

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

MATTH. xxvi. 26-28; MARK xiv. 22-24; LUKE xxii. 19, 20; I COR. xi. 23-26.

FROM these four scriptures, it is evident that the sacred Supper is a memorial ceremony; having in the Christian, the place occupied by the Passover in the Mosaic dispensation. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only ceremonies or ordinances in the Church of Christ; which by its spirituality and simplicity is distinguished from the Mosaic Church, which abounded in types, symbols, rites; necessarily, as it was the figure of that which is to come. With Moses was mystery; the great mystery of the Messiah to come, and his bringing in the gentiles. With Christ is the dispersion of mystery, life and immortality brought to light, and the way to heaven made so plain, that the simplest wayfarer need not err therein. The Gospel calls men: not Jews, but men: not gentiles, but men: and to men, everywhere, tells the same story, and makes the same proposition. It offers Jesus as the Christ, the Saviour of all, to all; because all men need a Saviour, and precisely such a Saviour as he. This universal need, the Gospel attributes to our relation to Adam: "For as in Adam all die;"—"by one man's disobedience the many (all) were made sinners." Therefore presenting to men the two grand truths, in which all are interested, the Gospel exhibits two symbols, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; the one reminding men of their relation to Adam; the other, of their relation to Jesus the Christ. Two great truths; two great symbols or diagrams.

The Lord's Supper, the memorial of Jesus the Christ, reminding us of his interposition for sinners, is much illustrated, as to its ceremonial, by studying its relation

to the Passover; of which we have a full and definite history. When the Jews were held in hard bondage by Pharaoh, in Egypt, and he had refused to release them, when so commanded; an angel slew, in one night, all the first-born in that land, except in the families of Israel; the doors of whose houses had been sprinkled with the blood of a lamb. Then, a cry of anguish being heard all over the nation, the Israelites were hurried out of the land of bondage, and started for Canaan, the land of promise. "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 forever." *Exod. xii. 14*, and in other passages of the Books of Moses. It was a solemn memorial of the divine interposition, in behalf of one nation in bondage to Pharaoh. It was to be kept by divine ordinance, generation after generation, forever—*i. e.*, so long as the Mosaic or typical dispensation should be continued. A lamb was to be slain and eaten, in remembrance of the lamb whose blood was sprinkled on the doors of Israel's habitations, protecting them from the destroyer. They were to use unleavened bread to indicate the haste with which they had been hurried out of Egypt; and bitter herbs to remind them of the bitterness of their bondage there. As the blood-sprinkling was not to be repeated, but remembered, the red wine was a suitable reminder. It should be noticed, also, that the entire solemnity in bringing to remembrance the deliverance from Egypt; that deliverance was because of a PROMISE to the father of that people, Abraham; and that was God's method of fulfilling that promise given centuries before: a method with which was connected miracle, violence, terror, and great destruction of defiant resisters of God.

But there was to arise one like unto Moses; the bringer in of a new and superior dispensation; the

Shiloh, around whom the nations should gather: one who would rescue all the nations of the earth from the grasp of satan; and the Lamb to be slaughtered in the case, would be Himself. This grand event, to which Moses and Israel looked forward; and which was typified in their rites and history; occurred in the person of Jesus the Christ, who came, died, rose from the dead, ascended to heaven. The same night in which he was betrayed, he had been seated, or reclining at the table, celebrating the Passover, the great memorial connected with the *one nation*; and at its conclusion instituted his own feast, to be kept as a memorial by *many nations*—*i. e.*, by ALL. The changes he made were for more simplicity, but for clearer and wider significance. No memorial lamb was to be slain; for there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin; so bread was substituted as the memorial of the sacrificed Jesus. That lamb of which we have been partaking, symbolized the lamb slain on that dread night in Egypt; but *this*, *this bread*, you are to use as the memorial of my crucified body. That lamb on the dish, signifies, and in that sense is, the paschal lamb's body: but *ye* shall kill no lamb, **THIS** (bread) is **MY** body: this is to remind you, as you break and eat, of my body which was broken for men; for *you* because you are men; and not because you are Jews. The Jewish memorial is about being expended: its forever, in a few days, will be fulfilled and closed. What was that in the dish, there? The paschal lamb. The one slain in Egypt, centuries ago? No; but a memorial of that. And to a child, it might have been said; You know the history of the Lord's passover; how we were in bitter bondage; and were directed to kill a lamb, according to our families, and sprinkle its blood upon our doors; and then were hurried out, without being allowed time for our bread to become leavened. So, we were to observe a memorial

