would do this as a study.

So that we're not just failing to think it through properly. But we need to discuss, but we need to understand and appreciate first. And Chris did a treatment of this on the 7th of August.

Perhaps not everybody heard that, but I'm just going to repeat some of that and affirm it. And perhaps some of it in large on what Chris has already done a very fine job of bringing to us.

[2 : 18] So here are some of the pieces of jigsaw that I'd like us to have in place. So first of all, let's think about the way life works by actions and shared actions.

So would you like to imagine life without waving a hand? That's an action, isn't it? You think how much is imparted when, if you go out of the door of the church, somebody says, Hello!

Or if you, as you're going out, go, Just an action. But it says a lot, doesn't it? Just imagine a world in which nobody ever did that.

And it was not possible to do such a thing. That says hold. I don't know what's happened to the D. But just imagine a world in which you couldn't hug anybody or hold anybody.

Just think how different the world, how empty the world would be without such an action. When you're a child, actually I've got a little picture on Facebook of my grandson.

[3 : 35] I don't know how he got into this talk. But my grandson and Jamie, and they're both wearing yellow T-shirts, and their hairlines are very similar, actually. They're both smiling the same smile.

And little chap is being held by daddy. And it did strike me how much that means to a youngster growing up.

For their first impression to be that not only do people talk to me and feed me, but they hold me. And I'm loved and protected.

And I can sense that. And I know that. And how much a child misses if they don't have that in their early years.

I know some people unfortunately don't have that. But what a loss. And how difficult to make that up in later life. Imagine what it would be if you could never kiss anybody.

[4 : 30] If there was no such thing. How would you show affection? How would Italian people greet one another? They wouldn't know what to do, would they? It's an action.

But it says so much. And we need to realise, just have our minds open to this, that actions mean something. If you couldn't lift your hands.

So I know in some cultures of Christianity, people, when they feel strongly about something in the meeting, will lift their hands. I know that football people will lift their hands.

And if you couldn't do that. So imagine whichever context you want. So let's go to football. Score a goal. And everybody goes, well done.

Instead of going, yes! Actions say a lot, don't they? Imagine a world in which there was no such thing as dance.

[5 : 36] Imagine a world in which you didn't have birthday parties. Or engagement parties. Or Christmas parties.

You never got together. You just said things to one another. Happy Christmas. Happy Christmas. Happy birthday. Happy birthday. Goodbye. Oh, sorry, I waved there.

I shouldn't have done that either. Just imagine if we never had those things. How flat an empty life would be. And think of that set of actions that happen when we eat together in a celebration.

So at a wedding. I have a dim memory. It could be a wrong memory. I have a dim memory that in Jewish traditional law, somebody once challenged the legitimacy of a wedding because there had been no food at the wedding.

It's an interesting thought, isn't it? I mean, what made an Old Testament wedding a wedding? It wasn't that there was a registrar because there were no such things.

[6 : 55] And it wasn't that they met in church because there was no such thing as church. One of the things that they nearly always did was have a meal. And just how important it is to sit together.

Will you be doing that at Christmas? I'm sure most people will be sitting down with loved ones, be it a large number or a small number, maybe it's just at Christmas, to be together, to eat together.

And how precious that is. And how sad not to be able to do that. So there's some thoughts about shared actions.

Actions, particularly actions that are shared. Let's also think a little bit about togetherness. So rather than individuality, togetherness, who invented pizza?

Are you putting up your hand there? Are you putting up your hand there? Are you putting up your hand there? Well, somebody else can answer. Who invented pizza? Who invented pizza? The Italians. That'll do, won't it?

[8 : 06] Italians invented pizza? Yeah? Not necessarily Stefano, although he might have done. But I think pizza, we think Italians.

Thank you. Thank you. We appreciate you for what your... Who won 27 gold and 17 bronze in the Olympics?

I did look this up because I wouldn't have the faintest idea otherwise. GB. Yes. GB stands for Great Britain. So some of us will say, we did.

