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# THE LORD'S SUPPER

BY

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*"Life in the Word," "Man's Day,"*

*"Reason to Revelation," etc.*

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## FOREWORD TO REVISED EDITION

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THE special object sought in putting forth this pamphlet is to exercise the consciences of the people of God in regard to the form or manner of partaking of the Lord's Supper. In order that believers may properly partake of this feast of remembrance, which is the *only* rite or ceremony appointed for the Church of God, there must needs be a *material* preparation as well as a *spiritual* preparation—though the latter is far the more important. To those who know that in Christ Jesus they have redemption through His Blood, which was shed for them, and that their sins were borne on the cross in His Body, which was broken for them, no detail of the rite which He appointed for the remembrance of His sacrifice can be a matter of indifference. Undoubtedly that which is of highest importance is the spiritual state and spiritual preparation of those who come to the Lord's Table, to the end that they may partake worthily, discerning the Lord's

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Body. If the spiritual condition of the saints be such that they "come together not for the better, but for the worse," if self-examination and self-judgment be neglected, and the saints eat and drink judgment to themselves, not discerning the Lord's Body, then no amount of care in regard to the time and other material details of the observance will avail to the end for which the Supper was appointed. Mere scrupulousness in regard to that which is outside, where there is indifference in regard to that which is inside, is Pharisaism—a "leaven" far more harmful and offensive to God than the material leaven which typifies it.

Nevertheless, the external details have their importance, and to these the present inquiry is restricted. It is undertaken with the humble desire that, when the saints come together to "do this," they may conform, even in matters of detail, to the revealed pattern.

It should be added that it is far from the writer's thought or purpose to cause division among the saints. Diversity of practice already exists in regard to the matters discussed herein. Such being the case, there is all the more call for an effort to ascertain, by prayerfully searching the Scriptures, what is the Lord's

mind about these things, to the end that there may be not merely an outward uniformity, but a conformity to His wishes. Uniformity is certainly to be sought, although we should never lose sight of the fact that mere ceremonial uniformity and correctness is a lifeless and fruitless thing, where the spiritual reality, which the ceremony represents, is lacking.

It is the writer's humble prayer that this pamphlet, in the revised form in which it is now issued, may be used of the Lord to accomplish, in some measure, the purpose stated above.

*January 11, 1915.*



## THE LORD'S SUPPER

“This do in remembrance of Me” (1 Cor. xi. 24).

“It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord” (Ex. xii. 42).

**T**HE Lord's Supper has a very special and close connection with the Lord Himself. It was instituted by Him in the last night of His life on earth. The two substances with which it is celebrated stand for His Body and His Blood. These, being separate one from the other, speak of His death by violence, whereby the Body was bruised and torn, and the Blood poured out.

The Lord's Supper is the standing witness and reminder of “the love of Christ which passeth knowledge”; and it speaks to us, His redeemed people, of the great price with which we have been bought.

His own hands blessed and broke the bread and ministered the cup at the institution of this Supper.

It was appointed for the express purpose of calling Him to remembrance. “This do *in remembrance of Me.*”

It shows (that is, *announces*) the most wondrous and amazing event that ever took place on earth, or anywhere in the Universe,—the death of the Lord. “For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew (announce) *the Lord's death* till He come” (1 Cor. xi. 26). The announcement of the Lord's death is the announcement of that stupendous event whereby God is supremely glorified in the putting away of sin (Heb. ix. 26), whereby the Devil, who had the power of death, is brought to nought (Heb. ii. 14), and whereby the children of God are delivered from death's dominion (Heb. ii. 15). It announces that event whereby the supreme will of God is accomplished (Heb. x. 7; John x. 18), whereby God's righteousness is maintained (Rom. iii. 25), whereby eternal redemption has been secured (Heb. ix. 12), and without which the eternal purpose of God could not have been carried out (Eph. iii. 11; 1 Pet. i. 19, 20).

The Lord's Supper stands alone. There is nothing like it. It is the only rite appointed for repeated observance by His people. The Israelites had various feasts, holy days, times, seasons, rites, ceremonies, sacrifices, offerings, all Divinely appointed for repetition year by



year, week by week, day by day. Christians have *one single rite* for repeated use, and one only. How grandly conspicuous is the Lord's Supper, as the solitary observance Divinely appointed for Christians! It fills the entire space of appointed ceremony from "the night in which He was betrayed"—"till He come!"

This wondrous symbolic rite is, of course, solely for believers—*i.e.* those who are partakers, by grace, of the benefits of that Death of the Lord which it commemorates and announces. None but those whose sins He bore in His own BODY on the tree, and who are "purged" and "made nigh" by His precious BLOOD, can participate in the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. To such only is the command given. To such only is the wondrous privilege accorded. Consequently upon such rests the grave responsibility to observe it in the appointed way. All believers share this responsibility, just as all share the benefits of that which the Supper commemorates. The responsibility was not vested in a special class of "clergy." It rests upon all the members of the assembly. The First Epistle to the Corinthians, in which the inspired directions for the Lord's Supper are given, is addressed to

“the church of God which is at Corinth, to them which are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, *with all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours*” (1 Cor. i. 2). In the passages “the cup of blessing which *we* bless,” “the bread which *we* break,” “this do *ye*,” “as often as *ye* eat . . . *ye* do shew the Lord's death”—the “we” and the “ye” are the saints of God in general, without distinction or difference. There are no distinctions among those who come to the *Lord's* Table. He is there Himself. How then *could* there be any rank or precedence among those who, by His grace, are the invited guests? All are on precisely the same footing there. It follows that they all share, not only the blessing and the privilege, but also the responsibility for carrying out the Lord's appointments.

And surely, if there be anything which ought to be cherished as sacred and holy among the blood-bought people of God (as the Ark was cherished among the Israelites), and concerning which the people of God should be careful not to alter a single detail, that thing is the Lord's Supper. Should not the heart of every one of His redeemed ones be jealous to preserve from alteration all the details of *His* appointment?

The very words "do *this*" admonish us to be careful lest we do something different from what He did.

Surely, seeing that the Lord has committed *only one* continuing ordinance to His people, and seeing that it has to do specially with His own sufferings and death on their behalf, they would be expected to guard that solitary ordinance with jealous care. But, alas! here, as in other respects, the Church has departed from the ways of the Lord; and its history has proved that the Apostle had good reason to fear "lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 2).

There is little excuse for departure from the appointed details in regard to the Lord's Supper, for those appointments are few and simple. On the other hand, there are found at the present time among professed Christians many religious ceremonies of man's devising which require elaborate paraphernalia and rigorous attention to detail, but which are nevertheless carried out by religious devotees with scrupulous care. Whether or not those unauthorized human ceremonies be duly carried out is a matter of no importance

at all. Since man devised them, man can change them at will. But the appointments of the Lord's Supper, though few and simple, are of the deepest significance. They may not be altered without impairing their significance.

Furthermore, let us emphasize the fact that this is the **Lord's** Supper. It is altogether and absolutely **HIS**. He alone has the authority to order all its arrangements. The Table is the *Lord's* Table. The substances upon it are *His* provision. Those who are invited there are *His* guests. Therefore it is not for us to modify any of the details of this feast, no matter how plausible a reason may be advanced for so doing.

The matters of detail which are of importance in the carrying out of the Lord's command are—*first* the time of the observance, *second* the substances used.

## I

### “A Night to be much observed unto the Lord”

A point upon which stress is laid in all the Scriptures that deal with the Lord's Supper is that the feast is one to be observed *in the*

*night time.* Yet in regard to this important feature—which the Word of God emphasizes in a very special way—the departure in practice has been well-nigh universal.

