

A Sampling of Biblical Texts on the Lord's Supper

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*A sacrament is a physical, material, tangible human action,
mandated by scripture*

*through which God acts to nourish, sustain, comfort, challenge, teach, assure us
and to seal the promise of the gospel for us.*

*As richly symbolic actions, the sacraments stir our imaginations to perceive the work of God and the contours of the gospel
through several layers of meaning.*

A. COVENANT--A SEAL ON A RELATIONSHIP

EX 24:1 Then he said to Moses, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship at a distance. ² Moses alone shall come near the LORD; but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him."

EX 24:3 Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, "All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do." ⁴ And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and set up twelve pillars, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵ He sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed oxen as offerings of well-being to the LORD. ⁶ Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he dashed against the altar. ⁷ Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." ⁸ Moses took the blood and dashed it on the people, and said, "**See the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.**"

[Also, "the new covenant in my blood" from institution narratives]

B. PRESENCE OF GOD/CHRIST

EX 24:9 Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, ¹⁰ and they saw the God of Israel. Under his feet there was something like a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. ¹¹ God did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; **also they beheld God, and they ate and drank.**

[Also, "this is my body" from institution narratives]

C. THANKSGIVING (=EUCCHARIST)

D. FORGIVENESS

E. ANTICIPATION OF HEAVENLY FEAST (Eschatological Hope)

MT 26:26 While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after **blessing it** he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; **this is my body.**" ²⁷ Then he took a cup, and after **giving thanks** he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, **all of you;**" ²⁸ for **this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.** ²⁹ I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine **until that day** when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

MT 26:30 When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

[REV 19:9 And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to **the marriage supper of the Lamb.**" And he said to me, "These are true words of God."]

F. SIGN OF PASSOVER, ATONEMENT

MK 14:12 *The Passover with the Disciples.* On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the **Passover lamb** is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" ¹³ So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, ¹⁴ and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' ¹⁵ He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." ¹⁶ So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, he came with the twelve. ¹⁸ And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." ¹⁹ They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, "Surely, not I?" ²⁰ He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me. ²¹ For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born."

While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." ²³ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. ²⁴ He said to them, "This is my **blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.**" ²⁵ Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

LK 22:14 When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. ¹⁵ He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; ¹⁶ for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; ¹⁸ for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. ²¹ But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. ²² For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!" ²³ Then they began to ask one another, which one of them it could be who would do this.

F. REVELATION/EPIPHANY/MANIFESTATION

LK 24:28 As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" ³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴ They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

G. SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT

JN 6:35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. ³⁶

H. COMMUNION/UNITY OF THE BODY

I. SIGN OF ETHICAL COMMITMENT

II CO 10:14 Therefore, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols. ¹⁵ I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. ¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. ¹⁸ Consider the people of Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar? ¹⁹ What do I imply then? That food sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? ²⁰ No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons. ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. ²² Or are we provoking the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

ICO 11:17 *Abuses at the Lord's Supper*

Now in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. ¹⁸ For, to begin with, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you; and to some extent I believe it. ¹⁹ Indeed, there have to be factions among you, for only so will it become clear who among you are genuine. ²⁰ When you come together, it is not really to eat the Lord's supper. ²¹ For when the time comes to eat, each of you goes ahead with your own supper, and one goes hungry and another becomes drunk. ²² What! Do you not have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you show contempt for the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What should I say to you? Should I commend you? In this matter I do not commend you!

J. REMEMBRANCE

K. PROCLAMATION

ICO 11:23 *The Institution of the Lord's Supper.* For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

ICO 11:27 *Partaking of the Supper Unworthily.* Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves. ³⁰ For this reason many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. ³¹ But if we judged ourselves, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world. ³³ So then, my brothers and sisters, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. ³⁴ If you are hungry, eat at home, so that when you come together, it will not be for your condemnation. About the other things I will give instructions when I come.