

MEMORIAL SERVICE

It was in the solitude of a quiet Upper Room that this memorial we are to observe first took place.

May we consider this our Upper Room where we have come to commune with our Lord - and to reflect on the experiences of our master on that final night and day of his life.

Let us begin by singing two Hymns. Let us begin with number 168 "What a Saviour." Remain seated for all the verses.

Let us continue with hymn 122 "Christ our Passover.

May we feel the presence of our Master in our midst this night as we come to the throne of grace - being led by our Bro. Carl.

We believe the Lord instituted the memorial so that each year as we recall Jesus great sacrifice it would in turn cause us to look inward and be determined to strive ever more fully to walk in his footsteps, sacrificing self and it's interest, for the blessing of others.

Tonight, as we reflect on the experiences of our Lord, we would like to briefly consider some of the final lessons the Lord wanted to convey to all of us on the last night of his life. They are recorded in the 13th thru the 17 chapters of John.

Notice how many concerned our relationship as brethren.

We're told in Luke 22:24 that immediately after the memorial there was a strife amongst the disciples as to which of them should be considered the greatest.

Our Lord responded in **JOHN 13:4**, by pouring water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet. Then he wiped them with a towel and said to them in verse 14, "If I your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

Oh how beautifully our Lord illustrated how none of us should ever start feeling superior to others. But rather God would have us each in humility serve one another even in the most menial task, if that is what is needed at any given moment.

Our Lord continues in **JOHN 13:34,35** "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

It seems hardly necessary to be told this. Who wouldn't want to love their brethren. Evidently this may be at times not so easy, for He repeated it two more times on this same night.

Why did the Lord have to repeat 3 times a COMMAND to love our brethren.

Because He knew that there would be times that it might be a bit difficult. All of us are different personalities. All of us have different backgrounds. Different doctrinal understandings could take place. Differences of opinion could easily arise in business meetings on various matters.

But no matter what, our Lord wanted to remind us all we are brethren, part of His body, we haven't chosen one another but He has chosen our brethren. So He wants to remind

us that as in any family we are to show true respect and love, to one another. That we are not to seek only self interests but to consider the needs of others of our brethren.

As the April 24th Manna beautifully brings out. "One form of service frequently not discerned by the Royal Priesthood is the opportunity of renouncing our own ways or plans, our own methods or preferences and in the interests of peace accepting instead the plans, the preferences of others, where it is merely a matter of personal preference."

The disciples that night only thought of their own needs, their own desires, Jesus gently chided them by washing their feet. May we in turn wash one another's feet.

You know brethren we are all still in the flesh and from time to time we might have a little strained relationship with one or another.

If any of us are experiencing this now, may we remember our Lords example. May we figuratively wash their feet, and express in our hearts our Love for them to the Father.

Our Lord continues His Memorial night admonition to us in **JOHN 14:1-3** "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

In these final farewell words of our Lord he brings to our attention the need for us to think often of the hope that lies before us beyond the veil.

As our trials increase, as our bodies begin to break down more and more and pain becomes a continuing daily burden, as we experience sorrow and loneliness of heart, He wants us to reflect in our minds of the time when our trials will all be over and we will experience the joys and blessings of that home in the universe that our Lord went to prepare for us.

Our Lord continues, **JOHN 14:27** "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Here our Lord reminds us that no matter what the trial, pain, or sorrow we are going through, he wants us not to be afraid, but to acquiesce with a calmness of heart, a peace that comes from the recognition that it is He who is permitting this experience for our eternal well being.

Jesus goes on to explain in a Parable how all these trying experiences are permitted in order to crystallize our characters and to help us produce more fruit.

JOHN 15:1,2 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

The purging is by the loving hand of our Father who knows exactly what would be best for us.

As God tells us in 2 Cor. 4:17 "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

Sr. Sundbom used to remind us these thoughts with the words, "Our trials are worth millions, let's not waste any of them"

We continue with Jesus beautiful prayer of **John 17** "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:"

"The hour was come! Our Lord knew on the morrow he would die. And we note what His innermost desire was, "that He might glorify His heavenly father."

As Jesus continues in prayer we see **HOW** He would **glorify** his father.

"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

God truly will be glorified when Jesus gives eternal life to the Church, but not only them but to the countless billions who will become our Lord's children in the kingdom.

Then notice the beautiful thought as to **WHY** they will all be given eternal life. The thought of the Greek is they will be given eternal life "In **ORDER** that they might know thee the only true God.

In other words it will take all eternity to know God in all his fullness, for both the Church as well as mankind. **WHY?** Because he will forever be bringing out new facets of an eternal plan, that will forever be expanding.

