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### **Memorial**

#### **The Watchtower, March 15, 1954, p. 174**

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#### **The Watchtower, March 15, 1954, p. 187**

“Who may partake of the Lord’s evening meal? All sincere Christians? No. Why not? Because the context of the record of Jesus’ institution of the Memorial as well as the testimony of other scriptures show that it is limited to those who have the hope of sharing heavenly glory with Jesus Christ, which number the Scriptures show to be limited to 144,000. .. All men of good will, however, are welcome and should come and observe the celebration...How often and when should the Lord’s evening meal be celebrated? Regardless of how often others may profess to do so, there is no Scriptural warrant for doing so more than once a year, even as the Passover, commemorating the deliverance from Egypt, was observed once a year, and that on the night of their deliverance, Nisan 14. Since Jesus instituted his evening meal on the night of Nisan 14, it is but fitting that we continue to celebrate it on the same date.”

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**The Watchtower, April 1, 1960, p. 199**

“The Memorial’s unique feature is the passing of the unleavened bread and red wine to all in attendance. But do all in attendance partake of them? No; in fact, in many if not in most instances today no one will partake. Why is that? Because the Scriptures show that Jesus instituted the Memorial of his death with those with whom he had made a covenant for his heavenly kingdom”

**The Watchtower, February 15, 1985, p. 17**

“There is only a remnant of such spiritual sons now living, and these are the ones who properly partake of the emblems. This, then, accounts for the vast majority of Jehovah’s Witnesses being observers and not partakers.”

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of Nisan 14, A.D. 33. And while the various religious organizations of Christendom celebrate the "Lord's supper" semiyearly, quarterly, monthly, weekly, and even almost daily, yet in view of the fact that the passover, which commemorated the deliverance from Egypt, was celebrated only once a year and that on Nisan 14, it is reasonable to conclude, in the absence of any instructions to the contrary, that the Lord's evening meal also should be celebrated only once a year, on Nisan 14, to commemorate the deliverance provided by the death of the antitypical passover Lamb, Christ Jesus.

It was after the passover supper and after Jesus had dismissed Judas that he "took a loaf and, after saying a blessing, he broke it and, giving it to the disciples, he said: 'Take, eat. This means my body.'" (Matt. 26:26; John 13:21-30, NW) To which body was Jesus referring here? To his fleshly body? Hardly, for concerning it we read that not a bone was broken, whereas Jesus broke the loaf. (John 19:36) Rather, he was referring to his spiritual body, the Christian congregation, which in the Scriptures is termed a body or Christ's body more than forty-five times. That this is the correct conclusion is apparent from Paul's words: "The loaf which we break, is it not a sharing in the body of the Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, although many, are one body, for we are all partaking of that one loaf." Clearly the loaf pictures not Jesus' fleshly body but his body members, the Christian congregation.—1 Cor. 10:16, 17, NW.

By partaking of this loaf one says in effect, 'I profess to be a member of the body of Christ.' Since in the Scriptures yeast or ferment is a picture of sin and all passover bread had to be without yeast, this would picture the fact that those who are part of the spiritual body of Christ

will do their best to keep themselves free from sin and malice. Further this yeastless bread was also termed the "bread of affliction" because it was heavy, "sad" as it were, and reminded the Israelites of their sufferings in Egypt and of the great haste in which they left Egypt, so great that they did not have time to properly prepare their bread. It therefore also fittingly pictures the suffering that Christ's body members must endure.—1 Cor. 5:6-8; Deut. 16:3; 1 Pet. 2:21, NW.

After giving the disciples the loaf to eat, Jesus also "took a cup and, having given thanks, he gave it to them, saying: 'Drink out of it, all of you; for this means my "blood of the covenant" which is to be poured out in behalf of many for forgiveness of sins.'" (Matt. 26:27, 28, NW) Since drinking the cup means sharing with Christ, does that indicate that Christ's followers have a part in providing forgiveness of sins by their sacrifice? No, for the Scriptures show that only Christ could provide a ransom. (Ps. 49:6-9; John 1:29) But his followers can share in drinking the same cup that Jesus drank in the sense that this cup also pictures God's will for his servants, even as Jesus prayed on the night of his betrayal: "Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me. Yet, not as I will, but as you will."—Matt. 26:39, NW. See also Matthew 20:22.

