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THE MEMORIAL PASSOVER SUPPER

AS heretofore announced, the date of the Memorial Supper Anniversary this year falls on Friday evening, April 22d, after six o'clock, according to Jewish reckoning. The Christian Church originally kept this Passover Memorial as we now do, but in order to make the dates more regular, and also in order to draw the minds of Christians away from the thought of following the Jewish precedents too closely, the method of reckoning the date was slightly altered. Thus the Jewish reckoning let the Passover fall where it might as respects the days of the week. But the change made the anniversary of our Lord's death to come always on a Friday, styled "Good Friday," and his resurrection date always, therefore, to fall on the Sunday thereafter, "the third day," styled subsequently Easter Sunday. The Jewish reckoning of time was by the moon as well as by the sun. Thus the majority of years with them had twelve months, but occasionally one would have thirteen months. The Jewish reckoning of the Passover date begins to count with the first New Moon after the Spring equinox, the Passover day thus coming on the full moon, fourteen days thereafter. Subsequently the Christian Church accepted the Friday near the first full moon after the Spring equinox, even though the moon was new before the Equinox. This explains the difference in dates this year, Good Friday, according to Catholic usage, falling on March 25, while the corresponding date, according to Jewish reckoning, will be April 23. We celebrate the [R4591 : page 115] Memorial on the evening preceding. Yet it is not the hour or day of our Lord's death, but the fact that is chiefly important. This year such a Memorial service will be in order on Friday evening, April 22, after six o'clock (Nisan 14th). The next afternoon, Saturday, April 23, at 3 p.m., will correspond to the hour of our Lord's

death; the Jewish Passover Feast beginning three hours later. So much explanation for the satisfaction of the minds of all.

WHAT WE MEMORIALIZE

We memorialize four great matters: –

(1) The death of our Lord Jesus as the Passover Lamb.

(2) Our relationship or participation with him in the sufferings of Christ, the death of Christ, as followers in his steps and sharers in his cup.

(3) We celebrate incidentally and prospectively the great deliverance which soon will follow this passing over of the present night-time. The deliverance will affect first of all those passed over, the Church – the "little flock" and the "great company," the antitypes of the Royal Priesthood and the Levitical host or tribe. The deliverance of these will come in the morning, the resurrection morning, the Millennial morning.

(4) We also incidentally commemorate the great "feast of fat things" which will follow the passing over of the Church, when the passed-over ones shall be associated with their Lord in his heavenly Kingdom as the great antitypical Prophet, Priest, Judge, Mediator and King over all the earth, to bless and uplift the human family through the merit of the same precious blood which he now permits the passed-over ones to participate in sacrificially, after the imputation of its merit to them has made them worthy.

These different points should be kept in memory separate and distinct from each other if we would have the greatest blessing from this Memorial.

Looking unto Jesus as the "Lamb of God," we behold his spotlessness – "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from

sinner." We behold how "he was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth." (Acts 8:32.) By speaking the word he could have resisted those who were intent upon his destruction. He assures us that no man took from him his life; that he laid it down himself – voluntarily. He laid it down not in obedience to the Father's Law, for Justice could not demand sacrifice; but laid it down in accordance with the Father's will, saying, "I delight to do *thy will, O my God*; thy law is written in my heart." From this standpoint the Christian believer can rejoice greatly that the Redeemer spared not himself, but freely delivered himself up with the foreknowledge that in the Divine purpose the value of his sacrifice would ultimately redound, first for the benefit of his followers, and subsequently for the blessing of all the people. Hence in partaking of the broken, unleavened bread we memorialize the purity, the sinlessness, of him who gave himself to be, in God's due time, the Ransom-Price for all of mankind. From this standpoint we realize that his shed blood signified that his death was necessary in order that our condemned humanity might be restored to life without infracting the Divine Law. Our hearts should pause here to appreciate, not only the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also the love of the Father, who designed the programme; and the Justice of God thus exemplified; and the Wisdom of God in making **[R4591 : page 116]** the arrangement; and the faith also to grasp the Power of God, as it will ultimately be manifested in the full carrying out of all the glorious purposes and promises which we Memorialize.

