

"THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME"

– MATTHEW 26:17-30. – *NOVEMBER 4.* –

WHILE holding, in common with the great majority, that the Memorial Supper was instituted by our Lord on Thursday night in connection with his last celebration of the Passover, and that he was crucified on the next day, Friday, we have no contention with those who suppose that these events took place on other days of the week. We lay great stress on the fact there accomplished and its significance as the antitype of the Passover instituted by Moses, and as the finishing of our Lord's great sacrifice for sins – the sins of the whole world. For these vital principles we are willing to contend earnestly, as they are part of "the faith once delivered to the saints;" but as respects the particular days of the week we will not contend, as in our estimation they are trifling matters, of no value, no consequence, and should therefore in no sense of the word disturb the minds or heart-fellowship of the Lord's people.

Our lesson opens with our Lord's instructions to his disciples as to where they should prepare for him and themselves, as a special and peculiar Jewish family, a place in which to celebrate the requirements of the Law in the type which pointed to our Lord Jesus as the Lamb of God. Respecting this supper our Lord himself said, "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." He did not refer to the principal feast, which lasted a week from the 15th day of Nisan. He was referring to the roast-lamb supper, eaten with bitter herbs, which preceded the general feast, and which reminded them of their deliverance from Egypt, and became the basis of their subsequent rejoicing as a liberated people. The upper room was provided for this supper. Things were made ready, and at even, at sundown, after six o'clock, our Lord and the twelve

assembled. One of the accounts tells us that there was a dispute amongst the disciples respecting the more honorable positions at the supper, and that Jesus rebuked this ambitious spirit in them by washing their feet, thus illustrating his own humility of heart, his readiness to serve each and all of them. Thus he set them an example that he, whom they esteemed greatest amongst them, should be their principal servant, willing and ready to serve any and all.

"ONE OF YOU SHALL BETRAY ME"

While they were eating Jesus remarked that one of them would betray him, and at once a spirit of sadness spread over the company, and each one – feeling it incumbent upon him to prove his innocence of such a charge – asked, "Lord, is it I?" With the rest, Judas also put this question, realizing that if he did not also ask, it would imply his acknowledgment that he was the one, and in response to his inquiry Jesus replied, "Thou hast said," – that is to say, "Yes, I refer to you." Another account tells us that Jesus answered the query by saying that the one for whom he would dip a sup would be the betrayer, and having dipped the sup – a piece of the lamb and a piece of the unleavened bread they were eating – Jesus gave it to Judas, thus indicating him without directly naming him. It would appear, too, that the other disciples up to this time had not learned to know Judas – that it was subsequently they ascertained that he was a thief, etc.

Amongst the Jews and Arabs deceit and betrayal were not so very uncommon, but there was a code of honor recognized according to which no one would eat the food of the person he would in any wise injure. As food was seasoned with salt, it was probably this custom that was known as the "covenant of salt" – the covenant of faithfulness. To succeed in having an enemy eat at your table or take of your food seasoned with salt was at that time amongst those people the equivalent of a pledge of his

lasting friendship – that he would never do you injury. Apparently Judas was so lacking of a proper spirit that he did not even acknowledge and obey this custom of the time – to be loyal and faithful to the one whose bread he ate, of whose salt he partook. Hence our Lord's words, "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me."

Nevertheless Jesus testified that his death was not a victory on the part of his betrayer and his enemies, but in harmony with what had been written of him before by the prophets. Nor are we to consider that Judas in this matter was merely fulfilling a prophecy irrespective of his own responsibility, his own wilfulness in the matter: such a thought is negated by our Lord's statement, "Woe unto the man by whom the Son of man is betrayed. It would have been better for that man if he had not been born." These words leave no question, we think, that Judas had already enjoyed his full share in the great atonement work through the intimate opportunities he had of coming to a clear knowledge of the truth, and the corresponding responsibilities. Evidently his was the sin unto death – the Second Death. Hence, aside from any future existence we are to consider that his life was a useless, wasted one, and that its joys did not overbalance its sorrows and anguish when to the latter were added his subsequent despair and suicide.

"TAKE, EAT; THIS IS MY BODY"

It was after the Passover Supper, after the eating of the lamb with the herbs and unleavened bread, etc., that Jesus instituted the Memorial Supper which, with all of his followers, by his direction takes the place of the Passover Supper of the Jews. This was a new matter, and the apostles listened with interest to his words as he blessed some of the thin cakes of unleavened bread and then brake them and handed portions to each of his disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body." What could he mean?

During their [R3879 : page 334] three years in his company they had learned that he spake in parables and dark sayings. On another occasion he had declared in their hearing that he himself was the bread which came down from heaven, of which if a man partook he would live forever. Now he was handing them some unleavened bread and said it was his body. They evidently understood him to mean that this bread to them would represent or symbolize his body, for he told them on this occasion that *thenceforth* they should do this in remembrance of him – thenceforth they should remember him as the slain lamb and use unleavened bread to represent his flesh, and partake of this instead of eating as previously of a literal lamb.

