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THOUGHTS ON THE MEMORIAL SEASON

"For as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come."—[1 Corinthians 11:26](#).

THE Passover season, as celebrated by the Jews, is approaching, beginning this year on the 28th of March. But the interest of Christians in this season centers especially in the slaying of the lamb, which preceded the Passover Feast, and which typified the Lamb of God, Christ Jesus. Our celebration of this Passover season, therefore, relates to the great Antitype. At this time we as Christians commemorate the greatest event of all history, the sacrificial death of the Savior of the world. Our celebration this year properly begins on the evening of March 26th, after six o'clock, which is the beginning of the 14th of Nisan.

We greatly regret that, while millions of professed Christians and Jews will in some formal ceremonies and in a perfunctory manner celebrate at that season this most important event, but few of either religion discern the real significance of the celebration. Could their minds be thoroughly awakened to its true significance, there would be a religious revival such as the world has never yet known. But, as St. Paul declares, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds" of many; and even some whose eyes of understanding are partially opened, St. Peter describes as being blind and unable to see afar off. They are unable to see the deep things of God in respect to these ceremonies, which have been celebrated for now more than three thousand years, in type and antitype.

The Israelites were commanded to celebrate the Passover as the first feature of the Law and as one of their greatest memorials as a nation. Therefore, we find that in some degree the Passover is celebrated by Jews in all parts of the world, even by those who claim to be agnostics. They still have a measure of respect for the Passover as an ancient custom. But is it not strange that with the bright minds which many of our Jewish friends possess, they have never thought it worthwhile to inquire as to the *meaning* of this celebration?

Why was the Passover lamb slain and eaten? Why was the blood sprinkled upon the door-posts and lintels? Of course, God so commanded; but what was the reason, the motive, behind the Divine command—what lesson, what object? Truly a reasonable God gives reasonable commands; and in due time Jehovah will cause His faithful people to understand the significance of every requirement. If the Jew can realize that his Sabbath day is a type of a coming Epoch of rest and blessing, of release from toil, sorrow and death, why cannot he see that similarly all the features of the Mosaic institution were designed of the Lord to be foreshadowings of various blessings, to be bestowed "*in due time*"?

FIRST-FRUITS AND AFTER-FRUITS

Blessed are those whose eyes can see that Jesus was indeed "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"; that the cancellation of the world's sin is to be effected by the payment of man's penalty, by the application of Jesus' sacrificial merit in due time for the sins of all mankind. Only the Church have as yet received of the merit of Jesus' death. Greatly favored are those who can see that as the whole world lost Divine favor and came under Divine sentence of death, with its accompaniment of sorrow and pain, so it was necessary that a satisfaction of Justice should be made before this sentence, or curse, could be removed; and that therefore, as the Apostle declares, "Christ died for our sins"—"the Just for the unjust," that He might bring us back to God. Thus He opened up a new way—a way to life everlasting.

The Scriptures call the Church of Christ "the Church of the First-borns," "a kind of First-fruits unto God of His creatures," "the First-fruits unto God and the Lamb." ([Hebrews 12:23](#); [James 1:18](#); [Rev. 14:4](#)) These expressions imply that ultimately there will be others of God's family *later* born; they imply *after* -fruits. Christian people in general seem to have overlooked these Scriptures, so far as making application of them is concerned, and have generally come to believe that only those are ever to be saved who are designated in the Bible as the *First* -fruits—that there will be no *after* -fruits.