As if we had anything to do with the tour. But we could say, we did that? Yes. Do you notice how we're saying, we've got a sense of togetherness? We're not particularly good at this as Brits, I don't think.

And perhaps in the modern world we're not so good at this. But there is a sense that there are things that bind us together beyond just being individuals. What language will they sing in heaven? Welsh.

[9 : 12] Yes. Welsh. So we will all have to learn Welsh. Welsh. Who were invaded by the Normans in 1066? Us.

Us. So it's interesting. Us. So not the people who lived... The people who lived a long time ago, 1066, were invaded. But it was us who were invaded. It sort of stretches down through time.

That is why we say pork, when otherwise we would have said pig. Because pork is a French word. That's why we say beef. And if they hadn't invaded, we would say cow. But beef is a French word.

The Normans brought that over and they left it with us.

And we were the... Who calls the autumn fall? Americans. Yeah. That lot. Yes. Who's going to leave the EU two years after Article 50 is triggered?

[10 : 14] We are. Who loves the NHS? We do. Please tell them that in America, Lindsay, because we do.

We love the NHS. So we have an identity. I'm just trying to get this subtle point across. We have this identity that is not just me, but us.

And there's all sorts of ways in which we have our us linked together across time and space. So it's us who were invaded in 1066 by the Normans.

It's us who will leave the EU according to that plan. It's them who call the autumn fall. We call autumn autumn. So we have this sense of identity that goes back to things that happened in history and goes forward and unites us and so on.

And how empty the world would be if there weren't such things. If each of us was an individual atom of person with no connection to the past and no connection to anybody else, it would just be impossible.

[11 : 24] God hasn't made the world like that. He hasn't made us like that. So there's a few thoughts to begin. And we're going to focus in on the idea of meals.

So here's a few things about meals. Would you like to look at 1 Corinthians 10? So this is not a Christian thing.

This reference is to a pagan thing in 1 Corinthians 10, 19 to 21, where the Corinthians, so these are people who lived in the city of Corinth all those years ago.

They had an identity, group activity, meal thing, but they did. Nothing to do with Christianity.

1 Corinthians 10, 19 to 21, he says, he's referring to their meals in the pagan temples. Do I mean then that a sacrifice offered to an idol is anything or that an idol is anything?

[12 : 33] No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God. And I do not want you to be participants with demons.

You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too. You cannot have a part in the Lord's table and the table of demons. And he's referring back to their experience before they were Christians that they belonged to the group of people who sat down at that meal in the pagan temple and united themselves somehow to that God.

And he says that actually meant something. And you can't do the Christian meal thing as well. You can't do both of them. They don't fit.

That is being one lot of us. This is another lot of us. And you can't be both of them. You can't participate in that table and this table.

So it's just interesting that it isn't just a Christian thing. It's part of that pagan thing too. Here's another, just a little touch on the importance of meals.

[13 : 44] This is Genesis 3, 6. And somebody saw the fruit. Saw the fruit. She took. She ate. And what did she do next with it?

She offered it to her husband. And what did he do with it? Did that make any difference to anything? Yeah. It ruined everything, didn't it? That's Adam and Eve in the garden. Just interesting.

That was a meal. And it was actually a bit of a shared meal, wasn't it? Because she gave it to him and he ate it. And just one other meal thing. The end of the world.

When we get to life after life after death. The end. Well it's a city. It has trees in it. And it's also spoken of as being a wedding feast.

We'll be there together. Eating. Drinking. According to the song by Paul Oakley, dancing. Be good to sing that one next week.

[14 : 49] That's a shared thing together. A meal that's upcoming. So I'm just sort of setting out the jigsaw puzzle here. Here's the text.

So let's look at it again. And then we'll come back to this right at the end. While they were eating.

No, let me start again. The Lord's Supper is described in three of the Gospels.