Rome is the arch-corrupter of Christian doctrine and practice, and it is to be expected that, in dealing with the Lord's Supper, she would do her very worst. Therefore it is not at all surprising, seeing that the Lord appointed the feast to be observed at night, that Rome should have ordained her travesty of it to be observed early in the morning; and it is not surprising, seeing that the Lord appointed His Supper to be eaten after all other eating for the day was ended, that Rome should have ordained her counterfeit to be performed before the eating for the day was begun.

But how can we account for the well-nigh universal morning observance of the Lord's memorial feast? The probable explanation is that this is one of the departures which the Reformation failed to correct, and the importance of which has not been recognized by those who have subsequently sought to set the arrangements of the Lord's House in order.

So we would make a strong plea for a return to the primitive custom of the Church in respect

to this important matter; and with that end in view we ask our fellow-believers to examine with care what the Scriptures have to say on this point.

We believe that the Supper occupies a place in God's House to-day comparable in importance to that which the Ark of the Covenant occupied in the Tabernacle. When the Lord gave to Moses the pattern of the Tabernacle, the first feature of it was the Ark (Ex. xxv. 8-22). The building started from that; and the description of the Ark was accompanied by the promise "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee." Moreover, when the Tabernacle was set up, the first thing to be attended to was to "put therein the Ark of the Testimony, and cover the Ark with the veil" (Ex. xl. 3). Nothing else could be put in order, *until the Ark was in its right place*. But when all was done according to the Divinely-given appointments, then "the Glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Ex. xl. 34). May we not reasonably infer that some of the disorder apparent in God's House to-day is due to the fact that the Lord's Supper is usually not observed in its proper place and surroundings?

Moses was repeatedly admonished to see to it

that all things connected with the Lord's House were made strictly according to the pattern shown him on the Mount. This should be also an admonition to us to be careful in respect to every detail of the Lord's Supper.

### THE PASSOVER SUPPER

The feast of unleavened bread was appointed for a perpetual commemoration of the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt. "And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt; . . . for with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt" (Ex. xiii. 8, 9). "It is a NIGHT to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is THAT NIGHT OF THE LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations" (Ex. xii. 42).

In like manner the Apostle Paul writes, "For I 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" (1 Cor. xi. 23). Thus the Lord Himself, in giving directions to His Apostle to be delivered

to the saints, links the memorial feast with the *night* of His betrayal.

The passover supper was to be eaten in the evening. "In the fourteenth day of the first month *at even* is the Lord's passover" (Lev. xxiii. 5; Num. ix. 5). This was never changed. No true Israelite would have dreamed of such a thing as changing the Lord's appointment, or of eating the supper at any other time than the evening. It required special legislation from the Lord to provide in the second month an extra opportunity for those who were prevented (as by being unclean, or being on a journey) from participating in the first month. But even that did not change the appointed day for the regular observance (Num. ix. 6-13). On the contrary, it was strictly provided that, if any man who had not the excuse of being unclean, or on a journey, "forbareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people" (ver. 13). Moreover, even when the passover was eaten in the second month, instead of the first, it was to be eaten "at even" (ver. 11). In the observance of the passover the time for eating the supper was a matter of importance, and this detail was never changed.

One thousand five hundred years later the Lord



Himself and His disciples fulfilled the ordinance of the passover. As to this we read: "And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. Now WHEN EVEN WAS COME, He sat down with the twelve" (Matt. xxvi. 19, 20).

The passover supper is linked with the Lord's Supper by a three-fold cord; *first*, by the common significance of the two feasts; *second*, by the Lord's own act in directly connecting the two together; *third*, by the Scripture "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast" (1 Cor. v. 7, 8).

Obviously, if the Lord had a purpose in appointing this feast to be eaten at night (as He clearly had) then the significance of the symbol is obscured by eating it at some other time. Either the symbol is important or it is not. If not, then it may be disregarded altogether. But if it be important, then it should be observed in the appointed manner, in order that the symbol may correctly represent the thing symbolized.

Of the passover supper it was said to the Israelites, "Ye shall eat the flesh in *that night*" (Ex. xii. 8). And, moreover, they were to eat it looking forward to their departure out of the

land of Egypt. It was to be for a continual reminder of the occurrence of that night in which the Lord wrought for them a mighty deliverance.

But the night which *we* commemorate is vastly more solemn and important. Therefore its symbol is correspondingly more sacred. The Scriptures impressively fasten our attention upon "*that same night* in which He was betrayed." Note the records given us in the four Gospels. "Now when *even* was come" (Matt. xxvi. 20). "And in the *evening* He cometh with the twelve" (Mark xiv. 17). "Likewise also the cup *after supper*" (Luke xxii. 20). "He (Judas) then having received the sop went immediately out: AND IT WAS NIGHT" (John xiii. 30).

There is no need to trace here the events of that night of the betrayal of the Lord Jesus. We all know that it was occupied wholly with His agony in the garden of Gethsemane and His sufferings at the hands of His enemies. How can any one suppose it to be a matter of indifference whether the feast appointed "in that same night" be observed in the night or in the morning? This is a matter in regard to which we have no right to indulge in suppositions. Our part is to "do" the appointed thing, in the appointed way, at the appointed time. If we do

so there will be no doubt that we are in the Lord's order. But if we consent to changes which men have made, and for which no authority can be produced, then how can we assure our hearts that we are not grieving the Lord by altering His appointments?

As the passover supper was eaten in preparation for departure from Egypt, so the Lord's Supper is eaten in readiness for departure from this scene of His sufferings. "Ye do shew the Lord's death *till He come.*" In the grouping of events connected with the Supper, God puts nothing but that Supper between the death of the Lord and His coming again. The feast of remembrance is for the period of His absence; for it is the absent who need to be, and who wish to be (if they love us), recalled to our memory. His absence makes that period "night." We watch and wait in the *night* of His absence, longing and looking for the *morning* of His appearing. "The night is far spent, and the day is at hand" (Rom. xiii. 12). But "we are not of the night nor of darkness" (1 Thess. v. 5). We know that the Day is coming and is near. "Ye see the day approaching" (Heb. x. 25). But, so long as the night lasts, we eat the Lord's Supper, and thus we continually

announce the fact of His death. The significance of the symbol demands that the Supper be eaten at night.

Moreover, there is something in the fact that all the affairs of the day, and especially all the eating that pertains to this life, are done and are out of the way. All the day's business being over, the Lord's people gather around *His* Table, and eat *His* Supper, with nothing ahead of them but the morning that is to come. It was "after Supper" (Luke xxii. 20); "when He had supped" (1 Cor. xi. 25). Obviously it is exceedingly unsuitable to eat the Lord's Supper in the morning, with all the meetings and other activities of the day yet before us. It should be the *last thing*. After *our* supper we should partake of *His* Supper. "I will sup with him and he with Me" (Rev. iii. 20).

We have thus, in support of the evening observance, the combined witness of the pass-over supper celebrated for 1500 years in anticipation of that night of His betrayal and sufferings; the example of the Lord in instituting the Supper; the instructions given by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. xi.; and the significance of the rite itself. But to these must be added the evidence of the name given to this feast,

“the Lord’s *Supper*” (1 Cor. xi. 20). That name definitely and clearly fixes the time when it should be eaten. It is expressly named a “supper,” the evening meal. Indeed the name alone is quite enough in itself for guidance as to the time of observance. Every time the rite is observed in the morning there is a contradiction of the name that has been Divinely given to it. Was not that name chosen with purpose, and to the intent that we should be thereby warned and guarded against the foreseen corruption of Rome? The Romanist can, to his own satisfaction, justify his action by an appeal to “church tradition” as giving warrant for the change of hour. But how can any valid reason be found by those who hold the Bible to be the sole and sufficient guide in all matters of Christian faith and practice?