But the Passover type indicates that it was God's purpose to save all Israelites; and that as a nation they represented all of mankind that will ever come into harmony with God and be granted everlasting life in the Land of Promise. Let us note that there were two Passovers—the one in which only the first-borns were passed over; and another greater one at the Red Sea, when by Divine Power the whole nation of Israel was miraculously delivered and led across the channel of the Sea especially prepared for them by the accentuation of winds and tides. These passed over dry-shod and were saved; while the hosts of Pharaoh, representing all who eventually will go into the Second Death, were overwhelmed in the Sea. The passover at the Red Sea pictures the ultimate deliverance from the power of sin and death of every creature of Adam's race who desires to come into accord with the Lord and to render Him worship, all who will ever become a part of Israel; for not one Israelite was left behind in Egyptian bondage.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FIRST-BORNS

But this passover is not the one which we are about to celebrate. We are to celebrate the antitype of the passing over of the first-borns of Israel by the angel, in the land of Egypt. Only the first-born ones of Israel were endangered on that night in Egypt, though the deliverance of the entire nation depended upon the salvation, the passing over, of those first-borns. So only the First-borns of the sons of God from the human plane, the Church of Christ, are now being passed over during this night of the Gospel Age; only these are in danger of the destroying angel. These are all under the sprinkled blood.

We see, in harmony with all the Scriptures, that the "Little Flock," "the First-fruits unto God of His creatures," "the Church of the First-borns," alone is being spared, passed over, during the present Age. We see that the remainder of mankind who may desire to follow the great antitypical Moses, when in the Age to follow this He shall lead the people forth from the bondage of Sin and Death, are not now in danger of eternal destruction—only the First-borns.

The Church of the First-borns are those of mankind who, in advance of the remainder of the race, have had the eyes of their understanding opened to a realization of their condition of bondage and their need of deliverance and to God's willingness to fulfil to them all of His good promises. Furthermore, they are such as have responded to the grace of God, have made a full consecration of themselves to Him and His service, and in return have been begotten of the Holy Spirit. With these it is a matter of life or death whether or not they remain in the Household of Faith—behind the blood of sprinkling.

For this class to go forth from under the blood would imply a disregard of Divine mercy. It would signify that they were doing despite to Divine goodness; and that, having enjoyed their share of the mercy of God as represented in the blood of the Lamb, they were not appreciative of it. For such, the Scriptures declare, "There remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins"; "Christ dieth no more." They are to be esteemed as adversaries of God, whose fate was symbolized in the destruction of the first-borns of Egypt. The Church of the First-borns, through the begetting of the Holy Spirit and the greater knowledge and privileges which they enjoy in every way, have a far greater responsibility than has the world; for they are the only ones yet in danger of the Second Death. This is the lesson of the Passover type, and applies only to true Christians.

By and by the night of sin and death will have passed away, the glorious Morn of deliverance will have come, and The Christ, the antitypical Moses, will lead forth, will deliver, all the people of God—all who, when they shall come to know, will be glad to reverence, honor and obey the will of God. That Day of Deliverance will be the entire Millennial Age, at the close of which all evil and evil-doers, symbolized by the hosts of Egypt, will be utterly cut off in the Second Death—destruction.

JESUS OUR PASSOVER LAMB

The Apostle Paul clearly and positively identifies the Passover Lamb with our Lord Jesus, saying, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast." He informs us that we all need the blood of sprinkling, not upon our houses, but upon our hearts. We are to partake of the Lamb; we must appropriate to ourselves the merit of Christ, the value of His sacrifice; we must also eat of the unleavened bread of Truth, if we would be strong and prepared for the deliverance in the Morning of the New Dispensation. Thus we put on Christ, not merely by faith; but more and more we put on His character and are transformed into His glorious image in our hearts and lives.

We are to feed on Christ as the Jews fed on the literal lamb. Instead of the bitter herbs, which aided and whetted their appetites, we have bitter experiences and trials which the Lord prepares for us, and which help to wean our affections from earthly things and to give us increased appetite to feed upon the Lamb and the unleavened Bread of Truth. We, too, are to remember that we have here no continuing city; but as pilgrims, strangers, staff in hand, we are to gird ourselves for our journey to the Heavenly Canaan, to all the glorious things which God has in reservation for the Church of the First-borns, in association with our Redeemer, as kings and priests unto God.

