

## The Lord's Supper

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**Luke 22v14-20 – Institution of the Lord's Supper** (see also Matt 26v26-30, Mark 14v22-26)

**Acts 20v6-8 – Participation in the Lord's Supper** (see also Acts 2v42)

**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11v17-34 – Revelation of the Lord's Supper**

### **v17-22: Degeneration of the Lord's Supper at Corinth:**

Note Paul's severe censure, v17 "*I praise you not that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse*", v22 "*shall I praise you in this? I praise you not*".

At Corinth, these gatherings had degenerated into occasions for display of the sinful flesh, when there were serious "*divisions*" (schisms) and "*heresies*" (factions) among the company (v18-19).

The carnal manifested the more spiritual element, "*they which are approved* (esteemed)" (v19).

What took place at Corinth could not be regarded as a proper expression of "*the Lord's Supper*" (v20), with divisions based on social status & wealth, some of the poorer saints being despised and left hungry, while others became drunken at the meal associated with the supper (v20-21).

**General principles:** There must be unity, proper relations among the believers, with genuine feelings of brotherly love, appropriate affection & respect for all of our fellow believers (see Matt 5v23-24).

The Lord's Supper is a local church / assembly function, "**when ye come together**" (vs17,18,20).

### **v23-26: Revelation of the Lord's Supper to the apostle Paul:**

**v23:** This was a direct personal revelation to Paul from the Lord, "*I* (emphatic) *received of the Lord*".

This account of the institution of the Supper comes to us with all the authority of the Lord Himself.

It was "*in the same night in which He was (being) betrayed*", Judas having left to perform his treacherous act of betrayal, leaving only the 11 true disciples to participate.

Participation at the Lord' supper is only for baptised believers in the fellowship of a local assembly.

**V24:** The Lord Jesus thanked God for those emblems which spoke of His own imminent death.

Luke 22v15 "*With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer*". He desired that there would be the remembrance of His suffering & death. It should be desire, devotion & affection which draw us to the Supper, and to remember our Lord as a priority of local assembly fellowship.

The 1<sup>st</sup> emblem is the bread; "*Take eat: this is My body which is [broken] for you*", i.e. the bread is symbolic / emblematic / representative of His body, given for us. The bread does not literally become His body.

For both the bread (v24) and the cup (v25), "*this do in remembrance of Me*"; the eating & drinking is a personal & individual positive act of calling into remembrance the Person of our Saviour.

As we partake of the bread, we remember the One who moved bodily here on earth, in all the beauty of His life & Person, doing only the things that pleased the Father, doing all for the glory of the Father, culminating in His sacrifice upon the cross, when He bodily gave Himself in totality.

Heb 13v10 "*we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*".

Luke 22v19 ***“This is My body which is given for you”***; His body was preserved unbroken at Calvary. Psalm 34v20 ***“He keepeth all His bones, not one of them is broken”***, fulfilled at Calvary, ***“For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, ‘A bone of Him shall not be broken’”*** (John 19v36), to proclaim the righteous character of our Saviour (see Psalm 34v15,19).

**v25:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> emblem, ***“This cup is the new testament (covenant) in My blood”***.

In contrast to the Passover cup (Lk 22v17-18), there is no mention of the contents of the remembrance cup. It is symbolic of all the sorrows & suffering that were His portion at Calvary, when He partook of that cup of sorrow & judgment for sin, ***“the cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?”*** (John 18v11).

The Lord indicates the cup to be particularly symbolic of ***“the new covenant”***, ratified in His precious blood shed at Calvary. Jeremiah 31v31 ***“Behold the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah”***.

In the upper room, the Lord Jesus indicates that this unconditional New Covenant between God & His people would be based upon His sacrifice & precious shed blood. When we partake of the cup, we think of all the new covenant blessings enjoyed spiritually today by the Church (see Heb 7v22, 8v6, 10v16-17).

Spiritual blessings brought to believers in the Lord Jesus, based upon His precious blood:

- our redemption & forgiveness (Eph 1v7, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1v18-19).
- our justification (Rom 5v9), and the associated reconciliation & peace with God.
- our sanctification (Heb 13v12).
- our cleansing from the guilt of our sins (1<sup>st</sup> John 1v7)
- our boldness to enter into the presence of God (Heb 10v19).

**v26:** ***“as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup”***; our individual participation in the Supper is to be a recurring remembrance of the Saviour until His coming again, when this memorial supper of the Lord will give place to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19v9).

Acts 20v7 ***“upon the first of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread”***.

In Christianity, the 1<sup>st</sup> of the week indicates that our redemption is accomplished in the risen Christ.

By the eating & drinking, ***“ye do show forth (proclaim or announce) the Lord’s death till He come”***; there is the acknowledgement & proclamation to God, the Lord Himself, and angels, that He is our Lord.

For those who acknowledge His Lordship, the Lord’s Supper is a commandment of the Lord Himself.

**v27-34: Examination prior to participation in the Lord’s Supper:**

The need for self-judgment connected with an individual’s responsibility in participation in the Supper, in view of the possibility of eating & drinking ***“unworthily”***, being ***“guilty of the body and blood of the Lord”***, and eating & drinking ***“damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body”***.

Failure at Corinth in their participation in the Supper had led to divine judgment upon them (v30).

So then ***“if we should judge ourselves, we should not be judged”*** (v31); self-judgment is much preferred.