

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

– APRIL 28, MARK 14:12-26; – MATT. 26:17-30; LUKE 22:7-30; 1
COR. 11:23-25. –

Golden Text – "This do in remembrance of me."

VERSES 12-16. The first day of unleavened bread when they killed the Passover lamb, was the 14th of Nisan (See March 15 TOWER, page 71). The Feast of Passover began on the 15th and lasted for seven days; the day beginning at sunset – 6 P.M., of the preceding day. (Exod. 12:18-20.) The prohibition of the use of leaven during this time was a reminder (1) of the haste with which they fled from Egypt, not having time to wait for bread to rise (Exod. 12:34,39); and (2) of their sufferings in Egypt, on account of which it was called the bread of affliction. (Deut. 16:3.) But (3) its chief significance was the putting away of sin, leaven being incipient putrefaction and hence a symbol of impurity. (1 Cor. 5:6-8; Matt. 16:6.) Considering Israel in its typical character and their deliverance from Egyptian bondage as a type of the deliverance of the world from the bondage of sin and death, this feast is seen to be a type of the world's proper condition in the Millennial age. Having, through Christ, experienced the great deliverance from the present bondage of sin and death and the great time of trouble, it will be required of all that they put away from them the leaven of sin and, in grateful remembrance of their deliverance, keep the feast (rejoicing in and partaking of the good things of God), not with the leaven of selfishness, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. [R1800 : page 95]

The killing of the passover lamb, which prefigured the sacrifice of Christ, was always done on the 14th of Nisan (Exod. 12:6); so also the sacrifice of Christ was accomplished on this same day, thus fulfilling the prediction of the type. The sacrifice of the lamb prefigured the

sacrifice of Christ for the salvation of "the Church of the *first-born*," and the subsequent deliverance of the whole groaning creation of which the nation of Israel was a type.

During the passover week hospitality was recognized as a duty in Jerusalem: hence the readiness with which the Lord's request for a room was granted. Probably the man was a believer, as verse 14 would seem to indicate; or there may have been some previous arrangement with him, as verse 15 seems to show.

Verses 17-21. The strife to be greatest, mentioned only by Luke (22:24), probably began when they were taking their places at the table, each desiring to be nearest to the Lord and so manifesting somewhat of a selfish spirit. This was made the occasion of a very touching illustration of humility on the Lord's part, and the enforcement of the truth upon the minds of the disciples that without this very necessary qualification they could not enter the Kingdom of heaven. – John 13:5.

The attitude of the disciples upon the Lord's announcement that one of them should betray him showed at once the effect of this lesson on humility. They were not overconfident, but each seeming to fear his own stability, inquiringly turned to the Lord saying, not, Lord, is it this one or that one? but, Lord, is it I? They had the spirit of self-examination.

The hardness of Judas' heart and the depth of hypocrisy manifested in the coolness with which he heard the Lord's warning (verse 21) and in the deliberate plotting and wicked perseverance in evil are in marked contrast with the humble, loving spirit of the eleven. It is an illustration of the hopelessness of a soul willingly submitted to the power of Satan. Verse 21 leaves no ray of hope for his restoration. See also John 17:12. The goodness of God only hardened his heart and therefore there was no remedy.

Verses 22-24 point out the very obvious import of the emblems, bread and wine. The broken bread represented the sacrifice of Christ's

humanity for our redemption, the benefits of which sacrifice we must individually appropriate by faith, such appropriation being symbolized by the eating of it. The cup, the wine, which symbolized his shed blood, the blood of the New Covenant shed for many for the remission of sins, had the same significance as the broken bread, our partaking of it also meaning our appropriation of the benefits of his sacrifice, thus securing our justification. So the Lord declares, saying, "Except ye [thus by faith] eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye have no life in you." (John 6:53.) And to this significance the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 10:16,17) shows another; viz., our participation with him, as members of his body, in the sacrifice: – "The cup of blessing for which we bless God, is it not *a participation* of the blood of the Anointed one? The loaf which we break, is it not *a participation* of the body of the Anointed one? Because there is one loaf, we, the many, are one body; for we all partake of the one loaf." [R1801 : page 95]

After the Supper followed all those words of instruction, consolation, comfort and hope, and the touching prayer reported by John (13:33-38; Chapters 14-17). It was a season never to be forgotten by the disciples, one whose influence was very manifest in their subsequent course.

Verse 25 foretells the final triumph of Christ and the Church when the sufferings of the present time are all ended. Then their feasting together will have a new and blessed significance, being commemorative of the heroism of their faith and their fidelity to the divine purpose under the most crucial tests, and a rejoicing together in the victory that faith and fidelity.

Verse 26. "And when they had sung a hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives." Instead of dispersing they went out together. Observing the Lord's sadness and forebodings, the eleven sought to comfort and help him with their love and sympathy, while Judas went on his diabolical errand.