

Eucharist



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Eucharist in Scripture

Old Testament Context: Remember

Genesis 9:13-16

- ✘ When God puts the rainbow in the sky, he says this is so that when he sees it he will “remember his covenant”.
- ✘ Either God forgets things, or there is something more to “remembrance” than mere mental recollection.
- ✘ God is not saying that he needs a “day planner”, but that the rainbow is a sign of his grace, and his remembering his covenant is acting on that grace.

Leviticus 26:40-42

- ✘ There is a cause-effect relationship here between the repentance of the people and God remembering his covenant.
- ✘ Like with Genesis 9, obviously God did not lose mental memory of his covenant.
- ✘ When God remembers his covenant (and the land!) he is acting on that covenant by giving the grace of forgiveness for their sins.

Numbers 10:9-10

- ✘ There are two parts to this verse, the historical salvation of Israel from their enemies as well as the celebration of that salvation
- ✘ In the first, they are to sound the trumpets so that they may be remembered before God, this remembrance is God acting on his covenant to save them. There is a cause-effect here: Do this action [play trumpets] this results in God's remembrance [salvation]
- ✘ In the second, Israel is to reenact these saving events by blowing the trumpets just as they did in battle. There is another cause-effect: Though this physical action God will remember them. When God remembers his covenant people he acts on that covenant in grace. So there is in some way a granting of covenant blessings when the people celebrate through the ritual action of the trumpets.

Psalms 106:4-7

- ✘ There are two parts to this psalm. A call for God to remember him and a lament that Israel forgot God.
- ✘ The call for remembrance comes with an expected result: that he will receive the covenant blessings of prosperity personally.
- ✘ The context of deliverance is a covenant context: This was one of the major covenant promises to Israel. The Psalmist is asking God to apply those blessings to him.
- ✘ The opposite of remembrance, to forget, is illustrated here. Israel did not forget who Yahweh was mentally, but in rebellion. To forget God is to turn on him and defy his covenant.

Thus "to remember" in the Old Testament in the context of God and his covenant is to act on this covenant. When a physical thing "reminds" God of his covenant then he grants the blessings of that covenant.

Old Testament Context: Ritual

Passover: Exodus 12:25-27

- ✘ In the passage for the Passover, the command for the child of future generations is to ask for the meaning for the ritual
- ✘ The answer is given in present tense, which is a tradition that follows to this day.
- ✘ Modern Passover Haggadah – each element represents some aspect of the Exodus and in taking the elements they believe they are re-participating in that historical event. Each generation relives the salvation event of the past.

**Feast of Booths: Leviticus 23:41-43**

- ✘ This passage commands for the Feast of Booths
- ✘ This feast is about remembering the time that Israel was in the wilderness
- ✘ As part of this remembrance Israel is to ritually re-enact this event by living in booths
- ✘ Ritual celebration is a re-enactment of God's leading Israel through the wilderness

In the Old Testament context the ritual action of a festival that celebrated a salvation event was a ritual re-enactment and re-participation in that event.

The idea of "remembrance" is a central idea behind the Eucharist. This was not new to the Eucharist itself, but goes back to the institution of the Passover. In Exodus the Israelites were told the Passover was to be a memorial for them, a time to remember the day the LORD brought them out of Egypt. The idea of זָכַר carries more weight to it than mere mental recollection. This is increasingly being affirmed by both Old Testament scholars,¹ and also of New Testament scholars over the word ἀναμνησις,² the LXX equivalent also used by Christ.

These are clear representations of the idea that when God remembers something, it is an expression of action, not mere mental recollection, unless it was going to be argued that God is able to mentally forget things. God uses "remember" in this way several times. First is in Genesis 9:15, where God says that when he sees the rainbow he will remember his covenant. Second in Leviticus 26:42 God says he will remember his covenant with Jacob when the Israelites repent. This concept is true of humans as well. In Deuteronomy 24:18 the Israelites are commanded to pursue to justice of the stranger.

¹ Brown, ed., *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 234.

² Macquarrie, *A Guide to the Sacraments*, 139.

The grammatical synonymous parallel for this verse is to remember that they were slaves in Egypt. This remembrance was not a concept of forgetting and so needing to be "reminded" but of active participation in the saving acts of God.³ "Remembering" they were slaves "is" to show justice to the stranger. Remembrance of the covenant is a common theme in the Old Testament,⁴ and cannot be reduced to a mere mental recollection, but an action and participation in the covenant.

In Deuteronomy God tells the Israelites that each Passover, when the child asks what the ceremony means, the head of the house is to respond that it is the night that the LORD passed over "our" houses and spared "our" homes.⁵ The event itself was seen as a present reality. Participation in the Passover made the saving event of the past contemporary and provided participation in the benefits of that event. The latter Haggadah sets up a virtual reenactment of the Passover.⁶ This concept is why Jewish tradition in the Mishnah states that each generation should see themselves as if they personally passed out of Egypt.⁷

Other feasts also have this idea of present participation, such as Tabernacles where the Israelites reenacting the time they spent in booths in the wilderness,⁸ or the feast of trumpets that sounded the battle horns to memorialize a victory.⁹ The feasts re-enacted a past event to remember or "actualize" them in the present. It can be said that the Passover then, was an actualization of redemptive history. For Brown: "Actualization occurs when the worshipper experiences an identification with the original events. He bridges the gap of historical time and participates in the original history"¹⁰

In this Brown states contra Childs that it is Yahweh who is ever present and allows the past to give the present shape, but the past does not itself become present.¹¹ Brown does not want to take actualization too far, yet it seems as if his conclusion should. If Yahweh is ever present and is the means that the past comes to the present in a real way that explains the data, then in some way we can say the past actually becomes present.

³ James F. White, *The Sacraments in Protestant Practice and Faith* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 104.

⁴ G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, trans. David E. Green, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 81.