of all this: and, you see, there is the lamb, there the unleavened bread, there the bitter herbs. But no lad would be so stupid as to suppose, the father meant, that all these, the lamb, the unleavened bread, the bitter herbs, had been changed into the identical lamb, bread, and herbs, that were upon the tables, in that dread night of the march from Egypt. Why, then, should any one misunderstand this blessed memorial, with its clear, distinct history in his hand, by the light of which he can read the *IN MEMORIAM MEI*? The disciples were Jews: from their youth, they had been accustomed to keep the Passover; and as a memorial; they had never heard that the constituents of that feast were transubstantiated, by the consecrating prayer. And when they were directed, thenceforth, to substitute the memorial of the breaking, the killing of the Lord's body; and were told, that bread was to be used instead of flesh; they could not have had the slightest difficulty, in understanding their Lord's "THIS is MY body," as meaning nothing other, than that they were to use, in the Christian feast, *bread*, and not lamb's flesh, nor flesh of any kind, in remembrance of their crucified Lord: crucified for them and for the many, all.

The wine was selected as the only other element. "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." *Matth.* xxvi. 28. "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." *Luke* xxii. 20. "This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." *I Cor.* xi. 25. "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many." *Mark* xiv. 24. In these four statements relative to this element, the wine, there are *verbal* differences, but no discrepancy of teaching. Matthew and Mark write, This is my blood of the new testament; while Luke and Paul write, This cup is the new testament in my blood.

Are we to understand that the wine at that feast was the Lord's blood, and the cup was the new testament? Do the phrases "my blood of the new testament," "the new testament in my blood," differ at all in their meaning? Certainly we cannot but see, that as the Israelites did their part, by confiding in the blood of the paschal lamb, and the Lord did his part of the covenant, by having his destroying angel to pass over those dwellings stained with the blood of that lamb; so now Christ's people, all, are to do their part by confiding in the blood of Jesus, the Christ; and the Lord will do his part of this new covenant, by saving all who confide in that blood shed for the remission of sins. This cup is (signifies, reminds of) the NEW testament (covenant) in MY blood. This is MY blood of the NEW testament (covenant), which was shed. This wine, this cup of wine which has heretofore reminded you of the blood of the paschal lamb, of that *old* covenant in Egypt; is, henceforth, to remind you of a *new* covenant, to ratify which *my* blood will be shed: a fact you and all generations to come should remember; for you are sinners, and my blood is to be shed for the remission of sins. In any other sense than figurative, the bread was not his body; the wine was not his blood.

The memorial character of the Supper, which has no vestige of sacrament about it, is especially evident from Paul's account, who "received of the Lord that account of it which he delivered unto us;" viz: that we are to eat the bread "in REMEMBRANCE of Him," and drink the cup "in REMEMBRANCE of Him." The word *eis* in such a connection fairly means *for*, being expressive of *purpose*: as in reply to the inquiry, Why do you practice that ceremony? we should say, Our object, purpose, is to keep up, perpetuate, the remembrance of him who shed his blood to wash away our sins. The phrase is *eis teen emeen anamneesin*: and is similar to

Luke ii. 34, and other passages: *Luke* writes, "And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary, his mother, Behold, this (child) is set for (*eis*) the fall and rising of many in Israel; and for (*eis*) a sign which shall be spoken against." Other examples are at hand for the studious, who may wish a further investigation: such as *Rom.* xiv. 1; xvi. 26; *Heb.* iv. 16; etc.

The purpose of the Supper, was to bring Jesus the Christ to our remembrance; the end sought being the spiritual good of the participants. As in the case of the Passover, whose reminder of God's interposition tended to incite gratitude for the great deliverance wrought out for their nation; and obedience by bringing to recollection, that only by an obedient observance of their part of the covenant, did Israel escape the blow of the destroying angel: and grateful obedience to God, is a great spiritual good. There was no mystery in the Passover: nor is there any mystery in the Lord's Supper: that was a monument of the salvation of one nation: this is a monument of the salvation of all nations.

