THE SYMBOLISM OF THE LORD’S TABLE

I Corinthians 11:23&24 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

The Symbolism of the Bread

Matthew 26:17 On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?”

Exodus 12:14&15 “This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD – a lasting ordinance. For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh day must be cut off from Israel.”

Exodus 12:17&18 “Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the days to come. In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day.

Exodus 12:19-21 For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And anyone, whether foreigner or native-born, who eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel. Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread.”

Matthew 26:26 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”

Matthew 16:5&6 When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread. “Be careful,” Jesus said to them. “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

Matthew 16:12 Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Luke 12:1b Jesus began to speak first to his disciples, saying; “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.”

I Corinthians 5:6-8 Your boasting is not good. Don’t you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch – as you really are. For Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

The unleavened bread symbolizes Jesus who is Truth without hypocrisy or any form of sin.

If possible, we use matzoh, the bread made by Jewish bakers for celebrating Passover. Not only is it unleavened, but it is also striped and pierced.

Isaiah 53:5(NASB) But he was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.

Many translations say “by His stripes we are healed,’ referring to the marks left by scourging.

The Symbolism of the Cup

Matthew 26:27-29 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.

Luke 22:20 In the same way, after the supper, he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.”

Hebrews 9:16-18 In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, because a will is in force only when someone has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living. This is why even the first covenant was not put into effect without blood.

Hebrews 9:19&20 When Moses had proclaimed every command of the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves, together with water, scarlet wool and branches of hyssop, and sprinkled the scroll and all the people. He said, “This is the blood of the covenant, which God has commanded you to keep.”

Hebrews 9:21&22 In the same way, he sprinkled with the blood both the tabernacle and everything used in its ceremonies. In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

“The fruit of the vine” was almost certainly naturally fermented wine mixed with one part wine to two to four parts water; neither unfermented grape juice nor wine with an alcohol content of about 10%, but diluted wine with an alcohol content of around 2.5-5%. When it comes to alcohol content, both churches that use modern wine and those that use grape juice are about half right when it comes to alcohol content. Because of the problems with alcohol in our culture, we use grape juice.

Eating Together

I Corinthians 10:16-18 Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the same loaf. Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar?

Paul’s Instructions

I Corinthians 11:23&24 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

I Corinthians 11:25&26 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

I Corinthians 11:27&28 So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.

I Corinthians 11:29&30 For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. That is why many among you are weak and sick; and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment.

I Corinthians 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Things to Remember

The unleavened, pierced and striped bread represents Jesus, who is truth without hypocrisy or sin of any kind and was pierced and scourged for us.

The fruit of the vine represents His blood shed for the forgiveness of sins and the establishing of the New Covenant, salvation by grace through faith.

Our eating together symbolizes our unity in the body of Christ.

We need to examine ourselves before we partake.