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The Canadian *Lord's Day* Association

Advanced Bible Correspondence Course Lesson 28: The Lord's Supper

LORD'S DAY 28

Q.75. HOW ART THOU ADMONISHED AND ASSURED IN THE LORD'S SUPPER, THAT THOU ART A PARTAKER OF THAT ONE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST, ACCOMPLISHED ON THE CROSS, AND OF ALL HIS BENEFITS?

ANSWER: THUS: THAT CHRIST HAS COMMANDED ME AND ALL BELIEVERS TO EAT OF THIS BROKEN BREAD AND TO DRINK OF THIS CUP IN REMEMBRANCE OF HIM, ADDING THESE PROMISES (A): FIRST, THAT HIS BODY WAS OFFERED AND BROKEN ON THE CROSS FOR ME, AND HIS BLOOD SHED FOR ME, AS CERTAINLY AS I SEE WITH MY EYES THE BREAD OF THE LORD BROKEN FOR ME AND THE CUP COMMUNICATED TO ME; AND FURTHER, THAT HE FEEDS AND NOURISHES MY SOUL TO EVERLASTING LIFE, WITH HIS CRUCIFIED BODY AND SHED BLOOD, AS ASSUREDLY AS I RECEIVE FROM THE HANDS OF THE MINISTER, AND TASTE WITH MY MOUTH THE BREAD AND CUP OF THE LORD, AS CERTAIN SIGNS OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST.

**(A)MATTHEW 26:26-28, MARK 14:22-24, LUKE 22:19&20,
I CORINTHIANS 10:16&17, 11:23-25, 12:13**

The blood of the paschal lamb

In the same night that the nation of Israel departed from Egypt, where they had lived in slavery for several centuries, a lamb was eaten in all Jewish homes at the command of God. The blood of that lamb was applied on the door posts of the houses. That blood served for protection: the angel of destruction, which was going to kill the oldest son in every Egyptian home, would pass by each Jewish home where the blood was applied. That blood saved from death, not through the power of that blood itself, but because it pointed toward the sacrifice that Christ would bring on the cross one day. That sacrifice of His body and His blood would in truth deliver sinners from the guilt of sin and from the punishment for sin. The lamb and the blood served to strengthen the faith that God would deliver His people.

The Lord gave command to keep the Passover (= passing over) each year from that time as a Sacrament. Then, during the Passover meal, a lamb was killed and eaten in remembrance of the paschal lamb in Egypt, but also to point to the coming great Paschal Lamb, Who would be sacrificed for sin. In this way, the Lord wanted to strengthen faith in the coming Saviour.

The institution of the Lord's Supper

On the eve of His death on the cross, Christ, knowing what would happen the next day, had the Passover with His disciples for the last time. At this meal a lamb was eaten, together with bread and wine. Afterwards, Christ took a piece of bread, broke it, and gave it to His disciples to eat. Next He gave them the cup of wine from which to drink. He commanded them to keep a Holy Supper from then on. Then bread is eaten and wine is drunk, in remembrance of Him, until He comes again on the clouds. With this Holy Supper, Christ replaced the Old Testament Sacrament of the Passover by the New Testament Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The significance of the Lord's Supper

Christ also explained the significance of this solemn act to His disciples. By the breaking of bread the breaking of His body is signified, and by the pouring of wine the shedding of His blood on the cross of Golgotha is signified. Like the paschal lamb pointed to the future, every time when the Lord's Supper is administered, the bread and wine point to the past. Both point to the sacrifice of Christ for the atonement of sins. Paul said: *"For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us"* (I Corinthians 5:7).

The strengthening and maintaining of faith

The Lord's Supper is meant to serve to the strengthening of the faith of the disciples and of all believers after them. When believers see the evil of their sins, they are sometimes attacked by fear that those sins are too heinous to be forgiven. However, in the Lord's Supper Christ then assures those believers that, as certainly as the bread is broken in their sight and the cup given to them, they may believe that He has let His body be broken and His blood be shed for *all* their sins.

By the Lord's Supper their spiritual life, the life through faith in Christ, is maintained. They are spiritually nourished with the crucified body of Christ and spiritually refreshed with His blood. Christ Himself has said, *"This is My body which is given for you"* (Luke 22:19); *"This is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"* (Matthew 26:28).

Bread and wine are signs, that is to say, true tokens. The Lord's Supper admonishes (that is, reminds of) and assures something. As certainly as the believers see and taste bread and wine, so certainly they may know that they are partakers of Christ and of what He merited for them by His death, and that one day they shall enjoy everlasting life in perfection with Him.

Q.76. WHAT IS IT THEN TO EAT THE CRUCIFIED BODY, AND DRINK THE SHED BLOOD OF CHRIST?

ANSWER: IT IS NOT ONLY TO EMBRACE WITH A BELIEVING HEART ALL THE SUFFERING AND DEATH OF CHRIST, AND THEREBY TO OBTAIN THE PARDON OF SIN AND LIFE ETERNAL (A); BUT ALSO, BESIDES THAT, TO BECOME MORE AND MORE UNITED TO HIS SACRED BODY, BY THE HOLY GHOST, WHO DWELLS BOTH IN CHRIST AND IN US (B); SO THAT WE, THOUGH CHRIST IS IN HEAVEN (C) AND WE ON EARTH, ARE NOTWITHSTANDING "FLESH OF HIS FLESH, AND BONE OF HIS BONE" (D); AND THAT WE LIVE, AND ARE GOVERNED FOREVER BY ONE SPIRIT, AS MEMBERS OF THE SAME BODY ARE BY ONE SOUL (E).