⁵ Ex 12:26-28

⁶ White, *The Sacraments in Protestant Practice and Faith*, 104.

⁷ Vander-Zee, *Christ, Baptism and the Lord's Supper*, 149.

⁸ Lev 23:41-43

⁹ Num 10:10

¹⁰ Brown, ed., *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 238.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 879.

¹³ White, *The Sacraments in Protestant Practice and Faith*, 106.

¹⁴ Contra Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 550.

¹⁵ Contra Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2 ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 1134.

¹⁶ Botterweck and Ringgren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 81.

¹⁷ Brown, ed., *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 239.

Seen in the memorials as ritual re-enactments of the past, the past itself is made present. This does not make history "cyclical" as some are worried it might,¹² but in the liturgy the community reenacts the sacred history for itself, making the results of the past true for them in the present.¹³

For the Church, the New Testament Eucharist is a participation in a new saving event and a person. Christ both reinterprets the symbols to be symbols of his death and changes the main focus from a saving event to himself. Just as the Israelites participated in the Exodus at every Passover, the Church participates in the person of Christ himself and receive the benefits of the covenant of his death. The *αναμνησις* is fulfilled in the celebration as the people remember not only the event but Christ himself. He is present when the Church does what he commanded with bread and wine. It is in the ritual and physical eating of bread and wine that there is a real participation in Christ and benefits from his covenant. It is more than "heightened Semitic imagery",¹⁴ it is toughly Hebrew, is grounded in the Semitic mind as opposed to Greek philosophy, and definitely more than some kind of psychological effect.¹⁵ Remembrance is active participation, making ritual memorials a real present participation in the past.

There is also an aspect of remembrance in the Old Testament relative to covenants, in which man calls on God to remember his covenant. In Nehemiah 1:8-9 God is called on to remember his covenant with Moses, similar to God remembering his covenant with the earth after the flood. There are frequent examples of this idea where God and man remember the covenant, which means more than to mentally recall it.¹⁶ In the Eucharist the body and blood of Christ as the new covenant is brought before God, to petition him to remember this covenant with his people. This is similar to Leviticus 24:7 which has both a manward and Godward aspect.¹⁷

Institution Narratives

Matthew 26:26-30 (and Mark 14:22-26)

- ✘ Jesus does three actions and gives one command with an interpretation
- ✘ Jesus takes the bread, blesses it (gives thanksgiving over it), breaks it and commands his disciples to eat
- ✘ This bread is then interpreted as his body within the ritual action
- ✘ Jesus does the same with the wine, which is the new covenant in his blood
- ✘ In the Passover these elements would have ritually represented aspects of the wilderness journey, which in partaking them the Jews would ritually re-enact



Luke 22:17-20

- ✘ There are four primary ritual actions here with the bread: Take, break, gave thanks, and gave to the disciples
- ✘ Like with Matthew, the bread and wine are said to be his body and blood
- ✘ Notice that Jesus says to perform an action “do this” for the “remembrance”
- ✘ Just like in Numbers 10: the ritual action IS the remembrance, which is the calling on God to remember his covenant, which is a source of grace
- ✘ In this case, the Passover re-enactment background gives context to the bread and wine. The new saving event is the coming crucifixion. The Eucharist will re-enact that with these new elements.

John's Gospel, interestingly, does not mention it in spite of the expanded discourse on that part of the narrative. This could perhaps be due to familiarity at the time St. John wrote by the end of the first century AD. The Eucharist had become such a central institution in the early Church¹⁸ that there would have been little need for John to include it. Perhaps he felt it more important to focus on other elements. Although traditionally John 6 has been taken as a Eucharistic discourse,¹⁹ its ambiguity means that the concentration of this paper should be on the accounts in the synoptics.

It is assumed for the sake of argument that the event is naturally seen as a Passover.²⁰ Matthew 26:18 and Mark 14:16 both state the disciples were to prepare the Passover. The supper took place that evening, and although there is no direct indication that it is the Passover itself, it is generally understood to be the Passover meal. The Passover connection is significant for determining the meaning of the Last Supper. The key point in Exodus and Deuteronomy with the institution is that the Passover was a remembrance of a saving event. In these passages there was no set liturgy, but by the middle ages a set liturgy had developed in the Haggadah.²¹ As a memorial, or remembrance, it was a feast in honor of the day the Lord brought them out of Egypt.²² The concept of "remember" to the Hebrews is important and will be covered later. Most commentators assume enough similarity between the Passover liturgy of the latter Haggadah and the one during Jesus' day to draw some parallels. As for the Gospel writers giving more explanation on the Passover themes of the Supper, they are much more concerned with what Jesus says that is different than in explaining the Passover

¹⁸ E. J. Bicknell, *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), 488.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ For a defense see Colin Brown, ed., *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 529.

²¹ Some historical redaction on the Liturgy has been done, which is the reason for most commentators using it as a guide to the Passover during the second temple period.

²² Ex 12:14

which would have been known. Most of the traditional Passover, including such important aspects of the Pascal lamb²³ had been omitted the Gospel accounts; instead there is a focus his body and blood as the two new main elements. Both ideas should be seen together as coordinated aspects of Jesus' sacrifice. Jesus reinterprets the Passover meal as a meal about his sacrifice, and in this way the traditional sacrificial lamb has been left out. Jesus becomes the new focus of the sacrifice in giving his own body and blood for the forgiveness of sins.

For Matthew and Mark the first act of the institution is Jesus taking bread and either blessing, it or giving thanks in the context of breaking it. Jesus then does two things with the bread. First he connects the bread of affliction with his body and next he commands them to continue this in remembrance of him. The concept to remember is vital and will be covered latter. This would have been the bread of affliction²⁴ as mentioned in Deuteronomy 16:3. Matthew and Mark only have the command to take the bread and eat it; Luke adds that the bread is "given for them", ²⁵ and that they are to do it in remembrance of their Lord. Nolland argues that breaking was a normal part of Jewish meals, and should not be seen with the same significance as the latter cup being poured out,²⁶ however, it is hard to see how Jesus is not making this connection between the breaking of the bread and his broken body given for them. The parallel is direct, especially given the context of the bread being symbolic of affliction, something Jesus was about to undergo. It is important to note that the Passover was a remembrance of an act of God, and here Christ makes it a remembrance of himself.