And there are two extended references in the first letter to the Corinthians. Those are the main references. So here's an example of how it's put in Matthew's Gospel.

And what's in Mark and Luke is similar. Little tweaks. Here's the Matthew version. While they were eating. Jesus took bread.

Gave thanks. Broke it. And gave it to his disciples. Saying, Take and eat. This is my body.

[15 : 58] Then he took the cup. Gave thanks. And offered it to them. Saying, Drink from it, all of you.

This is my blood. Of the covenant. Which is poured out. For many.

For the forgiveness of sins. I tell you. I will not drink of this fruit. Actually it uses the word sort of like product. Of the vine.

From now on. Until that day. When I drink it anew. With you. In my father's kingdom. I mean there's so much in.

In almost every phrase. It's difficult to know how to. How to respond to that. But let us just. Ponder. What it must have been like for those disciples. Sitting at that meal.

[17:01] Which we'll think about in a moment. And for somebody to say. Hold everything guys. Just wait a minute. Here's some bread. Thank God for it. Give it to you.

And say. This is my body. Eat it. And then for that same person.

To have a cup of wine. And give it. And say. All of you drink this. This is my blood. I mean.

Imagine the thoughts going around in their heads. We don't drink blood. How can that be blood? I don't want to drink blood. And Jesus says. You've got to. Drink it. But there's lots of things going on. I won't try and deal with them all. What I would like to do. Is say. Okay. There that is. In time and space. There in Jerusalem. There in Jerusalem. At that particular moment. Let's see. Let's try and put it into a big context.

[18:02] Of where it comes from. And I'd like to go back. And pick up some points in the Bible. That bring us to this. So. If you don't mind. Let's go right back.

To Exodus 24. The reason to do this. Is that Jesus is himself. Picking up on all sorts of strands. And threads. And memories. And reminiscences. And focusing them all. On that particular meal. And he's using words.

That have resonances. And so. I'd like to try and pick those up. If you would. Come along with me in this. So. Exodus 24.

Let me read. To what it's. What it says. Am I going to do that? Yeah. Do you want to. Tell. Pardon.

[19:00] Sorry. I'm. I'm. I'm just debating my own mind. How to do this. Let me read you. Exodus 24. From verse 8 to 11. See if you don't notice. Some resonances.

Moses then took the blood. Sprinkled it on the people. And said. This is the blood of the covenant. That the Lord has made with you. In accordance with all these words.

You notice some resonance there. And. Yes. Covenant. There's only a couple of places. Where anybody in the Bible says.

Blood of the covenant. One of them is Jesus. And the other one is this. And here. Moses says. This is the blood of the covenant. That the Lord has made with you.

In accordance with all these words. Moses and Aaron. Nadab and Abihu. And the 70 elders of Israel. Went up. And saw the God of Israel.

[19:57] Under his feet. Was something like a pavement. Made of sapphire. Clear as the sky itself. But God did not raise his hand.

Against these leaders of the Israelites. They saw God. And they ate and drank. And the Lord said to Moses. Come up to me on the mountain.

And stay here. And I will give you the tablets of stone. With the law and commands. That I have written for their instruction. So I am just jumping into this scene. It is there in Exodus.

It is old covenant. It is part of the. Amazing. Arrangement. That God made. With. Israel.

In those days. This. This bond together. Made with extreme care. With many provisions. And many blessings.

[20:54] And much instruction. And it is there. To instruct us. So. If you don't mind. Looking at it. A little bit more. Just to enlarge.

On this. This is on the mountain. And in chapter 24. Verse 1. It says. Come up to the Lord. You and Aaron. Nadab.

And Abihu. And 70 of the elders of Israel. You are to worship at a distance. But Moses alone. Is to approach the Lord. The Lord. The others may not come up. And the people may not come up with him.

So. This is the mountain. Where God. Is there. Present. And most of the time. They are told. Keep out. Most of the time. They are told. Don't come anywhere near this.

