

Reading Plan

August

Communing with God

Week Seventeen

Monthly Description

YHWH not only desires that we would live with loyalty toward him, but that we would also experience his presence, communing with him as children flourishing in his household. This month we are walking together through what the whole story of Scripture has to say about communing with God.

Communion

Note: Daily descriptions in **bold**.

Weekly Description:

The sacrament of communion was introduced by Jesus to give thanks and remember his great sacrifice for our redemption. This joyous meal is shared among believers and with Christ himself, who is present at the table with his people as they partake. The meal consists of the bread and the cup – the representation of the body and the blood of Jesus that was sacrificed on the cross.

Many people are familiar with the practice of communion. But for many, there needs to be a renewed understanding of the importance of coming to the Lord's table as an act of love and engagement — and act that immerses us in the whole story of King Jesus.

Weekly Video:

Exodus 1-18 (The Passover)

<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/exodus-1-18/>

Day One: Communion as Remembrance

At the Lord's table, we immerse ourselves in the story of Christ's redemptive sacrifice on the cross and his victory over death in his resurrection. We commit ourselves to the rhythms of this sacred act, regularly calling to mind the redemption story whenever we partake of communion. The Lord's Supper took place while Jesus and his disciples took Passover together.

Likewise, the Lord's Supper calls to our remembrance how God, through the ministry of Jesus the Messiah, has extended deliverance to all the nations and will, after this age, bring his people into new creation, where his covenantal promise will extend throughout all the cosmos.

Exodus 12:11-28, 50-51 (ESV)

"...It is the Lord's Passover. "For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I

am the Lord. ¹³The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴“This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast. ¹⁵Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven out of your houses, for if anyone eats what is leavened, from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶On the first day you shall hold a holy assembly, and on the seventh day a holy assembly. No work shall be done on those days. But what everyone needs to eat, that alone may be prepared by you.

¹⁷And you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day, throughout your generations, as a statute forever. ¹⁸In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.

¹⁹For seven days no leaven is to be found in your houses. If anyone eats what is leavened, that person will be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a sojourner or a native of the land. ²⁰You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwelling places you shall eat unleavened bread.”

²¹Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans, and kill the Passover lamb. ²²Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.

²³For the Lord Will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you. ²⁴You shall observe this rite as a statute for you and for your sons forever. ²⁵And when you come to the land that the Lord Will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service. ²⁶And when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’

²⁷you shall say, ‘It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.’ ” And the people bowed their heads and worshiped. ²⁸Then the people of Israel went and did so; as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

²⁹All the people of Israel did just as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron. ³⁰And on that very day the Lord brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

To read more about communion as remembrance, see Luke 22 and Matt. 26.

Day Two: Jesus, Our Passover Lamb

During the Passover, YHWH instructed his people to slaughter a lamb and spread its blood over the doorposts of their homes. With this act, death would pass over their house. As we fast forward to the time of Jesus, we see him and his disciples celebrating the Passover with a shared meal much like the Hebrews shared on that first Passover night. This meal, however, had much more powerful implications than any meal before it. It was in this meal that Jesus would declare himself as the Passover lamb.

In this way, the communion meal becomes an observance of YHWH’s redemption of his people through the blood of a perfect sacrifice – the Passover lamb, the son of God, Jesus Christ of

Nazareth. It was in Jesus that the Passover meal was brought to its highest expression, made perfect by the perfect sacrifice of the Messiah.

Luke 22:7-38 (ESV)

⁷Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. ⁸So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it.” ⁹They said to him, “Where will you have us prepare it?”

¹⁰He said to them, “Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters ¹¹and tell the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ ¹²And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there.” ¹³And they went and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

¹⁴And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. ¹⁵And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” ¹⁷And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. ¹⁸For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

¹⁹And he took 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.” ²⁰And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. ²¹But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. ²²For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!” ²³And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.

²⁴A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. ²⁵And he said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. ²⁶But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. ²⁷For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.

²⁸“You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, ²⁹and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, ³⁰that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

³¹“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, ³²but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” ³³Peter said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.” ³⁴Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.”

³⁵And he said to them, “When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?” They said, “Nothing.” ³⁶He said to them, “But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one. ³⁷For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors.’ For what is written about me has its fulfillment.” ³⁸And they said, “Look, Lord, here are two swords.” And he said to them, “It is enough.”

To read more about Jesus as our Passover lamb, see Matt. 26 and Mark 14.

Day Three: Generous Hearts at the Table

Acts 1-7

<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/gospel-series/>

Communion is another way that we engage in worship with God. The sacrament of the communion meal gives us a powerful physical demonstration of our loyalty to King Jesus. The end of Acts 2 shows us a beautiful portrait of how early Christians embraced the communion meal whenever they came together. It was through this meal that the Spirit forged a common bond between them, as they celebrated the victory of Jesus Christ.

Acts 2: 1-15(ESV)

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. ⁷And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?

⁹Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” ¹²And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” ¹³But others mocking said, “They are filled with new wine.”

¹⁴But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. ¹⁵For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

To read more about generous hearts at the Table, see 1 Corinthians 11.

Day Four: An Unworthy Manner

Holiness

<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/holiness/>

Of all the churches of the New Testament era, few illustrate how *not* to come to the Lord’s table more than the church in Corinth. The story of the Corinthian Church illustrates to us just how seriously the unity of the church is and how integral Christian unity is to partaking of the Lord’s Supper. By partaking together of the bread and the cup we testify that we are a united people, brought together by King Jesus and that we lay aside our petty differences for the sake of the King and his kingdom.

1 Corinthians 11:17-34 (ESV)

¹⁷But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. ¹⁸For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, ¹⁹for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. ²⁰When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat.

²¹For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. ²²What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not.

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

²⁷Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

³⁰That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. ³¹But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. ³²But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

³³So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another— ³⁴if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home—so that when you come together it will not be for judgment. About the other things I will give directions when I come.

To read more about communion in an unworthy manner, see Acts 2 and Luke 22.

Day Five: The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

As we come together to celebrate communion, it is important to focus our spiritual eyes on what is to come in eternity. Much of the communion meal is defined by remembrance, but there is also a component that looks to the future. Revelation 19 gives us the picture of what is commonly called the marriage supper of the Lamb—an end-time feast we will enjoy together when Christ returns.

The marriage supper will celebrate the union of Christ with his bride—the church. The marriage supper of the Lamb is a fulfilled communion meal shared by all of God's people at his table in new creation. We can, therefore, speak of the communion meal we share together now as a "rehearsal dinner" for that incredible wedding feast we will all share in eternity.

Revelation 19:1-10 (ESV)

¹After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out,
"Hallelujah!
Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,
² for his judgments are true and just;
for he has judged the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth with her immorality,

and has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”

³Once more they cried out,

“Hallelujah!

The smoke from her goes up forever and ever.”

⁴And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!” ⁵And from the throne came a voice saying,

“Praise our God,

all you his servants,

you who fear him,

small and great.”

⁶Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out,

“Hallelujah!

For the Lord our God

the Almighty reigns.

⁷ Let us rejoice and exult

and give him the glory,

for the marriage of the Lamb has come,

and his Bride has made herself ready;

⁸ it was granted her to clothe herself
with fine linen, bright and pure”—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

⁹And 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 the true words of God.” ¹⁰Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

To read more about the marriage supper of the Lamb, see Matt. 22 and John 2.