Finally, we have the testimony of the solitary inspired record of the observance of the Lord’s Supper by disciples after His departure. This is found in Acts xx. At ver. 7 we read: “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and he continued his speech until midnight.”

This Scripture is the *only* warrant we have for meeting on the first day of the week for the purpose of breaking bread. If one Scripture be sufficient for the observance of the rite on the Lord's Day, and surely it is, though it does not perhaps forbid an observance on other days, then how can any who bow to the authority of the Scripture justify the disregard of the many concurring testimonies that fix the evening as the proper time for the Supper?

Ver. 9 tells us that "Paul was long preaching," and apparently his preaching was interrupted by the fall from the window of the young man Eutychus. This occurred, according to ver. 7, at midnight. After this, when Paul "was come up again, *and had broken bread,*<sup>s</sup> and eaten, and had talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed" (ver. 11).

This Scripture adds a strong testimony to those which have been already noted. It shows the practice in a Gentile assembly; and there has been since that time no authorization by the Lord of any change in the practice.

We believe that the event recorded in Luke xxiv. 29, 30 is also pertinent. Those two

\* *gentil: gentile, i. e. non-jew*

disciples had no thought of observing the Lord's Supper. Yet the record tells us that the Lord, *as they sat at meat*, did a thing quite out of the ordinary, and the Scripture specially directs our attention to it, showing it to be a matter of importance. "And it came to pass, as He sat at meat, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him." We observe that the Lord did all the four things that characterized His institution of the Supper, and did them in the same order. He took the loaf, He blessed it, He brake it, He gave it to them (compare Luke xxii. 19). And the result of this was that "their eyes were opened, and they knew Him." He deliberately chose this way of making Himself known as risen from the dead; and this was done on the first day of the week at evening. This brings forcibly to mind the Lord's promise with reference to the Ark, "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee" (Ex. xxv. 22).

In view of all this, what reasons can be advanced for changing the time of the Lord's Supper from evening to morning? The reasons usually given are based on convenience, on the

difficulty that some persons have of coming out in the evening, the desirability of having a Gospel meeting in the evening, and the like. But should those be regarded as valid reasons for changing the Lord's own appointments for *His* Supper? Rather we should rejoice to overcome difficulties and inconveniences in order to carry out the Lord's wishes.

Some brethren have sought to justify the practice of observing the Lord's Supper in the morning by pointing to the fact that, according to the Jewish reckoning, the day began in the evening, so that the Supper was originally appointed to be eaten at the beginning of the day. Hence it is urged that, since with us the morning is reckoned as the first part of the day, the Lord's Supper should now be eaten in the morning.

Manifestly those who advance this reason *accept the principle that we ought to be guided by the Word of God in this matter.* Hence the only question between us is whether there is Scriptural ground for the change from evening to morning as the time of observance of the Lord's Supper. The following points seem to us conclusive as to that question:—

1. In the days when our Lord was on earth the



morning meal was *breakfast* (John xxi. 12) and the evening meal was *supper* (1 Cor. xi. 20), precisely as with us. It is entirely immaterial whether the 24-hour period be reckoned as beginning in the evening or in the morning. The Lord's Supper was fixed with reference to the unchangeable ordinances of day and night, and not with reference to the arbitrary point of beginning of the 24-hour day. In fact, for the purpose of the present discussion, the Jews themselves began the reckoning of their day in the morning. Six o'clock a.m. was the "first hour," twelve noon the "sixth hour," and so on. Nothing has been changed that would lend the least support to such an innovation as shifting the supper-time to the morning. Men went forth to their work in the *morning* and at *night* returned to their supper and their bed in those days just as they do now.

2. The reckoning of the 24-hour day as beginning at midnight is a *heathen custom*. It has not the sanction of the Word of God; and surely no one will contend that the hour for eating the Lord's Supper should be shifted in deference to the customs of the Gentiles. The only question which could arise in this connection is whether the Lord's Day should not be reckoned by His

people as beginning Saturday evening. But that question need not now detain us.

3. If the Scriptures teach that the Lord's Supper ought to be eaten at the *beginning of the 24-hour day*, then the time of observance should be soon after midnight. Even if the principle under discussion were Scriptural, it would not sanction the observance of the Supper at from eleven to twelve o'clock in the forenoon, as is often done.

We must conclude that, to all who accept guidance from the Word of God in this matter, the proper time for the Lord's Supper is the evening. Those who accept Acts xx. 7 as fixing the proper day for the observance cannot consistently reject all the Scriptures that testify to the evening as the proper time of the day.

## II

### **This Bread—This Cup**

The second matter to be considered in connection with the Lord's Supper is with regard to the substances used in its observance. Emphasis is placed in the Scripture on "*this bread*," "*this cup*."

To the spiritually enlightened mind it will be

evident that the substances used in this service are not matters of indifference. They are symbols of that which is most holy, even the Body and the Blood of the Lord. Hence the symbols should properly represent that which is symbolized.

The Scriptures make it certain that the bread which the Lord took into His Hands and broke, and of which He said, "*This is My Body,*" was *unleavened bread*. None other was allowed on the table or in the house during the holy passover season. No leaven was permitted to be on the premises (Ex. xiii. 3, 7). Of course, when that strict command was given to the Israelites, the Lord had in view all the details of His redeeming work, including His last Supper with His disciples, and the repeated feast of remembrance whereof it was to be the pattern.

There is a profound reason for the selection of unleavened bread as the symbol of the Lord's body. Leaven, or ferment, is a mass of corrupted organic matter, infested with small active organisms known as "germs" or "microbes." When introduced into a large mass of uncorrupted matter, as dough or grape-juice, these germs multiply and spread through the entire mass, generating gas, which, in the case of dough,

distends it, imparting lightness to the bread, and in the case of wine imparting intoxicating properties. Hence, leaven is everywhere in Scripture the type of *the working of evil*, whether in the heart of man or in doctrine (as "the leaven of the Pharisees," and "the leaven of the Sadducees," see Matt. xvi. 6-12). Leaven was therefore rigidly excluded from all the offerings which typify the sacrifice of Christ (Lev. ii. 11, vi. 17, x. 12). On the other hand, it was allowed in the two wave-loaves that were waved before the Lord on the feast of Pentecost (Lev. xxiii. 17), because those loaves represented the redeemed sinners who are saved through the sacrifice of Christ.

There is no need to make an exhaustive study of the subject of leaven, since it is well understood to be the Scriptural type of sin or evil in its active working, stealthily and covertly spreading corruption "till the whole is leavened."

It is clear then that unleavened bread is a fitting type of the Man Jesus Christ, in Whom is no sin; and that leavened bread is the appropriate type of the corrupted nature of the children of Adam.

This surely is of importance. God gives us a symbol beautifully expressive of the immaculate

purity of the One Who says of Himself, "I am the Bread of life." "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" (John vi. 35, 51). If this be the true import of the symbol, then none who love the Lord, and who have regard to the vital truth of His sinlessness as man, would willingly change it; and certainly it is a material change to substitute the common leavened bread, which in the Scripture stands as God's type of sinful human nature.