The Scriptures tell us that the soul or life is in the blood. (Lev. 17:14) Blood poured out would therefore picture death. So those who drink of the cup at the Lord's evening meal confess thereby that they expect to die with Christ that they may share in his resurrection. (Phil. 3:7-11) With the arrival of God's kingdom, drinking of the fruit of the vine is also a symbol of sharing in Christ's joy.—Matt. 26:29; 25:21, 23, NW.

There Jehovah God gained an even greater victory over Satan and his demons in that they were unable to swerve Jesus, God's Son, from his course of faithfulness until death; thereby God through Jesus proved that the Devil was a liar when he boasted that God could not put a man on earth that would prove faithful to Him. And by that sacrificial death Jesus provided, not merely a temporary, religious, political and economic freedom and that of but one small nation, but he thereby opened the way for all mankind to be set free in God's due time from every kind of bondage.

Thus we see why Christ commanded his followers to commemorate his death by eating unleavened bread and red wine, symbols of his body and his blood. It was so that we should forcefully remind ourselves of the marvelous demonstration of the supremacy of Jehovah that took place at that time, as well as the wonderful expression of his justice and love; he having such respect for his righteous principles and such love for mankind as to be willing to offer up his only-begotten Son. Also it was that we should ever have a keen appreciation of what Christ Jesus did for us, the suffering and death that he was willing to experience so that we can become reconciled to God and gain everlasting life. And the Lord's evening meal should both make us want and help us to follow the example set by Jesus in keeping integrity against great odds.

More than that, the Lord's evening meal should be an occasion for self-examination as to whether or not the Christian partaking of the emblems does so in a manner worthy of the meal, even as Paul shows at 1 Corinthians 11:27-32. And, finally, it serves to impress all those who are of the spiritual body of Christ with their oneness: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a sharing in the cup of the Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not a shar-

ing in the body of the Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, although many, are one body, for we are all partaking of that one loaf."—1 Cor. 10:16, 17.

#### WHO AND WHEN?

Who may partake of the Lord's evening meal? All sincere Christians? No. Why not? Because the context of the record of Jesus' institution of the Memorial as well as the testimony of other scriptures show that it is limited to those who have the hope of sharing heavenly glory with Jesus Christ, which number the Scriptures show to be limited to 144,000. The facts show that today only a small remnant of that number, who began to be selected at Pentecost, A.D. 33, remains. All men of good will, however, are welcome and should come and observe the celebration, as for them also it calls to mind what Jehovah God and Jesus Christ did, and how they can show appreciation therefor.

How often and when should the Lord's evening meal be celebrated? Regardless of how often others may profess to do so, there is no Scriptural warrant for doing so more than once a year, even as the Passover, commemorating the deliverance from Egypt, was observed once a year, and that on the night of their deliverance, Nisan 14. Since Jesus instituted his evening meal on the night of Nisan 14, it is but fitting that we continue to celebrate it on the same date. Nisan is the first month of the Jewish lunar year and begins with the visible new moon nearest the spring equinox. This year Nisan 14 falls on March 23. Jehovah's witnesses throughout the world will heed Jesus' command to "do this in remembrance of me" by coming together after 6 p.m. at their Kingdom Halls to celebrate the Lord's supper. Associate with them and receive the blessings that such an attendance brings with it!

our gratitude for all he has done for us grows.

