

The Lord's Supper as a Proleptic Covenant Ratification Meal and Inaugurated Kingdom Feast

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INTRODUCTION

At the Last Supper, Jesus took the cup filled with the fruit of the vine and told the disciples, “The cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20). Jesus had earlier explained “From now on I will not drink ... until the kingdom of God comes” (v. 18). Thus, at the Last Supper, Jesus claims that the new covenant would be established before the kingdom would be consummated. In their work *Kingdom through Covenant*, Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum propose that God ushers in his saving reign (i.e., kingdom) through successive covenants over time that culminate in the new covenant (i.e., progressive covenantalism).¹ This paper extends

their project by exploring the relationship of the Lord's Supper to both the new covenant and the kingdom of God. This paper argues that the Lord's Supper is a proleptic (i.e., forward-looking and anticipatory) covenant ratification meal and an inaugurated kingdom feast, given that it points forward to the consummation of God's new covenant promises in the eschatological kingdom of God.

After a brief exegesis of Luke 22:14–20 this paper will briefly survey the relationship of covenant meals to the particular covenants to which each meal is attached—the old covenant meals of Passover (Exod 12) and covenant ratification on Sinai (24:1–11) and the new covenant meals of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 10:16–17; 11:17–34) and the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:6–10).² These meals require analysis because Jesus (implicitly) refers to each of them at the Last Supper. In the final section of the paper, I focus on the relationship of the Lord's Supper to each of the covenant meals, providing areas of continuity and discontinuity, to demonstrate the function of the Lord's Supper in the new covenant and the kingdom of God.

LUKE 22:14–20³

Luke 22:1 states that the Feast of Unleavened Bread, “which is called the Passover,”⁴ was at hand. Nolland contends that verses 15–18 focus primarily on Jesus' celebration of the old covenant meal, albeit with Jesus' death and the consummated kingdom in view, while verses 19–20 focus on Jesus' reinterpretation of the Passover around his death.⁵ Accordingly, the redemptive-historical transition from the old covenant meal centered on the exodus to the new covenant meal centered on Jesus' death is paramount in Luke's presentation.⁶

The fact that Jesus reinterprets the Passover in verses 16–18 requires that the Last Supper itself functions as a partial fulfillment of the first Passover.⁷ Verse 16 provides Jesus' clearest typological interpretation of the Passover: he had to eat the Passover before he suffered because he would “not eat *it*, until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” Clearly, the term “*it*” cannot be the kingdom of God, because Jesus distinguishes the Passover and the kingdom in the following phrase.⁸ The culminating Passover feast will be the feast that occurs “in the kingdom of God.”⁹ Jesus' fulfillment language “indicates the end of the old Passover and its replacement by its [inaugurated] fulfillment.”¹⁰

By claiming that the Passover would be ultimately fulfilled in the kingdom of God, Jesus explicitly describes three meals as Passover meals: the first Passover (Exod 12), the Last Supper (Luke 22:14–20), and a future feast in the consummated kingdom (cf. Luke 13:29; 14:15). Passover's fulfillment in the kingdom of God (v. 16) is eschatologically parallel to the future coming of the kingdom in verse 18, with both referring to the consummated kingdom meal.¹¹ At the Last Supper then, Jesus presents the old covenant Passover meal as anticipating his death (and resurrection; cf. 9:21–22), which would be a greater deliverance than the Israelite exodus and would eventually terminate in the future consummation of the kingdom of God.

After speaking of the Passover twice in connection with the future coming of the kingdom, Jesus reinterprets the bread and the cup mentioned in verses 19–20 with specific reference to his approaching death. Whereas verses 14–15 mentioned “the hour” of Jesus’ impending “suffering,” Jesus describes the bread as representative of his body,¹² which he would give “for you” (v. 19). This language, combined with Jesus’ reference to the cup of his blood “poured out for you” (v. 20) suggests that Jesus’ death functions as a substitutionary atonement.¹³ Whereas the cup of verse 18 recalls redemption of the first Passover and places the participants in solidarity with the exodus generation,¹⁴ the second cup (v. 20) recasts God’s deliverance in terms of a new covenant inaugurated by Jesus’ blood sacrifice.

Three Old Testament themes emerge here: (1) the new covenant blood/cup of Christ typologically fulfills the purpose of the blood of the Passover lamb (cf. 1 Cor 5:7); (2) Jesus’ association of the cup poured out for the disciples with “the new covenant in my blood” is acknowledged by all as an allusion to Exodus 24:8, where the blood Moses sprinkled on the people of Israel to inaugurate the Mosaic covenant is described as “the blood of the covenant;”¹⁵ and (3) Jesus’ reference to a new covenant entails the fulfillment of God’s promise to make a new covenant with his people whereby all the covenant partners would know the Lord and have their sins forgiven (Jer 31:31–34).¹⁶ Meredith Kline summarizes,

Since the symbol adopted by Jesus as the sign of his covenant blood was the sacramental cup of the transformed Passover meal, Jesus’ death answers both to the sacrifice offered in preparation for the Passover and to the ratification sacrifices of the Sinaitic Covenant. Thus, the significance of the blood ceremonies that

introduced and consummated the exodus-event fuse in the meaning of the cross.¹⁷

Of the Synoptic writers, Luke alone records Jesus’ command to the disciples to “do this” in remembrance of him (22:19). While the redemptive-historical *telos* of the Last Supper is clearly the Messianic banquet of the consummated kingdom (vv. 16, 18), Jesus’ command to repeat the meal he institutes requires the ongoing rite of the Lord’s Supper in an intermediary redemptive stage.¹⁸ Although Jesus speaks of the kingdom of God in future terms in verse 18 (cf. 22:29–30), he had already signaled the arrival and inauguration of the redemptive reign of God (Luke 11:20). In the economy of redemption, the inaugurated kingdom had broken in on the old age of the Mosaic covenant. By speaking of the new covenant in his blood in verse 20, Jesus forecasts the formal inauguration of a new, redemptive-historical era by virtue of his death and resurrection. With these factors in view, Jesus’ command to continue celebrating the meal serves as an indication that Jesus’ death and resurrection would bring together both the new covenant phase of God’s redemptive plan and the inaugurated kingdom. Until the consummated kingdom feast, all the celebrations of the Lord’s Supper are and will be redemptive-historically connected both to the new covenant and the inaugurated kingdom as anticipations of the consummated kingdom feast.¹⁹

COVENANT MEALS AND THE KINGDOM

This section surveys the covenant meals to which Jesus alludes.²⁰

Passover and the Mosaic Covenant

Following Jesus’ interpretive framework, several thematic features of the original Passover deserve mention. First, the context of Exodus 12 suggests that the Passover meal and exodus event should be closely connected.²¹ In context, the prescription for the Passover celebration (Exod 12) follows the sequence of plagues on the Egyptians that culminated in the death of the firstborn (5–11; cf. 11:19–32). Because this final plague moved Pharaoh to free Israel, leading to God’s deliverance through the Red Sea, these events are of a piece.²²

Second, the specific means of Israel’s deliverance from the final plague on Egypt was their being covered by the sacrificial blood of the Passover lamb.²³

Because God promised to judge all of Egypt that was not covered by the blood of the lamb, the lamb's death functions as a substitutionary sacrifice for the firstborn in the house (vv. 11–12).²⁴

Third, the lamb's blood marked off God's people from the Egyptians. Ironically, God describes the blood as a "sign" for *Israel*, even while he promises to "see the blood" and "pass over you" (12:13). Thus, the blood that marked off Israel from their enemies served as a comforting, visible symbol to each Israelite. By this nationally-common meal, God would distinguish the people with whom he was to establish a covenant from those under judgment (cf. Exod 19:4–6).²⁵