The second point is scarcely less important to us than the first. The first blessing from the Redeemer's sacrifice has been offered during this Gospel Age to such as have the "hearing ear" and the appreciative heart. This blessing is most astounding. It purposes a still further blessing to such of mankind as turn from sin and accept the grace of God in Christ by faith, and present their bodies living sacrifices, with full consecration, vowing to

walk in the footsteps of Jesus. To all such, during this Gospel Age and until the completion of the elect number, the Redeemer will *impute* the merit of his sacrifice, in order to make their *sacrifices* acceptable in God's sight – to the intent that they may suffer with him in the flesh, and share with him in the begetting of the Spirit now and in birth to the Spirit plane in the resurrection. Thus as his glorified "members" they may be associated with him in his Millennial Kingdom, when he shall act as "Mediator between God and men." The word *men* here includes all not begotten of the holy Spirit to be New Creatures on the spirit plane.

Our partaking of the bread symbolically represents our partaking of the fleshly perfection of the man Jesus. We partake of his perfections by faith, and not actually. He gives us, not restitution to human perfection, but merely an *imputation* of his righteousness, his perfection, as covering in the Divine sight the blemishes, the imperfections, of our fleshly bodies, which we have tendered to God as living sacrifices.

When as our great Advocate the Redeemer imputes to our offering the merit of his sacrifice the Father accepts the same and begets the sacrificer to the new nature as a "member of the Body of Christ." And since we are not at once perfected as New Creatures, but still have mortal flesh, the Father "adopts" us in a sense that includes our justified flesh and all of its interests.

It is only those who have thus partaken of the merit of Christ and whose sacrifice God has accepted that are directed in conformity to their Covenant of sacrifice to drink of his cup and to daily be immersed into his death.

"MY CUP OF THE NEW COVENANT"

The cup is not ours, but the Lord's. The life or sacrifice symbolized by the blood is not ours, but the Redeemer's. We are

merely given the privilege of drinking it, partaking of it. The blood of Jesus could have sealed the New Covenant between God and Israel, and on behalf of all mankind through Israel by the New Covenant, without being offered to us at all. The offering to us of the privilege of participation in the cup of Christ's sufferings and death is therefore not to indicate that it was insufficient nor that we could add anything to it. It illustrates the grace of God – that he is willing to receive us and make us joint-heirs with our Lord and Savior, if we have his Spirit. The Spirit which actuated Jesus was a spirit of devotion to the doing of the Father's will – to the smallest detail, and even unto death. Exactly this same spirit must be in all those whom the Father will now accept as members of his Bride, his Body, his Church in the heavenly glory. Hence the Redeemer emphasized the matter distinctly, saying that all who would sit with him in his Throne must drink of his cup of self-denial, self-sacrifice, and must be immersed into his death.

This is exactly what St. Paul points out to us, namely, that our Lord is the true Bread, the true Loaf, which came down from heaven, and that we are invited to be portions of the One Loaf, which ultimately will be the Bread of Life for the world during the Millennial Age. We not only partake of Christ, but, accepted by him according to the Father's plan, we become members with our Lord in the larger Loaf, the multitudinous Christ. Hence, as St. Paul suggests, when we break this Bread together as a Memorial, we not only symbolize our Lord's broken Body, but in a larger sense we symbolize the breaking of the Church and our own breaking or dying as members of that Church. "The loaf which we break, is it not the communion (the common union or participation) of the Body of Christ? For we, being many, are one Loaf, the one Body; for we are all partakers of that one Loaf." – I Cor. 10:16,17.

The cup of the fruit of the vine to us means the sacrificed life of our Lord. But additionally, it reminds us that we, in becoming his disciples, accepted his invitation to share his cup. To us this means faithfulness in self-sacrifice as the Lord's representatives, even unto death. "The cup of blessing which we bless (for which we give thanks as the greatest imaginable favor of God bestowed upon us), is it not the communion (the general union, the fellowship) of the Body of Christ?" Does it not represent our Lord's sacrifice and our share with him in his sacrifice, by his invitation and in harmony with the Father's pre-arranged Plan, in which he foreknew us with Jesus from before the foundation of the world?

Oh, what a depth of meaning attaches to the Communion Cup from this standpoint! Oh, what heart-searching should go with the accepting of it! How evident it is that this Communion Cup represents not merely turning from sin; not merely believing in Jesus; not merely preference for right over wrong, but chiefly the presentation of believers' bodies living sacrifices to God: sacrifices considered holy, because of the imputation of Jesus' merit, and which sacrifices God has accepted, begetting the offerer to the new nature as a New Creature! – Rom. 12:1.

