

ANNIVERSARY OF OUR LORD'S DEATH

For the sake of new readers we mention that it is our custom to commemorate our Lord's death once a year, upon the recurrence of its anniversary.

To all who truly realize that the "wages of sin is death" – and that the *ransom* given for all, by our dear Redeemer, was his life, – his death, his cross, must always be the central point of interest from which all our hopes of future life and blessing emanate. All such will esteem it a privilege to commemorate the dying love, the redeeming love, the enduring love, the powerful love manifested at Calvary. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his *friends*. But the love of God is specially commendable, as beyond all other loves in that it was while we were yet *sinner*s and enemies, that Christ died for us, the just for the unjust, that he might lead us to God; that he might have the right and opportunity of effecting human restitution to the state of perfection and harmony with God, forfeited by Adam's transgression.

As foreseeing this desire in his loyal followers, and as indicating his approval of it, and the propriety of it, our Lord instituted that very simple, yet very impressive remembrancer known as "The Last Supper." It was instituted the day before the beginning of the Passover Festival, – in the same night in which he was betrayed, and in the same day in which he was crucified; – the 14th day of the month Nisan.

The Hebrews reckoned their day differently from what we do. With them it *began* at sunset or at 6 o'clock P.M. Thus it was that our Lord and the apostles could eat the Last Supper probably about 8 o'clock, then go to the Garden of Gethsemane, to Pilate and Herod and be crucified the *same day* in the afternoon. Probably it was in view of the fact that both the symbolic supper in commemoration of

our Lord's death, and the death itself, might be upon one and the same day, that the Hebrews had the custom mentioned, of reckoning the 24 hour day as beginning with the night. Again, the night represents the dark period of sin, and sleep in death, to be followed by the glorious and everlasting day, of resurrection and heavenly light and blessing, which begins with the rising of the Millennial Sun of Righteousness with healing in his beams.

The fact that the Lord instituted his memorial supper of bread and wine as *taking the place* of the Paschal Supper of the literal lamb, coupled with the fact that the Passover lamb and the deliverance from Egypt which followed the eating of it, were typical of the Lamb of God and the deliverance of all who partake of his merits, leads us to recognize the propriety of commemorating on *its anniversary*, the death of its antitype, "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world," as the only intended and proper and significant time. We believe too, that this was what our Lord intended to be understood by his words, "As oft as ye do *this*, do it in remembrance of me;" *i.e.*, as often as ye celebrate *this Passover Supper*, henceforth, you who believe in me as the antitype, the Lamb of God, should think of me and the real passing over due at the resurrection, and not any longer do *this* in commemoration of the typical lamb and the typical deliverance from Egypt.

Christians in every age have recognized the propriety of celebrating in some manner this great event of Calvary, and the purchase of the life of the world there effected; and many commemorate "Good Friday" and "Easter Sunday" in remembrance of the crucifixion and resurrection. But as for celebrating the Lord's death in the Supper, upon its anniversary, the very commemoration which he approved, that has been lost sight of for now nearly sixteen hundred years. It was dropped from policy, for two reasons: First, because of the animosity engendered between professed Christians and Jews: to cut the cord which would link the new religion with the old, for fear of the influence of other Jewish rites and customs over

Christians; and secondly, because when Papacy had general control the "Sacrifice of the Mass" (which claims to be a *fresh sacrifice* of Christ repeatedly) was substituted for the one and true death, which alone and once for all time, taketh away the sins of the world.

Protestants coming out of papal darkness generally saw enough to lead them to reject the Mass – "the abomination" – and to re-establish the Lord's Supper in much of its early simplicity. They are in doubt, however, as to how often it is *proper* to celebrate it; some doing so every Sunday, some monthly, some quarterly, etc.

Scripture evidence upon the subject, however, removes all doubts and conjectures, and presents the ordinance in its primitive simplicity, and full of typical significance. As this subject was treated at some length in our issue of March 1888, we refer new readers to the article, "This Do in Remembrance of Me," in that number. We have a few copies on hand which we will be pleased to supply gratis, to such as are desirous of studying the subject from this standpoint.