Among the possible recipients of Christ's body are Christ and Judas. Although it could be argued that Christ did not eat himself of the bread, this seems unlikely due to the context of a Passover meal. For Christ to take the bread meant something different then for his disciples, in that taking the bread of affliction as his own body was sealing the decision to have his body broken.²⁷ There also is a possible indication that Judas took

²³ John Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, New International Greek Text Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 1074.

²⁴ Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 1074.

²⁵ For a defense of the longer reading here see Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (New York: American Bible Society, 2000), 148-50. For an alternate view see Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 554.

²⁶ Nolland, *Gospel of Matthew*, 1074.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 1084.

²⁸ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, vol. 33B, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1995), 772.

²⁹ John Macquarrie, *A Guide to the Sacraments* (New York: Continuum, 1997), 114.

³⁰ Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 773.

³¹ Vander-Zee, *Christ, Baptism and the Lord's Supper*, 146.

³² Heb 9

³³ Donahue and Harrington, *Gospel of Mark*, 396.

³⁴ For TC see Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 54.

the bread and cup before leaving. None of the synoptics actually mention when Judas left, and John does not place the leaving relative to the Passover. Judas left sometime after Jesus talks of being betrayed, but with the betrayal passages being in different time orders in the synoptics it can still be possible Judas was there. If so, then Jesus was stating that the bread was his body even to Judas.

Some would argue that the meaning of $\epsilon\sigma\tau\iota\nu$ in the Supper is metaphorical or figurative speech. The pronominal subject "this" is being equated with the predicative nominative "my body" in the same manner as Jesus says that he is a door, or a vine or a good Shepherd. It is true that $\epsilon\sigma\tau\iota\nu$ does not have to always be interpreted as a direct correlation, and especially given the above examples, a figurative usage is possible. The difference here, however, is the context and usage. First, there is no parable being used here or figure being interpreted. In the case of Jesus being a vine, a clear parable was given and then the symbol of the vine was given to be Jesus. In the Supper there is no parable being given.

This leads to the second point, that in the case of figurative language the subject is always the person because the person is taking on the qualities of the predicate nominative. In the parables Jesus is the vine because he gives life to those attached, a quality of the vine being applied to Christ. In the case of Herod being a fox, qualities of a fox are being applied to Herod. In the words of institution the order changes, now there is the object "bread" being given properties of "my body". If this is metaphor similar to the other statements then either the bread is taking on the properties of the body of Christ, which would be compatible with the idea of a real presence, or Christ is taking on the properties of bread, which is grammatically wrong in the Last Supper passage.

The phrase "this is my body" could be argued as an equation of symbol, so that Jesus is not using metaphor, but by "is" he means "symbolizes". However, this view suffers from a logical fallacy of not being falsifiable. If Jesus meant to say the bread really is his body then there is no stronger way to state the idea, but if he only meant it to be symbolic then he could have easily used a different wording to that effect. Benefit of the doubt is given to a literal interpretation of "is" using this principle. Hagner,²⁸ among others, would say that the fact of Jesus being physically present during the supper, while speaking of this external object as his body, works against "is" being literal. This is against the context of the Passover as an institution of a memorial. This is not the first Eucharist, but the prototype.²⁹ Just as the Passover was instituted before the Passover event, so the Supper is being instituted before the salvific event. As the death and resurrection had not taken place, even a symbolic view must acknowledge that the fullness of the institution had not yet happened. Jesus then, did not have to be present with the bread and wine in the way he is today, because he was there in person instituting a ceremony before the event to be a memorial after the event.

The next major act Jesus makes is in the taking of the cup. Luke here differs in the number of cups, for while all three accounts have a cup given after the bread; Luke also has a cup given before the bread. Matthew and Mark have the formula "after he had taken a cup and given thanks" as part of the distribution after the bread, Luke has it before. Luke also puts the eschatological motif of not taking of the vine until when in his Father's kingdom before the bread. Assuming a continuing connection between the current Haggadah and the second temple Passover, the cup would have most likely been the third cup.³⁰ Some of the differences in Luke can be attributed to having more than one cup in the Haggadah. Luke, being a writer mostly to a gentile audience, would have wanted to give his readers enough information to figure out which cup was being used. This is opposed to Matthew and Mark who could assume enough familiarity to not have to go into as much definite detail. This cup was the "cup of blessing", and those who partook of it were said to share in the blessings of that cup.³¹

Matthew and Mark both put the emphasis on the cup being his blood, while Luke puts the covenant first. Both are acceptable, as it is Jesus' blood, which is the bringer of the new covenant.³² The benefits and blessings of the new covenant are bestowed on those who are sharers in the covenant, who in turn are those who share in the blood of Christ. This sharing is made even more prominent by the fact that normally each person would have had their own cup, but in this case Christ is the giver of the blessings of one cup and it is shared among all. These benefits are explained after the explanatory *γὰρ* as being the forgiveness of sins which Christ has shed for many. *πολλῶν* here should not be taken as exclusive, but as inclusive;³³ not that there are a few which Christ is shedding his blood for, but a vast group of people. Luke is the only one to call this the "new covenant",³⁴ like in Hebrews where the blood of Christ is also seen as the ratification of the new Covenant. Here Christ makes the Eucharistic wine this covenantal ratification. The way in which this "is" the blood of the new covenant can be argued the same as above for the bread. Partaking in the wine is partaking in the blood of the new covenant and the blessings of forgiveness the same as with the bread being a partaking in the body of Christ.