Sort of put a barrier around it. Put an electric fence around it. Don't let any animals. Come up to this mountain. Because it is holy. Interesting.

[21:47] Isn't it? And in verse. There is a lot of writing. Of regulations. And laws. And a statement of obedience. In verse 3. Everything the Lord has said.

We will do. Moses then wrote down. Everything the Lord had said. He got up early the next morning. And built an altar. At the foot of the mountain. And set up 12 stone pillars. Representing the 12 tribes of Israel.

He then sent young Israelite men. And they offered burnt offerings. And sacrificed young bulls. As fellowship offerings to the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood. And put it in bowls.

And the other half. He sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant. And read it to the people. And they responded. We will do everything the Lord has said. We will obey. And then he took some of the blood.

And sprinkled it on the people. This is the blood of the covenant. That the Lord has made with you. In accordance with these words. And then 70 plus 4. Go up the mountain.

[22 : 44] And meet God. So what have we got? We've got in verse 4. As I said. The 12 pillars. Representing the 12 tribes. So it's all the people.

Us. And we have this covenant. A covenant is a. If you like. It's a relationship. Written down in words. A relationship written down in words.

And God is making a covenant. With these people. He's saying. I bind myself to you. You are bound to me. This is our relationship.

It has a book. And it has commitment. Everything you say we will do. They say. They never quite made good on that. And in verse 8.

As we said. This is the blood. Of the covenant. So this covenant. Needs blood. Not every covenant.

[23 : 42] Needs blood. If you were to think. Of a marriage as a covenant. Which it sort of is. There is no requirement. For any. Blood to be shed. But this covenant.

Needed blood. And it need. It needs buckets of it. See these animals being sacrificed. They offered burnt offerings.

And sacrificed young bulls. As fellowship offerings to the Lord. There's buckets full of blood. What's blood doing in here? Well the answer is. That in the terms of this covenant.

Blood. Is the most. What's the word? Polluting thing. But it is also. The most cleansing thing.

And. Animal blood. Apparently. Is needed. To cleanse. To clean. The people. The apparatus.

[24 : 46] That they use. To meet God. The altar. All sorts of stuff. And. So the heart. Of this old covenant. Is blood. Animal blood.

And buckets of it. Says something. Doesn't it? About. What it's like. To relate to God. There needs to be. Cleansing. There needs to be.

Sin. Dealt with. There needs to be. Guilt. A tone. Sin. Atoned for. And guilt. Taken away. And in the old testament. It's buckets of blood. From loads and loads of animals.

And it's there. In abundance. In this picture. And then having done that. Having. Sealed this covenant. They go up on the mountain.

See what happens. They go up on the mountain. How many? How many went up? Seventy four.

[25 : 44] So. You notice here. It's. It's not everybody. It's only a concession. That lets the seventy four go up. Most people are told.

Keep back. Keep away. But. Seventy four of them go up. And they go up to the mountain. And what do they see? God. What does he look like?

Somebody else. Tell us. Verse ten. Do we. What description are we given? What description are we given? Chapter 24.

Verse ten. What description are we given of anything? Pavement. Where he's standing. Yes. It's fascinating actually. We're not told what God looks like.

We're told what the pavement under his feet looked like. And even that is a difficult one to describe. It was something. There was something. Under his feet was something like a pavement.

[26 : 46] Made of sapphire. Clear as the sky itself. And then the next sentence expresses surprise. What's the writer surprised at? Verse eleven. God did not raise his hand against them.

They got away with it. They survived. That's what they're surprised at isn't it? These people dared to go up. So close to God. They could see what he was standing on.

Couldn't see his face. They could see what he was standing on. Sort of. And they survived it. And. They ate and drank.

You think. What an amazing thing. The covenant had got them to the point. Of union. Of togetherness. So that seventy four of them.

Could. By the skin of their teeth. Get up to the mountain. Temporarily. See a bit of God. Eat and drink. And then down they come.