Fourth, the instructions for Passover also served as the institution of an ongoing cultic (i.e., worship) practice. Thus, eating the lamb, unleavened bread, and herbs on their appointed days became the perpetual reminder of God's historical and continuing deliverance (cf. 12:21–28).²⁶ Whereas, failure to celebrate Passover (and the Feast of Unleavened Bread) appropriately resulted in removal from the covenant community (12:15), participation in the physical elements of Passover marked one out as belonging to God's covenant people.²⁷

Fifth, the death of the firstborn and the redemption of Israel through that judgment climactically displayed God's saving power and rule over his people's enemies and their gods. God promised not only the death of the firstborn of the Egyptians, but also to "execute judgments" "on all the gods of the Egyptians" (12:12).²⁸ From the time God summoned Moses to be the earthly deliverer of Israel, God promised to display his might over the king of Egypt (Exod 4:21–23; 7:5; 9:14–16; cf. 14:16–18). In the wider context of the Passover-exodus event, the narrative repeatedly portrays God's deliverance of his people as a display of the kingdom of God—God's saving rule, as with the final phrase of the Song of Moses in Exodus 15:18, "the LORD will reign forever and ever."²⁹

That the Passover should be viewed as a covenantal meal is verified by the following: (1) Israel's participation in the Passover was the means by which they could be preserved from judgment and eventually arrive at Mt. Sinai; (2) God's intention in the Passover-exodus event was always ultimately the inauguration of a covenant at Sinai (Exod 3:12; 4:23; cf. 19:1);³⁰ and (3) although the instructions for how to celebrate the Passover were given prior to the other covenant stipulations at Mt. Sinai, the command to celebrate

the Passover as an ongoing feast/festival (the high point of the Feast of Unleavened Bread) formed part of those stipulations (Exod 12:14–20).³¹ Although the Passover meal did not inaugurate the Mosaic covenant, the Passover meal inaugurated the saving events of the exodus by which God brought Israel into covenant relationship with himself and served as a yearly covenantal celebration and memorial for Israel's redemption.³²

Mosaic Covenant Ratification Meal

When Jesus explained that His blood would be "poured out for you" as "the cup of the new covenant in [his] blood," he alluded to the shedding of blood that established the Mosaic covenant in Exodus 24:6–8, as was previously noted. Several features of Exodus 24:1–11 shed light on its relation to God's kingdom and covenant. First, Exodus 24:1–11 is subsequent to God's declaration that he redeemed Israel to be his own people (Exod 19:4–6) and God's delineation of the terms of the covenant with Israel (Exod 20–23). Israel's formal covenant vow, "All the Lord has spoken we will do" (Exod 24:3, 7) is the nation's response to YHWH's terms. Although they had already agreed to the terms of the covenant "in principle" (19:8), Israel had to "solemnly affirm their allegiance to the covenant," having heard its obligations.³³ Therefore, Gentry et al. describe the ceremony that occurs in Exodus 24:1–11 as covenant ratification, meaning that what occurs here formally seals the agreement between the two parties and binds them to uphold their obligations.³⁴

Secondly, Moses' sacrifice in Exodus 24:5–6 functions as the covenant-establishing shedding of blood for the Mosaic covenant, as Moses states in 24:8, "Behold the blood of the covenant the LORD has made with you" (cf. Heb 9:18). God's pattern for establishing covenants with people in the OT usually involves the shedding of blood as a warning of judgment for failure to keep covenant stipulations (cf. Gen 15:7–21). Gentry and Garrett claim that the cleansing/atonement aspect to the sacrificial blood is not in focus; instead, they emphasize the establishment of a suzerain-vassal joining of God with his covenant people.³⁵ Whatever the case, Jesus appears to unite the functions of covenant-establishment and atonement in describing the blood he would shed (Luke 22:20).

Thirdly, that a meal followed the shedding of blood in Exodus 24:9–11 verifies that the events recorded in the passage constitute a covenant ratification.

As Gentry points out, communal meals often function to ratify covenants in the Old Testament (see Gen 31:44–46, 54; 2 Sam 3:12–13, 20).³⁶ If the shedding of blood symbolized the joining of two parties, the meal itself functions to celebrate the union, very much like wedding. As Gentry explains, “It is by virtue of the covenant at Sinai that Yahweh becomes the *goel*, i.e., the nearest relative, and that Israel becomes not just a nation but a ‘people’ (עַם), i.e., a kinship term specifying relationship to the Lord.”³⁷ When the seventy elders (i.e., Israel’s representatives) ascend the mountain with Moses, Aaron, and Aaron’s sons to eat and drink with their covenant Lord, they do so to celebrate the wedding of God to his people (cf. Hos 1:9; Ezek 16:8–13). The fact that God “did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel” (Exod 24:11) emphasizes that the holy God of Sinai was welcoming *his* people into his presence.

Finally, several features of the covenant ratification meal serve to consummate the Mosaic covenant and, in the flow of the biblical storyline, form patterns of expectations for the consummation of the new covenant. First, the mountain location of the meal (Horeb/Sinai)³⁸ is taken up typologically throughout the Old Testament as the place (Moriah/Zion) where the Lord himself will rule the earth in connection with the eschatological day of the Lord (cf. Exod 15:17; cf. Isa 2:1–4; 4:3–6; Mic 4:1–5).³⁹ Second, by stating that all who ascended the mountain “saw the God of Israel” (v. 10) and “beheld God” (v. 11), seeing God and being in his presence functions with the meal as the climax of the establishment of the covenant relationship.⁴⁰ Throughout the Old Testament, the privilege of seeing God (i.e., his manifest glory) is reserved for God’s covenant people⁴¹ and promised as the covenantal blessing for covenant faithfulness.⁴² Next, as Beale has argued, the color and material of the “pavement of sapphire stone” underneath the throne of God, which was “like the very heaven for clearness,” is consistently used in Scripture to portray God’s glory as he appears in his heavenly temple (see Ezek 1:26–28; 10:1). This image culminates in Revelation 21:11, 18–20, where John describes both the glory of God and the New Jerusalem (which reflects God’s glory) in similar terms.⁴³ While Jesus alludes directly to “the blood of the covenant” in Exodus 24:8, in the progress of redemption, it seems clear that John alludes to other aspects of the Sinaitic ratification meal when he describes the marriage supper of the lamb.

Lord's Supper and New Covenant

As was noted in the exegesis of Luke 22:19–20, Jesus’ instructions to repeat the meal he instituted after his departure constitutes the Lord’s Supper as an ordinance of the new covenant church in the inaugurated kingdom.⁴⁴ Therefore, several thematic features from Paul’s instructions to the Corinthians concerning the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor 10:16–17; 11:17–32) and its surrounding context deserve mention.

First, in the context of the book of 1 Corinthians, Paul demonstrates that the church already participates in inaugurated kingdom of God under the administration of the new covenant by comparing the experience of the church to that of Israel. Whereas Israel was covered by the blood of the Passover lamb, “Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed” (1 Cor 5:7), entailing both the removal of God’s wrath and the necessity of living in holiness.⁴⁵ Whereas God demonstrated his redemptive rule for Israel through the Passover-exodus event, new covenant believers have experienced a “new exodus” by their experience of Christ’s blood covering (5:7), baptism (10:2), and partaking of the spiritual food of the Lord’s Supper (10:3).⁴⁶ Whereas God displayed his authority in Israel through his covenant mediator Moses (Num 12), and later the Davidic king (Deut 17:18–20; 2 Sam 7:11–17), Christ—the new covenant mediator and Davidic king of the church—displays his authority through his new covenant church’s exercise of church discipline (1 Cor 5:4, 11–12).⁴⁷ These parallels between Israel and the church serve in part to situate the church in its new covenant epoch. Paul clearly foresees a future aspect of the kingdom of God (6:10) and a consummation of the new covenant relationship of Christ with the church, his bride (2 Cor 11:12; cf. Eph 5:22–32). Furthermore, Paul’s instructions concerning the Lord’s Supper include the epoch-marking comment “we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” (1 Cor 11:26),⁴⁸ requiring that the church should continue its practice until that time of consummation.⁴⁹ Each of these contextual clues reveal that the Lord’s Supper is a meal that occurs after the inaugurations of the new covenant and the kingdom of God and prior to the consummation of both the new covenant and the kingdom.⁵⁰