Paul's Writings

1 Corinthians 10:16-21

- ✘ The Greek for "sharing" has various ideas of mutual participation, communion, fellowship, ect.
- ✘ Paul says we share in the Body and Blood of Christ, but what does this mean?
- ✘ His continued argument makes a direct parallel between the altar sacrifices in Israel and the pagan sacrifices (NB: With a direct connection to the Eucharist *as a sacrifice*)
- ✘ The cause-effect relationship in Paul's theology of sacrifices is eating the sacrifice causes the worshippers to commune with the spirit being sacrificed to

- ✘ Paul is not saying that we share in the elements in the fact that each person takes some, but that by taking the body and blood we share in Christ himself

1 Corinthians 11:18-34

- ✘ Part of the problem of the Corinthian Church was they had reduced the Lord's Supper to a mere meal that had divided among the rich and poor
- ✘ "Discerning the body" is not about theologies of presence in the Eucharist, but about unity in the Body of Christ, the Church
- ✘ The Eucharist is not to be a normal meal among some part of the Church who happen to be friends, but it a ritual of the entire Church
- ✘ Paul also states another fact: there is a cause-effect relationship: The Eucharist itself is a proclamation of the death of Christ. The death of Christ is a metonymy Paul uses other places for the entire sacrificial and saving event of Jesus, ie the Gospel
- ✘ Thus the Eucharist is the proclamation of the Gospel

The next clearest passages dealing with the Lord's Supper can be found in St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians. He makes the reference twice, first in relation to sacrifices to idols³⁵ and second to abuses at the Supper.³⁶ In both parts there is a major emphasis on fellowship. This is especially seen in the first passage, where St. Paul contrasts the participation in the body and blood with that of demons. The second passage, focusing lack of fellowship among believers, the Apostles reiterates the Eucharistic tradition as part of his argument.

In the first case the Corinthians were in some fashion participating in the sacrifices to idols. St. Paul did not condemn eating of the meat sacrifices to idols in other places,³⁷ yet here he condemns eating the said sacrifices. The difference is in the participation. There is clearly the reference to participating at the altar of the idols as opposed to merely eating meat bought at the marketplace. These Christians thought it was acceptable to both participate religiously in the altar of the Lord and the altar of demons.

The Apostle calls the cup the "cup of blessing", which demonstrates further that the cup in the Gospels was the third cup. It could denote any Jewish meal that involved a blessing over a cup,³⁸ but the repetition of it being the "cup of blessing" which is then blessed³⁹ would argue for the cup being called that as a technical term related to

³⁵ 1 Cor 10:16-21

³⁶ 1 Cor 11:20-30

³⁷ 1 Cor 8:8-13

³⁸ Anthony C. Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, New International Greek Text Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 756.

³⁹ Some minor Western texts have "thanksgiving" which follows the Hebraic idea of blessing

Passover, especially in light of the Lord's Supper and Passover theme.⁴⁰ The order of the bread and cup are different here then in the Gospels. The closest connection is Luke, but Luke still has the cup of the blood as after the bread. It is likely that the cup is being mentioned here first for emphasis due to some culturally relevant reference to pagan practices.

Both the bread and cup are considered a *κοινωνία* in the body and blood of Christ. Fellowship as an idea is stressed three times in this first passage. First the fellowship with the body and blood, then the fellowship of the Jews with the altar and last contrasted with the fellowship with demons in the pagan sacrifices. The body and blood are seen from the Gospels to be the death of Christ, his broken body and spilled blood. The Gospels portray of covenantal idea behind the bread and wine, and the context can be seen as the same here.⁴¹ Fee argues that is all that is intended.⁴² Fee sees the presence of Christ as the host, but not a sacramental partaking in Christ. The issue with this view is that Paul very clearly says that the bread and wine are not given by Christ as host to communicate his presence, but that the bread and cup themselves are a participation or fellowship in Christ's body and blood.

Based on the Passover, where Christ was the host giving his body and blood, there is still Christ in the Eucharist as host, but this it not he total aspect of how we fellowship with him. It is this body and blood, not faith or celebration of the act, which is the cause of the participation.⁴³ It is even the bread as the body of Christ, which is the focus of unity here for Paul.⁴⁴ Thiselton also does not want to see "undue quasiphysical sacramentalism"⁴⁵ in the text by going this far, even though he does not define what he means by that or why it would be wrong even if taking it this far would lead to something "quasiphysical". Rightly however by implication, the covenantal participation in the body and blood has results. Participation in his life, death and resurrection⁴⁶ should lead to Christ being the guide for lifestyle. There is also the reception of the benefits of Christ as the host,⁴⁷ yet with the elements of participation in his Body and Blood. The main focus here for Paul is this covenantal idea that was to

⁴⁰ Gregory J. Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000), 340.

⁴¹ Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 750.

⁴² Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 467.

⁴³ Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 341.

⁴⁴ Contra Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 767.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 766.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 761.

⁴⁷ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 467.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 548.

⁴⁹ Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 389.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 388.

⁵¹ Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 880.

impact lifestyle and loyalty to Christ, but in this the Apostles sheds light on the nature of the Eucharistic Communion itself.

The next section St. Paul is dealing with those who where in some way abusing the Lord's Supper and being judged for it by God. Becoming haughty towards others, some had forgotten what it meant to partake of the Supper and of one loaf. Paul says that he received the story of the Passover with Christ and passed it down to them, him foreshadowing those of the Gospels This tradition may have been received from the other Apostles, like Fee argues,⁴⁸ or even from Christ himself going off of Galatians 1:11-12 as argues Lockwood.⁴⁹ Whatever the source, the Apostle reiterates to draw out a similar point as in chapter ten about being part of this covenantal community and participating all in one loaf of bread. Here there is a special emphasis on the theme of remembrance;⁵⁰ In fact, Paul not only makes this one of the main parts of the tradition handed down, but also repeats the command "do this in remembrance" twice. In contrast Luke only has it once and Matthew and Mark leave it out. Remembering Christ was to exhort the Corinthians to remember him in his sufferings which is to be transforming.⁵¹

When put all together, the Eucharist is a remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ, thus a re-enactment of this saving event that calls on God to remember his New Covenant, and through which we participate in this sacrifice and receive the blessings of the covenant.

