

## OUR "CUP OF BLESSING"

**"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."  
– 1 Cor. 10:16,17. – Diaglott.**

THE CUP of blessing, for which we bless God," is indeed a cup of blessing in many respects. It represents the blessed privilege of suffering with Christ, and the blessed things which will come as a reward of those sufferings. The Lord declares that the promise will have fulfilment in the Kingdom, when we shall share the Kingdom joys.

The Church is represented as being a part of the great Vine which God has planted; as Jesus says, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." (John 15:5.) Our Lord tells us of the precious fruit of this Vine, the development of which represents the *sorrowful* part of our experience. There is a sense in which the *cup* represents the *joy* which we shall have when we shall have passed *beyond* the *sufferings* of this present time and shall have entered into glory. (Matt. 26:29.) The expression, "for which we bless God," may be understood to mean, for which we give thanks and praise to the Lord. Whoever receives the *cup* without thankfulness of heart, without appreciation, will not get the great reward. In order to receive the blessing *designed*, we must receive the cup with *thankfulness* for this great privilege of *suffering* with Christ.

In considering this question of the Apostle, "is it not a participation [common union] in the blood of Christ?" we should have a double thought before our minds: first, of the literal cup to which he refers, the literal fruit of the vine, which represents the

blood of Christ; and second, the fact that we have the privilege of partaking of *His* cup, the *sacrificial* cup. We have the privilege of sharing in His death, sharing in His sufferings. This thought is borne out in other Scriptures – that Jesus is the Head of the Church which is His Body, etc. He is to be the great Prophet, Priest, King, Judge and Blessor of the world.

According to the Scriptures, the great Head was glorified, after having endured the sufferings even unto death, after having laid down His life for the world. And He has adopted us as His members – members *now* in the flesh, to be His members shortly in glory. We use the word *members* in the sense that we speak of members of the House of Parliament. The body of Parliament has many members, and so the Body of Christ has many members. The terms on which they may make their calling and election sure are that they shall believe in Christ and shall give themselves to God. Then our Lord will adopt them as His members, members now on earth and afterwards members of Him in glory.

### **"DRINK YE ALL OF IT"**

On condition, then, that we drink faithfully of this cup (Matt. 26:27), we shall make our "calling and election sure." (2 Peter 1:10.) The injunction, "Drink ye *all* of it," had a double signification: first, it must *all* be drunk before the end of the Gospel Age; and secondly, *all* who would be members of His Body must drink of it. St. Peter spoke of the sufferings of The Christ, Head and Body, which have now been going on for more than eighteen centuries, and of the glory that shall follow. (1 Peter 1:8-12; 4:1; 5:1.) As soon as the last member shall have passed into the Heavenly condition, all the sufferings of The Christ will be over, and none others will have the privilege of sharing in the "sufferings of Christ," even as some others will have the privilege of sharing in His glory and becoming His "Bride, the Lamb's Wife."

It is *one cup*, though it contains the juice of *many grapes*; and it is *one loaf*, though made from *many grains*. The grains cannot retain their individuality and their life if they would become bread for the world. The grapes cannot maintain themselves as grapes if they would constitute the life-giving spirit. Thus we see the beauty of the Apostle's statement that the Lord's people are participants in the one loaf and the one cup. There is no other way by which we may attain the new nature than by accepting the Lord's invitation to drink His cup, and by being broken with Him as members of the one loaf; by being buried with Him in baptism into His death, and thus attaining with Him a resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, attaining unto the First Resurrection.

### **THE CHURCH'S PART IN THE ONE LOAF**

The loaf represents primarily the Lord Jesus' body, which is broken for us and for the world in general. In a larger sense it includes all the Body of Christ, all who become His members. Thus the breaking of the loaf, the breaking of the Body, has continued for more than eighteen centuries.

We read that in the institution of the Lord's Supper *Jesus* broke the loaf. As a matter of fact, He was the only one at that time who *could* break the loaf. All others of mankind were unjustified in God's sight until Jesus by His sacrifice and exaltation made good the deficiency of a certain class. So Jesus was the first to break the loaf. Today, as the unleavened bread at the Memorial season is passed to each of us, and as each takes a portion of it, he breaks it for himself.

The fact that our Lord first broke the bread does not mean that we should not have *our individual part*. We recall that the Heavenly Father had to do with the breaking of our Lord's body. As it is written, "It pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief." (Isa. 53:10.) This was not done against our Lord's will. While the Heavenly Father had to do with His breaking, so, in harmony with the Divine arrangement, the breaking of our share of the loaf.

The Apostle's statement in the succeeding chapter, "Ye do show forth the Lord's death," applies exclusively to the death of Jesus. The setting of the words indicates that it is the Lord Jesus personally who is mentioned: "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come." (V.26.) "He is *thy* Lord, and worship thou Him." (Psa. 45:11.) The Church is never spoken of as *the Lord*.