Second, the Lord’s Supper functions as a sign of the new covenant (1 Cor 11:25),⁵¹ entailing several blessings of participation in the meal. In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul presents Israel’s and the church’s experience of participation (κοινωνία)⁵² in Christ through the covenant meal(s) as analogically

similar.⁵³ The pattern of redemption leading to a covenant ratification meal is redolent in the Supper (cf. Exod 24:9–11). Those who have been delivered from God's wrath by the blood of Christ—the Passover lamb—and who have been baptized, as Israel was, receive spiritual food of participation in Christ.⁵⁴ The Supper celebrates communion first with Christ and derivatively with the new covenant community of Christ.⁵⁵ Eating the bread and drinking the cup demonstrates and deepens union/communion with Christ (1 Cor 10:16),⁵⁶ the covenant head, and with the new covenant partners in the church by virtue of their common covenantal connection to Christ (10:17). To eat the bread and drink the cup bespeaks one's participation in the new covenant from the human side,⁵⁷ but it also serves as the means of receiving assurance (ratification) from God's side. As Horton explains, the signs of a covenant ratify covenantal sanctions.⁵⁸ Thus, while the Lord's Supper anticipates a fuller, eschatological knowledge of Christ when he returns, the benefits of the new covenant are already experienced in a partial way by those who partake of the Supper. In a not-yet-fully-realized sense then, the Lord's Supper is a covenant ratification meal—thus, proleptic.⁵⁹

Messianic Banquet and the Consummation

Finally, Jesus provides the warrant for interpreting the messianic banquet of Revelation 19:6–9 as the typological fulfillment of the Passover. This section focuses on the way in which the marriage supper of the Lamb consummates both the new covenant and the kingdom of God.⁶⁰

In Revelation 19:6–9, kingdom and covenant appear side by side, denoting the consummation of both.⁶¹ As a result of Christ's judgment of Babylon (cf. 19:1–4, 11), the kingdom of the earth is transferred completely in its authority to Christ, “and he will reign forever and ever” (11:15).⁶² Thus, the time arrives for the “marriage of the Lamb” (19:7). John's depiction of the marriage of the Lamb and his “Bride,” the church, brims with covenantal overtones. By mentioning the linen garments with which the bride clothes herself (19:8), John alludes to the “robes of righteousness” that God promised to Israel (Isa 61:10),⁶³ which he would give her in preparation for their marriage and life together in a land called “Married” (62:4). The marriage imagery in Revelation is meant to convey the consummation and ultimate ratification of covenant relationship.

The kingdom theme remains present with the language of a marriage

supper (19:9),⁶⁴ because Jesus repeatedly referred to the consummation of the kingdom as involving a wedding feast (Matt 8:11–12; 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 14:15; 22:16, 18, 29–30). Schreiner summarizes, “The coming kingdom can be described as a great end-time feast in which the righteous will rejoice but others will be cast out into the darkness.”⁶⁵ Still, because this meal includes formerly unrighteous sinners who have been forgiven by the blood of their husband, the Lamb, the consummated kingdom feast must also be a covenantal meal. The participants in this meal are both followers/guests of the Lamb and the Bride of the Lamb (12:10–12; 19:7, 9).⁶⁶ While the former image emphasizes the Lamb's kingdom rule (cf. Isa 25),⁶⁷ the latter emphasizes complete ultimate ratification (Exod 24:9–11). At this Supper, the resurrected King sits down to enjoy table fellowship with his guests who have arrived at their much-anticipated fulfillment meal by virtue of their prior participation in Christ's new covenant (1 Cor 11:26).

CONTINUITY AND DISCONTINUITY OF COVENANT MEALS

In what follows, each of the covenant meals surveyed in this paper is compared and contrasted with the Lord's Supper along various axes in order to demonstrate that the Lord's Supper is indeed a proleptic covenant ratification meal and inaugurated kingdom feast.

Passover and the Lord's Supper

Several points of continuity between the Passover and Lord's Supper are as follows. First, while the Lord's Supper is not explicitly described as a Passover meal by Jesus (Luke 22:16, 18), Paul seems to consider the Lord's Supper a Passover meal, when he urges the church to “celebrate the feast” with reference to the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 5:7–11; 1 Cor 10:3–4; 10–17).⁶⁸ Second, both Passover and the Lord's Supper function as acts of remembrance (Luke 22:19b; cf. Exod 12:14 and 13:9).⁶⁹ Third, both the Passover and the Lord's Supper were instituted by divine instruction prior to the kingly act of redemption—the exodus through the Red Sea in the old covenant and the death and resurrection of Jesus in the new covenant. Fourth, both feasts mark(ed) off the people of God from the surrounding nations as signs of the covenant with which they are associated (Exod 12:12–13; 1 Cor 11:24–25; 1 Cor 5:7–12). Fifth, identification with the redeemed comes through participation in the covenant meal (Exod 12:3–4; 1 Cor 11:17–34). Sixth,

since those in Egypt who did not participate in Passover experienced God's judgment in the death of the firstborn and those who do not participate in the Lord's Supper remain under judgment, both feasts function to signify those who are sealed as recipients of divine mercy compared to those who remain under wrath (Exod 12:29; 1 Cor 5:5, 11). Each of these continuities contribute to the thesis that the Lord's Supper serves as a sign of God's redemptive reign.

Several discontinuities are also evident, centering on the arrival of the new covenant with Christ's death. Whereas the Passover participants were covered by the blood of a sacrificial lamb, Christ's once-for-all sacrificial blood covers Lord's Supper participants (Exod 12:5–7; 1 Cor 5:7). Whereas the Passover meal was a demonstration of God's saving reign over Israel's enemies for the purchase of Israel from physical slavery, the Lord's Supper commemorates the demonstration of God's saving reign over the kingdom of darkness for the deliverance of the multi-ethnic body of Christ (1 Cor 10:1–17; Eph 2:11–12). Whereas Passover occurred in anticipation of God's deliverance from Egypt with instructions for its ongoing celebration, the Lord's Supper occurs subsequent the inauguration of God's saving reign in the coming of Jesus and the new covenant he inaugurated by his blood.

Covenant Ratification and the Lord's Supper

Two similarities between the Lord's Supper and the meal on Sinai suggest that the Supper is a (proleptic) covenant ratification meal. First, like the Sinai meal, the Lord's Supper occurs subsequently to the covenant-establishing shedding of blood as a celebration and ratification of the covenant (Luke 22:20; Heb 9:14–23; 1 Cor 11:25). Second, as Israel's representatives ate and drank in God's covenantal presence on Sinai (Exod 24:9–11), so in a sense that precludes sight, the church experiences Christ's covenantal presence in a special way when they “participate” in the body of Christ through consuming the bread and cup (1 Cor 10:16).