(A)JOHN 6:35&40, 47-54; (B)JOHN 6:55&56; (C)COLOSSIANS 3:1, ACTS 3:21, I CORINTHIANS 11:26; (D)EPHESIANS 5:29&30, 3:16, I CORINTHIANS 6:15, I JOHN 3:24, 4:13; (E)JOHN 6:57, 15:1-6, EPHESIANS 4:15&16

Eating Christ's body and drinking His blood

Eating the bread is, as it were, eating the crucified body, and drinking the wine, as it were, drinking the blood of Christ. He Himself said one day, "*He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life,*" and "*Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life*" (John 6:47, 54). This forceful imagery is used to make clear that by eating and drinking in faith at the Lord's Supper, the close and inseparable communion between the believer and Christ is strengthened.

By this two things are emphasized. The Lord's Supper reminds us that, through the sufferings and death of Christ, believers receive the forgiveness of all sins and everlasting life, for they share in what Christ has merited by His sufferings and death. By His death He gives life to the believers. In this way, they have communion with His sufferings and death. His death is their acquittal.

However, mention is also made of strengthening the communion of faith with Christ Himself, by partaking of the Lord's Supper. This communion is so close, that there also forceful imagery is used. Paul said: "*For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones*" (Ephesians 5:30). Christ also once spoke to His disciples: "*I am the Vine, ye are the branches*" (John 15:5).

One spiritual body

What does the communion of faith with Christ consist in? And how is this communion maintained? Well, the head and all the other members of the body of a man are governed and directed by *one* spirit. But now Christ and the believers together form also *one* spiritual body: Christ is the Head and the believers are the other members of that body. Within this spiritual body dwells *one* Spirit, the Holy Ghost: He works both in Christ *and* in the believers. Thus Christ and the believers live for ever by one and *the same* Spirit. Thus they are governed and led by one and the same Spirit. It is true that Christ according to His human nature is now in heaven and the believers are here on earth. But in respect to His Godhead, majesty, and grace, He is always with His children. And so it becomes true what He promised at His ascension: "*I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen*" (Matthew 28:20).

Q.77. WHERE HAS CHRIST PROMISED THAT HE WILL AS CERTAINLY FEED AND NOURISH BELIEVERS WITH HIS BODY AND BLOOD, AS THEY EAT OF THIS BROKEN BREAD, AND DRINK OF THIS CUP?

ANSWER: IN THE INSTITUTION OF THE SUPPER, WHICH IS THUS EXPRESSED (A): "*THE LORD JESUS, THE SAME NIGHT IN WHICH HE WAS BETRAYED TOOK BREAD: AND WHEN HE HAD GIVEN THANKS, HE BROKE IT, AND SAID, TAKE, EAT: THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH IS BROKEN FOR YOU; THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. AFTER THE SAME MANNER ALSO HE TOOK THE CUP, WHEN HE HAD SUPPED, SAYING, THIS CUP IS THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MY BLOOD; THIS DO YE, AS OFTEN AS YE DRINK IT, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. FOR, AS OFTEN AS YE EAT THIS BREAD, AND DRINK THIS CUP, YE DO SHOW THE LORD'S DEATH TILL HE COME*" (I CORINTHIANS 11:23-26). THIS PROMISE IS REPEATED BY THE HOLY APOSTLE PAUL, WHERE HE SAYS: "*THE CUP OF BLESSING WHICH WE BLESS, IS IT NOT*

THE COMMUNION OF THE BODY OF CHRIST? THE BREAD WHICH WE BREAK, IS IT NOT THE COMMUNION OF THE BODY OF CHRIST? FOR WE, BEING MANY, ARE ONE BREAD AND ONE BODY: FOR WE ARE ALL PARTAKERS OF THAT ONE BREAD”
(I CORINTHIANS 10:16&17).

(A)MATTHEW 26:26-28, MARK 14:22-24, LUKE 22:19&20

Christ’s own promise

Is the communion with Christ in and through the Lord’s Supper a conclusion of the believers, or did Christ Himself also promise this? This Christ promised. Where? He did so when He was sitting with His disciples at the last Passover. There He said of the bread, *“This is my body, which is broken for you” (I Corinthians 11:24)*. It was broken when He died on the cross. And of the wine He said, *“This cup is the new testament in My blood” (I Corinthians 11:25)*. A testament is a covenant. In biblical times, such a covenant was often confirmed by an offering by which blood flowed. In a covenant promises are made. In *this* covenant (called a new testament) Christ promises that He will shed His blood for the forgiveness of sins. Paul described it in this way because he had learned it this way from Christ. Therefore Paul himself, in I Corinthians 10, had already pointed to the faithful communion with Christ, which is strengthened by drinking the wine and eating the bread at the Lord’s Supper. Through the Lord’s Supper, the mutual communion between the believers is also strengthened, because they are joint partakers of bread and wine.

The cup of blessing

Paul spoke about the cup of blessing, which is blessed. The congregation of the faithful praises and thanks God for His unspeakably glorious gift. God gave His son for a ransom: by His sacrifice Christ bore the punishment for all the sins of His children. The cup of blessing (one of the cups of the Passover) was blessed: it was sanctified unto the special use at the Lord’s Supper.

Questions:

1. *Can you name some similarities between the Passover and the Lord’s Supper?*

2. *What two things are emphasized in the Lord’s Supper?*

3. *What does the blessing of the bread and wine at the Lord’s Supper signify?*

4. *What is strengthened by the proper use of the Lord’s Supper?*

Evaluator: _____