To suppose him present in the elements, is to annihilate the very design of the Supper: for if the elements are he, then he is the memorial of himself: we reach an absurdity. Such a view ends, necessarily, in superstition, adoring the *host*, a day and procession in its honor; withholding it, by way of punishment; etc. The word *host*, signifies a sacrifice, a victim, from the Latin *hostia*: and though the sacred record, distinguishes clearly between the victims offered so frequently, under the typical dispensation, and the "once offered," and "once for all" victims of this latter age (*Heb.* ix); this wildly erroneous theory presents the victim daily; offers it daily; annulling the argument of the Apostle. Besides, no priest offered the Victim who died "once for all," for human guilt. He offered him-

self; obtained eternal redemption for us; "so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." They who use the Supper as a remembrancer, admit his bodily absence; he is invisible; they remember his personal departure, and hopefully look for him: but the theory of his presence in the elements, the transmutation of the elements, the adoration of the elements, does not admit of his personal absence; the participants cannot look for him, he is there, present; they have no *memorial*, who imagine that they have the *person*.

We have a memorial, a monument, not the person; and on the monument is inscribed the fact, that "— he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people." The believer needs not a *host*, but a *memorial*: needs no priest to offer a sacrifice; as no sacrifice for sin is possible, but that of Christ's atoning blood, which he himself offered once for all. An unbloody sacrifice is useless, if not a profanity: for "— without shedding of blood is *no remission*;" "nor yet that he should offer himself often, * * * but now ONCE in the end of the world (*toon aioonoon*, the dispensations) hath he APPEARED to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." *Heb.* ix. 26. So, the theory of his appearings in the elements of the Supper, is remarkably contrary to the statement of the Apostle; and cannot be correct or useful.

And, we observe, that, as the Passover reminded the *Israelites* of the deliverance, in fulfillment of the promise made to their father, Abraham; so, the Lord's Supper reminds *men* of the deliverance, in fulfillment of the promise made to their father, Adam. To Abraham, "* * * thy seed shall be a stranger in a land not theirs, and they shall serve them, and they shall afflict

them four hundred years. And also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance." *Gen.* xv. 13, 14. To Adam, the promise that, "— it (the seed of the woman, Messiah) shall bruise thy (satan) head." *Gen.* iii. 15. The Supper, then, as the Passover was, is a reminder that God fulfils his promises: though he may seem to delay, he is but awaiting the "due time:" therefore, as the Gospel abounds in "exceeding great and precious promises," the Supper should remind us that, "He that spared not his own Son (promised) but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things (promised)." *Rom.* viii. 32.

The facts and scenes of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage, were gloomy with violence and terror. So, the Súpper reminds us of the darkness of Gethsemane, and the terrors of Calvary. In that dread night in Egypt, when the first-born were smitten, "Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants, and there was a great cry in Egypt!" *Exod.* xii. 30. And so from Calvary went up a wail, the like of which was never heard until then, and will never be heard again! A dark hour in Egypt, followed by the bright joy of deliverance for *Israel*: a darker hour on Calvary, followed by the far brighter joy of deliverance for *man*.

It may be useful to add, that the first administration of the Supper, was by our Lord in person, to his disciples who were, confessedly, in a very defective condition as to knowledge, faith, spirituality, and grace. Demonstrating the absurdity of supposing something like perfection, to be needed as a qualification for the Lord's Supper. Salvation is provided not for merit, but necessity. When has a believer most need to be reminded of a Saviour, who loved him and gave himself for him? When he is strong, or when he is weak? When he feels worthy, or when he feels unworthy?

Though it be the voice of the prophet, it is in the very spirit of the Gospel, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, * * * without money and without price." *Isai.* lv. 1. So, the prophet. Now the Evangelist: "* * * whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." *Rev.* xxii. 17. Wherein do they differ? Thirst, need, is the requisite, the qualification; and the water is abundant: let the thirsty drink. Hunger, need, is the requisite, the qualification; and the Supper is waiting: all things are ready, let the hungry eat.

[Return to course main page and take Test 5.](#)