By contrast, because the Lord's Supper anticipates the kingdom feast, that mirrors and surpasses the meal on Sinai (1 Cor 11:26; cf. Luke 22:16, 18), the Lord's Supper should be understood as a proleptic covenant ratification meal.⁷⁰ Whereas only the representatives of Israel were allowed to ascend the mountain into God's presence (Exod 24:9–11), all who enter the kingdom by faith in Christ are already assembled on Zion as the temple

of God (Heb 12:22–24; 1 Cor 3:16). Whereas Moses sprinkled physical blood on the Israelites to demonstrate their cleansing and responsibility to uphold their covenant obligations, the church's physical participation in the Supper represents their unilateral cleansing and forgiveness by God in the new covenant, based upon Christ's obedience and sacrifice (Heb 9:20–22; cf. Isa 53). Marshall writes, “We can thus regard the Lord's Supper as the feast of [inaugurated] fulfillment in the kingdom of God inasmuch as it is an anticipation of the heavenly feast.”⁷¹

Last Supper and Lord's Supper

Several reflections on the Last Supper and Lord's Supper fill out the thesis. The Last Supper sets the paradigm for the Lord's Supper. Marshall helpfully suggests “that Jesus looked forward to a new Passover in the heavenly kingdom of God, but that at the same time he commanded his disciples to celebrate a meal which would be an anticipation of that heavenly feast.”⁷² As Beale explains, “The Lord's Supper is the [inaugurated] antitypical correspondence fulfilling the type of Israel's meal.”⁷³ When Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 11:26 that each time the church eats the bread and drinks the wine they “proclaim the Lord's death until he comes,” the forward-looking proclamation of Christ's death reminds the participants in the Lord's Supper that “the inaugurated form of the Lord's Supper would cease” when Christ returns to consummate the kingdom.⁷⁴ By using “fulfillment” language, Jesus actions at the Last Supper bring the old covenant celebration of the Passover to its initial telos, rendering celebration of the old covenant Passover redemptive-historically inappropriate. For God's people the church, the Lord's Supper functionally replaces the Passover.⁷⁵

The discontinuities in the Last Supper and Lord's Supper revolve around their respective redemptive-historical moments. Whereas the Last Supper anticipated redemption, the Lord's Supper celebrates redemption accomplished. Whereas the Last Supper anticipated the inauguration of the new covenant in Christ's blood, the Lord's Supper celebrates the present experience of God's new covenant forgiveness and presence as a covenant ratification meal (Ezek 36:26–27). Whereas the Last Supper looked back to the Passover that it fulfilled and forward to the kingdom feast it anticipated, the Lord's Supper looks back to the cross and resurrection of Christ (with the Passover-exodus event as an interpretive grid) and looks forward to the

consummation of the new covenant and the kingdom of God. Whereas the Last Supper occurred during the inaugurated reign of Christ but prior to its corollary new covenant, the Lord's Supper occurs in the age of the already-not yet, new covenant and kingdom.

Therefore, the present experience of believers as they participate in the Lord's Supper is one of assurance. Each time they eat and drink the Supper together, God reminds the church that the new covenant benefits of communion with him through forgiveness of sins is theirs (Jer 31:34). The new covenant is ratified toward them even while it is not consummated: thus, proleptic. Similarly, as the church participates together in meal that points forward to the saving reign of Christ and as they exercise the authority Christ has given them to bind and loose related to that meal (Matt 18:15–20; 1 Cor 5:1–12), they participate in an inaugurated kingdom feast.

Lord's Supper and Kingdom Feast

Because the kingdom feast of Revelation 19:6–9 functions as the consummation of both the new covenant and the kingdom of God, it is the much-anticipated anti-type of all the previous covenantal meals between God and man. As a wedding (Rev 19:7, 9), the church will experience its covenantal goal when it experiences Christ's presence face to face in the ultimate fulfillment meal of Christ (Rev 21:5). As a royal banquet, the church will experience the full fellowship and joy of Christ's complete destruction of sin, rather than needing to fight against personal sin. Indeed, the blessing of new covenant and kingdom consummation at the heavenly banquet will be to eat and drink again with Christ around his Table (Luke 22:16, 18).

CONCLUSION

The church participates in the Lord's Supper in the time between two inaugurations—the kingdom of God and the new covenant—and one climactic fulfillment. This paper has explored the relationship of Passover feast and covenant ratification meal to the Mosaic covenant, comparing these meal-covenant relationships with that of the Last Supper, Lord's Supper, and marriage supper of the Lamb in relation to the new covenant. As a sign of the new covenant, the Lord's Supper has various continuities and discontinuities with the other covenant meals here considered. Jesus statements in Luke 22:14–20 and the examination that followed led to the conclusion that the Lord's Supper

is a proleptic covenant ratification meal because the new covenant benefits of forgiveness of sin and participation in Christ's covenantal presence have already been inaugurated and will be fully realized at the marriage supper of the Lamb. We also saw that the church displays God's saving reign, which Jesus inaugurated, through its participation in the Lord's Supper. As such, the Lord's Supper is an inaugurated kingdom feast.

¹ Progressive Covenantalism refers to view championed by Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum as a description of how to put the whole Bible together through a recognition of God's progressive revelation in their work, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton: Crossway, 2018). They argue for a middle position between dispensational theologies and classic covenantal theology whereby (1) they maintain that God brings his saving reign over the earth through successive covenants which are integrally related to each other until all of the prior covenants find their telos in Christ and the new covenant he brings; (2) they favor the notion of one plan of God over the notion of one covenant of grace with differing administrations, arguing that the latter idea flattens the distinctions between the covenants; (3) they view covenants as consisting of unconditional (unilateral) and conditional (bilateral) elements blended together; (4) they find a solution the tension between conditional and unconditional elements in the covenants in Christ, God's obedient Son, the divine-human covenant partner who meets the conditions and provides full forgiveness of sins for all who are united to him; (5) they reject a distinct future for ethnic, national Israel as separate from the one people of God throughout time; and (6) they reject the notion that all the promises to Israel may be directly applied to the church as the replacement of Israel, because Christ is the true Israelite and Davidic king in whom all the promises of God find their amen (2 Cor 1:20). See also Stephen J. Wellum and Brent E. Parker, eds., *Progressive Covenantalism: Charting a Course between Dispensational and Covenant Theologies* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016).

² Marshall also makes this connection. See I. Howard Marshall, *Last Supper & Lord's Supper* (Vancouver: Regent Publishing, 1980), 91–92. In Luke's account, Luke 22:14–20 forms part of the culmination of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem (cf. Luke 9:53), where Jesus repeatedly told his followers he would suffer and die for sinners (Luke 9:21–22, 44; 13:33; 18:31). Having arrived in Jerusalem and having been hailed as the "King who comes in the name of the Lord" (19:38), Jesus wept over the coming destruction of Jerusalem (19:41–44) before cleansing the temple (45–48) and proceeding to teach about coming kingdom and answer challenges to his own authority (20:1–21:38).

³ This section and what follows are further developed in Dallas W. Vandiver, *Who Can Take the Lord's Supper: A Biblical-Theological Argument for Close Communion* (Monographs in Baptist History, vol. 21; Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2021).

⁴ Several times in the immediate context of the Last Supper, Luke explicitly claims that they were celebrating the Passover (22:7, 8, 11, 13, 15). This fact is noteworthy because scholars debate whether the Apostle John situates the upper room meal the day prior in his Gospel. For the purpose of this paper, Luke's clear indicators of the paschal nature of the Last Supper are sufficient to warrant the Last Supper being described as a Passover celebration. The debate over whether Jesus' Last Supper occurred on Wednesday or Thursday is beyond the scope of this paper. However, four sources which make strong arguments in favor of a paschal interpretation of the Last Supper are Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*, 59–61; Andreas J. Köstenberger, "Was the Last Supper a Passover Meal?," in Thomas R. Schreiner and Matthew R. Crawford, *The Lord's Supper: Remembering and Proclaiming Christ Until He Comes* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010), 6–30. The two previous studies depend largely on the classic work: Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (trans. Norman Perrin; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1966), 41–83. See also Anthony Thiselton's excursus entitled "Was the Last Supper a Passover Meal? Significance for Exegesis" in *First Corinthians* (NIGNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 871–74. Contra Jonathan Pennington, "The Lord's Supper," in Schreiner and Crawford, *Lord's Supper*, 34. Pennington argues that

