

## The Communion Meal we Share

Each week as we gather together for our thanksgiving meal we bring the children in to be with us.<sup>1</sup> The child so designated will ask (Dt 6:20-25) about our Passover (1 Cor 5:7). We are to do this in remembrance of Him (1 Cor 11:24-25) and proclaim the Lord's death until He comes — although by this very act we do remember Him and proclaim His death. For our children's sake, for the *first part* of the thanksgiving meal, before the breaking of bread, let us for at least 15 minutes tell of our deliverance, even the Passover in Egypt relating to the cross and resurrection — and the significance of His death. Heb 2:14-15 — Our Master went into the lower regions to deliver those waiting in faith for His Spirit to descend to set them free. Only in His death could this happen; only in His death was His spirit separated from His body.

Each week we tell the many stories of Yahshua and our forefathers. In this our children can participate in our celebration of His death and in the remembrance of Him. We dedicate this precious time to them in sharing in our own very precious inheritance. Then the children can go to bed, already dressed in their sleeping clothes, so it will limit baby sitting. All can come, no one missing. The children will have eaten beforehand. We limit our before-the-meal snacks, so we will be very hungry for the bread of life we partake of, not filling up on any substitute food, so as to dull our hunger for the real food. None of the bread should be left over; all must go into us — as all of Messiah in His Body, just as all the Passover lamb must be eaten that night, or it must be burned (Ex 12:10).

Mk 14:24; Mt 26:28; Lk 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25 — We re-enact the New Covenant set forth in His blood. He alone determines the conditions, and He alone guarantees the validity of the covenant. 1 Cor 11:25 — This cup is the New Covenant in His blood —

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<sup>1</sup> This was before we began having the story at the end of the resurrection celebration, before going into the breaking of bread room, but the spirit of what is said here is applicable to our current practice.

God's own provision for man's proper relationship to Himself and to life. God has in this New Covenant decreed that it is by the way of the cross that man is to live. By the way of the cross man is to be reconciled to God. The blood, the life given, is the true and living way. The blood of Yahshua — His life given — is the pledge or assurance of the Kingdom of God. Mk 14:25; Mt 26:24 — The cup of the New Covenant attests to God's New Covenant made secure in the triumphant death of Messiah.

In this supper (communion, thanksgiving meal) *faith*, hope, love, joy, obedience, *koinonia*, self-examination, self-judgment, testimony, confession, gratitude, thanksgiving, adoration, and worship are *expressed*.

It is the wonderful way we are given to start the eighth day — after the rest of the seventh — in true worship and thanksgiving. Everyone brings his thank offering, the fruit of their lips — only those who are experiencing forgiveness and communion can be thankful.

There is a great and wonderful hope in this supper of thanksgiving — the *breaking of the bread* (Acts 2:42). The hope of Him someday coming again is expressed in this meal together in total fellowship. One member will keep the whole offering from being received in heaven. One member can defile the sacrifice (Rom 12:1; Mal 3:3-4; Heb 13:15). It is a sacrifice of praise, one sacrifice of the whole lump (1 Cor 5:6-8). Some day during this meal the hope is that Messiah, our Yahshua, will come, for we are proclaiming Messiah's death until He comes (1 Cor 11:26). *Maranatha* — The prayer, "Come, Lord!" is the confidence we have that we will not shrink back when He returns.

The bread and the wine are true representatives of the body and the blood, in that they are pure and undefiled and unadulterated, but made according to the Word of God. Pure wine is "good" as pure bread is "good." But our fellowship or communion (*koinonia*), is not symbolic or representative, but is an actual participation in the blood — in the *life given* — and our *koinonia* is also *good*. Rom 12:1 — We are to be that "one" sacrifice to the Sovereign. The life is in the blood, making the Body of Messiah, the *Bread*

of Life, the people of God's own possession. This supper gives witness that the One who is to be remembered is victorious over death (Heb 2:14-15), over the *death angel* (Ex 12), the one who holds the power over death, to keep us unto eternal life. This One who is remembered is also present in this one people who are gathered in His name. This meal of thanksgiving not only looks back to this decisive event, and to the very present in its realization of His presence in His body, but it looks forward to His coming in the fullness of His kingdom (Mk 14:25; Mt 26:29; 1 Cor 11:26) — “until He comes.” The meal, as we have said, is the proclamation of Yahshua's death until He comes. It is a meal of a great and wonderful memory, and a great and wonderful hope, just as the Israelites, our forefathers, in their Passover, not only looked back to their delivery from Egypt, but to a new deliverance by Messiah whom they expected.

The Corinthians failed to see themselves as the Body of Messiah because of their obvious disunity and lack of *koinonia*. The witness of the Holy Spirit was lacking in their hearts, for they were disobedient and obstinate in heart. They instead were practicing an “unholy communion” with the world, and were failing to cultivate a real fellowship with the saints. They had to pretend they were in unity, and pretend they were partaking the Lord's supper, and pretend to give thanks, because they had to pretend to be forgiven and had a pretended faith (1 Cor 11:20-24). They were drinking out of two cups, or trying to, and partaking of the table of the Lord and the table of demons, or trying to.