He could not have meant, as Roman Catholics and some Protestants believe, that the bread was by his blessing turned into his actual flesh, for he still had his flesh – he was not killed for about fifteen hours later. Hence all the arguments to this effect are foolishness and sophistry. When he said, "This is my flesh," it was as much a figure of speech as when he said a little later, "I am the vine," "I am the door," "I am the Good Shepherd," "I am the way, the truth and the life," etc. The right, sane view of the Master's words is apparent: he was represented in all these different ways. In the case under consideration the bread would represent him, his flesh, to his apostles and to all his followers throughout the Gospel age.

As bread stands for and symbolizes all food (indeed wheat is said to contain every element of nutriment in its proper proportion), so the teaching of this symbol is that whoever would have the life which Christ has to give must accept it as the result of his sacrifice. He died that we might live. The rights and privileges which he surrendered voluntarily may be eaten, applied, appropriated by all who have faith in him and who accept him and his instructions – such are reckoned as having imputed to them the perfect human nature, with all its rights and

privileges lost by Adam, redeemed by Christ. None can have eternal life except by the eating of this bread from heaven. This applies not only to believers of this present time, but also to those of the future age. Their life-rights and privileges must all be recognized as coming to them through his sacrifice. In a word, the bread representing our Lord's body teaches our justification through the acceptance of his sacrifice.

"DRINK YE ALL OF IT"

Next our Lord took a cup containing the fruit of the vine. We are not told that it was wine; therefore it is an open question whether it was fermented or unfermented, and in view of all the circumstances of our time and the requirements of the Lord's Word, we may feel sure that unfermented grape juice or raisin juice will fulfil the terms of his injunction. Since it is never called wine, but merely the **[R3880 : page 334]** cup and the fruit of the vine, there is no room for disputation amongst the Lord's followers. Each may be free to follow his own conscience in the matter of what kind of a fruit of the vine he shall use: for our part we prefer the unfermented as being less liable to do injury or to awaken dormant passions for drink in the Lord's followers.

In connection with the cup the Lord said, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (the two oldest Greek MSS. of the New Testament, the Sinaitic and Vatican, omit the word "New"). True, the New Covenant must be sealed with the blood of the Christ before it can go into effect, and it is not to go into effect until the opening of the Millennial age. But there was another Covenant – the old Covenant, the foundation Covenant of all covenants – namely, the Abrahamic Covenant, which was sealed by our Lord's death. That it would be thus sealed was typically represented in the figurative death of Isaac at the hand of Abraham and his figurative resurrection from the dead. The Apostle assures us

that Isaac represented our Lord Jesus, and also declares, "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" – the Oath-bound Covenant. – Gal. 4:28.

Applying our Lord's words thus to the Abrahamic Covenant, which he was sealing or making sure, we see that it was by his death that he became the heir of that Covenant and all of its glorious provisions for the blessing of all the families of the earth. And from this standpoint we see a special meaning and force in Jesus' words to his followers, "This is my cup, drink ye all of it." Thus understood, the invitation to drink of the Lord's cup signifies an invitation to all of his elect Church of this Gospel age to partake with him of his cup of suffering and death – to lay down their lives with him that they also might have a share with him in the coming glories of the Kingdom, which will be the divine channel for the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promise, the blessing of all the families of the earth.

While the eating of the bread and participation in the justification effected by our Lord's death and by the acceptance of the same, will be necessary to the whole world if they would have the restitution blessings purchased by our Lord's sacrifice, nevertheless the cup is not for the world but only for the Church, only for the consecrated of this Gospel age. "Drink ye all of it" – not only all of you drink of it but all of you drink all of it – leave none. There will be none of the sufferings of Christ left over for the coming age, no more suffering for righteousness' sake will then be known to the world – only evil doers will suffer thereafter. Now is the time when whosoever will live godly shall suffer persecution, and when all of the Lord's followers who would be loyal to him and counted worthy to share in his Kingdom glories must expect to drink of his cup. Hence again the Lord unites the two thoughts, saying, "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life in you." Those who consecrate during the present time as the Lord's

disciples, to walk in his steps, must not only share in justification through faith, but must also share through sacrifice the cup if they would gain the life eternal promised to the elect who now forsake all to be his disciples.

NEW WINE IN THE KINGDOM

In declaring, "I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom," our Lord implies a new wine under different conditions at some distant date. He thus confirmed in their minds what he had been teaching them for some weeks previously, namely, that he would not at this time set up his Kingdom, but that instead he would suffer, be crucified, and that they must expect also to suffer with him; and **[R3880 : page 335]** that by and by, when the Kingdom should be established and himself be in glory, his disciples should be with him in his throne. These new thoughts in their minds were confirmed by the lesson now given.