In Gen. xviii. we find at least a suggestion, if not something more, of the fitness of using unleavened bread in connection with that which is offered to the Lord. When the Lord appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre, Sarah was bidden to "make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes on the hearth" (ver. 6). The next time we read of the "three measures of meal" is where the Lord tells of a woman hiding leaven therein, till the whole was leavened (Matt. xiii. 33). This foretells the steady progress of corruption in doctrine throughout this age.

In Ex. xxxiv. 25, we read the commandment,

“Thou shalt not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning.” This forbids the association of the blood of God’s sacrifice with leaven. That blood was but an emblem of the blood of Christ, God’s true Sacrifice. Likewise the fruit of the vine in the communion cup is an emblem of the blood of Christ. Association with leaven is manifestly unsuitable in this case also. The prohibition against allowing the sacrifice of the passover to be kept until the morning contains a strong reminder that the night is the appointed time for observance of the feast.

We believe it to be unnecessary to dwell at length upon the question of leaven; for surely it will suffice for our purpose to call attention to the Scriptural significance of leavened and unleavened bread, and to remind the spiritual reader that the difference between those substances represents, according to the mind of God and the clear teaching of the Holy Scriptures, the immeasurable difference between the corrupted nature of the first man, and the holy incorruptible nature of the Second Man, who is “the Lord from heaven.” Those who have learned the significance of the symbol would never be

consenters to the substitution of that which stands for corrupted human nature. The extraordinary care which God has taken (beginning fifteen hundred years before the Lord's Supper was appointed) to ensure that all leaven should be excluded, not merely from the bread used, but even from the very houses of the people, should teach us how essential it is, in His eyes, that the appropriate symbol of Christ's holy Body should be preserved from change or substitution.

We submit for the consideration of the spiritual reader that there is meaning in the words "*this bread*," and that any bread containing leaven is not "*this bread*," but a very different substance.

#### "THIS CUP"

For the reasons now to be stated, we are convinced that "the cup" used by the Lord contained the unaltered "fruit of the vine," though it is a fact that the evidence for this is not so clear as that for the exclusion of leaven from the bread. It is remarkable and significant that the word "wine" is never once employed in the Scriptures in connection with the Lord's Supper. The word used is always the "cup." The word "wine" is ambiguous, being used both of the fermented, intoxicating

article, and also of the harmless, non-alcoholic "fruit of the vine."

The Lord Himself defined what was in the cup as "the fruit of the vine" (Luke xxii. 18), which is the pure and direct product of the vine, given by God Himself (Ps. civ. 15); whereas fermented wine is charged with a poisonous and injurious substance—alcohol. It is of the "fruit of the vine" that the Lord said: "*This* cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you." Can we properly take those words as descriptive of a substance which is different in its nature and in its effects from the fruit of the vine? Can we properly apply them to a substance which has been the cause of untold misery and wickedness?

The meaning of the term "fruit of the vine" seems to be indicated by the dream of the chief butler, which Joseph interpreted. The butler said: "In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; and in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes. And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes *and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup*, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand" (Gen. xl. 9-11). This was



“the fruit of the vine,” pressed into the cup. This is what is pressed into the cup which the Lord puts into our hands. “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?”

There are, in this incident, many strong shadows of Christ in His humiliation and sufferings. Joseph was in prison sharing the condemnation of two malefactors, one of whom was subsequently saved while the other perished. This recalls the fact that our Lord suffered between two thieves, one of whom was saved. The “three days” after which the chief butler was raised up out of prison, suggest resurrection. Joseph’s words, “But think on me,” recall the Saviour’s wish to be remembered.

The fate of the chief baker presents a marked contrast. It is the first reference in Scripture to one who was made a curse by being hung on a tree (ver. 19). His flesh was eaten by the fowls of the air, the type of evil spirits (Matt. xiii. 19; Rev. xix. 17, 18). Whereas, in the Lord’s Supper we commemorate the death of that Holy One who gives to His redeemed people His flesh to eat.

Not only has the Lord likened Himself to bread, but He also said, “I am the true vine”

(John xv. 1). Therefore "the fruit of the vine" fitly symbolizes His "precious blood." Those two substances are therefore set apart as symbols of His spotless nature and holy life.

Moreover, among the miracles that He wrought were the multiplying of the *bread* to feed the multitudes, and the turning of water into *wine* to supply the lack at the wedding feast. This gives a special prominence and significance to those substances.

Not only is "the fruit of the vine" expressly and most fittingly made the symbol of "the precious blood of Christ"; but the leavened (fermented) wine is the fitting type of the impure blood or life ("the blood is the life") of sinful men. This is indicated by the prophetic passage in Isa. lxiii., where Christ is pictured as coming from the enemies' stronghold, Bozrah, having His garments stained with blood as one that has trodden the wine-press. In that passage the words "dyed garments" are literally *leavened* garments. Thus the blood of sinners is said to be "leavened," or, in plain speech, corrupted.

It is a remarkable and instructive fact that both the substances employed in the Lord's Supper are found in each of two different

states or conditions, according as they have or have not been subjected to the action of leaven or ferment; *and there are no other substances in common use of which this is true.*

So, answering to this fact, is the further fact that the nature of man is found in *two distinct states or conditions* according as it has or has not been affected by the action of sin. In Adam and his race the nature of man is found in a state of corruption. In the Man Jesus Christ it is found pure and uncorrupted. Sin never existed in Him, or in anywise defiled Him.

The Devil is the arch-corrupter of the work of God. Again we would recall the words of the Apostle, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be *corrupted* from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 3).

One effect of Satan's subtilty is seen in the way he has beguiled Christians in regard to the two Christian ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism witnesses to the total ruin of man, and the believing sinner, by that rite, confesses himself justly deserving of death.

The significance of the rite requires that the confessed sinner suffer himself to be put under the water—"buried in baptism" (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12).<sup>1</sup>

But the Devil, who is the author of sin, belittles sin and its consequences. He beguiles men by his subtilty into the comfortable notion that the state of man is *not after all very bad*. He does not need to be buried as one *dead* in trespasses and sins. A *little* water sprinkled on his head will meet all the requirements of the case.

Baptism relates to the sinner; and the corruption of that ordinance exalts man, belittling sin. But the Lord's Supper relates to Christ; so the Devil's aim here is to drag it down. The facts represented at the Lord's Table require that the bread and wine be both unleavened. If such be indeed the case, then it would seem that the enemy has succeeded in misleading the saints so that the great majority see no unfitness in employing substances which symbolize corrupted human nature.

<sup>1</sup> *Baptism: Its Place and Importance in Christianity, with a letter Concerning Household Baptism.* Paper, 1s. net (post free, 1s. 3d.); cloth, 1s. 6d. net (post free, 1s. 9d.). *Concerning Household Baptism.* May be had separately at 3d. net (post free, 4d.). Morgan & Scott Ltd.

## CONCLUSION



### DIFFICULTIES EXAMINED

**C**ERTAIN difficulties in regard to the use of the unfermented fruit of the vine at the Lord's Table have been brought to our notice, and as those difficulties have weight with some who take this subject to heart, they deserve a careful examination in the light of Scripture.

1. It is said that unfermented grape-juice would not have been available at Passover season, as that was about six months after the vintage. But this assumes that no method was known to the ancients for preserving the juice of the grape from fermentation. We have no warrant for making this assumption. On the contrary, it has been positively asserted (though the writer has not had opportunity to examine the evidence upon which it is based) that the preservation of grape-juice was well understood and extensively practised by the ancients. It is at least improbable that they were ignorant

of methods for preserving unchanged one of their commonest products. Indeed it is likely that their knowledge of treating the product of the vine was more, rather than less, extensive than ours.