The same may also be said regarding Jesus Christ. In fact, it in particular highlights his course of action and what he did and will yet do for us. Although existing in God's form, the Word—as he was known before coming to earth—was willing to humble himself and become a man and suffer all manner of abuse upon earth while faithfully carrying out his commission to be a witness to the truth. He kept integrity even to the shameful and painful death on the torture stake. Jesus did all this out of love for us as well as out of love for his heavenly Father, thereby making His heart glad. At the Memorial his body that he gave and his blood that he shed for us are pictured by unleavened bread and red wine. How much we are indebted to him! Surely to have these truths so graphically called to our attention is another powerful reason why attending this Christian anniversary is a must for us!—Phil. 2:5-8.

The Lord's evening meal also causes us to grow in appreciation of what is required of us as Christians. We must imitate Jesus, as we read: "Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely." His example of keeping integrity in spite of temptation and persecution is set forth for us to follow. And as shown by Jesus' further remarks on that evening when he instituted the Memorial, as recorded at John, chapters 13 through 17, Christians must bear fruit and so prove themselves his disciples. They must abide in union with Christ, the Vine, and must love one another, even as Jesus loved them. By this fact alone, all men would recognize who truly were his followers. The Memorial, or Lord's evening meal, therefore causes us to examine ourselves

and serves to spur us on to greater efforts to imitate Jesus Christ in keeping integrity.—1 Pet. 2:21.

#### WHO MAY PARTAKE?

The Memorial's unique feature is the passing of the unleavened bread and red wine to all in attendance. But do all in attendance partake of them? No; in fact, in many if not in most instances today no one will partake. Why is that? Because the Scriptures show that Jesus instituted the Memorial of his death with those with whom he had made a covenant for his heavenly kingdom, the members of which are limited to 144,000. (Luke 22:28-30; Rev. 7:1-4; 14:1, 3) Last year, of the one and a quarter million in attendance, a mere one in eighty-eight partook. Only those partook who had a firm conviction that God was individually dealing with them as spiritual sons and who therefore had a sure hope of a heavenly destiny.—Rom. 8:15-25.

What about the rest? These are the "other sheep," the members of "a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations." Their hope is that of enjoying everlasting life in an earthly Paradise, for someday this earth will be filled with righteous creatures, all worshipping Jehovah God. However, though not partaking of the emblems, they heed Jesus' command to commemorate his death and are glad that they can be present to profit from the things said and done, for they also need to keep integrity to share in vindicating God's name and to gain life everlasting.—John 10:16; Rev. 7:9; Isa. 11:9.

So let all men who are well disposed toward God, whether professing to be dedicated Christians or not, attend the anniversary celebration of Christ's death with Jehovah's witnesses at one of their Kingdom Halls and be greatly benefited thereby.



The Memorial deepens love for Jehovah and his Son

flock." For what purpose? In order for the person to become God's spiritual son with the prospect of being a priest and a king with Christ Jesus. (Revelation 20:4, 6) There is only a remnant of such spiritual sons now living, and these are the ones who properly partake of the emblems. This, then, accounts for the vast majority of Jehovah's Witnesses being observers and not partakers.

#### The Passover and the Memorial

<sup>6</sup> Some have suggested that the increasing great number of "other sheep" should partake of the emblems. Their reasoning is: Since "the Law has a shadow of the good things to come," and since one of the

6. Why have some contended that the "other sheep" should partake of the emblems, and what question does this raise?

requirements of the Law was the keeping of the Passover by both Israelites and circumcised alien residents, this would imply that both classes of sheeplike ones in the "one flock" under the "one shepherd" ought to partake of the Memorial emblems: (Hebrews 10:1; John 10:16; Numbers 9:14) This raises an important question: Was the Passover a type of the Memorial?

<sup>7</sup> It is true that *certain features* of the Passover observance in Egypt were undoubtedly fulfilled in Jesus. Paul likens Jesus to the Passover lamb, saying, "Christ our passover has been sacrificed." (1 Corinthians 5:7) The sprinkling of the Passover lamb's blood on the doorposts

7. In what respects was the Passover "a shadow of the good things to come"?