Apostolic Fathers

Didache 9:1-5

Now concerning the Thanksgiving (Eucharist), thus give thanks. ² First, concerning the cup: We thank thee, our Father, for the holy vine of David Thy servant, which Thou madest known to us through Jesus Thy Servant; to Thee be the glory for ever. ³ And concerning the broken bread: We thank Thee, our Father, for the life and knowledge which Thou modest known to us through Jesus Thy Servant; to Thee be the glory for ever. ⁴ Even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and was gathered together and became one, so let Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom; for Thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever. ⁵ But let no one eat or drink of your Thanksgiving (Eucharist), but they who have been baptized into the name of the Lord; for concerning this also the Lord hath said, Give not that which is holy to the dogs.

Didache 10:1-7 ¹

But after ye are filled, thus give thanks: ² We thank Thee, holy Father, for Thy holy name which Thou didst cause to tabernacle in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality, which Thou modest known to us through Jesus Thy Servant; to Thee be the glory for ever. ³ Thou, Master almighty, didst create all things for Thy

name's sake; Thou gavest food and drink to men for enjoyment, that they might give thanks to Thee; but to us Thou didst freely give spiritual food and drink and life eternal through Thy Servant. ⁴ Before all things we thank Thee that Thou art mighty; to Thee be the glory for ever. ⁵ Remember, Lord, Thy Church, to deliver it from all evil and to make it perfect in Thy love, and gather it from the four winds, sanctified for Thy kingdom which Thou hast prepared for it; for Thine is the power and the glory for ever. ⁶ Let grace come, and let this world pass away. Hosanna to the God(Son) of David! If any one is holy, let him come; if any one is not so, let him repent. Maranatha. Amen. ⁷ But permit the prophets to make Thanksgiving as much as they desire.

St. Ignatius to the Ephesians 20:2

Especially *will I do this* if the Lord make known to me that ye come together man by man in common through grace, individually, in one faith, and in Jesus Christ, who was of the seed of David according to the flesh, being both the Son of man and the Son of God, so that ye obey the bishop and the presbytery with an undivided mind, breaking one and the same bread, which is the medicine of immortality, and the antidote to prevent us from dying, but *which causes* that we should live for ever in Jesus Christ

St. Ignatius to the Romans 7:3

³ I have no delight in corruptible food, nor in the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, the heavenly bread, the bread of life, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who became afterwards of the seed of David and Abraham; and I desire the drink of God, namely His blood, which is incorruptible love and eternal life.

St. Ignatius to the Philadelphians 4:1

¹ Take ye heed, then, to have but one Eucharist. For there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup to *show forth* the unity of His blood; one altar; as there is one bishop, along with the presbytery and deacons, my fellow-servants: that so, whatsoever ye do, ye may do it according to *the will of God*.

St. Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans 7:1

¹ They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they confess not the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which the Father, of His goodness, raised up again. Those, therefore, who speak against this gift of God, incur death in the midst of their disputes. But it were better for them to treat it with respect, that they also might rise again.

St. Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans 8:1

¹ See that ye all follow the bishop, even as Jesus Christ does the Father, and the presbytery as ye would the apostles; and reverence the deacons, as being the institution of God. Let no man do anything connected with the Church without the bishop. Let that be deemed a proper Eucharist, which is *administered* either by the bishop, or by one to whom he has entrusted it.

Apologists and Early Fathers

During this period there were three main doctrinal ideas discussed, presence, sacrifice and consecration. What was in major agreement was that Christ was present in some real way, the Eucharist was the Christian sacrifice that replaced the Old Testament sacrifices and that the priest in the liturgy consecrated the elements to become the body and blood of Christ. Also in agreement was the purpose and effects of receiving the Eucharist, which was continual participation in the mystical body of Christ and the reception of eternal life.

In general there was a strong realist view of Christ's presence in the elements. Such terms as "trans-elemented" and "transformed" were used freely to attempt and explain a real change. The manner of change was debatable and to use transubstantiation would be anachronistic. Although real change was present throughout the Church, the Western Church tended towards a possibly more Aristotelian realism and the East towards Platonism coming out of the Alexandrian school. It was not the change that was debated itself so much as the identity of the elements with Christ's historical body.

There was a tendency, notably seen in St. Augustine and some Eastern writers, to have some symbolic discontinuity between the two. This was a more mystical tendency. Note that some Fathers will use terms such as "figure" or "representation". This does not mean, however, they held to a modern Zwinglian conception. In the ancient world a "symbol" was more than a mere sign but shared in the reality of that which is symbolized.

On the other side, a more materialist idea of change was becoming the dominant view. This view was prevalent in both East and West. There did not seem to be an idea of change in substance as later understood, but there was still a real physical change into Jesus' historical body and blood.

Language of sacrifice in regards to the Eucharist was common and assumed at the time. The Fathers see the Christian Eucharist as the fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi 1:11. To a large extent this was the "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving" yet it still took place in the context of the Eucharist and was associated strongly with the priest offering the elements to God. The priest represents Christ at the altar and offers a sacrifice of the Church (as there is a real union between Christ and the Church as the One Body) to God the Father. The priest is seen to re-enact the oblation of Christ in such writers as St. Cyprian. (see *Epistle* 63) In fact, some Fathers write about the sacrifice on behalf of the living and the dead. By the start of the Medieval Era the idea of Christ as both priest and victim in the bloodless sacrifice of the Eucharist was firmly established. This would be a major point of contention during the Reformation.