Furthermore, we are to remember that Jesus said, "This do in remembrance of *Me.*" (Luke 22:19.) He did not say, This do in remembrance of *yourselves* – in remembrance of *your own* share in the sacrifice. We are to be dead *with Him*. We remember that we must share with *Him* in the sufferings of this present time if we would share in the glories to follow. The Father gave Him to be the Head – "God blessed forever." – Heb. 3:1; Rom. 8:17,18; 9:5.

### **THE LIFE IS IN THE BLOOD**

The Scriptures say that the *life* is in the *blood*. (Lev. 17:11.) In harmony with that statement, the Jews were bidden to always refrain from eating the blood. The animals must be bled before they were permitted to eat the flesh. Nor was any stranger sojourning with them to eat any blood. (Lev. 17:10-14.) In this way, God would **[R5342 : page 328]** seem to say that *life* is a very sacred thing. This life principle that He gave to man, seems to reside in the blood. As long as the blood is passing through the organs of circulation, there is life; but when the blood is shed, the being dies.

When our Lord laid down His earthly life, He did not retain a right to that earthly life in the sense of using it for Himself. He tells us in the parable that all who would gain "the pearl of great price" (Matt. 13:45,46), must sell *all that they have*; that is, all that they enjoy of earthly life or privileges. Our Lord had a perfect earthly life. He gave up that life. "He poured out His soul [life] unto death." (Isa. 53:12.) On what basis? On exactly the same basis He has put before us; if we would *live*, we must *die*; if we would *reign*, we

must *suffer*; we must be dead with *Him*. (2 Tim. 2:11,12.) So we who follow in His steps do the same that He did.

If we, as His disciples, lay down our life for the brethren, we are doing what Jesus did. This is all to be applied for the world. He took that earthly life, not to keep it, but to turn it over, eventually, to all mankind. The right to human life is still *in His control*. He is the One who, as the great Mediator, will give to the world of mankind the life He poured out.

He now *imputes* His merit to the Church, that we may share with him in His suffering and in His glorious Kingdom, on the spirit plane. This cup, then, represents the full renunciation of earthly life and of all claim thereto. Our Lord's earthly life was not *forfeited*, but merely *laid down*. (John 10:17,18.) The intention in laying it down was to abandon it, personally, forever, that humanity might get it. He has not yet accomplished this, in the sense of turning life over to them, but He gave up His life with that purpose in view.

## **UNFORFEITED EARTHLY LIFE-RIGHT**

Our Lord undertook to accomplish the Divine will in the redemption of the world, and He has proceeded in the accomplishment of it, but has not yet completed the purpose. He *laid down* His life, but did not *forfeit it*. When He was raised from the dead He still had a *right* to that earthly life, with the understanding, however, that He was not to use it for Himself, but that He would give that life to all the world who were willing to receive it, assigning it to them at the end of His Reign of a thousand years, during which His Church will Reign with Him.

So then, His life was *not taken from Him*; for His life could be taken from Him only by His *disobedience*. (Lev. 18:5; Ezek. 20:11; Luke 10:28; Rom. 10:5.) He laid it down voluntarily, in harmony with the Divine will. He laid it down that it might become

an asset in the hands of Divine Justice, so that when the time should come He might use that asset for mankind. – John 6:51.

In the beginning it was the Divine purpose that our Lord's human life should be laid down forever, that He should not take it again. He consecrated His life at Jordan and finished the sacrifice at Calvary. Throughout the Gospel Age He has been sacrificing His Mystical Body. Just as soon as He shall have finished the sacrificing of all these Body members, then their life-right, which belongs to the great High Priest, will be used for the purchase, the redemption, of the world, by the sealing of the New Covenant. Immediately after this, His Kingdom will be established. This further application of His merit, His life-right, which will not be made until the whole Church has passed beyond the veil, is symbolized by the sprinkling of the Mercy Seat with the blood of the goat. The blood of our Lord and the blood of His Body, is all one blood. It is one Priest of many members. It is one Atonement for all – for the sins of the whole world. – I John 2:2.

The blood represents not only the death of Christ, but also the death of all the members of His Body, to whom merit is imputed. This the Apostle expresses in the same connection, saying, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion [common union, or participation] of the blood of Christ? The bread [loaf] which we break, is it not the communion [common union, participation] of the Body of Christ?" that is to say, a union in common with Him, a *partnership*, as represented in the cup and in the bread [loaf]. The whole matter has its origin in Him. But we are celebrating also our own individual share as members of the Church in the sacrifice of the flesh, in our participation in the sufferings of Christ.

=====