Our Lord Jesus also fully identified Himself with the Passover Lamb. On the same night of His betrayal, just preceding His crucifixion, He gathered His Apostles in the upper room, saying, "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." It was necessary that as Jews they should celebrate the Passover Supper on *that night*—the night of the anniversary of the slaying of the Passover lamb in Egypt, of the saving of the typical first-borns from the typical "prince of this world"—Pharaoh—the same date on which the real Passover Lamb was to be slain. But as soon as the requirements of the type had been fulfilled, our Lord Jesus instituted a new Memorial upon the old foundation, saying, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

PRIMARY SIGNIFICATION OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

We recall the circumstances of the first Memorial—the blessing of the Bread and of the Cup, the fruit of the vine; and our Lord's declaration that these represented His broken body and shed blood, and that all His followers should participate, not only feeding upon Him, but being broken with Him; not only partaking of the merit of His blood, His sacrifice, but also laying down their lives in His service, in cooperating with Him in every and any manner, that they might later share all His honor and glory in the Kingdom. How precious are these thoughts to those who are rightly in tune with our Lord!

In presenting to the disciples the unleavened bread as a memorial, Jesus said, "Take, eat; this is My body." The evident meaning of His words is, This symbolizes, or represents, My body. The bread was not actually His body; for in no sense had His body yet been broken. In no sense would it then have been possible for them to have partaken of Him actually or antitypically, the sacrifice not being as yet finished. But the picture is complete when we recognize that the unleavened (pure, unfermented) bread represented our Lord's sinless flesh—leaven being a symbol of sin under the Law, and especially commanded to be put away at the Passover season. On another occasion Jesus gave a lesson which interprets to us this symbol. He said, "The Bread of God is He which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth life unto the world." "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 forever; and the Bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."—[John 6:33,35,51](#).

In order to appreciate how we are to eat, or appropriate, this living Bread, it is necessary for us to understand just what the bread signifies. According to our Lord's explanation of the matter, it was His flesh which He sacrificed for us. It was not His prehuman existence as a spirit being that was sacrificed, although that was laid down and its glory laid aside, in order that He might take our human nature. It was the fact that our Lord Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners—without any contamination from Father Adam, and hence free from sin—that enabled Him to become the Redeemer of Adam and his race, that permitted Him to give His life "a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time."—[1 Timothy 2:3-6](#).

When we see that it was the pure, spotless nature of our Lord Jesus that was laid down on behalf of sinners, we see what it is that we are privileged to appropriate. The very thing that He laid down for us we are to "eat," appropriate to ourselves; that is to say, His perfect *human* life was given to redeem all the race of man from condemnation to death, to enable them to return to human perfection and everlasting life, if they would; and we are to realize this and accept Him as our Savior from death. The Scriptures show us, however, that if God would consider all past sins canceled, and should recognize us as having a right to human perfection, this still would not make us perfect, nor give us the right to eternal life.

In order that any of the race of Adam might profit by the sacrifice of Jesus, it was necessary that He should *rise from the tomb* on the spirit plane of life, that He should ascend to the Father and deposit the sacrificial merit of His death in the hands of Justice, and receive from the Father "all power in Heaven and in earth." As relates to the world, it was necessary also that in the Father's due time He should come again to earth, a glorious Divine Being, then to be to the whole world a Mediator, Prophet, Priest and King, to assist back to perfection and to harmony with God all who will avail themselves of the wonderful privileges then to be offered.

It is this same blessing that the Gospel Church of this Age receive by faith in their Redeemer; namely, justification by faith—not justification to a *spirit* nature, which we never *had* and never *lost*, and which Christ did not *redeem*; but justification to *human* nature, which Father Adam *possessed* and *lost*, and which Christ *redeemed* by giving His own sinless *flesh*, His perfect *human life*, as our Ransom-sacrifice. The partaking of the unleavened bread at the Memorial season, then, means to us primarily the appropriation to ourselves, by faith, of *justification to human life-right—a right to human life*—with all its privileges, which our Lord at His own cost procured for us. Likewise the fruit of the vine symbolizes primarily our Savior's life given for us, his human life, his being, his soul, poured out unto death on our behalf; and the appropriation of this by us also signifies, primarily, our acceptance of Restitution rights and privileges secured by our Lord's sacrifice of these.

DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LOAF AND THE CUP

Now let us note that God's object in *justifying* the Church *by faith* during this Gospel Age, in advance of the justification of the *world by works of obedience* in the Millennial Age, is for the very purpose of permitting this class who now see and hear, who now appreciate the great sacrifice which Love has made on man's behalf, to present their bodies a living sacrifice, and thus to have part with the Lord Jesus in His sacrifice—as members of His Body. This deeper meaning of the Memorial He did not refer to directly. It was doubtless one of the things to which He referred when He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when it, the Spirit of Truth, shall come, it will guide you into all Truth, and will show you things to come."—[John 16:12,13](#).

This Spirit of Truth, the power and influence of the Father bestowed through Christ, speaking through the Apostle Paul, clearly explains the very high import of the Memorial; for St. Paul says, writing to the consecrated Church, "The Cup of blessing for which we give thanks, is it not the *participation* of the blood of Christ? The Loaf which we break, is it not the *participation* of the Body of Christ?"—the sharing with Christ as joint-sacrificers with Him even unto death, that thereby we might be counted in with Him as sharers of the glory which He has received as the reward of His faithfulness?—"For we, being many, are *one Loaf* and *one Body*."—[1 Corinthians 10:16,17](#).—*Emphatic Diaglott*.

Both views of this impressive ordinance are very important. It is essential, first of all, that we should see our justification through our Lord's sacrifice. It is proper then that we should realize that the entire Christ, the entire anointed company, is, from the Divine standpoint, a composite Body of many members, of which Jesus is the Head ([1 Corinthians 12:12-14](#)), and that this Body, this Church, as a whole must be broken—that each member of it must become a copy of the Lord Jesus and must walk in the footsteps of His sacrifice. We do this by laying down our lives for the brethren, as Jesus laid down His life—directly for His Jewish brethren, but really for the whole world, according to the Father's purpose.

It is not our *spiritual* life that we lay down, even as it was not *Jesus' spiritual life* that He laid down. As He sacrificed His actual, perfect being, His *humanity*, so we are to sacrifice our justified selves, *reckoned perfect* through Jesus' merit, but not *actually* so. Likewise the Loaf and the Cup represent *suffering*. The grains of wheat must be *crushed* and *ground* before they can become bread for man; they cannot retain their life and *individuality* as *grains*. The grapes must submit to the pressure that will extract all their juices, must lose their identity as grapes, if they would become the life-giving elixir for the world. So it is with the Christ company, Head and Body. Thus we see the beauty and force of St. Paul's statement that the Lord's children are participants in the one Loaf and the one Cup. But it is *His* blood, the virtue of *His* sacrifice, that counts. *Our* blood has virtue only because of His merit counted to us, only because we are members of His Body.

Our Lord distinctly declares that the Cup, the fruit of the vine, represents blood; that is, life—not life *retained*, but life *shed*, given, yielded up—sacrificed life. He tells us that this life poured

out was for the remission of sins; and that all who would be His must drink of it, must accept His sacrifice and appropriate it by faith. They must receive life from this source. It will not do for any to claim an immortality outside of Christ. It will not do to declare that life is the result of obedience to the Law. It will not do to claim that faith in some great teacher and obedience to his instructions will amount to the same thing and bring eternal life. There is no way to attain eternal life other than through the blood once shed as the Ransom-price for the whole world. "There is none other name given under Heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved." ([Acts 4:12](#)) Likewise there is no other way by which we can attain to the new nature than by accepting the Lord's invitation to drink of His Cup, and to be broken with Him as members of the one Loaf, to be buried with Him in baptism into His death, and thus to be with Him in His resurrection to glory, honor and immortality.—[Romans 6:3-5](#); [2:7](#)