Sacramental consecration came to the fore in the Donatist controversy. The debates surrounding Baptism and Ordination were applied to the Eucharist as well. Ultimately it was not the priest, but God enacting the sacramental action. The priest

acted as an instrument. Thus, particularly in the West, emphasis was placed on what would later be called the proper matter, form and intention. It was the sacraments themselves, defined by God, which caused grace, and not the holiness or rightness of the minister. This idea would also later develop into the doctrine of *ex opere operato*.

It is during this period that the distinction in consecration between East and West began to develop. Following ideas of Eucharistic sacrifice and the place of the priest, the West saw consecration primarily as the act of the priest reciting the words of Jesus. The priest, acting in the place of Christ, transformed the elements into the body and blood of Christ by virtue of this ritual re-enactment. The East, however, saw consecration resulting from the priest's prayer to send the Holy Spirit down (epiclesis). The Holy Spirit then sanctified the elements and made them the body and blood of Christ.

St. Justin Martyr, I Apology 65

But we, after we have thus washed him who has been convinced and has assented to our teaching, bring him to the place where those who are called brethren are assembled, in order that we may offer hearty prayers in common for ourselves and for the baptized [illuminated] person, and for all others in every place, that we may be counted worthy, now that we have learned the truth, by our works also to be found good citizens and keepers of the commandments, so that we may be saved with an everlasting salvation. Having ended the prayers, we salute one another with a kiss. There is then brought to the president of the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands. And when he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people present express their assent by saying Amen. This word Amen answers in the Hebrew language to so be it. And when the president has given thanks, and all the people have expressed their assent, those who are called by us deacons give to each of those present to partake of the bread and wine mixed with water over which the thanksgiving was pronounced, and to those who are absent they carry away a portion.

St. Justin Martyr, I Apology 66

And this food is called among us the Eucharist, of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has enjoined. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Savior, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, said, "This do ye in remembrance of Me,

this is My body;" and that, after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, "This is My blood;" and gave it to them alone. Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done. For, that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated, you either know or can learn.

St. John of Damascus, Exposition of the Orthodox Faith IV.13 (Excerpts)

Now seeing that this Adam is spiritual, it was meet that both the birth and likewise the food should be spiritual too, but **since we are of a double and compound nature, it is meet that both the birth should be double and likewise the food compound.** We were therefore given a birth by water and Spirit: I mean, by the holy baptism : and the **food is the very bread of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who came down from heaven...** after He had eaten the ancient Passover with His disciples and had fulfilled the ancient covenant, He washed His disciples' feet in token of the holy baptism. Then having broken bread He gave it to them saying, Take, eat, this is My body broken for you for the remission of sins. Likewise also He took the cup of wine and water and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it: for this is My blood, the blood of the New Testament which is shed for you for the remission of sins. This do ye in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you do show the death of the Son of man and confess His resurrection until He come...if God the Word of His own will became man and the pure and undefiled blood of the holy and ever-virginal One made His flesh without the aid of seed , **can He not then make the bread His body and the wine and water His blood? He said in the beginning, Let the earth bring forth grass, and even until this present day, when the rain comes it brings forth its proper fruits, urged on and strengthened by the divine command...**And now you ask, how the bread became Christ's body and the wine and water Christ's blood. And I say unto you, **The Holy Spirit is present and does those things which surpass reason and thought...**in like manner since it is man's custom to eat and to drink water and wine, He connected His divinity with these and made them His body and blood in order that we may rise to what is supernatural through what is familiar and natural...The body which is born of the holy Virgin is in truth body united with divinity, **not that the body which was received up into the heavens descends, but that the bread itself and the wine are changed into God's body and blood.** But if you enquire how this happens, **it is enough for you to learn that it was through the Holy Spirit, just as the Lord took on Himself flesh that subsisted in Him and was born of the holy Mother of God through the Spirit.** And we know nothing further save that the Word of God is true and energises and is omnipotent, but the manner of this cannot be searched out. But one can put it well thus, that **just as in nature the bread by the eating and the wine and the water by the drinking are changed into the body and blood of the eater and drinker, and do not become a different body from the former one, so the bread of the table and the wine and water are supernaturally changed by the invocation and presence of the Holy Spirit into the body and blood of Christ, and are not two but one and the same...**The **bread and the wine are not merely figures of the body and blood of Christ**

(God forbid!) but the deified body of the Lord itself: for the Lord has said, This is My body, not, this is a figure of My body: and My blood, not, a figure of My blood...

St. Cyril of Jeruslaem, Mystagogical Catechesis IV.2

He once turned water into wine, in Can of Gaililee, at his own will, and is it incredible that he should have turned wine into blood?...

St. Cyril of Jeruslaem, Mystagogical Catechesis IV.6

Contemplate therefore the Bread and Wine not as bare elements, for they are, according to the Lord's declaration, the Body and Blood of Christ; for though sense suggests this to thee, let faith stablish thee. Judge not the matter from taste, but from faith be fully assures without misgiving, that thou hast been vouchsafed the Body and Blood of Christ.

St. Cyril of Jeruslaem, Mystagogical Catechesis V.8

[after discussing the Holy Spirit descending on the Bread and Wine in V.7 he continues] Then after the spiritual sacrifice is perfected, the bloodless service upon that sacrifice of propitiation, we entreat God for the common peace of the Church...we all supplicate and offer this sacrifice.

St. Ambrose of Milan, On the Mysteries 9.50

Perhaps you will say, I see something else, how is it that you assert that I receive the Body of Christ? And this is the point which remains for us to prove. And what evidence shall we make use of? Let us prove that this is not what nature made, but what the blessing consecrated, and the power of blessing is greater than that of nature, because by blessing nature itself is changed.

