

This Do In Remembrance

*“He took bread,
and gave thanks,
and brake it, and
gave unto them,
saying, This is my
body which is given
for you: this do in
remembrance
of me.”*

—Luke 22:19

AT THE END OF JESUS’

earthly ministry, he instructed his disciples to prepare the upper room to celebrate the Jewish Passover, which would begin after sundown on Nisan 14. He knew that this would be the last time he would sit at the table with them, and celebrate the type which he himself would fulfill that very day on their behalf, and also on behalf of the whole human family, to be testified in due time.

PASSOVER INSTITUTED

When the Passover was instituted in the land of Egypt, the Jews were given particular instructions for the selection of the lamb for sacrifice, and the explicit time it was to be slain and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The scriptural account says, “The LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months [Abib,

changed to Nisan]: it shall be the first month of the year to you.”—Exod. 12:1,2

This was the first month of the Jewish new year. “Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.”—vss. 3,4

Each household represented the household of faith. “Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.” (vss. 5-7) Each home was ‘under the blood’ which represents our being under the precious and anti-typical blood of Jesus.

FIRSTBORN PASSED OVER

In connection with the slaying of the lamb of sacrifice and the placing of the blood on the doorposts of each home, there was the dramatic passing over of the firstborn, those who remained in their homes and under the blood of the sacrificial lamb. The account reads, “I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against

all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.”—vss. 12-14

A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

The Passover was observed during the night in Egypt when the blood of a lamb saved the firstborn of Israel from death by passing over them. This also foreshadowed in a grander way the passing over of an antitypical firstborn class of our Lord Jesus’ consecrated believers during the present Gospel Age. These have been saved from death by the precious blood of the Lamb of God in advance of the human family who will be blessed during Christ’s glorious future kingdom.

The Lord became the Advocate for this antitypical class of firstborn after his resurrection. Concerning this special class of his body members during this age of acceptable sacrifice, the Apostle John said, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (I John 2:1) The Passover type illustrated what would be accomplished for the antitypical firstborn by our Lord’s death as the Lamb of God.

CONSUMED BY LOVE

We now understand more fully what our Lord meant when he spoke to his disciples as he sat with

them that last Passover night. We read, “They went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire [I have heartily desired, *Marginal Translation*] I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”—Luke 22:13-16

Jesus was about to die a prolonged and humiliating death for the sins of mankind. The love that he had was fervent to a degree that only the Spirit begotten of this present Gospel Age can comprehend. It is this comprehension that adds such force to the Apostle John’s declaration, “Before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.”—John 13:1

Through the psalmist we catch a glimpse of this love, and hear the voice of our Lord himself as the antitypical lamb of God. “The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.” (Ps. 69:9) The Lord Jesus Christ was ultimately consumed in sacrifice by the things which he suffered for the sake of his church—the antitypical firstborn of this Gospel Age—and subsequently to be made manifest to the human family.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

Sitting with his disciples and observing Israel’s annual Passover celebration in Jerusalem for the last time, Jesus asked them to memorialize his death and

love toward them, and gave them explicit instructions to carry this out. The Apostle Paul, when writing to his brethren at Corinth, conveyed these instructions to them. "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."—I Cor. 11:23-25

The expression 'this do in remembrance of me' implied that the ceremony Jesus was introducing to his disciples at that time was to replace Israel's Passover celebration. It was about to become obsolete that very same day at Calvary's cross when he gave his own life. Continuing with his epistle to the Corinthian brethren, Paul states plainly the purpose and function of the Lord's new memorial. He writes, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."—vs. 26

COMMUNION BY INVITATION

Earlier in his first epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul wrote, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." (I Cor. 10:16,17) Here, the aspect of partnership, shared participation in the suffering of Christ, is introduced by the word

which has been translated ‘communion’ and is a derivation of the term ‘common-union.’ The body of Christ is composed of many members, and is characterized as ‘one bread.’ Not all are invited by God to membership in that one bread. This invitation has been clearly expressed in the Gospel of John where Jesus’ words are recorded. He said, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”—John 6:44

During the present Gospel Age, those who are drawn by the Heavenly Father to Christ are invited to share with him in the inevitable cup of suffering that comes to all who determine to uphold God’s standard of Truth and righteousness for the people. The Apostle Paul speaks of Jesus, “Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.” (Gal. 1:4) Therefore, the eating of the bread and the drinking of the fruit of the vine from the cup on this anniversary of our Lord’s death is a symbolic confirmation of our vow of consecration to share with him in the laying down of our lives also and following as faithfully as possible his example.

We do not share, or participate, in Christ’s walk in sacrifice only during the evening of the Memorial observance, but daily throughout the entire course of our earthly pilgrimage. As we partake of the symbols that memorialize the death of our dear Lord, let us recall that when he established the first Memorial the apostles were his specially invited guests. Since then, it has been observed especially by the selected guests, all of whom have entered the narrow way of sacrifice unto death.

RENEWED DETERMINATION

During this anniversary of Jesus' death, and as we partake of the emblems of the Memorial, let us have in mind the true significance of what they represent. We should focus on the meaning of our Lord's death, and the peace we have in the knowledge that we have been invited to enter into the likeness of his death. It is a great privilege to gather in spirit with others of like precious faith who have also heard and accepted the invitation to join the Master in his baptism unto death. "Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with." (Matt. 20:23) The Apostle Paul explained, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6:3) But, we have the great hope before us, "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."—vs. 5

When we eat of the bread and drink of the cup, let us do so with deep appreciation of the gracious privilege which has been extended to us of being partakers with Jesus. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Gal. 5:24) Our appreciation of this glorious privilege of communion in the sufferings of Christ can best be expressed during this Memorial anniversary by a renewal of our determination to fulfill our vows of consecration.

Let us then determine that neither discouragement, weariness, nor feelings of unworthiness will hinder us. May we seek our loving Heavenly Father and ask forgiveness when and wherever necessary. We are encouraged to enter into prayer with

the Father, and avail ourselves of his cleansing power. When we partake of the emblems of our Lord's death, let us do so reverently and in remembrance of all that it has accomplished for us, and in due time for all of the willingly obedient during his righteous kingdom. Let us remember, "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—I John 2:2 ■