It is our custom to celebrate this event on its anniversary as reckoned by the Jews – the reckoning followed by the apostles and the early church in general – lunar, not solar time. Following the lunar time exactly, as the early church did, the celebration may fall upon any one of the **[R1100 : page 2]** days of the week.* This year it will be upon Sunday evening April 14th (after six o'clock). At six o'clock of that evening, the 14th day of the Hebrew month Nisan begins, and lasts until Monday evening at six o'clock, where the 15th of Nisan commences the first day of the seven days festival of the Jews, called the Feast of Passover. We, however, do not celebrate their *feast*, neither do we use the literal lamb. Ours is the antitypical, the true Lamb of God, of whom the bread and wine are but emblems. And by and by we shall celebrate the antitype of their seven days feast of rejoicing, when all of God's people (all who have and will come into harmony with him, typified by Israel), shall have passed the Red sea of sin and its consequence, death, and stand on its further

shore; and when Satan and all his *willing* followers with their slings and spears and chariots of evil devise, who now seek to hold in bondage, the first-born (the church) and all who desire to follow them and to serve the Lord, shall be finally and everlastingly overwhelmed in death – the lasting or second death. These and their final destruction were typified by Pharaoh and his horsemen, overwhelmed in the Red sea. From that calamity all who were under the blood of the Lamb were saved, – not only the first-born saved (spared) in that night (the present Gospel age), but also all the hosts of the Lord who followed their lead the next (the Millennial) morning.

*Those who commemorate Good Friday, Easter Sunday, etc., also reckon by lunar time, but not exactly, for they take for their anniversaries the Friday and Sunday nearest to the exact lunar date.

Wherever two or three or more believers in the efficacy of the precious blood of our Lamb can do so, let them not forget to assemble themselves and "*do this*" in remembrance of him who did so much for us. But while desirous of thus meeting as many members of the Lord's body as possible, do not urge any, nor feel that numbers, or the presence of any particular one of your company, is essential; indeed meet the Lord alone and celebrate his great sacrifice if you can find no others near you who would enjoy the privilege with you.

Think not that the handling and commemorating of this simple ordinance belongs to a special class, called the "clergy," as some teach and as many believe. The Lord recognizes no such *caste* among [R1101 : page 2] his true followers, but declares, "all ye are brethren, and *one* is your Master, even Christ." All ye are ministers (servants) of Christ; all ye are preachers (declarers) of the good tidings, showing it in your cheerful words and looks and deeds, as well as telling it with your tongues and pens and through the printed page; all ye are priests, not of human ordination, but by divine acceptance as members of the body of our great High Priest – "the

High Priest of our order" – "the Royal Priesthood" "after [like] the order of Melchizedek." – Matt. 23:8; Rev. 1:6; Heb. 3:1; 4:14; 7:21.

But while not *seeking* the company of any but the consecrated, be not close-unionists; attempt not to decide the rights of others at the Lord's table. If some of whom you disapprove draw near and desire to commemorate, remember that one at the table with the Lord was a deceiver and that very night betrayed him for money. If the Lord endured Judas, until the devil whom he served led him to "go out," so can you wait for the separation to come voluntarily, on the part of a similar class now.

It has been the custom of the church at Allegheny to invite all who can do so to meet with us here, to celebrate, and so far as possible to entertain those who come from a distance; and this invitation is warmly extended again, this year. Come, all who can; that we may celebrate our Redeemer's sacrifice, and in the three days following contemplate its fulness and sufficiency – as regards the consecrated church now, and as regards "all the families of the earth" shortly. Wait not for any further or private invitation. All who come will be welcomed, and this is your *special* invitation. But, let none come with bitterness of heart, or pride, or vain-glory; but with hearts overflowing with love to the Redeemer, and full of desire to know him, and to know his will and plan and our respective privileges therein more perfectly, let us meet.