[27 : 51] And that's it. They ate and drank. But just think what we've got here. Just for a glimpse. It's only those few verses isn't it? The old covenant.

Brings people. Some of them. For a short time. With the hairs on their neck. Probably standing up. Are we going to make the rest of this. Before we get zapped by this holy God.

And they share a meal. In the presence of the almighty. And that's the old covenant. That is where the blood of the old covenant. Is quoted. And.

Do you not. Agree with me. That the new covenant. Is better. Than the old covenant. That in the new covenant. covenant. Well for a start.

It isn't just. Seventy people. Who eat and drink with God. It's every single one of God's people. That eats and drinks with God. The blood.

[28 : 50] Is better. Because the blood of the old covenant. Was the blood of animals. And there was buckets of it. And it had to be repeated.

Again and again. And again. And again. And it never. Did. What it. Was meant to do. It never. Took away. Guilt. It never.

Took away. Sin. It never really. Made people clean. It was a sort of. Pictorial aid. And God said. You put your trust in this. Because this is what I'm showing you. And people could say.

Well I don't see how this is working. But Lord. I trust you on this. I will dare to come into your presence. And God said. That's fine. Leave the mechanics of it to me. You're putting your trust in me. That's. That's fine.

But the blood. That. We're talking about. That Jesus is talking about. Was blood of. Of a son of Adam. Of. A human being.

[29 : 46] Like us. And that blood. The blood of Jesus Christ. Son of man. And son of God. Was so powerful. That he only had to do it once.

And by doing it once. Finished. Done it. Achieved it. And what he achieved.

Was the ability. Of sinners like us. To come into the presence of God. And not be zapped. But be welcomed.

And in the communion. If you like. It's a. It's a sense in which we come. And eat and drink with God. And God does not raise his hand.

But he welcomes us. To come around his table. So the communion. If you like. Is a. Is a. Fulfillment of this. Rather. I think rather beautiful picture.

[30 : 43] In the Old Testament. That was 74 of them. They survived. The new is better. Let's look at another picture. If we may. Let's look at.

Exodus. 12. Now the reason I'm coming to. Exodus 12. Is that the meal. That Jesus. If I might put it. Reverently hijacked. The meal that Jesus. Took. And transformed. Was a Passover meal. It was a Passover meal.

And let's go back. And look. At where this whole Passover thing. Comes from. So we're in Exodus chapter 12. And. I'll read it.

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron. In Egypt. This month. Is to be for you. The first month. The first month. Of your year. And I think I've got a little picture of that.

[31 : 43] That's a little calendar. This month is the first. So it's the first of the first. Because. God says. I want you to. Change all your. Apps on your.

Smartphones. And all your calendars. In your house. And you thought it was. Whatever it is. Of November. But actually. This is the first month. Of the first day. Of the first month. Change your calendars.

Because this is where it all starts. It's fantastic. Isn't it? You get these time references. Which we'll notice again. And he says. And there's a community reference. There's an us reference.

He says. Tell the whole community of Israel. Verse three. That on the tenth day. Of this month. Each man is to take a lamb. For his family. One for each household.

If any household. Is too small. For a whole lamb. They must share one. With their nearest neighbor. Having taken into account. The number of people there are. You are to determine. The amount of lamb. Needed.

[32 : 39] In accordance with. What each person will eat. So. Let me just stop. And say. There's. A very careful match. Between the people. And the lamb. So.

We want. The people. Matched. To the lamb. If you're a small family. You need to join. With someone else. If you're a big family. What does it say? Having taken into account. The number of people. You match the people. To the lamb. And actually. You don't have any lamb. Left over. At the end of it. It all has to be. Either eaten. Or destroyed. So there's an exact match. People. Lamb. Lamb. People. You are to. So. Verse five. The animals you choose. Must be year old males. Without defect. You may take them. From the sheep. Or the goats. Take care of them. Until the fourteenth day. Of the month. When all the people. Of the community. Of Israel. Must slaughter them. At twilight. They are to take. Some of the blood. And put it on the sides. And tops. Of the door frames.