2. Reference is made to the fact that in 1 Cor. xi. 21 some of those who gathered to observe the Lord's Supper were reprov'd for being "drunken," indicating the use of fermented wine. But can this be taken as a warrant for the use of intoxicating wine at the Lord's Table? What those Corinthians did is not presented as an example to be copied, but to be avoided; and certainly they would not have incurred reproof for drunkenness had they used the unfermented fruit of the vine. It is by no means certain from this Scripture that those whom Paul rebuked were made drunk by that which was used to symbolize the blood of the Lord, *much less* that the use of intoxicating wine for that purpose was sanctioned. The reference in 1 Cor. xi. 21 is to each one eating before others "*his own* supper." The preceding verse says that "this is *not* to eat the Lord's Supper."

3. It is pointed out that the case of fermented wine differs materially from that of leavened

bread in that nothing needs be added to the former in order to produce fermentation (which indeed is difficult to prevent), whereas, in order to make leavened bread it is necessary to introduce the leaven into the dough. And in this connection it is noted that, while the Scriptures give great prominence to leaven as a type of the active principle of evil, when the leaven is used in connection with bread, nothing is said as to the effect of leaven or ferment upon the fruit of the vine. No typical significance is given to fermented wine, and its use in the offerings is not prohibited.

On the contrary, attention is called to Num. xxviii. 7, where, in the directions given for the drink-offering that pertained to the continual daily burnt-offering, the Israelites were commanded to use "strong wine." Assuming that by "strong wine" was meant wine containing alcohol (the product of fermentation), it is urged that we have here a clear case in which leavened bread was prohibited and fermented wine allowed.

This reason would have considerable force were it not for the impressive fact that, in every Scripture which speaks of the Lord's Supper, the word "wine" is avoided. Were

that word used to define the substance appointed as a symbol of the blood of the Lord, we might properly draw inferences from the directions given for the drink-offerings in which "wine" was used. But the fact that, in the Scriptures that speak of the Lord's Supper, the word "wine," though one of the common words of the Bible, does not once occur, challenges our attention; and certainly it admonishes us to recognize a distinction between this symbol and the common "wine." It is for us to discern the significance of this remarkable fact. May we not perceive it in the frequent use of the word "wine" to typify that which is distinctly *evil*? (see, for example, Deut. xxxii. 33; Prov. xx. 1; Jer. li. 7; Rev. xvii. 2; xviii. 3). In view of such expressions as "Their *wine* is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps," and "The inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the *wine* of her fornication," we should not be surprised that the Lord avoided using the word "wine" in designating the symbol for that which is most holy,—the blood of the New Covenant, which was shed for the remission of sins. For a thing so special and so sacred we should expect a special symbol; and this expectation is met in the fact that the peculiar



expression used by our Lord, and used in this connection only,—“the fruit of the vine,”—describes a substance which appropriately symbolizes His precious blood, a substance which is not “the poison of dragons,” and which does not “make drunk.” We should be very slow to accept the view that the Word of God selects the same identical substance to typify both the fornication of the great harlot and of the blood of Christ.

It should be noted that the “strong wine” of the offering spoken of in Num. xxviii. 7, was *not to be drunk* by the priests in the holy place, but was to be “poured out unto the Lord for a drink offering.” For our guidance in the matter into which we are inquiring a far more pertinent Scripture is Lev. x. 9–12, which gives directions for the *eating and drinking* of the priests in the holy place. They were to eat of the meat offering “*without leaven* beside the altar: *for it is most holy*” (ver. 12). The reason for not eating leaven is distinctly indicated—namely, because it symbolizes that which is unholy. And this is the direction as to wine: “Do not drink *wine* nor *strong drink*, thou nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die” (ver. 9). And again the reason is distinctly stated: “And that ye may

put difference between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean" (ver. 10). In both English and American R.V., and in Rotherham's Version, the rendering of Num. xxviii. 7 is "strong drink," instead of "strong wine"; and as this is undoubtedly the correct rendering, it still further removes the passage from application to our present subject; for no one would contend for the use of "strong drink" at the Lord's Table.

Doubtless the question will arise in many minds, Why is this point left in obscurity in the Scriptures? Why are we not plainly directed to use the unfermented juice of the grape, if that were the Lord's wish? In answer to this question we would suggest that, in this and in similar cases, the obscurity (which of course is intentional) has for its object to provoke diligent effort on our part to seek the mind of the Lord. The indifferent will not make the effort required for this; so that a test is hereby afforded as to whether or not we take the matter sufficiently to heart to seek the Lord's Will concerning it. We may confidently expect that light will be given to those who are willing to change their ways, if necessary, in order to conform them to the will of God.

Furthermore, the Lord's Supper was not to be confined (as were the drink-offerings) to the Israelites,—a people dwelling in a hot climate and habituated to the free use of light wines. It was for all the world. And, of course, the Lord foresaw its observance in countries where the prevalence of drunkenness was to become the prolific cause of crime, misery, and unspeakable degradation. This is a matter which touches the consciences of many saints; and even if by some fellow-saints their consciences are regarded as "weak," nevertheless they are entitled to consideration on the principle of 1 Cor. viii. 9–13. Now that the whole subject can be viewed in the light of Scripture and of experience, and now that the unfermented fruit of the vine is obtainable in most places where the Lord's Supper is observed, there is no reason why the "weak conscience" should be offended by "this liberty," which is claimed by some, to use fermented "wine" at the Lord's Table.

### THE DECIDING RULE

This brings us finally to the principle given in the Scriptures for our guidance in cases where there is a difference of opinion, such as exists

in the present case. That principle is *submission* or *yieldingness* (see Rom. xiv. 21 and 1 Cor. viii. 12). In regard to the various points examined in this pamphlet, all who are interested in the Lord's Supper would agree that it is entirely proper to observe that ordinance in the evening, and to use unleavened bread and unfermented fruit of the vine, as the symbols of the body and blood of the Lord. The choice then lies between that which offends the consciences of some believers and that which offends the consciences of none (for we know of none who deem it wrong to observe the Lord's Supper in the evening, and with unleavened substances). In such a case it is easy to determine which of the two parties should claim and enjoy the privilege of yielding to the other.

## APPENDIX



SINCE the printing of the second edition of this booklet further consideration of the entire subject has been necessitated in consequence of letters received by the author, some of which have contained detailed discussions of the points dealt with in the booklet. Some of the matters thus brought forward have not been discussed in the foregoing text. Therefore, in order to cover the ground fully, the replies given to several highly esteemed correspondents are now added to the booklet; and we earnestly ask attention to their contents on the part of those who bear the responsibilities of oversight in the congregations of the Lord's people.

Much of the criticism of the booklet has been directed to those parts thereof that refer to the significance of the Passover, and its relation to the Lord's Supper. But the conclusions we

have reached on the main points discussed (the time of observance and the symbols) do not rest at all on the views expressed on the Passover, or on any inferences whatever drawn from Old Testament types and shadows. We find, in the plain clear words of the New Testament Scriptures relating directly to the Lord's Supper, ample directions to guide in making the necessary material arrangements for that feast of remembrance. Nothing has yet been brought forward which we could accept as a satisfactory reason for departing from the pattern found in those Scriptures. Such reasons as have been advanced have been carefully weighed, and the reader will be able, from the contents of this pamphlet, to form his own opinion as to their value.