THE CELEBRATION IN THE KINGDOM

On the occasion of the institution of the Memorial Supper, our dear Lord, as usual, had something to say about the Kingdom, the theme of His every discourse. Those to whom He had promised a share in the Kingdom if faithful, He reminded of His declaration that He would go away to receive a Kingdom and to come again and receive them to Himself to share in it. He now adds that this Memorial which He was instituting would find its fulfilment in the Kingdom, that He would no more drink of the fruit of the vine until He should drink it anew with them in the Father's Kingdom.

Just what our Lord meant by this statement might be difficult to determine positively, but it seems not inconsistent to understand Him to mean that as a result of the trials and sufferings symbolized in His Cup, there will be jubilation in the Kingdom. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." He will look back over the trials and difficulties endured in faithful obedience to the Father's will, and will rejoice in these as He sees the grand outcome—the blessings which will come to all mankind. This jubilation will be shared by all His disciples who have drunk of this Cup, first in justification, then in consecration and sacrifice with Him. These have His promise that they shall reign with Him; and when the reign shall have begun, when the Kingdom shall have been established, looking back they shall praise the way that God has led them day by day, even unto the end of their earthly course, and even though it has been a "narrow way," a way of self-sacrifice, a way of self-denial.

Our dear Master's faith stood the test of all these trying hours which He knew to be so near the time of His apprehension and death. The fact that He rendered thanks to the Father for the bread and the cup is indicative of a joyful acquiescence in all the sufferings which the breaking of the bread and the crushing of the grapes implied. Already He was satisfied with the Father's arrangement. In line with this spirit was the singing of a hymn as they parted, a hymn of praise no doubt, thanksgiving to the Father that His course on earth was so nearly finished, and that He had found thus far grace sufficient for His need.

In considering the events of those solemn hours which followed the Memorial Supper, let us follow the Redeemer to Gethsemane, and behold Him "with strong cryings and tears" praying "unto Him who was able to save Him out of death"—expressive of our Master's fear of death lest in some particular He might have failed to follow out the Father's Plan, and therefore be thought unworthy of a resurrection. We note that our Lord was in some way comforted with the assurance that He had faithfully kept His consecration vow, and that He would surely have a resurrection as promised.

We behold how calm He was thereafter, when before the high priest and Pilate, and Herod and Pilate again. "As a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth" in self-defense. We see Him faithful, courageous to the very last; and we have His assurance that He could have asked of the Father and could have had more than twelve legions of angels for His protection. But instead of petitioning for aid to escape His sacrifice, He petitioned for help to endure it faithfully. What a lesson is here for all His footstep followers!

On the other hand, we recall that even amongst His loyal disciples the most courageous forsook the Master and fled; and that one of them, in his timidity, even denied his Lord! What an occasion is this for examining our own hearts as respects the degree of our own faith, our own courage and our willingness to suffer with Him who redeemed us! What an opportunity is thus afforded for us to buttress the mind with the resolution that we will not deny our Master under any circumstances or conditions—that we will confess Him not only with our lips, but also by our conduct.

OUR OPPOSITION TO BE FROM RELIGIOUS WORLD

We are shocked with the thought that it was Jehovah's professed people who crucified the Prince of Life! and not only so, but that it was the leaders of their religious thought, their chief priests, Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, rather than the common people, who were responsible for this dreadful deed. We remember the Master's words, "Marvel not that the world hate you; for you know that it hated Me before it hated you." We see that He referred to the religious world; and realizing this, we know that it will be the religious world that will hate us, His followers. We are not to be surprised, then, that opposition to the Truth and persecution of the light-bearers should come from the most prominent exponents of so-called Christianity. This fact, however, should not cause us to hate either our own opponents or those who persecuted our Lord to the death. Rather we are to remember the words of the Apostle Peter respecting this matter: "I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."—[Acts 3:17](#).