The cup in the present time must speak to them of the crushing of the grapes, the blood of the grapes, their Master's blood, the life sacrificed, poured out, and their lives also sacrificed with him in his service, in his cause. But the sufferings of this present time were linked with the glory that should follow by the thought that all who would drink of the present cup of suffering, ignominy and death would also share in his cup of joy and blessing, glory and honor in the Kingdom. This same thought should be before our minds, and like the apostles of old it will help us more and more to look forward to the Kingdom as the time when suffering for the name of Christ shall cease, and when the glories shall follow and result in the blessing of all the families of the earth. Our Lord here identifies his Kingdom with his second advent, and in no sense of the word intimates that they would drink of this new wine at Pentecost, nor at the destruction

of Jerusalem, nor at any other time but in that mentioned in the prayer which he taught them, saying, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

This should be the thought before our minds also: in waiting for the Kingdom we are waiting for the second coming of our Lord and his subsequent setting up of the Kingdom; that is, the resurrection change, the glorification of his faithful ones who must be with him and share his glory. No wonder the Apostle declared that he who hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure. (1 John 3:3.) He that hath this hope of the new wine in the Kingdom, the participation with his Master in those glories and honors and blessed opportunities for uplifting the world of mankind, will take lightly, yea, joyfully, suffering, trials, sacrifices of this present time – yea, he will be glad to suffer with the Master that they also may be glorified together.

"FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS"

So far as we are concerned, it is in vain that men teach that God forgives sins without exacting a penalty therefor from anybody. It is in vain that they claim that Christ was not the ransom price for the sinner, that it was not necessary that he should die, the Just for the unjust, in order that he might bring us back to harmony with God – in order that God might be just and yet justify the sinner. It is in vain, too, that they claim that it was sufficient that Jesus was a great teacher, by whose *words* the world should be saved. Our reply is in harmony with the Master's statement here and elsewhere and the testimony of all the apostles, that it was necessary that Christ should die for our sins; that our sins could never have been forgiven by divine justice except through the divine arrangement by which he paid our penalty. To us it is a most precious thought, therefore, that our Lord's blood was indeed shed for the remission of sins of the many. And it is also a precious thought to us that we are

privileged to be so intimately associated with him as members of his body; that our little sacrifices covered by his merit are in God's sight esteemed as part of the great sin sacrifice for the world; that as joint-sufferers with Christ we are permitted to drink of his cup and be immersed in his baptism into death.

It is equally vain for Evolutionists and Higher Critics to tell us that, so far from man falling from God's likeness into sin and death, he has been on the contrary evolving upward step by step, from beastly conditions to where he now is. We believe them not. We hold fast the divinely inspired testimony that there was a fall, and that this made necessary the redemptive work; that Christ was the honorable servant of God, privileged and authorized to make atonement for the sins of the whole world; that he began this atonement work in the sacrifice of himself; that he has been carrying it on during this Gospel age by the sacrificing of the members of his body, and that he will soon complete it, when he, with all of his members glorified, shall during the Millennial age distribute to the world the blessings of that redemptive work, causing all to come to a knowledge of the Truth, of the love of God; that its height and depth and length and breadth are immeasurable, yea, all accomplished through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

"IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME"

The Apostle Paul, referring to this Memorial Supper, quotes our Lord as saying, "This do in remembrance of me," and then adds, "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11:24-26.) The thought is that we are to thus celebrate this great transaction until the time come for the Kingdom celebration of it with the new wine, the joy, the glory, the honors, which we are to share with him who loved us and bought us. The Apostle evidently does not mean merely until the parousia, the presence of the Lord to gather his

servants and reward them, but rather until all shall have been gathered and the Kingdom class shall all thus have been set up and glorified.

The same Apostle in the same epistle (1 Cor. 10:16,17; 12:12) emphasizes the thought of the unity, the oneness of the Church, with each other and with the Lord. He declares, "The loaf which we break, is it not the communion [the fellowship] of the body of Christ?" Are we not all as parts of one loaf broken with the Lord? "For we being many are one loaf and one body: for we are all partakers of that one loaf"; and again he adds, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion [participation, fellowship] of the blood of Christ?" Assuredly this is the thought then, that from God's standpoint there is the one great Messiah, the elect Head and the elect members of his body. These, as one loaf, constitute from God's standpoint the bread of **[R3881 : page 335]** everlasting life for the world, and in order to fill this picture each and all must be broken, each and all must partake of the cup of Christ's suffering and death before entering into his glory. And not until all these sufferings have been completed will the Lord's time come for the new dispensation, the new day, the day of blessing instead of cursing, the day of restitution instead of dying, the day of uplifting instead of falling, so far as the world is concerned.