No wonder the Apostle intimates that whoever lightly, irreverently, yet intelligently, partakes of this symbolic flesh and symbolic blood brings condemnation upon himself. It is of this blood, viewed from this standpoint, that the Apostle speaks in Heb. 10:29. He speaks of some who count the blood of the Covenant wherewith they were *sanctified* an unsacred or common thing – some who do despite to the spirit of grace, favor, which has called us with this high calling during this Gospel Age. The Apostle intimates that God's providence for such would be the Second Death. We cannot understand the Apostle to mean that Church members who have never made a real consecration to God, who have never understood the real

grace of God, the real privilege which they enjoy – that these should be subjects of the Second Death. The context, on the contrary, intimates that the persons referred to had at one time a clear understanding of the matter; that they had been "once enlightened"; that they had not only been justified by faith in the precious blood to approach God thus, but, on the basis of that justifying faith, they had gone on to *sanctification* – presenting their [R4592 : page 116] bodies living sacrifices. The text cited indeed declares that it refers to only such as despise the blood of the Covenant (the Cup we memorialize), with which they had previously been *sanctified* by the begetting of the holy Spirit when they agreed to "drink of Christ's cup" in their consecration.

"EVEN YOUR SANCTIFICATION"

Our sanctification, which is the will of God and in harmony with which the present Gospel call is made, is effected not when we are "called," nor when we begin [R4592 : page 117] to turn from sin, nor when we begin to hear and heed the voice of God, but when, under the influence of these blessings and mercies of God, we come to the point of *full consecration* – full discipleship, full surrender, full sacrifice of all of the earthly rights and privileges, that we might have instead thereof the spiritual blessings, the divine nature, joint-heirship with our Lord in his Kingdom. Is it asked who would despise such a favor as this? Who would repudiate the privilege of being joint-sacrificers with the Lord? Who would spurn "his cup" and "his baptism" into death in view of the privilege of being associated in the reward? The answer is that surely none would do so who still retain the spirit of begetting and faith-appreciation of the things not seen as yet – glory, honor and immortality. If, therefore, any who have once tasted of the heavenly gift and been made partakers of the holy Spirit and participated in the powers and privileges of the coming age – if they shall fall away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance.

We cannot read the heart. We cannot know, surely, who have seen beyond the first veil, and who have not. We cannot know absolutely who have committed the "sin unto death," and who have not. We are not to judge one another. We are rather to accept one another's expressions, provided the course of life corresponds – in that it is not symbolically represented by the injurious thorns and thistles. If, however, any should repudiate "the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified" – if any should claim that participation with Christ in this Memorial Cup is participation in something common or ordinary, and not participation in his great sacrifice, it would imply that he had lost his spiritual vision, his spiritual apprehension of the value of being a partaker of Christ's cup – the blood of the Covenant, which shortly is to be sealed for Israel and through Israel for all the families of the earth who will come into harmony with its Divinely arranged terms.

It may be possible that some who have professed to see the spiritual things, some who have professed a fulness of consecration even unto death, some who have professed to appreciate the participation in the breaking of the One Loaf and the drinking of the one cup of fellowship with Christ in his death, have never really appreciated these things. Perhaps they not only deceived us by their statements, but also deceived themselves.

Let us remember our Lord's words, "By their fruits ye shall know them." If those who once professed that they were sanctified, set apart, consecrated sacrificers as members of the Body of Christ and who partook of his cup of suffering and self-denial and then manifested a spirit of holiness and gave evidences of developing the fruits and graces of the spirit, we may safely consider that they were spirit-begotten. If these afterward repudiate the blood of the Covenant and view the privilege of partaking of Christ's cup as something that is merely common or ordinary, but not exclusive and only for the *members*

of Christ – if these now manifest no longer the fruits of the Spirit of God, but the fruits of the spirit of the Adversary, we may well fear for them that they not only have lost the light, but also lost the Spirit. We are not to expect that such would necessarily go to open deeds of violence, murder, robbery, etc. It would be sufficient evidence of their having lost the Spirit of the Lord if they should develop afresh the spirit of anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. These St. Paul designates works of the flesh and of the devil.

