

Take time and read the following article to help prepare your heart for communion on October 11, 2026:

He Didn't Choose the Lamb

by Mark Loughridge

There is a wonderful tie-up between Passover and the Lord's Supper—the whole Exodus is God's giant illustration, painted in real time and history, of what Jesus' salvation is like. It's all there, especially in the Passover—deliverance from slavery, sheltering under the blood of the perfect lamb slain so that judgment would fall on the lamb not on God's people, the cups of wine symbolizing aspects of redemption, etc.. Yet as a preacher, preaching through Exodus and observing the Lord's Supper when we studied the Passover, I found myself wondering why did the Lamb not choose the lamb to make his point when he instituted the Lord's Supper at a Passover meal? Why bread?

It seemed as if it would have been so much clearer: “Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world”, “Not one of his bones shall be broken”, the parallel of judgment falling on the lamb, during darkness, so that the people's sins would be atoned for and they could go free. It was all there. The lamb had been on the table for the Passover meal. It wasn't as if Jesus suddenly thought up the idea of a sacrament to ‘remember his death until he comes’ at the last moment and found the lamb was already finished.

So why did he not choose the lamb? All the symbolism was there. The lamb was there. But he chose the bread. Or more particularly he didn't choose the lamb. I grant that bread has a lot of history and symbolism in scripture too, but this seems more deliberate. Why?

The answer came in an off the cuff comment from the speaker at a ministers' conference. He mentioned the Lord's Supper and said in passing "He takes the bread because there would be no more sacrifice." The scales fell from my eyes—maybe you had figured this out!—but I was so surprised by it and its wider implications I accidentally let out a long loud whistle as I exhaled in surprise!

Think of it. He could have chosen the lamb, but he didn't choose the lamb, because he wanted it to be clear to us that there was no more shedding of blood required. That this was a never-to-be-repeated sacrifice. This was a once-for-all sacrifice. For all the symbolism of the lamb already established, there was a greater, more significant over-riding factor. And that had to be made clear: No more sacrifice, no more death for sins.

How significant to the believer to remember at the table—He didn't choose the lamb, because there would be no more bloodshed, even in remembrance. That's how final his sacrifice is. That's how complete his forgiveness is. All the ugly work of death and substitution has been done. No more! It is finished!

But more than that: I live and work in Ireland, where most of my neighbours and friends are from a Catholic background. It was through this lens too I saw the implications. That's what struck me the most and why I was so surprised—what had been a minor theological puzzle (why the bread, not the lamb), now fitted into a much bigger apologetic picture. Surely Jesus' deliberate eschewal of the lamb and choice of the bread speaks into the age-long debate about the Mass. If Jesus had wanted it to be understood as a sacrifice all he had to do was choose the lamb. But he didn't.