STURRY, KENT, *March 4, 1915.*

DEAR MR. D—,—I am glad to have Mr. —'s comments on my pamphlet on the Lord's Supper, as I have felt that from him we should be likely to get the best reasons that can be advanced in support of the custom of observing the Lord's Supper in the morning, and in support of the use of leavened substances. And now may grace be sought and found to the end

that the ensuing discussion may be to the glory of the Lord and the edifying of His Church.

As was to have been expected, I have found help and instruction in Mr. ——'s comments. For example, his remarks on the significance of the word "blessed," in the statement that the Lord took a loaf and "blessed, and break it," are important; for it is needful to guard against the thought that the loaf was the object of the blessing, and that thus it (the loaf) acquired some new virtue in itself. But inasmuch as these comments do not touch the main points under consideration, I will not dwell upon them at this time.

As to the main points, we have for our guidance the fact that the Lord's Supper is a *symbolic* act. Its value lies entirely in the fact that it represents something infinitely holy and precious. Each item of it, the loaf, the cup, the breaking of the bread, the eating, the drinking, is the representation of a great spiritual reality. This is well understood by all who are fit to bear responsibility in the churches of God. Hence, in making preparation for the Lord's Supper, the elders, who are charged with the responsibilities of overseership, must have regard to the significance of the various details,

according to the Scriptures, to the end that the symbols may correctly and scripturally represent the corresponding spiritual realities. Probably no one who is qualified for overseership would dissent from the foregoing proposition. None would claim that the selection of symbols that are to represent the body and blood of the Lord should be according to human ideas of suitability. God alone can determine what is appropriate for such a purpose. We *must* look, then, to His Word, and to that alone, for the information needed in making the necessary arrangements; and most certainly it should be a matter of the deepest concern to ascertain the mind of the Lord, and to follow it in every detail in which He has been pleased to reveal it.

The application of this simple and indisputably sound principle will suffice to settle every question. Take the matter of the loaf. What sort of a loaf shall be prepared? That question must be settled. If all bread had the same significance in Scripture the question would not arise. But it is a matter of elementary Biblical knowledge that there are two distinct kinds of bread mentioned in the Scriptures,—leavened and unleavened,—each of which is a symbol. It is well known that these symbols respectively



represent, according to the revealed mind of God, things *directly opposite in character*. Leavened bread stands in God's sight for that which has been corrupted by sin; and unleavened bread stands, in His sight, for that which is pure and uncorrupted. In the light of this knowledge the overseers of the assembly have to act in the choice of a loaf to be placed on the Lord's Table as the symbol of His body. Shall they, in the light of that knowledge, reject God's symbol of uncorrupted humanity? Shall they deliberately select the substance which stands in God's mind for sin-corrupted flesh, and say that will do well enough to represent the Lord's body? If a student of the Word of God were asked to search in it for the substance that is most unsuited to symbolize the body of the Lord,—for the substance that stands for the *opposite* of all that the Lord Jesus was as Man in flesh,—would he not find that leavened bread is the substance that answers to that description? Undoubtedly. What reason then can possibly be deemed sufficient to justify that choice? I have heard of none, and can conceive of none.

But it is to the question of the proper time of day for the observance of the Lord's Supper

that Mr. — devotes nearly the whole of his paper. Here again a choice *needs must be made* by those who take the oversight; and here again, if the choice is controlled by Scripture, there is no room for uncertainty as to the appropriate time of day. Those who seek to know the Lord's mind on this point could ask and desire nothing more satisfactory for their guidance than the fact that the Lord instituted His Supper in the evening, and that, in every reference to it in the Scriptures, mention is made that the observance was in the evening. Here is the best possible reason for choosing the evening as the time for observance of the Lord's Supper.

What reasons, then, are given by those who depart from the scriptural pattern so clearly set before us, and who fix the forenoon as the time for the observance? When we ask for those reasons and subject them to examination we find, in the first place, a remarkable and very suggestive lack of agreement among the upholders of the prevailing custom. Being lately in receipt of voluminous comments from various leaders, I am in a position to observe this discordance. And how could there fail to be a clashing of reasons, when these are of necessity drawn from

sources other than the Scriptures that relate to the Lord's Supper?

In my pamphlet I have stated the reasons that had been given me up to the time of publication, and which had been advanced by prominent leaders among the Christians with whom Mr. — is himself identified. Yet of those reasons he says: "These are all *quite new to me*," and "I join Mr. M. in his *repudiation* of them" (italics mine).

Mr. — does well, I am sure, to "repudiate" those reasons; but he would do better to repudiate also the traditional practice for the support of which they have been advanced. Let us see, then, whether Mr. — can give a better reason than those he repudiates. What reason does *he* give? He tells us that the Lord instituted His Supper in the evening because

"The evening was the only time available in the busy lives of the Lord and His Apostles, as witness the fact that Nicodemus had his interview with the Lord by night, and the statement that during the day 'they had no leisure so much as to eat' (Mark vi. 31)."

Here we have an *assertion*—namely, that the Lord instituted His Supper by night because He

could not command the time to do it by day (leaving to be inferred that otherwise He would have instituted it in the morning)—and we have also two items given in *proof* of that assertion: (1) the Nicodemus incident, and (2) the statement in Mark vi. 31. I challenge both the assertion and the alleged proofs; and am confident that a large majority of those who hold with Mr. — in the practice of morning observance will as unqualifiedly repudiate his reason as he has repudiated the reasons advanced by others.

In the first place, the idea that the Lord could not command *any hour of the day* that He desired, and that He deemed suitable, for the institution of His own memorial feast which was to be observed “till He come,” is an idea that falls to the ground of its own weight. Through all His life of untiring service in doing the Father’s will He was the absolute Master—never the creature—of all circumstances. Everything was done in exactly the right order, and at exactly the right time. No act or word could be taken out of its place of occurrence and re-located without marring the perfection of that perfect life. His Supper was not an exception. It occurred *at the time and place chosen by Him*;

and we are not without specific information showing the careful preparations He had made for a memorial that is of vastly greater importance than the Passover (see, for example, Luke xxii. 7-13). I am confident there be very few of those who know the Lord that will entertain for a moment the idea that, had He willed to institute His Supper in the morning, He could not have commanded the time, but was driven by stress of circumstances to institute it at a time of day from which He desired His people to depart when changes of conditions should make it "possible" for them to do so.

As to the Nicodemus incident little need be said. It plainly lends no support to the idea advanced by Mr. —. There is nothing to indicate that Nicodemus came to the Lord by night for the reason that the Lord was too busy to receive him by day. Many sought and found Him by day; and Nicodemus could have done so except he had reasons of his own for wishing the interview to be by night. The repeated mention of the fact that Nicodemus was the man who came to the Lord "by night" (John iii. 2, vii. 50, xix. 39), marks that incident as exceptional. But whatever inference may be drawn from it, we can most positively say it does not in the least

tend to prove that the Lord had no morning hour alone with His disciples when He might have instituted His Supper, especially after having left the country of Judea He went into "a country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and *there* abode with His disciples" (John xi. 54).

Referring now to Mr. —'s second item of proof (Mark vi. 31), I would point out that the words "they had no leisure so much as to eat" apply to the evening as well as to the morning. It does not say that the morning hours were any more crowded than the evening, or that they were any more free to eat in the evening than in the morning. Furthermore, those words tell only what the conditions were at that particular time and place, when "there were many coming and going." It was often so, no doubt, but not always. There were occasions—not a few—when He was alone with His disciples; and this must have been the case more frequently in the early morning hours than at any other time of the day. Plainly this Scripture lends not the slightest support to Mr. —'s contention.