St. Ambrose of Milan, On the Mysteries 9.52

We observe, then, that grace has more power than nature, and yet so far we have only spoken of the grace of a prophet's blessing. But if the blessing of man had such power as to change nature, what are we to say of that divine consecration where the very words of the Lord and Saviour operate? For that sacrament which you receive is made what it is by the word of Christ. But if the word of Elijah had such power as to bring down fire from heaven, shall not the word of Christ have power to change the nature of the elements? You read concerning the making of the whole world: He spoke and they were made, He commanded and they were created. Shall not the word of Christ, which was able to make out of nothing that which was not, be able to change things which already are into what they were not? For it is not less to give a new nature to things than to change them.

Early Eucharistic Controversies

First Controversy: 8th Century

Radbertus vs. Ratramus, both monks at the monastery of Corbie

What is the nature of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist?

What is the relationship of the Eucharistic body of Christ to the historical body?

Radbertus

Flesh after consecration is historical flesh of Christ, faith must be present or only judgment received. Whoever eat of worthy fashion will not die [eternally]. The elements become body and blood by the power of the Holy Spirit. There is a mystical sacrifice for the life of the world. There is also a mystical consecration, a type of incarnation. Change is done by the Spirit by agency of priest and Christ's word. He distinguished between "figure" and "truth".

Jesus is present in truth even though the elements remain under the figures of bread and wine. The same way that Christ has two substances and one person, so the Eucharist has a figure of bread and wine as well as the substances of body and blood. There is a spiritual eating and drinking along with Christ's corporal presence.

Ratramus

There is a strict distinction between sign and grace in the sacrament. The Eucharist is not Jesus' historical body, but he is truly received. Ratramus uses terminology differently: truth is physical presence, figure is outward sign. The Eucharist cannot be in truth Jesus' flesh and blood because truth for him necessitated an empirical component. Change does not take place in a corporal sense but bread is made body, wine is made blood in a spiritual and figurative way. This change is a result of Holy Spirit, but he refuses to say it is substantial unlike Radbertus. This refusal is because for Ratramus "substance" is a physical concept. Under the corporal bread and wine Christ's spiritual body and blood exist and have a relationship to the historical body but are not to be equated with that same body.

The Holy Spirit is not substantial therefore change is not substantial. This is similar to Baptism where the water does not change but the Spirit's power is added to the water. Thus, the Sacrament is Christ's flesh, his true flesh but not historical flesh because we do not have flesh and blood on the paten and in the chalice. (NB: In Anglican history: Ridley and Cranmer both pick up on this concept.)

Conclusion

Ultimately, due primarily to the growing emphasis on the Mass as a sacrifice, Radburtus' position became dominant. Pelikan (in *Medieval Theology*) argues it was the rule of prayer that won the argument for Radburtus.

Second Controversy: 11th Century

Berengar vs. Lanfranc

How can the body of Christ be in heaven and on the altar at the same time?

Is there a difference between the sacramental Body of Christ and the physical (historical) Body of Christ?

What happens to the bread and wine after consecration? Is it destroyed?

Berengar

Elements are similitude and sign, reality comes not in hand but in thought, elements remain but a spiritual significance added to elements, and only believers receive body and blood. Condemned by Rome in 1055, and recanted. [which he later retracted and had to recant again and finally died a hermit] Some analogies by his supporters though sound like a form of "impanation".

Lanfranc

Substantial change into body and blood. Uses language common to earlier Radburtus and later medieval thought.

Conclusion

Thus substance metaphysics "wins the day" and becomes the major thought in the West. Several theories of presence existed up to Trent but all are based on an underlying substantive metaphysical change in the elements.

Medieval Scholastic Theology

Presence of Christ: Transubstantiation

Lateran IV (1215 AD) dogmatized the term “Transubstantiation” but did not define it: *“the body and blood are truly contained in the Sacrament of the Altar under the outward appearances of bread and wine, the bread having transubstantiated into the body and the wine into the blood.”*

Aquinas systemized the concept using Aristotelian metaphysics. See *ST III.73-83*

How do we explain the relationship between the one and the many?

Aristotle: each thing contains the form of the object

Plato: each thing participates in the external form

Underlying form theory: matter is changeable and imperfect, spirit is eternal and more perfect and more “real”.

Transubstantiation means the whole substance changes, both form and matter, but not accidents.

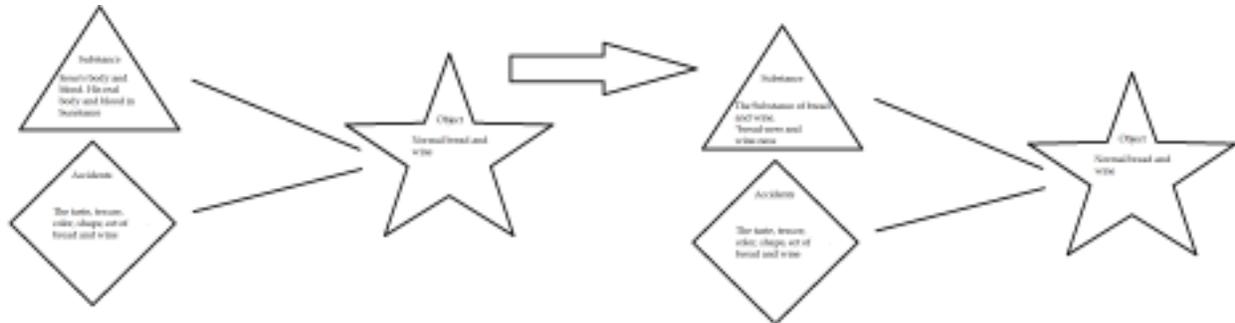
Matter is the “stuff” things are made of.

Form is what makes matter one thing and not another.

Accidentals are those things that do not change what a thing “is” and are so accidentally part of the object. For instance a white chair and a red chair are both chairs but one is accidentally white and the other red. Accidents are the outward aspects of an object, while the substance is the object itself.



