

# Bible Thoughts

with  
P.H.A.Hopkins

## The Lord's Supper

*The thoughts and note material given on these pages are only a possible suggestion of the meaning, they must not be taken as inspired, however they are prayerfully prepared and compared with other similar material. There are many ways in which God's Word can be analyzed and none must be taken in place of the Word of God itself.*

bible-thoughts.co.uk

study@bible-thoughts.co.uk

# The Lord's Supper

## or Communion,

### Eucharist, Sacrament.

#### What is the significance of the Lord's Supper?

[Matthew 26:17-30.](#)

It is called the Lord's Supper because it commemorates the Passover meal Jesus ate with his disciples; *"26) And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.*

*27) And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;*

*28) For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. "*

The Lord's Supper has important pointers to the meaning in the names used by churches,

- "the Eucharist" indicates the act of thanksgiving because when we take part in it we are thanking God for the work of Christ for each one of us.
- "Communion" As a result of the action we are communing with God and with other believers.

As we partake and eat the bread and drink the wine, we should be thinking about what the Lord Jesus has done for us, his death on the cross for our sins and reflect on his promise that he will come again for us to have eternal life with him. We should be pleased and grateful for the wonderful gift God has given us, and pleased and joyful as we join with Christ and the body of believers.

#### What does the Lord's Supper reminds us of?

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34:

*"26) 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 Lord's Supper is a visible symbol of the death of Christ for our sins. It was instituted by Jesus on the night before he died upon the cross, it is designed to remind us of the death of Jesus and the future

glorious promise of his return. We take part to remember the act and strengthen our faith through fellowship with Christ and with other believers.

The Lord's Supper was initially instituted on the night of the disciples celebration of the passover, [Luke 22:13-20](#). The Passover meal was celebrating the nation of Israel's deliverance from slavery in Egypt, therefore the Lord's Supper celebrates the Believers delivery from sin through the death of Jesus Christ.

When the Lord's Supper was originally celebrated in the early church, it was part of a feast or fellowship meal followed by the celebration of Communion. Unfortunately, in the church in Corinth, because the people of the church were a wide cross section of people, from those who were rich down to the slaves, so this fellowship meal had turned into a time when some were eating and drinking to excess while others went hungry, there was little sharing and caring for each other. This behaviour did not show the oneness and love that should have been in the believers, neither was it a suitable preparation for Communion. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians church he condemned this behaviour and he reminded the church of the real reason and purpose of the spiritual Lord's Supper.

### **Church interpretation of Lord's Supper.**

There have been many thoughts expresses upon the meaning of the words of Christ *"This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me."* and *"This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."* :-

- (1) Some believe that the wine and bread actually become Christ's physical blood and body.
- (2) Others believe that the bread and wine remain unchanged, but that Christ becomes spiritually present with the bread and wine.
- (3) Still others believe that the bread and wine symbolize or represent Christ's body and blood.

What ever you believe, it is generally agreed by Christians, that taking part in the Lord's Supper is an important part of the Christian faith and that the remembrance act strengthens us spiritually by the presence of Christ, however we interpret and understand the meanings of the action.

The Lord's Supper is in remembrance of the new covenant which appears as a result of the death and resurrection of Jesus. So what is this new covenant?

Under the old covenant which was given to the Israelites by God, the people could only approach God through the priests and a system based upon sacrifice of animals etc. The people of Israel first entered into this agreement after they left Egypt, [Exodus 24](#). This covenant was also designed to point to the day when Jesus Christ would come and the new covenant set up.

The new covenant came into being because of the death of Jesus, the Son of God, taking Mankind's punishment on the cross for their life of sin, this action allowed a new covenant or agreement between God and us. Anyone who accepts the gift of forgiveness through the death of Christ can now personally approach God and communicate with him directly.

The old covenant is now completed by the new covenant, the new covenant fulfills all that it was pointing to in the old covenant, see [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#).

*"31) Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:*

*32) not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah.*

*33) But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people:*

*34) and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more."*

Jesus put into effect the Lord's Supper with the words, *"Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."* How do you remember Jesus Christ when taking part in the Lord's Supper?

1) The action of eating the bread and drinking the cup of wine shows that we are remembering the death of Christ for us and renewing our

commitment to serve him."

2) By thinking about what he did and why he did it.

3) However, we must be careful, if the Lord's Supper becomes just a ritual or we just go to church, pretend to be religious, just doing it as a habit, then you are no longer remembering Christ and what he did, it has lost its real meaning and significance.

## **Taking part in the Lord's supper.**

### [1 Cor 11:17-34.](#)

Paul gives specific instructions on how the Lord's Supper should be observed because the Lord's Supper is a holy act. The Lord's Supper is not to be taken lightly:-

- (1) Because we are proclaiming that Christ died for our sins we should partake the Lord's Supper understanding the meaning of the event, no one should take the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, Paul was speaking to the church members who were rushing into it without thinking of its meaning, [1 Cor 11:26.](#)
- (2) We should take it worthily, with due reverence and respect [1 Cor 11:27.](#)
- (3) We should examine ourselves for any unconfessed sin or resentful attitude to others, [1 Cor 11:28.](#)
- (4) We are to be properly prepared, based on our belief in and love for Christ.
- (5) We should be considerate of others, [1 Cor 11:33.](#), waiting until everyone is there and then eating in a well behaved attitude and as one body.

When Paul talks about those who did not follow these instructions he was pointing out that they were "guilty of sin against the body and the blood of the Lord." Instead of honoring his sacrifice, they were effectively guilty of crucifying Christ. In reality, no one is worthy to partake in the Lord's Supper for we are all sinners saved by grace. This is why we should prepare ourselves for Communion, examine ourselves, confess our sins, and sort out any problems or differences with others. These actions will remove any barriers that affect our relationship with Christ and with other believers. Awareness of any unforgiven sin should not keep you away from Communion but should drive you to correct the situation so as to participate in it.