- "Jesus intentionally celebrated the Passover meal a day earlier than the official Jerusalem one" without a lamb in light of his approaching death.
- John Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53* (WBC, vol. 35c; Dallas, Word Books, 1993), 3:1044.
- Pennington, "Lord's Supper in the Gospels," in Schreiner and Crawford, 41. See also Nolland, *Luke*, 3:1044. As a law-keeping Israelite, Jesus commemorated God's "kingly saving power" of deliverance for his people, which led to the establishing of the Mosaic covenant at Sinai. Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*, 78.
- Pennington argues that all four Gospel writers "present Jesus' work as the Passover fulfillment and new exodus," promised in the prophets (see Isa 40:1-11; 65:17-25; 49:8-12). See Pennington, "Lord's Supper in the Gospels," 49n54. Further, the "water crossings and wilderness feedings in the Gospels (e.g., Matt 14:13-21 and 14:22-33; [John 6:1-15 and 6:16-21]) have long been recognized as an intentional allusion to the exodus events being redone and recast by Jesus." Jesus' recapitulation of these events furthers the typology evident surrounding the last Supper as a Passover meal. Meredith Kline adds, "the exodus typology of Luke's Gospel is forecast earlier in Luke's Gospel when Jesus spoke of his 'departure' (*exodus*) with Moses and Elijah at Jesus' transfiguration" (Luke 9:31). Kline, "Old Testament Origins of the Gospel Genre," *WTJ* 38:1 (1975): 10. Most helpful in explaining the typological connection of the Passover to the Last Supper and subsequent Lord's Supper is Brent E. Parker, "The Israel-Christ-Church Relationship," in Wellum and Parker, *Progressive Covenantalism*, 51-52. He explains, "typological patterns are always either completely fulfilled with the coming of Christ, the primary antitype, or they are initially inaugurated by Christ with appropriation directed to the church, living in the 'already-not-yet' tension of the new covenant era." With this in mind, it is appropriate to think of the Last Supper as a partial fulfillment of Passover and the Lord's Supper as an "ongoing or continuing fulfillment."
- Robert H. Stein, *Luke* (Logos Edition, vol. 24; NAC; Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), 541.
- Bock argues "A Passover meal is the only possible antecedent." Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53* (vol. 2; BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 2:1720-1721.
- Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*, 80. Inserting "inaugurated" before Marshall's term fulfillment is preferable because, as Parker explains, "Some types are completely fulfilled in Christ's first coming while others are initially fulfilled while also having antitypical fulfillment and realization in the church and finally the new creation. Even so, with the arrival of the antitype, namely Jesus Christ, the type is surpassed since the 'antitype fills the role of the type in a way that makes the type unnecessary and effectively obsolete.'" Parker, "The Israel-Christ-Church Relationship," 52. Parker cites Paul M. Hoskins, *Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Temple in the Gospel of John* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2007), 23.
- After sharing the cup with the disciples, Jesus would abstain from the celebratory and commemorative wine until that feast. Amos 9:11-15 is one OT portrait of the abundance of wine that will be present in the consummated kingdom. Bock, *Luke*, 2:1724. In other words, Jesus "implies that [his] end will come before there is occasion for him to have another festive meal of any kind." Nolland, *Luke*, 3:1052.
- Bock is correct that the "to be" verb *estin* "indicates representation, not identification." Bock, *Luke*, 2:1725.
- Bock correctly observes that the disciples "represented many others for whom Jesus would die." Bock, *Luke*, 2:1719. The substitutionary and sacrificial nature of Jesus impending death should not be discounted due to Jesus' association of himself with the bread and cup rather than the lamb because, Kimbell argues, Jesus understood his death as the *telos* of all the Old Testament animal sacrifices. Jesus' death would establish a new covenant community that continued to celebrate a meal of bread and wine in remembrance of him. John R. Kimbell, "The Atonement in Lukan Theology" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009), 38.
- Note God's command to all future generations of Israelites to explain the meal and their identity as a nation in terms of God's redemption (Exod 13:7-9). Brian Vickers, "Past and Future," in Schreiner and Crawford, *Lord's Supper*, 320.
- Matthew's Gospel contains this exact phrase, with the note that some manuscripts add "new" to covenant (Matt 26:28; see par. Mark 14:24). Several examples of those who recognize the reference to Exod 24:8 are Bock, *Luke*, 2:1728; Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*, 91-92; Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 763; David P. Moessner, *Lord of the Banquet: The Literary and Theological Significance of the Lukan Travel Narrative* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989), 179; Nolland, *Luke*, 3:1054. More hesitant is Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 194-195.
- This paper understands the God-man Jesus to be the human partner with whom the new covenant is made. In other words, when Jeremiah speaks of "the new covenant I will make with the house of Israel" (31:31), Christ embodies Israel as the promised blessing of Abraham and Son of David. As such, all who

- come to God through Christ are included in the new covenant. See Parker, "The Israel-Christ-Church Relationship," 63-64. Contra Bruce Ware, "The New Covenant and the People(s) of God," in Darrell Bock and Craig Blaising, *Dispensationalism, Israel, and the Church*, pt. 1, sec. 1 para. 7. Kindle.
- Kline, "Old Testament Origins of the Gospel Genre," 12-13.
- Pennington, "Lord's Supper in the Gospels," 63. That Jesus commands the disciples concerning how they were to observe the Lord's Supper after his departure makes clear that the instructions he gave at the redemptive-historically unique Last Supper establish the necessity of an ongoing Lord's Supper. Beale contends that Jesus' promise to eat and drink with the disciples when "the kingdom comes" "apparently began to be fulfilled during his resurrection appearances," since Acts 10:41 mentions Jesus eating and drinking with the disciples. G. K. Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 818.
- Green, *Luke*, 761. For this source, see Pennington, "Lord's Supper in the Gospels," 62.
- Due to spatial constraints, this section will highlight thematic features of each text without providing a full exegesis, while making every effort to put forward arguments and conclusions that are consistent with the context. Yet, in order to avoid the eisegesis that would result from moving too quickly to a canonical interpretation of each passage, due attention will be given to each text in its initial contextual horizon. See Richard Lints, *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 293, 298; Daniel Doriani, "A Redemptive-Historical Model," in *Four Views on Moving beyond the Bible to Theology*, ed., Gary T. Meadors (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 87-89.
- Pennington describes the event as the "Passover-Exodus." Pennington, "Lord's Supper in the Gospels," 50.
- Carpenter emphasizes the fact that the cluster of God's redemptive acts in Exod 4-19 functions to explain the creation of the nation of Israel in history. See Eugene E. Carpenter, *Exodus* (vol. 1, EEC; Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2016), 1:339-43. The Passover event is both temporally connected to God's redemption of Israel and the external means by which believing Israelites appropriated that redemption. Robert Walter draws attention to the promises the Lord makes to his people in Exod 6:6-7 to bring them out, deliver, and redeem—all of which they received by faith obedience to God's instructions. Walter, "Passover in the Torah," in Darrell L. Bock and Mitch Glaser, *Messiah in the Passover* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2017), 35-37.
- God instructed "the whole congregation of Israel" (12:3, 6) to slaughter one lamb per "household" (vv. 3-4), whose blood would be placed on the doorposts and lintels of the house and whose roasted flesh would serve as the substance of the meal (vv. 7-10). Yet, the slaughtering of the lamb did not entail mutilation, given God's command not to break any of its bones (v. 46). This point becomes significant as the canon unfolds, and the theme of Christ as the Passover lamb emerges. John claims that the puncturing of Christ's side on the cross and avoidance of his legs being broken fulfills Exod 12:46 (cf. John 1:29). Victor P. Hamilton, *Exodus: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 198.
- Bruckner's claim that "representation, if not substitution, is clearly implied" falls short of the evidence. James K. Bruckner, *Exodus* (NIBC 2; Peabody: Hendrickson, 2008), 113. Bruckner is correct however that the Passover lamb "was not directly connected with sin, although it was 'apotropaic' in the sense of averting God's stroke" (114). The life of the lamb was laid down for that of the firstborn inside each house.
- Pennington, "Lord's Supper in the Gospels," 53-54. Given this context, Walter's reframing of God's action toward those covered by the blood as protecting rather than passing over misses the point that God himself acts as judge of those not covered by the blood that he graciously gave as a means of escape. Note that the Lord says "I will strike all the firstborn in the land" (12:12); "I will execute judgments," "no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt" (v. 13); and "The Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians" (v. 23). The Lord executed these judgments through an emissary called "the destroyer" (v. 23). Nevertheless, retranslating *pesach* to *protect* rather than *pass over* is inappropriate due to the context. Walter, "Passover in the Torah," 37. For this interpretation, Walter cites Levine, *Leviticus*, 156. For the argument that the Lord stands by to protect his people who are covered by the blood even while he directs the destroyer on those not covered, see Hamilton, *Exodus*, 185-86. Even while Israel celebrated the feast in households, the whole nation celebrated at the same time—in the evening. Garrett explains the relationship of household celebrations in light of God's progressive revelation in Deut 16:3, where Israel is told to celebrate Passover in "the place where YHWH choose to have his name dwell," by stating that the whole land would constitute such a place after Israel entered the Promised Land. Furthermore, while the household celebrations would continue, a national celebration also began after the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem (see 2 Chr 30:1-18). Duane A. Garrett, *A Commentary on Exodus* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2014), 361-62.
- For this theme, see Vickers, "Past and Future."