Ah, yes! Ignorance and blindness of heart and mind is at the bottom of all the sufferings of Christ—both Head and Body. The Father permits it to be so now, until the members of the Body of Christ shall have filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of their Head. ([Colossians 1:24](#).) Soon, as our dear Lord declared, those who now partake of His broken body and are broken with Him in the service of the Truth, those who now participate in His Cup of suffering

and self-denial, will drink with Him the new wine of joy in the Kingdom, beyond the veil. With that glorious Morning will begin the great work for the world's release from the bonds of sin and death—the great work of uplifting, the "Times of Restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began."—[Acts 3:21](#).

The thought before the mind of each of those who participate in the Memorial service should be that expressed in the words of St. Paul, "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him; if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him"; "for our light afflictions, which are but for a moment," "are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." ([Rom. 8:18](#).) With these thoughts respecting the passing over of our sins as the First-borns through the merit of the precious blood, and our share with our blessed Lord in all His experience of suffering and of glory, we may indeed keep the Passover feast with joy, notwithstanding the trials and difficulties. So doing, continuing faithful as His followers, very soon we shall have the great privilege of leading forth the Lord's hosts—all who ultimately shall hear and know and obey the great King—out of the dominion of sin and death, out of Egypt into Canaan.

THE COMING ANNIVERSARY

According to custom, our congregation will this year meet to celebrate the great event which is so full of precious significance to all the saints who have come into an appreciation of Present Truth. We recommend that the dear friends in various parts of the world neglect not this blessed Memorial. We do not advise the leaving of the smaller groups to meet with larger companies, but rather that each little company, or band, meet together as is its usual custom; for this seems to have been the course of the early Church. Let us "keep the Feast," with joy of heart, but with due appreciation of its solemnity, not only as relates to our Lord's sacrifice for us, but also as relates to our own covenant to be dead with Him. We recommend that the leaders of each company make arrangements to obtain unleavened bread, and either unfermented grape juice, or raisin juice, or other fruit of the vine. Our recommendation is against the use of fermented wine, as being a possible temptation to some weak in the flesh, though provision might be made for any, if there be such, who conscientiously believe that fermented wine was meant to be used.

We recommend that these little gatherings be without ostentation. Decently, orderly, quietly, let us come together, full of precious thoughts respecting the great transaction we celebrate. Let us not have our attention too much taken up with forms and ceremonies. Let us in this, as in all things, seek to do that which would be pleasing to our Lord; and then we shall be sure that the service will be profitable to all who participate.

We have heretofore suggested that none are to be forbidden to partake of the emblems who profess faith in the precious blood and full consecration to the Lord. As a rule there will be no danger that any will accept the privilege of this fellowship who are not earnest of heart. Rather, some may need to be encouraged, since wrong views, we believe, are sometimes taken of the Apostle's words concerning those who "eat and drink damnation (condemnation) to themselves,

not discerning the Lord's body." (*[1 Corinthians 11:29](#)*.) For the sake of these timid ones, who, we trust, will not forego the privilege of commemorating this great transaction, we would explain that to our understanding the class mentioned by the Apostle is composed of those who fail to realize the real import of the sacrifice, and who recognize this service as a mere ceremonial form. The failure to investigate and learn what this signifies, brings condemnation, reproof.

We trust that the occasion will this year be a most precious and profitable one to all the saints. As we are approaching the end of our course, the great importance of our Calling, its responsibilities and privileges, should be impressed more and more upon our hearts and minds. We are living in wonderful times. We know not what a day may bring forth. Then let us walk with great carefulness, with great soberness, yet with joy and rejoicing, knowing that our deliverance draweth nigh; and that, if faithful, soon with our Beloved Bridegroom we shall partake of the wine of joy in His Kingdom and be forever with Him.

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