True, a sanctified member of the Body of Christ might be overtaken in a fault, or act in a manner that would imply anger, but he certainly could not have malice and hatred. Besides, if overtaken in a fault, he would soon realize his difficulty and not only go with the fault to the throne of heavenly grace for forgiveness, but also go and make reparation and full apology to those wronged, injured, by the act. Whoever, therefore, indicates that his spirit has become a malicious one, gives evidence that he has already lost the Spirit of God and is "twice-dead, plucked up by the roots," and belongs to the thorn and briar family and not to the vine.

"THE EARNEST OF OUR INHERITANCE"

In our Memorial service let not our hearts merely meditate upon the sufferings of Jesus, nor merely upon the sufferings of the members of his Body as they walk in *his footsteps to sacrificial death*. On the contrary, let us receive a proper exhilaration of spirit from our participation in this cup. We read that Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and the Apostle urges all these who are drinking of the cup, saying, "Rejoice in the Lord; and again I say, Rejoice!" The Christian's life is not a sad or morose one, but a most joyful one. He can even be joyful in tribulation, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." Knowing also that "our light

affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" – beyond the veil. (Rom. 5:3,4; 2 Cor. 4:17.) We thus partake in the cup of *suffering and joy* which is an earnest of our inheritance, which we will receive at the Second Coming of our Lord and our gathering together with him – as his members and his Bride class. This rejoicing in spirit is necessary to our courage and zeal in the service of the Lord. Note the operation of it in St. Paul, who, with Silas, could sing praises to God in the prison with his feet in the stocks and his back lacerated. And so it should be with all Christ's true followers in the narrow way. With the wound of every thorn, with the pain of every sharp arrow of bitter words with which we are assaulted for Christ's sake, we may have joy unspeakable.

JOY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

A further joy may be ours as we gradually comprehend more and more fully the significance of this New Covenant or New Testament blood in which our Lord offers us an opportunity to participate. He imputes his merit and thus enables us to be dead with him. He thus passes the blood of the New Covenant *through us*, his members. But it is offered only to such as pledge themselves to be dead with Christ. Even then it is not given, but merely *imputed* or loaned to us to make good or worthy our offerings when the great High Priest as our Advocate presents them and accepts them in the Father's name and grants us his Spirit of adoption.

These earthly rights which belong to our Lord Jesus alone, which are at his disposal, are to go by the New Covenant to natural Israel. (Jer. 31:31.) "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy." (Rom. 11:31.) We may therefore rejoice in sympathetic anticipation of the blessings about to come to natural Israel, in which all mankind will have an opportunity of sharing. If their casting away at the beginning of this age was

preparatory to our acceptance, how glad we may be that our acceptance will not mean their everlasting loss, but, on the contrary, that they will be profited through the blessing of Spiritual Israel, members of the great High Priest and Mediator and fully "qualified servants of the New Covenant." (2 Cor. 3:6.) Thus to Israel eventually will be given the earthly blessings and promises which God originally set apart for them, and which were typified under [R4592 : page 118] the Law Covenant and its typical Mediator Moses, who is like unto or a type of the great Mediator, the Christ of God, of which Jesus is the Head and the overcoming saints, his faithful followers, are accounted members. – Acts 3:22,23.

Let us then appreciate this glorious Memorial more and more as the years go by, seeing in it expressed more and more of the "Love Divine all love excelling," whose length and breadth and height and depth surpass all human comprehension.

"LET US KEEP THE FEAST"

We urge upon the Lord's people who recognize the foregoing facts and signification to meet in the name of the Master as his "members," and comply with his invitation, "Do this in remembrance of me," and not as the Jews, in remembrance of the type; as St. Paul said, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11:26): until at his coming he shall change the Church, which now is his Body of humiliation, to make it in the truest sense his glorious Body.

Again, we suggest that where the dear friends possibly can they meet together in little groups, and where this is impossible, they nevertheless should celebrate alone with the Lord. We do not urge large gatherings on such occasions, but the reverse – that each little group or company meet by itself as a separate organization of the Body of Christ. "Where two or three are

gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."
– Matt. 18:20.

The Congregation of Brooklyn Tabernacle will meet at No. 13-17 Hicks street, Brooklyn, near the Fulton Ferry and Jersey City (P.R.R.) Annex, and not far distant from the terminus of the Brooklyn Bridge. On the preceding Sunday there will be an immersion service. All who desire to participate will, if possible, please give word in advance. Friends from nearby cities will be accommodated with pleasure at this immersion service. But no Memorial Service invitation is given to distant friends. Individuals, however, who have no better opportunity at their homes will be welcomed at any of the classes anywhere.

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