Finally, if it were conceivable that mere stress

of circumstances compelled Him who is "Lord of all" to dislocate His own memorial Supper from the time of day which He would have preferred for its observance, we may be sure that every inspired reference to it would not in that case have contained mention of the fact that it was instituted and observed in the evening. Rather some word would have been given whereby simple-hearted believers might know that the Lord would have them disregard His example and observe the Supper in the forenoon.

Mr. — accounts for the Apostolic practice of breaking bread in the evening by saying that

"The disciples, dependants for the most part, and all of them engaged in 'the daily round of common task,' would not find it possible to gather earlier in the day."

No proof at all is given to show that the reason why the disciples of early days met in the evening for the breaking of bread was because it was not possible for them to gather earlier in the day. Whether or not they were more tightly bound than believers of later centuries to "the daily round of common task," it may nevertheless be that they observed the

Lord's Supper in the evening for the excellent reason that He Himself observed it in the evening.

It is hardly worth while to subject to rigid examination the assertion that there was then no opportunity, such as now exists in some places, for a morning gathering. But we would point out that, in the leisurely customs prevailing in Eastern countries in those days, it was easy to gather multitudes at all hours of the day. The Gospels and Acts abound in instances proving that such was the case not only in Judea, but also in Gentile countries. And furthermore, there was always available the early morning hours, before the labours of the day begin.

Speaking of conditions that prevail in England at the present time, Mr. — says:

“Thus, having the whole day (the first day of the week) at their disposal, Christians are able to conform to the goodly rule to put God first, to begin the day and week with His worship, and thereafter to go on to His service.”

Certainly it is a goodly rule for every Christian to put God first, and to begin the day with Him. But such “rule” must needs



be individual and self-imposed; and it is to be hoped that every Christian begins the day with God many hours before the conventional "morning meeting." Then there is also the family gathering, the hour for which is under the rule of the head of the house. But for the assembly none can put forth a "goodly rule" to which the members should "conform" except by the authority of Christ, the Head of the Church. In any matter that concerns the Church, and in regard to which He has indicated His mind, there can be no "goodly rule" that does not conform thereto. This rule is not according to Scripture. Therefore it is of no authority for Christians.

It is implied in Mr. —'s statement that conformity to this "goodly rule" was what the Lord really desired from the start, and that the reason why He did not impose it upon the Church at the beginning was that, in their circumstances, they were not "able to conform" to it; but we have shown that such a supposition cannot possibly stand.

Furthermore, if the rule laid down by Mr. — were really of Divine authority, and hence were binding on the Church, then the practice followed by those Christians with whom Mr. —

is identified does not conform thereto; for they do not observe the Lord's Supper at the beginning of the day, but towards noon. The only persons who conform to this "rule" are the Romanists and Ritualists. And this leads to the observation that, if it had been the wish of the Lord that His people should begin the day by gathering to break bread in remembrance of Him, it would have been just as "possible" then as now to have appointed an hour before the labours of the day begin.

What force then has Mr. —'s reason for putting the observance of the Lord's Supper in the forenoon of the day? I think I do him no injustice in saying it has less than none. The impression it makes on my mind (and I started my examination of this subject with the same prejudice Mr. — has for the morning observance) is to deepen the conviction that we ought, in this matter, to adhere to the Scripture pattern. Those who settle down to that conclusion can state solid and satisfactory reasons for their position, and can state them in few and simple words. They need only say—

*First.* In every inspired reference to the

Lord's Supper mention is made of the fact that it was observed in the evening.

*Second.* Unleavened bread was on the table (Mark xiv. 12) when the Lord instituted His Supper; and it was a loaf of unleavened bread that He held in His hand when He said, "This is My body." Moreover, leavened bread is the well-known symbol of corrupted man. It is, in the light of Scripture, the most unsuitable substance that could be chosen to represent the Lord's body.

*Third.* In all inspired references to the Lord's Supper the common word "wine" is avoided. Intoxicating "wine" is the product of fermentation produced by ferment or leaven. The Lord defines what was in the cup by an expression not used elsewhere in Scripture—"the fruit of the vine"—which indicates the unaltered juice of the grape rather than intoxicating "wine."

These reasons can be grasped by all, and are easily kept in mind. They constitute a solid basis of clear scriptural reasons upon which the heart and mind can serenely rest. On the other hand, that which is advanced in support of the traditional custom is a mass of reasonings, difficult to understand and to keep in mind,

and often so contradictory that the grounds upon which some rest their conclusions are wholly repudiated by others.

The utmost that Mr. — and those who hold with him in this matter can contend for is that it is immaterial whether the Lord's Supper be eaten in the morning or the evening. In the nature of the case that conclusion cannot possibly have anything better to rest upon than surmisings and reasonings ; and there are many Christians who will never be satisfied with such ground for the arrangements that are necessary for carrying out the Lord's wish in regard to His own appointed memorial.

Mr. — says that I have not given to this subject, or to any part of it, "the consideration it certainly deserves." Undoubtedly it deserves far more consideration than I have given it, notwithstanding that, through the full and detailed discussions of the subject that have come to me from various sources, I have enjoyed exceptional opportunities for considering what could be advanced in support of the existing custom. Let me suggest, in reply to the above statement, that, for reasons already set forth, there is no need of deep study and of making nice distinctions in order to ascertain the revealed mind of

the Lord as to the points under discussion. As is always the case in matters that are intended to be understood by all classes of people and all grades of intelligence, the indications needed for our guidance are found on the *surface* of Scripture, and they are so simple and so plain that wayfaring men, though fools, need not err in regard thereto.

On the other hand, they who set those indications aside, refusing their guidance, and who look for clues pointing in another direction, must of necessity search far afield and dig deep in order to find something that will serve their purpose. From the letters that have reached me I am satisfied that the custom under discussion was not adopted, by those who now defend it, as the result of any examination whatever of the Scriptures that bear upon it. They have first accepted it without inquiry, and naturally enough in view of the many godly and well-instructed Christians who have conformed and given their endorsement to it. And now that the custom which they accepted without inquiry is called in question, they are seeking eagerly for reasons, scripturally grounded, whereby it may be maintained. But none can be found.

How then does the matter stand? On one side, we have the example of Christ and His Apostles recorded for our benefit in the Scriptures. On the other, we have a traditional custom of very questionable origin, supported only by human reasonings. Why should we not follow the former?—Sincerely yours in Christ.

*8th February 1915.*

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST,—I have to acknowledge gratefully your letter of the 19th of January, with the accompanying article on “The Lord’s Supper: the Symbols and Time of its Observance.” I am glad indeed to consider what you say on this subject, and the more so because of the brotherly and affectionate tone of your letter. I feel confident that any discussion conducted in the spirit manifested by you will lead to profitable results.

In your article you ask: “Can it be profitable to raise the question about the Symbols, whether they be leavened or unleavened, fermented or unfermented?” This question seems to declare the purpose that prompted your article, namely, to find some reason why we should not concern ourselves about the symbols used on the Lord’s Table, but should go on indifferently using any

kind of bread or wine that comes to hand. To that I would reply :

*First.* It is impossible to avoid "raising the question." It lies plainly before us, and cannot be avoided. The very fact that a symbol is used makes it important that the symbol should correspond with the thing represented. We *cannot* ignore the significance of leaven. It has been brought to our attention again and again. We know perfectly well what it represents in Scripture—*evil*. Knowing this fact, we *cannot* close our eyes to its significance at the Lord's Table. How can one who has learned from the Word of God that leavened bread stands in God's mind for that which contains corruption, be satisfied to have that symbol to represent the Lord's Body on His Table?

We must, therefore, accept the fact that the question *has been* raised, and must face the responsibility of deciding it according to the Scriptures.