[33 : 33] Of the houses. Where they eat the lambs. That same night. They are to eat the meat. Roasted over the fire. Along with bitter herbs. And bread made without yeast. Do not eat the meat. Raw or cooked with water.

But roast it over the fire. Head. Legs. And inner parts. Do not leave any of it. Till morning. If some of it is left. Till morning. You must burn it. And this is how you are to eat it. With your cloak. Tucked into your belt. Your sandals on your feet. And your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover. So notice the exact match.

Between the people and the lamb. Between us. And this. The lamb provision. And notice too. The blood. Now have I got. To the blood.

But yes I have. Let's read on in verse 12. On the same night. I will pass through Egypt. And strike down every firstborn. Both men and animals.

[34 : 34] And I will bring judgment. On all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. The blood will be a sign for you. On the houses where you are. And when I see the blood. I will pass over you.

No destructive plague will touch you. When I strike Egypt. So here's the Passover. Here's a picture. There's the house. And there's the lamb.

The lamb gets roasted. And it's blood gets used. To put on the door posts. Around there. And here's the whole family. Adults. Children. And here are their bags.

All packed. Ready to go. Because this is such a special event. Before the lamb died. They could not leave Egypt. They tried and tried.

But they could not leave. After the lamb dies. They cannot stay in Egypt. They're going to get pushed out. By the power. Of this action. And what God is going to do.

[35 : 29] He's going to go to every house. And bring judgment. It's not going to be full judgment. It's sort of partial judgment. But it will be the death of the firstborn. And when he comes. To an Israelite house.

He as it were. You could imagine the angel. Coming and looking. And saying I need to. Oh. There's. A blood's already been shed here.

A death has already taken place. No further action needed. Go on to the next house. And that is how. That's why it's called Passover. That is how.

Israel. Was saved. That is how. They. Became. An independent nation.

Through the. Through the death of the lamb. And you see how this is. Involving them. They're doing eating. They're getting ready to move.

[36 : 29] And God acts. In this powerful. Definitive. Determinative way. And from now on. Everything is different. And this.

One off. Activity. Action. God. Designs this. To be. Projected forward. Into the future. He says. I want you to do.

Something like this. Every year. Verse 14. This is a day. You are to commemorate. For the generations to come. You shall celebrate it. As a festival to the Lord.

A lasting ordinance. For seven days. You are to eat bread. Made without yeast. On the first day. Remove the yeast. From your houses. For whoever eats anything. With yeast in it. From the first day. Until the seventh.

Must be cut off from Israel. You're not part of us. You don't do this. On the first day. Hold a sacred assembly. Hold another one. On the seventh day. Do no work at all.

[37 : 25] In those days. Except to prepare food. For everyone to eat. That is all you may do. Celebrate the feast. Of unleavened bread. Because it was. On this very day. That I brought your divisions. Out of Egypt.

Celebrate this day. As a lasting ordinance. For the generations to come. In the first month. You are to eat bread. Made without yeast. From the evening. Of the fourteenth day. Until the evening. Of the twenty first day.

For seven days. No yeast is to be found. In your houses. Whoever eats anything. With yeast in. Must be cut off. From the community of Israel. Whether he is an alien. Or native born. Eat nothing made with yeast. Getting the point.

I think. Wherever you live. You must eat. Unleavened bread. And Moses summoned. All the elders of Israel. And said to them. Go at once. Select the animals. For your families. Slaughter the Passover lamb. Take a bunch of hyssop.

Dip it into the blood. In the basin. Put some of the blood. On the top. And on the sides. Of the door frame. None of you. Shall go out of the door. Of his house. Until morning. When the Lord. Goes through the land. To strike down the Egyptians.