- ²⁷ For the language of being cut off from the community, see Lev 20:1–6; Exod 30:33, 38; and 32:34–35 (cf. Gen 17:14). Carpenter, *Exodus*, 1:455. After a survey of reasons Israelites could be cut off from the community, Hamilton summarizes a range of meanings for the significance of being cut off (depending on more specific circumstances) as “(1) an earlier-than-expected death; (2) childlessness; (3) the elimination of the sinner’s family and descendants; (4) failure to join and enjoy the hereafter with one’s family already in the land of eternal bliss.” Hamilton, *Exodus*, 188. He nearly dismisses the idea that being cut off amounts to being “excommunicated from” (cf. Lev 20:17).
- ²⁸ The death of the firstborn “is tied to the ancient Near Eastern idea that the defeat of a nation is, in effect, a military victory.” Thus, “Any ancient people would have seen this as a defeat of the gods of Egypt.” Garrett, *Exodus*, 363.
- ²⁹ By participating in the Passover and the exodus that followed, Israel experienced God’s saving reign over all the nations and displayed their obedience to the LORD as their King (cf. Isa 43:15). Those texts which portray God as a warrior for his people (Exod 14:4, 13–14, 17–18; 15:3) and sovereign ruler of all things (Exod 15:1–18; Deut 32:1–43) coalesce around the theme of the kingdom of God. Hafemann also cites Isaiah 43:15 in this regard, which is a clear allusion to the Passover-exodus event. There, God describes himself as the “Creator of Israel, your King.” Surely, God’s creation of Israel in this context refers to their deliverance from slavery in Egypt and God’s kingship to his saving rule that brought their redemption. Scott Hafemann, “The Kingdom of God as the Mission of God,” in *For the Fame of God’s Name*, ed., Justin Taylor and Sam Storms (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010), 242.
- ³⁰ Kline, “Old Testament Origins of the Gospel Genre,” 12.
- ³¹ Garrett is surely correct that the Lord’s instructions to Moses regarding the assemblies and full week of eating unleavened bread were intended for the ongoing celebration of the Passover due to the rush of the first event. Garrett, *Exodus*, 361.
- ³² Participating in the Passover meal was “one of the ways in which the covenant between God and Israel was maintained in being.” Marshall, *Last Supper & Lord’s Supper*, 77.
- ³³ Garrett, *Exodus*, 542.
- ³⁴ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 304–5. See also Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus* (vol. 2; NAC; Nashville: B&H, 2006), 551; Walter Kaiser, Jr., *Exodus* (vol. 2, EBC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 448–449. Brucker helpfully discusses the responsive actions of Moses and the people to the revelation of God’s law. Brucker, *Exodus*, 225.
- ³⁵ Gentry argues that the shedding of blood in Exodus 24:5 was not for the purpose of cleansing Israel from sin, as cleansing is absent from the context. Rather, “The symbolism is that the one blood joins two parties,” making the sacrifices more akin to the fellowship offerings of consecration, prescribed for the making of vows, than to burnt offerings to atone for sin (cf. Lev 7:12–18). Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 304. Gentry further maintains that although God was making Israel a “kingdom of priests” to the surrounding nations by establishing his covenant with them, as in ordination imagery (Exod 19:4–6; cf. Lev 8), and although Israel was a sinful people in need of cleansing, the absence of cleansing/purification language means that the sprinkled blood on the altar and people testifies to the union/communion established between God (represented by the altar) and the people. Gentry critiques each of these alternate, albeit complimentary, proposals for understanding the sacrifices in Exod 24:56. He dismisses the notion of ordination on grounds that Lev 8 “entails three sacrifices,” including (1) a sin offering, (2) a burnt offering, and (3) a ram of ordination while Exod 24:5–6 includes only burnt offerings and peace/fellowship offerings (305–6). Garrett concludes, the sacrifices function here to “solemnize a suzerain-vassal relationship and fix the duties of each party,” reminding Israel of the threat of death for failure to keep the covenant. Garrett warns further, “Christians naturally want to see a connection between the blood of Christ and the blood of Old Testament sacrifices. But one must be careful here. The blood of Christ is redemptive (analogous to the Passover lamb) and expiatory (analogous to the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement). The sacrifice enacted here is neither.” Unlike the Abrahamic covenant in which the smoking firepot (representing YHWH) was the only party to pass between the slain animals, the Mosaic covenant was “fully bilateral, with both WHWH and Israel assuming toward one another a covenant commitment with specific duties.” Whereas God unilaterally guaranteed his promises to Abraham and would assume the consequences for failure to uphold his word, the Mosaic covenant “places Israel under covenant obligations—with dire consequences should they fail to keep them.” Garrett, *Exodus*, 543, 545. For a similar take on the purpose of the sacrifices, see Allen P. Ross, *Recalling the Hope of Glory: Biblical Worship from the Garden to the New Creation* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006), 178–180. For the view that the sacrifices were in part to atone for Israel’s sin, see Stuart, *Exodus*, 2:554. Thomas R. Schreiner,

The King in His Beauty (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 39. One could argue that the author of Hebrews only explicitly describes the articles used in the tabernacle as being sprinkled with blood for purification (9:21). However, I am swayed by the connecting phrase “In the same way” (ὁμοίως) in 9:21 that the author intends the purification rite of blood sprinkling he describes for the tabernacle to be an accurate description of the people being sprinkled with blood at Sinai in 9:19–20. On this reading, “For without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins” (9:22) summarizes the purpose of blood being shed at the inauguration of the Mosaic covenant and the dedication of the tabernacle. Peter Enns cites several passages which associate burnt offerings with the tabernacle in defense of the same conclusion (29:18, 25, 42; 30:9; 40:29). Peter Enns, *Exodus* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 490. Kimbell reads the passage similarly. He writes, “Interestingly, covenant institution and atonement are precisely the elements the author of Hebrews holds together in his comments on Exod 24 (Heb 9:15–22). The author makes clear that when the people are sprinkled with blood in Exod 24 they are undergoing a cultic cleansing (*katharizo*) [καθαρίζω] with blood that is directly connected with forgiveness (*aphesis*) [ἀφεσις] (v. 22).” Kimbell, “The Atonement in Lukan Theology,” 42n56. According to Ross, the “burnt offering” (ῥῆγ) was an “atoning sacrifice” (see Lev 1; 6:8–13), which signified that the worshiper had surrendered his or her life to God and that God had completely accepted the worshiper. In other words, any barrier that had existed was removed—there was full atonement.” Ross understands atonement as God’s provision for “the maintenance of a right relationship between the worshiper and God.” Ross, *Hope of Glory*, 200–1. Kaiser points to the similarities with rites of purification in Lev 14:6–7 and Heb 9:19–20 and explains “The division of blood points to the twofold aspect of the blood of the covenant: The blood on the altar symbolizes God’s forgiveness and acceptance of the offering; the blood on the people points to a blood oath that binds them in obedience. In other words, the keeping of the words and laws was made possible by the sacrificial blood of the altar.” Kaiser, Jr., *Exodus*, 449. Kimbell makes a similar appeal to Heb 9:15–22 and to Targumic texts (see note 54). He outlines several parallels with the consecration of priests (Exod 29:33; Lev 8:34) in which blood was sprinkled on the altar and the people, followed by a meal. Kimbell, “The Atonement in Lukan Theology,” 41.