In Transubstantiation the bread and wine in substance become Christ, but all the accidents remain the same. So it still looks like bread, and tastes like bread, ect but is not really “bread” because the metaphysical substance is no longer “breadness” but Christ.

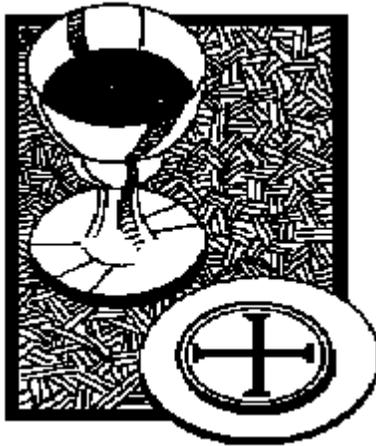


Latter Nominalism would challenge the metaphysical foundations, much of the modern world is nominalist. Nominalistic metaphysics informed the parts of the Reformation.

Nominalism = we call things what they are, rejects forms behind things [this is a radical change]

Ockham’s razor: things should not be multiplied unnecessarily

Moment of Consecration



As seen from the developments in the Early Church, and with the growing emphasis in piety and theology in reference to Christ’s presence in the Eucharist, debates arose as to when exactly this happens and why. Typically in the Western Church, consecration is seen to occur at the word of institutions, when the priest repeats Christ’s very words. Thus in Western liturgies you will find the priest directing these words to the elements followed by the sound of bells and genuflections. In the West, the priest is acting as what would be known as the *alter Christus*. The priest acts in the place of Christ by re-enacting the words and actions of Christ.

The Eastern Church tends to avoid making a statement of “when”, rather seeing the entire Liturgy as the event when Christ becomes present. At the same time, however, they view the consecration as a result primarily of the priest calling down the Holy Spirit, otherwise known as the “epiclesis”. This idea became important in Anglicanism via the revisions of the prayer book, and is a contention between “high” and “low” churchmen.

Continental Reformation

The reformers all had contentions with the Medieval Catholic Mass, but differed among themselves as to the nature of Christ's presence and the nature of the Eucharist as a means of grace. What all did agree on, however, was that the Eucharist could in no way be a sacrifice except for a general sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving common to all worship and agreed in rejecting transubstantiation.

Luther: Word and Sacrament

Sacraments are both promises and a sign of the promise. God's Word of promise is added to make a sacrament a sacrament.

"How can water do such great things?" The same idea applies to the Eucharist.

Eucharist presence of Christ "by, with and under", but he did not use the phrase consubstantiation. He opposed scholastic speculation on principle.

Luther also rejected transubstantiation on the grounds that it would no longer be a visible sign of invisible grace (quoting St. Augustine) and so the bread and wine must remain bread and wine.

Christ is both in heaven and in the elements via *communicatio idiomatum*. The Eucharist is connected to Christology.

Luther defended Eucharistic adoration as adiaphora!

The Mass could not be a sacrifice because Christ has already died once for all. There can be no grace given to the dead.

Calvin: Mystical Communion with Christ

Calvin was more platonic. He held to a form of virtualism (*virtus* = power). Christ is "made present" in the communion by the power of the Spirit.

In the Eucharist there is a substantial communication of Christ to the Christian by the Holy Spirit, as well as a transfusion of life of Christ into the believer. No essential union with God and humanity, however. There are also strong covenantal overtones.

Zwingli: Pledge of Loyalty

Radical difference in sacraments. They do not convey grace but are signs of grace and pledges of loyalty to the community. Nothing mediated to the person.

Eucharist is a memorial sign: "I entrust to you a symbol of my testament, so that when you see this bread and cup you may remember me".

English Reformation

Cranmer

Eucharistic theology is debatable. According to Brooks, a major scholar, He holds three positions:

- 1- transubstantiation under Henry VIII
- 2- real presence [corporeal manner]
- 3- true presence

He seemed to have some idea of a spiritual real presence, but is unclear. His defense of the sacrament sometimes sounds Reformed and sometimes almost Zwinglian.

Elizabethan Settlement

Idea of Mass as a propitiatory sacrifice rejected, goes back to St. Augustine "outward sign of inward and invisible grace". Transubstantiation was seen to overthrow this dual nature.

Hooker

Ultimately sees the sacraments as mystical. Not in the sacraments themselves but in the grace that accompanies the actions. He has view of moral causality. Humans have duties of service and worship, which must be done in faith to be profitable. They are conditional promises, God gives the grace if we do them, and he won't if we don't.

The Eucharist is a mystical communion. It strengthens and continues life. There is real participation in body and blood by means of the sacraments.
 "my body/blood" = "communion with my body/blood".

Not concerned with either consubstantiation or transubstantiation because Christ is not seated in the elements but is truly given.

Sacraments are instrumental means of grace, grace is really given as by an instrument but Christ is not contained in the bread or in the wine. They contain no vital force or energy in them because they are moral causes. He draws a parallel between Eucharist and Baptism (Christ is not present in the water for Baptism, but is given in being baptized thus so with the bread and wine)

Caroline Divines

Rejected transubstantiation but believed in a real presence of Christ. They had a reticence to explain exactly how Christ is present. Scripture is not clear on it so there cannot be a dogmatic article of faith on it (but they had an almost hypostatic union-esque view of it)

Generally held that Eucharist is a propitiatory sacrifice but not as Rome did. Saw "remembrance" as bringing into the present a past event, once for all sacrifice present on the altar. Not that each mass has a new meritorious value that can be applied to those in purgatory (Roman) but one sacrifice made present again.

Note on Reservation: A major objection of Caroline divines was seeing the presence of Christ in the elements without communion. They did, however, acknowledge reservation for the sick. They advocated it on the grounds that that without the Roman abuses it would not be a problem, and thus adoration was also acceptable in the light of actual partaking of communion. However, in general these practices were scarce [except in Scotland] until the Oxford movement.