



*23 For 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: 24 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. 25 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. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. (1 Cor 11:23-29)*

Weary not, nor despond, if you missed that first Lord's Supper, for the Table of the Lord remains open continually to all who hunger and thirst for the Bread of Heaven and the Wine of Salvation. The Lord's Supper is the consummation of the ancient Passover meal consumed in old Egypt. The lamb that was slain that last night in Egypt, and whose blood was applied on the doorposts and lintels of every child of God was to exempt them from the midnight visitation of the Angel of Death over that dark Egyptian panorama. That lamb prefigured the Promise of God for a far greater lamb that had consented in eternity past (before the worlds were made) to be the sacrificial Lamb of God that would likewise, once and for all, redeem the people of God from the eternity of death and sin of which Egypt was also a figure and type. *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. (1 Peter 1:18-20) - see also Rev 13:8.*

The Lord's Supper began in the Upper Room at Jerusalem, but has not yet ended. We may all have the privilege to come forth to the Table of the Upper Room spread with meats of salvation and repentance, and furnished with the Bread of Life and the Wine of the Holy Spirit. Every Holy Communion Service in Godly churches is a continuation of that blessed Supper that Jesus initiated 2,000 years ago. That was the fulfillment of God's Promise of a Redeemer who would go all the way to the Cross to redeem His people. The Lord was present at that Supper with His disciples, and He is present with all who partake of that same Supper today. Have you ever wondered why the Lord's Table in our Reformation churches is always centrally located instead of the pulpit being central? It is because Christ is central to our worship. The pulpit is situated

to the right side (facing outward) because man is not central. *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* (Matt 18:20) The spiritual presence of Christ follows the believer every place, but is particularly and mystically so during the partaking of the Holy Communion.

Christ observed that Supper with two symbolic elements - unleavened bread and fermented wine (not grape juice). These particular elements bear significant meaning to our faith. We will discuss below some aspects of those meanings of Bread and Wine:

### **Unleavened Bread**

Why do you suppose Christ used unleavened bread? Unleavened bread was commanded from the first Passover until today for Holy Communion stands in the place of, and truly is, our Passover. The bread of Passover was to be unleavened because leaven represents sin and false doctrine. *Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.* (Matt 16:6) The disciples failed to grasp the significance of the counsel of Christ concerning leaven, so Jesus frankly revealed it to them: <sup>11</sup> *How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?* <sup>12</sup> *Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.* (Matt 16:11-12)

In the Hebrew Passover, three pieces of unleavened bread are used (matzo bread). It is of singular importance that the bread be unleavened, that it retains the stripes of the bread grill on its surfaces, and retain puncture marks uniformly throughout. Little do the Jews of today understand the symbolism. The unleavened bread represents the Bread of Life which is the Body of Christ. *Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.* (John 6:32-35)

The grill-stripes represents the stripes of which He suffered for us. *And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.* (Zech 13:6) *Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.* (John 19:1)

The pierced holes in the 'matzo bread' represents the nail piercing and thorns wounds Jesus received at crucifixion. *They pierced my hands and my feet.* (Psalms 22:16b) *Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.* (John 19:32-34)

At the Hebrew Passover, three individually wrapped (in white linen) loaves of matzo bread are combined together - but first, the center piece is broken and half thereof hidden in the house. That broken bread, unbeknownst to the Hebrews, represents the central figure of the Trinity - Jesus Christ - whose body was broken for us. After the meal, the children of the household search for the hidden piece of bread. The one who finds it will receive a gift. The same is true today. Whoever finds the Bread of Life is rewarded with the gift of eternal life.

Now unleavened bread is made from innumerable grains of wheat. The Body of

Christ is comprised of His innumerable host of believers. But the one whole bread is made from these innumerable grains of wheat, crushed and ground, into particles tiny and cohesive. Combined together, these tiny particles represents the Body of Christ. Though we are crushed and beaten, we are being prepared for the whole Bread of the Body of Christ.

The wine of Communion symbolizes the Blood of Christ that purchased our salvation. It is served in a cup or chalice. Drinking wine from a common chalice was the solemn covenant made at betrothal in old Israel. It represented a commitment unto death. We drink from that same common Cup of Christ of sacrifice and spiritual faithfulness. *I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.* (John 6:51-55)

Well, a soul needs a body and it also, if it is a living body, needs blood. The Word of God is Truth, and it is the Bread of Life. The life itself is provided in the blood. *For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.* (Lev 17:11) The most precious Blood of Heaven or Earth is our Life, and it is the Spirit of our faith in Christ. *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.* (John 4:23-24)

Next Holy Communion Service, please keep the words of the invitation to the Table in your hearts, and also the words spoken at the reception of the element of Bread: *The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving.* and at the reception of the Cup: *The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.*

I can still hear my dear mother, in the ancient past, shouting at eventide, "Supper's ready, kids. Come to Supper."

Can you still hear that voice, but from on High?