When Yahshua instituted the meal of thanksgiving, He said, “Do this in remembrance of Me.” This meal is more than a memorial, but it is that also. It is a remembrance of a *decisive event* in which Messiah *effected* in His death at the cross the “new exodus” for not only those waiting in death, but for all mankind who are under the death sentence even now while still alive. It is *our own Passover*. He has become our own exodus (2 Tim 1:10; Heb 2:14-15; Eph 4:8; 1 Pet 3:19). Only through death could He go into the lower regions righteously to deliver Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David, all the way down to Lazarus (Lk 16:22).

The one loaf of which they jointly partook at this meal was designed outwardly to express the fact they were one people, one body, even the Body of Messiah, that they had a common life and possessions, they shared the one Spirit in whom they all participated — the cup of blessing, the whole life of fellowship and blessing. 1 Cor 11:26 — The bread which we break is a joint participation in the Body of Messiah. The bread and the New Covenant cup are only shared in by those who personally entered into baptism for the personal application of the blood of forgiveness (Acts 2:33).

Can we (as Yahshua said in Lk 22:15) say, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you?” Let us *earnestly* desire this blessed blessing of this fellowship with one another, with our Savior present in all of us.

Our *communion*, thanksgiving meal must be a natural outcome of our life — a joyous meal realizing the spiritual presence of Yahshua *actually* with us, looking forward to His returning so we can behold Him — His face, His body, His nail prints, looking into His eyes, and also looking back to His death in thankfulness for our exodus and our great salvation from the pit of destruction, and our own selfish lives spent in wantonness and vanity (Mt 1:21). It is a fellowship meal and a meal of remembrance of Him and His death. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

This meal is only accepted by our Father in heaven if it is shared in *unity* of heart and purpose — as forgiven men and women, expressed by a thankful heart from the mouth (Heb 13:15). In order to be a *sacrifice of praise* (offering of praise to our Father) it must be the *fruit of lips* that give thanks to His name... the name, *Salvation*, Yahshua. “Come!”

The meaning of this meal together in communion is that the life of Messiah that dwelt in His physical body was broken and divided among all the believers in the Body in *each* church. The Body of Messiah is still being broken and divided each time a new believer is baptized into the Body and participates in the “thanksgiving (with the lips)

meal.” Therefore when we share in this meal we need to discern the Messiah’s Body, our brothers and sisters, as actual parts of the Messiah’s body. His body was broken in the sense that He was pierced, so that His life was poured out unto death, and His Spirit was given to us in this event. His Spirit was able to go to the regions below. His Spirit was able, only by His death, to be given to men. He became a *life-giving* Spirit (1 Cor 15:20-26,45,55-58), delivering us from that place of torment (Lk 16:28).

The bread is broken and passed (shared) between all of us who are alive in Him. But if we by our actions profess that we receive our brothers and sisters as parts of the Lord’s Body but in our hearts hold *resentment* or *jealousy* or bitterness, we unwittingly share the guilt of those who physically broke the body of Messiah, our Salvation. So, in order to receive Messiah’s ministry, His fullness, into our lives, we must come to the point where we regard one another as extensions of Messiah Himself (1 Cor 11:27). Paul is not talking about eating and drinking the bread and wine in an irreverent way — but the shameful way they treated one another, and then taking this meal which represented that they received one another as Messiah Himself. They did not recognize one another as the Temple of the Spirit of Messiah our Salvation, but had a mere human point of view after the flesh.

When we become angry, bitter, hold grudges, are unforgiving in spirit, and regard one another from a worldly point of view, we are guilty of what Paul was talking about (2 Cor 5:16,17). Mt 27:18 — The Jewish leaders made this mistake of regarding Yahshua from a human point of view, and because of their spiritual blindness they conspired together to crucify the Son of God, the Lord of Glory, who had come to save them. Our Father has sent each one of us to be a blessing, sent to save one another here in the Body.

The bread they shared was one loaf, unleavened, and could be broken. So each one broke off a piece and took some to eat. The communion they shared was a common loaf, a common cup. We participate in Him, His body and blood. We cannot help but

remember Him in this way, and His presence with us. We are part of an eternal fellowship in the City of God — a functioning member of His very own body — we join with all those in the past and all those on the earth today who have trusted in Him in His Body; we join in with every *tribe* of every nation who now puts their trust in Him. But only as it is real in the body of believers is it real in the whole twelve-tribed Israel of God. We look forward to the destiny of the redeemed who will drink it anew in the Kingdom of God. And when this becomes the meaning of this meal, barriers will be removed, pettiness will be laid aside, and love will once again be the compelling force uniting us through the Holy Spirit. Only then can we stand against the *world evils* and put all His enemies under His feet.