*Second.* I would lovingly urge that it is *due to the Lord* to inquire *most carefully* into all that concerns His Supper. Indeed, I do not see how you can permit yourselves to encourage an

attitude of indifference on this subject. Your argument will appeal strongly to all who are indifferent, and to all who do not wish to take trouble, or to change their ways. But surely, in that which concerns the Lord, it should be a delight to us to trace out all the details of the pattern that can be found in the Word of God, and to conform thereto. If it was a legal commandment, to be obeyed under penalty, we should expect the most explicit and precise language. But in a matter of the fulfilment of the wishes of One whom we desire to please, we should seek diligently for the expression of His mind, and particularly in regard to that which closely concerns His Person and work.

You evidently feel obliged to say (after urging what you can to the contrary) that you do not "make a point of using *leavened* bread." In other words, you do not find anything in the Scriptures telling you that *leavened* bread should be used to represent the Lord's Body. To you it is immaterial what sort of bread is used. That being the case, I would ask what reason you can advance why we should not use *what the Lord Himself used*, and what, according to the clear teaching of Scripture, fitly symbolizes



*His* Body, in whom is no sin? Is there any reason for not doing so, except that it involves a little more trouble to us?

*Third.* The question having been raised, it has become a matter of conscience to many of the Lord's people that the appropriate symbols of the Body and Blood of the Lord should be used on His Table. What is to you a matter of indifference is to them a matter of conscience. You have therefore to consider not only the teaching of Scripture, but also the conscience of your brethren. They cannot, in good conscience, use leavened substances, whereas you can, in good conscience, use unleavened substances. You see no unfitness in them, only you consider it not necessary or important that they be used. How shall you act in such a case? I have dealt with this point in a revised edition of my pamphlet about to be issued, whereof I beg your careful consideration.

Turning now to the argument advanced by you in support of the view that the kind of bread is immaterial, it appears that you ignore completely the scriptural significance of leaven, also the fact that leavened bread was positively

forbidden at Passover Season (the season of the death of the Lamb of God, which death *we* announce, not once a year only, but *as oft as we eat this bread*), and also the fact that the Lord used unleavened bread in instituting His Supper. Surely, if these facts are of no importance (and to me they seem to be controlling) you should show us why. Your failure to notice them indicates to me that you have no reply to make to them.

All that you are able to advance in support of your view is an inference drawn from the Greek word *artos*, which, as you rightly say, signifies a *loaf*, and which might mean either a loaf of leavened bread or of unleavened bread. Your idea is that, if unleavened bread were intended, the word *azumos* would have been used. But the fact is that the word *azumos* does not mean "unleavened bread," as you say. It is an *adjective*, meaning unleavened, and it is used in the New Testament only in the plural, signifying unleavened *things*. The word *artos*, on the other hand, is a noun, meaning a *loaf* or *cake*. It is used, as you know, because there is a precious truth symbolized by the "one loaf." That word alone does not tell us whether the loaf is leavened or unleavened. But other

Scriptures supply that information clearly ; so that we are not left in any uncertainty. I cannot see, dear brethren, that your view (that the kind of loaf is a matter of indifference) gains any support from this argument.

You further say that we are to keep the Lord's Supper with the "unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. v. 8). It should be noted that the Apostle is not speaking in this passage of the Lord's Supper, but of the purging out of wickedness from the assembly ; though the passage does indeed contain a forcible reminder of the significance of leaven. Further, it should be noted that here, as elsewhere, the word "unleavened" is in the plural, so that it could not be followed by the word "loaf." Moreover, when we partake of the Lord's Supper, we do not break and eat a loaf of sincerity and truth, but a loaf of *bread*. And that loaf stands for the Lord's Body. *What sort of a loaf, then, should it be?* Can you have any doubt how that question should be answered?

Let us consider this passage for a moment. It tells us that the spiritual realities symbolized in our eating the feast are "sincerity and truth," which are characteristics of Christ ; and it reminds us further that *unleavened substances* are

the symbols thereof. In the light, then, of this Scripture, what shall we choose when we are responsible to place upon the Lord's Table substances that are to represent His Body and Blood? There are two kinds of bread, and each kind is, in Scripture, a symbol. One is the symbol of that which characterized the Manhood of Jesus Christ (sincerity, truth, incorruption). The other is the symbol of sinful men, containing that which represents evil. We are responsible to select between these two; and after the matter has been brought to our attention, we cannot escape making a *deliberate* and *intelligent* choice. Can you, under these circumstances, advocate the choice of that which typifies evil, and put that symbol on the Lord's Table to represent His Body? And would you eagerly catch at something in the Scriptures—a shade of meaning of a Greek word, or some other equally shadowy thing—to justify the deliberate choice of the symbol of evil to represent that which is *most holy*? I am sure that, when you face the question out, as it ought to be faced, you will conclude that the simple and only satisfactory thing is to choose the symbol that fitly represents the Lord's Body. In so doing you cannot make a mistake.

What you say about "*the cup*" does not seem to call for further comment. The meaning of the Hebrew word *yayin* does not settle anything, seeing that no word of equivalent meaning is used in connection with the Lord's Supper. See further on this point the second edition of my booklet.

As to the *time of observance*. I must call attention to the fact that, in this case also, you completely ignore the many and clear testimonies of God's Word that the "*Lord's Supper*" was instituted in the *evening*, and was, by the apostolic Church, observed in the evening. To support the radical change from evening to morning, you cite the words, "*As oft as ye eat,*" etc. This, you say, implies *frequency*. But I should say that whether or not it implies frequency is wholly beside the point. The question is, does it imply a change of the time of eating from evening to morning? How can you say so? Evenings are just as "*frequent*" as mornings. You eat your own supper doubtless with consistent "*frequency*," oftener probably than you eat the Lord's Supper. Yet you have not shifted *your own* supper to the morning? What reason is there for changing *His*? We

may very properly consult our own convenience in arranging for our own meals ; but as regards the *Lord's Supper*, I submit to your hearts and enlightened consciences, that we are *bound* to inquire whether *He has indicated His mind as to the time of observance*. In fact, *He has* done so, and with unmistakable clearness. Such being the undoubted fact (and you do not question it), there are some of His people who *cannot*, if they would, close their eyes to so plain a fact, and who *cannot* proceed according to their own wishes and convenience, just as if *He had not made known His pleasure in the matter*. Do you blame us for this ? Would you have us stifle the voice of our consciences ? And why ? For what are you contending ? It is not for the scriptural pattern, for obviously the Scripture is all against you. I cannot see that your contention is for anything more or other than for independence to observe the Lord's Supper according to the wishes or convenience of a majority of the people, rather than to follow the indications so plainly given to us in the Word of God. I cannot go with you in this.

Referring finally to Acts xx. 11 : whether or not the breaking of bread by Paul at midnight

was the observance of the Lord's Supper, or was merely (as you think) the taking of refreshment by Paul, the fact remains that, according to Acts xx. 7-12, when the disciples met on the first day of the week to break bread, they assembled *in the evening*. If some of us believe that this example has been recorded for our guidance, and if our hearts prompt us to follow it, can you see any valid ground of objection?

I beg of you a further and prayerful consideration of the whole subject, believing that, as the result, you will gladly sacrifice your own preferences in order to be in accord with your brethren who seek to follow the guidance of Scripture in this matter.

If you consider that anything I have urged herein is not in accordance with the Scriptures, I should be glad to have you point it out; and would be pleased to hear anything further that you may have to say on this important subject. —Sincerely and affectionately yours in Christ.