Decide as soon as possible whether you can probably come. If you think you will come, please write us a letter or postal card on this one subject alone. Give your address very plainly and mention if others will be with you, what rail-road you will take, and when you expect to arrive here.

In reply to inquiries, whether there will be an opportunity during the meeting for water baptism (in symbolization of the real baptism or immersion into Christ – into his death) we would say, Yes! good opportunity. Both the "Baptists" and the "Disciples" have kindly

placed their baptistries, robes, etc., at our disposal, for several years past. So many as feel that they have already been *immersed into Christ*, and are desirous of following the example of the Lord and the apostles, in the *water symbol*, will have the opportunity afforded them in the *afternoon* of Sunday April 14th. All such are requested to study the subject carefully with their Bible, Concordance and the May 1888 WATCH TOWER. Twenty-three rejoicingly availed themselves of this privilege just before our last Anniversary Supper. But we *urge* no one to thus openly confess his consecration. Nor do we make it a test of fellowship: we believe, however, that sooner or later the fully consecrated will be led to see the beauty and propriety of the water-symbol, and that whenever seen it becomes a test of the depth of our consecration, the reality of our death with Christ to the world and its opinions.

The bread used by the Lord was unleavened bread, bread made without yeast rising, much like water crackers but in large thin sheets. If you can procure such bread from a Hebrew family, do so; or if more convenient use water crackers. Not that it is essential to have bread made without yeast, for "we are not under Law" but controlled by love and privilege in this, as in the matter of the time of observing the supper. But as we desire to observe at the proper time, when we *see* its special appropriateness, so in the matter of the bread, when we see it to be a symbol or representation of our Lord's body, and when we learn that *leaven* or yeast is used in the Scriptures as a symbol of corruption and sin, we naturally desire to use as pure a bread-symbol as we can conveniently obtain, to represent the pure One – holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from the race of sinners.

The wine used by our Lord, to represent his shed blood, we have no doubt was made (as "orthodox" Hebrews still make their Passover wine) without any yeast or leaven being added to the grape juice to *hasten* fermentation. But nevertheless it was fermented wine; the elements of fermentation inhering in the grape juice, led by slower

process to fermentation and clarification, and thus it became "wine." But while it is clear to us, that the wine used by our Lord at the Supper, was pure wine (but not simple grape juice, which would not keep without fermentation from fall to spring) and of the same sort mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, an excess of which would make drunk (Eph. 5:18; John 2:10; Luke 5:39), still, we feel convinced, as we view the havoc made by the adulterated wines and liquors of commerce, and the wrecking of health and homes which it has accomplished and is accomplishing, that our Lord would neither use those adulterated and injurious wines as a symbol of his precious life-giving blood, nor any other, even *pure* wine, calculated to awaken or revive an appetite for alcoholic liquors. We believe that he would regard in this matter the growing weakness of our dying race. And when we thus judge of our Lord's sentiments on the subject, and reflect that the celebration of his death in the use of emblems is not a command, but a privilege, we see that as it would not be wrong for us to use leavened bread, so it would not be a wrong, nor a neglect of the ordinance, for us to use something that will not tempt any, as a substitute for the wine; especially as this principle is strongly inculcated by the apostle, who says, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." – Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 8:13.

What can we use instead of wine? We can do as the Hebrews used to do during the Passover week in which all leaven was forbidden them under the law. If their supply of wine ran short and they could obtain no more into which they were *certain* that no leaven or yeast had been put to hasten fermentation, they made of raisins a substitute for wine, equally a "fruit of the vine." We can all easily do the same. Get the common raisins, which are strongest in sugar, and after stewing them in a little water strain off and use the juice. And will not this be as really a "*fruit of the vine*" as though it were real wine? Therefore while not claiming that our Lord and the

apostles used raisin-juice or grape-juice, but the real wine, we believe that because of our climate, and the push, drive and fast living of our day, and the present weakness of self-control among men, the Lord would approve our use of the raisin-juice fruit of the vine, rather than real wine, because of the changed circumstances.