³⁶ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 312.

³⁷ Ibid., 304.

³⁸ Sinai is called the “mountain of God” in Exod 3:1; 18:5; and 24:13. See G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (NSBT; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 105.

³⁹ Michael Horton colorfully describes the procession of God’s people from Sinai to Zion as a royal parade. As is common in prophetic literature (both of foretelling and event-prophecy of typological patterns), a prophecy may be partially fulfilled multiple times in escalating degrees before reaching its culminating fulfillment. In this light, Heb 12:18–24 portrays the new covenant church already participating in the eschatological worship of Mt. Zion made possible by the resurrection of Christ, who faithfully trusted and obeyed the Father’s law perfectly and thus completed the procession from Sinai to Zion as the forerunner and firstfruits of all who would believe in him. Michael S. Horton, *People and Place: A Covenant Ecclesiology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 289–296.

⁴⁰ Schreiner, *The King*, 39–40; Kline, “Old Testament Origins of the Gospel Genre,” 6. Although I demur from Nicholson at several points, he ably describes the climactic nature of Israel’s representatives seeing God on top of Mt. Sinai, noting the contrast to God’s command not even to touch the mountain in Exod 19:12. Ernest W. Nicholson, “The Covenant Ritual in Exodus 24:3–8,” *Vetus Testamentum* 32:1 (1982): 84.

⁴¹ Exod 24:16–17; 33:10–11, 18–23; 34:34–38; cf. 1 Kgs 8:10–11.

⁴² In Isa 24:6–9, the mountain of the Lord is the location at which the LORD himself will act as host, will serve a “feast of rich food” full of marrow and alongside well-aged wine, will “swallow up death forever,” and will “wipe away tears from all faces.” That this passage refers to the consummation of the new covenant is evident by the fact that the only redemptive-historical moment in which God accomplishes all these things is described in Rev 19–22 (cf. Isa 65:13, 17–25; Matt 5:8).

⁴³ In Exodus 24:10, Beale argues the heavenly temple has “temporarily descended to the top of Mt. Sinai.” Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission*, 44. For a similar connection, see Garrett, *Exodus*, 544–545.

⁴⁴ This theme is evident in the title of Marshall’s classic work: *Last Supper & Lord’s Supper*.

⁴⁵ Paul’s use of leavened bread to signify sin (1 Cor 5:7) furthers the idea that “the church [is] the typological fulfillment of the storyline of Israel.” James Hamilton, “The Lord’s Supper in Paul,” in Schreiner and Crawford, *The Lord’s Supper*, 90.

⁴⁶ Hamilton, “The Lord’s Supper in Paul,” 91.

- 47 Unlike Israel, the church represents “those on whom the end of the ages has come” (1 Cor 10:11). On Christ as new covenant mediator, see 1 Tim 2:5 and Davidic king, see Col 1:12–23. On the exercise of discipline as a sign of Christ’s kingly authority in and through the church, note Paul’s promise of Christ’s presence with the assembly when they gather in Christ’s name (i.e., authority), enabling them to hand an unrepentant church member over the kingdom of Satan (1 Cor 5:4) and to judge those inside the church (5:11–12). Paul continues the theme of the church’s present participation in the redemptive rule of Christ’s kingdom in 1 Cor 6:2ff. If the saints will judge the world and even angels (v. 3), they should be competent to “judge trivial cases” (v. 2). Paul concludes his defense of the Corinthians’ ability to settle internal disputes by describing how God had brought them from many different sinful backgrounds into salvation, the implication being that their salvation entails their entrance and participation in the inaugurated kingdom of God (6:9–11).
- 48 Whereas Jesus instructs the disciples to continue celebrating the Supper in connection with the bread (Luke 22:19), Paul, although closest to Luke’s account, includes the command to repeat the Supper in connection with the cup. On Paul’s similarity to Luke, see Hamilton, “The Lord’s Supper in Paul,” 85.
- 49 Marshall describes Paul’s anticipatory statement as an “echo” of Jesus promise that the Last Supper would be fulfilled in the consummated kingdom, because when the Lord comes, so does the heavenly feast. *Last Supper & Lord’s Supper*, 113.
- 50 So, Horton writes, “The Lord’s Supper occurs between the old age and the new age, locating the church in this precarious intersection of two ages.” I generally follow the tenor of Horton’s analysis, while demurring from his sacramental theology at some points. The kingdom emphases are mine. Horton, *People and Place*, 121–122. Schreiner also sees the Lord’s Supper as a meal of the inaugurated new covenant and inaugurated kingdom of God, which will both be consummated when the kingdom is consummated. Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 734. In this way, Schreiner echoes the theme that the kingdom comes through covenant.
- 51 On baptism as a new covenant sign, see Stephen Wellum, “The Means of Grace: Baptism,” in *The Compromised Church: The Present Evangelical Crisis*, ed., John H. Armstrong (Wheaton: Crossway, 1998), 149–70.
- 52 Hamilton, “The Lord’s Supper in Paul,” 80.
- 53 By presenting God’s sustaining of his people in the wilderness through water as typologically fulfilled in Christ, Paul presents the church’s experience of Christ as analogous to Israel’s. Stephen R. Turley, *The Ritualized Revelation of the Messianic Age: Washings and Meals in Galatians and 1 Corinthians* (Library of New Testament Studies 544; New York: T&T Clark, 2015), 153. Yet, the Corinthians participate in Christ in a heightened, eschatological manner, given the dawning of the new covenant. Parker, “The Israel-Christ-Church Typological Pattern,” 346. As Christ was disclosed to Israel in the water from the rock, so “Christ is disclosed through the cup of the new covenant in the midst of the Corinthian church (10:16).” So, Hamilton concludes, “It seems that the undercurrent of Paul’s statements to the Corinthians—the narrative framework that results in him saying what he says—is that the Corinthians have experienced the new exodus ... They have entered into a new covenant.” Hamilton, “The Lord’s Supper in Paul,” 901.
- 54 Interestingly, Paul typologically connects Israel’s experience to that of the church differently (though not in contradiction) in 1 Cor 5 than in 1 Cor 10. In 1 Cor 5:7–10, Paul seems to describe the Lord’s Supper as an anti-type of Passover feast. The Passover lamb being celebrated is Christ (v. 7). The Supper is a “festival” the church must still celebrate (v. 7). The unleavened bread pictures the call to holy living by new covenant members that is in accord with the atoning blood of Christ (v. 8). In 1 Cor 10:3–4, the Lord’s Supper is an anti-type of God’s miraculous feeding of Israel with manna and water in the wilderness (cf. 10:6; *typos*). In the case of 1 Cor 10, Paul more specifically defines the relationships between type and anti-type, describing the spiritual drink as Christ. Paul’s purpose in elucidating the typological connection in ch. 10 is to warn the church that their physical participation in the signs of the new covenant does not guarantee their salvation. If the church participates with Christ and demons simultaneously, God promises judgment like that which Israel received. Some of the foregoing is indebted to Hamilton, “The Lord’s Supper in Paul,” 74–75.
- 55 Paul’s rebuke and instructions for the church at Corinth came precisely because they ignored the new-covenant unity they objectively shared with one another by virtue of their common union with Christ. This truth explains Paul’s repeated emphasis on the whole new covenant community celebrating the Supper “when you come together” (1 Cor 11:17, 18, 20, 33, 34) in a unitive fashion (v. 29, 33) rather than some rushing ahead and discriminating against others (vv. 17–22).
- 56 While the precise nature of God’s presence at the Lord’s Supper is beyond the scope of this paper, Allison