[38 : 22] He will see the blood. He will see the blood. On the top. On the sides of the door frame. Will pass over that doorway. He will not permit the destroyer. To enter your house. And strike you down. Obey these instructions. As a lasting ordinance.

For you. And your descendants. And when you enter the land. That the Lord will give you. As he promised. Observe this ceremony. And when your children ask you.

What does this ceremony mean? Then tell them. It is the Passover sacrifice. To the Lord. Who passed over the houses. Of the Israelites in Egypt. And spared our homes.

Do you notice that? It is us who get saved. It is our homes. Even though it was generations before. It is us. He spared our homes. When he struck down the Egyptians.

And the people bowed down. And worshipped. And the Israelites did. What the Lord commanded Moses. And Aaron. And at midnight. The Lord struck down. The firstborn in Egypt. From the firstborn of Pharaoh. Who sat on the throne.

[39 : 17] To the firstborn of the prisoner. Who was in the dungeon. And all the firstborn. Of the livestock as well. Pharaoh and all his officials. And all the Egyptians. Got up during the night. And there was a loud wailing in Egypt.

And there was not a house. Without someone dead. And the Israelites were out. Amazing story isn't it? This great night. These great events.

And God's mighty arm. And they couldn't leave before that. But now they cannot stay. That's what the death of the lamb produced. And they're to remember it.

Through the generations. Jewish people still do. Don't they? Passover. Still do that. And there will still be a tradition. For the youngest child to say. Why are we doing this?

And the answer will be given in a formula. Which I don't know the formula. But the idea of it will be. This is what God did for us. The Lord saved us. Out of Egypt. All those generations ago.

[40 : 11] And we're still remembering. And we're still grateful. And that's still who we are. So yes. I've put that in. The future. So we have. You notice this.

We have a time reference. In the past. And then we have time going on. In the future. And we have the definitive. Action taking place here. But it goes on being remembered.

Down through the generations. That's very like communion. Isn't it? That's very like communion. On the night he was betrayed.

Jesus took bread. Whenever you eat it and drink it. That's now. You proclaim the Lord's death.

That's the past. Until he comes. That's the future. Future. And this is the same. Pattern. There's a one-off thing. With a future repetition. And.

[41 : 13] The covenant. In Exodus. Is like the. The pattern. Setting covenant. This is the covenant. Of covenants. This is. This is what. This is the covenant. In its most advanced form.

Until we get to the new covenant. I want to say. Even in this advanced. Form. The new is like it. But it's better. Can I just. Ask you to ponder.

The Jewish people. Have Passover. It's such a big thing for them. Isn't it? Would I be right in saying that? It sort of defines them. And they will sit at a meal.

And somebody will say. What does this mean dad? And dad will say. This is what the Lord did for us. And. We have. Something better. We have a table.

Set by Jesus Christ. In which he says. I've done a better. Salvation. I haven't just delivered you. From one piece of geography.

[42 : 11] To another. From one political system. To another. I've saved you from sin. And here we are. Together. Saved from sin. Looking back.

At what was done. By that. Death of a lamb. Before the lamb died. We were lost in sin. After the lamb died. We could not stay in sin. Because his death.

Propels. Each of his elect people. Out of sin. Into salvation. Matched. For the people. And sets us free.

And we have a meal. By which we can humbly. And joyfully. Say. This is us. This is what the Lord's done for us. The new is better. Father. Well.

I said that. We would come back. To this passage. And I'm going to try something. Which previously didn't work. So I'll. Try it with. A bit of trepidation. If we look at that passage again.

[43 : 11] Can we look at it with fresh eyes. Having thought about. What we've thought about. That I wonder whether I can. Pick out. Or can we pick out.

Any of the things that. Relate to what we've been looking at. So far. From the Old Testament. So for example. The blood of the covenant. Oh.

It didn't work. Bear with me a second. That might work.

When Jesus says.

Blood of the covenant. He's not making that up. For the first time. He's relating back. Isn't he. To what. Happened in the days of Moses. This is the blood of the.

[44 : 04] I think it says. New covenant. Have I missed out the word new. Somebody tell me. What does it just say. Blood of the covenant. Blood of the covenant. Okay.

Thank you. Is there any reference. To new. In what he says. In some of the gospels.

It would actually say new. I could. Risk writing it in. If you like. I can get this to work. New. That said new.

There is a. There is a. There is a word. New up there. Can anybody spot it. Yeah. Yes. There is. Sorry.

Okay, so there's a new, either in the parallel to passages or in that word there.

[45 : 06] Yep, anything else from that passage that say, oh yeah, I can see why he says that now. Poured out for many, yes.

Where does it say that? Somewhere in the middle. Oh! Oh! You can see, I haven't still got the hang of this, have I?

Poured out for many, so that's... No. Okay. Rather than stretch your patience by me clicking things that don't work.

Poured out for many. That's a sacrifice language, isn't it? Blood poured out is sacrifice language. But not the sacrifice of animals, the sacrifice of Jesus.

Any other references? Any other things that he mentions? You say, ah, that's actually quite important now you've come to mention it. Yeah, it would be the bread.

[46 : 10] Which perhaps relates, well it would be originally the unleavened bread that the Israelites were remembering.

I think this is tremendously important, the forgiveness of sins. Because the blood of the old covenant, it produced a geographical change.

They came out of Egypt into the promised land. But their sins carried along with them, didn't they? This actually goes much deeper in forgiving sins and dealing with sins.

And I'm just thinking of this many. Does anybody know a very special reference which says, da-da-da-da, the many?

I'm not quite sure whether I do now. I've got to think of it. Well, Romans. Yes, Romans. If you go back, where Romans is quoting from is actually the servant songs.

[47 : 17] Now, it actually was in my head and now it's gone out. Yes, it's Isaiah 52, 53. He made... Shall I leave that to another time, seeing as I can't remember it?

Or let's look at it, otherwise it would be unsatisfactory. Let's look at Isaiah 52, 53. Isaiah 53, verse 11.

By his knowledge, my righteous servant will justify many. He... And in verse 12, he bore the sin of many.

I would venture to suggest that the use of the word many is a reference back to Isaiah. Well, okay. What we've done this morning is just try and get the jigsaw pieces out on the table and see how some of them are very strongly relating to the Old Testament and how that gives us a picture to

understand and appreciate and value the supper that Jesus has given us.

And the us is not the us of that race of people who like their tea done properly, but it is us who are Christians.

[48 : 37] We have a God who invites us to eat and drink with him. And it's better than we just survive it.

He welcomes us to the table. Let me leave you with a text about eating and drinking. And it's Jesus who says to people, I would like to eat and drink with you.

I would like you to eat and drink with me. And he puts it in this rather memorable way. He says, behold, I stand at the door and knock. It's as it were, he's knocking on your life and saying, I'm here. I would like us to eat and drink together. I would like us to sit around the table together. Stop keeping me out.

Stop putting up excuses. Let down your defenses. Let me in. And if you let me in, I will come in and eat with you and you with me.

[49 : 51] Wonderful promise. Let's stop for a moment to see if maybe in your heart of hearts, you would like to say to the Lord Jesus, didn't understand everything this morning, but I'd really like to have you in my life, sitting at my table and I at your table.

Let's stop and pray. Lord, we thank you for the glorious wonder of a God who eats and drinks with his people.

And we thank you for the Lord Jesus who spreads a table for us to come to.

And perhaps we have it in our hearts to pray that prayer, Lord. I want that. I want my life to be lived in table fellowship with you.

I want you to be in table fellowship with me. And if I've been keeping you out by my disobedience, my unbelief, by my insistence on holding the handle of the door rather than letting you hold it, forgive me.

[51 : 25] Come into my life, Lord Jesus. Amen. Let's close by singing a song that is usually sung at communion.