- contends that the church experiences Christ’s ontological and covenantal presence in a special way at the Lord’s table based on the covenantal overtones of the word *koinonia* and image of the body of Christ. Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 395–398.
- 57 The human responsibility aspect of participation in the new covenant ordinance is also present in Paul’s warning “not even to eat” with those who claim to be covered by the blood of Christ and yet live in unrepentant sin (1 Cor 5:8–10). As Hamilton observes, “The benefits of the Passover were not applied to anyone who disregarded the command and ate leaven.” Thus, the Lord’s Supper, as a new covenant sign, is intended to mark off those who are truly participants in its blessings from those who are not. Hamilton, “The Lord’s Supper in Paul,” 90.
- 58 Horton, *People and Place*, 104, 116, 120. While agreeing with the notion that covenant signs function to seal those who are truly believers as a means of God’s communication to them that they are his, Horton reads his covenantal theology into the description of covenant signs when he describes their function as “sealing our participation in the visible covenant of grace.” Although Horton recognizes that infants who receive baptism must themselves receive the reality to which baptism points by personal faith to receive the full benefits of the new covenant, he maintains that they already participate in the benefits of the covenant of grace. Paul’s use of Israel’s typological baptism and the Lord’s Supper functions as a warning (see note 54) because the old covenant did not guarantee circumcision of the heart to which physical circumcision pointed (Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 31:31–34; cf. Ezek 36:26–27). The notion that God might ratify his new covenant toward some who do not embrace the covenant does not adequately account for the participation in the coming age that accompanies entrance into new covenant relationship with Christ (2 Cor 5:17; 1 Cor 6:18–20; 12:13). Therefore, while affirming a close relationship between the new covenant sign and the thing signified, I contend that infant baptism abuses this normal pattern. The practice of infant baptism introduces the regular, structural guarantee of embracing the sign without the thing signified. With believer’s baptism, the possibility of embracing the sign without the thing signified is present only as the sad result of imperfect people acting in self-deception or being deceived knowingly or unknowingly.
- 59 Horton does not use this precise terminology, but for a similar theme, see Horton, *People and Place*, 107.
- 60 Although John refers to the reign of God before the marriage of the Lamb, we will consider the marriage first (Rev 19:6–7), because of the biblical-theological emphasis on the kingdom arriving through covenant.
- 61 With the destruction of the wicked complete (19:1–4) the saints begin to worship God because his reign boasts no rivals (v. 6). Throughout the book of Revelation, John portrays the church as a new, eschatological Israel (Rev 7:1–9; cf. 14:1–5) that experiences a new exodus made possible by the blood of the Lamb (Rev 15:1–4). Schreiner, *The King*, 629. Several OT texts unite the promise of an effectual covenant with marriage and eating imagery. In Hosea 2:14–23, Although Israel was unfaithful to God’s marriage-like covenant with Israel when he redeemed them from Egypt, God promised to “betroth her to himself in righteousness,” so that she would know the Lord and call him “my husband” in a land brimming with bread, wine, and oil. See also Ezek 16:59ff.
- 62 Beale demonstrates the linkage between 19:6 and 11:15 by appeal to 11:17. G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation* (NIGNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 931.
- 63 Beale, *The Book of Revelation*, 938–939.
- 64 Paul describes Christ’s relationship to the church in a similar fashion denoting Christ’s present sanctification of his bride as a means to her perfection as his return for their wedding (Eph 5:26–27; cf. 2 Cor 11:12). No consensus has been reached on the timing of this kingdom feast. Paige Patterson distances himself from some interpreters who claim that the marriage supper is only a metaphor. However, as a dispensationalist he makes no formal decision between the millennial reign and the new heavens/new hearth. Paige Patterson, *Revelation* (vol. 39; NAC; Nashville, B&H, 2012), 344. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to determine the timing of the feast, the further mentions of the arrival of the Bride in Rev 21 are noteworthy.
- 65 Schreiner, *New Testament Theology*, 51.
- 66 G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*, rev. ed. (NCBC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 275.
- 67 With the new exodus complete by means of exodus-like plagues on the earth, the declaration of God’s rule comprises part of the Song of Moses and Song of the Lamb (15:3–4). Cf. Exod 15:18, “The Lord will reign forever and ever.” Beale, *Revelation*, 933. At the Parousia of Christ comes God’s final saving deliverance (Passover-exodus) of his people into the peace of his righteous rule (Luke 22:16).
- 68 Hamilton, “The Lord’s Supper in Paul,” 88–91. In Bock’s treatment of the Last Supper, he argues “Any application of [Jesus’ statement that the Passover would be fulfilled in the kingdom of God in v. 16] to

the Lord's Supper is inappropriate, since the Lord's Supper is not a Passover meal." *Luke*, 2:1720. So far as his statement is accurate, he later adds "To argue that the reference is to the Lord's Supper and the near kingdom ignores the direct allusion to Passover." Bock seems to hold that some reinstatement of sacrifices is necessary for the consummated meal to maintain its status as a Passover meal (1721). But this argument is unnecessary given that typological fulfillment contains, by definition, elements of similarity to maintain the type, while also escalating, surpassing, and rendering the inaugurated anti-types complete.

⁶⁹ Nolland, *Luke*, 35C:1048; Marshall, *Last Supper & Lord's Supper*, 90.

⁷⁰ Furthermore, the parallels between the Sinai meal and heavenly meal that the Lord's Supper anticipates are multiple: (1) Both occur on a "mountain of God;" (2) Both are regarded as weddings; (3) Both occur in context with the destruction of death and end of pain; (4) Both involve God's people seeing God; (5) Both involve eating and drinking with God; (6) Both represent covenantal fellowship/communion between God and his people; (7) Both are covenant ratification meals for their respective covenants; and (8) Both celebrate the saving kingly rule (kingdom redemption) of God for his people.

⁷¹ As Marshall explains, "The Lord's Supper is linked to the Passover in that the Passover is a type of the heavenly banquet while the Lord's Supper is the anticipation of the heavenly banquet," meaning "The middle term of comparison between the Passover and the Lord's Supper is the heavenly banquet." Marshall, *Last Supper & Lord's Supper*, 80.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Rather than justifying his claim with reference to Luke 22 as this paper does, Beale shows the correspondence between the Passover meal and Christ as the antitypical Passover lamb from 1 Cor 5:6–8. Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology*, 818. This connection is one reason I argue that the Lord's Supper should be celebrated in the context of the local church, since it is only those in the Corinthian church who have the authority to exercise the power of the keys against their sinning "brother" by "not even eat[ing]" with such a one. The linkage of Christ being the Passover lamb and the language of eating (presumably the Lord's Supper) in the same context suggests that the Lord's Supper is viewed as a new covenant meal and that those who may participate in the meal exercise a greater function of accountability toward one another than is commanded or possible via Christians in other local churches. Thus, those who should participate together in the new covenant meal of the Lord's Supper should generally have the ability and knowledge to exercise formative and corrective discipline toward the others.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 928.

⁷⁵ Marshall, *Last Supper & Lord's Supper*, 80.