Jesus prayer continues **JOHN 17:20,21** "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; **That they all may be one;** as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

Oh how our Lord desires to have his brethren united with a oneness of **purpose - will - of desire** to appreciate - to love one another - and to serve together shoulder to shoulder in the work God would have us to do.

After praying for the oneness of brethren, we are told they went over the brook Kidron into the Garden of Gethsemane.

There we're told our Lord became sorrowful unto death, and prayed 3 times for God to remove "His cup of bitter experience" if it was God's will.

What was the Cup our Lord desired to have removed?

In the 102nd Psalm we have the Prayer of our Lord to our Father when he was in the Garden of Gethsemane, that gives us an incite into what it may have been.

PSALM 102:1 & 2 "Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee. Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble;

The inference seems to be that the Father started to remove his presence from Jesus there in the Garden. For the thought of the phrase "hide not thy face from me," is really hide not thy presence from me.

Our Lord always thruout his life could feel the fathers presence with him. But now suddenly something began to change.

God began to remove His presence from Jesus there in the garden. It was something Jesus never experienced before in all his existence as a Logos and as a man for 33 years.

It overwhelmed him! The fathers presence wasn't the same. He was somewhat withdrawn. **WHY?** Had he failed somehow in keeping the Law perfectly?

The doubt of not knowing was unbearable. He cries out in **PSALM 102:24** "O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days!"

What did he mean, "take me not away in the midst of my days!"

We know Jesus as the Logo's was the very first creation of God thus he came in existence billions of years ago, and he would have anticipated living for eternity.

So the thought in this 24th verse when he says "take me not away in the midst of my days," shows that he was apprehensive that somehow he failed in some small iota of the law and therefore would be cut off or die in the *midst or middle of the eternal* life that he anticipated.

Hebrews 5:7 (Diaglott) seems to corroborate this same thought.

He who in the days of his flesh, having offered up both prayers and supplications, crying aloud with tears to Him who was able to deliver him **OUT OF DEATH**, and was heard for his devotion."

The King James translation says he cried "to be saved from death. But this is not the thought of the Greek. Jesus didn't want to be saved from death. He knew he had to die as a ransom for all mankind.

But what he was crying about was the fear that suddenly overwhelmed him that possibly he wouldn't be resurrected. Thus he prayed with crying and tears to be delivered **OUT OF DEATH by a resurrection.**

Similar to Psalm 102 where he cried out, "take me not away in the midst of my days." Don't leave me father forever dead.

Hebrews 5:7 then tells us God sent an angel to assure him he was faithful, he would live again. We believe the assurance came in the words of Psalm 102:24-27. First Jesus prays

"O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days:

Then God answers the cries of his precious son, "thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end."

From that moment on, having been assured by his father that he was faithful, - Jesus became perfectly calm.

Even after being cast into a dungeon, - falsely accused, - put on trial - mocked, - blasphemed, - spit upon, - a crown of thorns placed on his head, - nails driven thru his hands and feet into the cross, - still, were told, "as a sheep before its shearers is dumb or silent - he opened not his mouth.

Until finally while on the cross our Father had to remove his presence entirely for a moment - our Lord cried out "My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me."

There he endured the ultimate trial which literally broke his heart, he bore the sinners ultimate penalty of complete alienation from God.

As we consider what our Master was willing to suffer on our behalf, I'm sure this season makes us all reflect inwards, "what Can I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me."

We reflect on our consecration vows and are determined that we will strive with ever greater determination to walk more closely in his footsteps, uncomplainingly acquiescing to whatever His will permits.

To lose our lives in his service!

To use every fiber of our being in serving our Lord the truth and the brethren.

And for those of you in our midst, who the Lord is calling, who are counting the cost - but have not yet made the decision to consecrate your life to serve God supremely - may we encourage you with the words of Paul in Rom. 12:1 (Living Bible) "I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living holy sacrifice. When you think of what He has done for you is this too much to ask?"

This brings us to the question as to who should partake of the emblems tonight.

Those who have accepted our Lord as their Redeemer and have made a full consecration to serve him supremely.

Some may have made a consecration and have not yet had an opportunity to symbolize it. Even so we encourage you to partake for water immersion is only a symbol of the consecration that has taken place in your hearts.

As we consider the Memorial emblems the question comes to mind - Why did the Lord use Two Symbols?

We believe the reason is that it very beautifully and simply brings to our attention two precious truths - the Ransom and the Sin Offering.

The Unleavened Bread being broken = pictures the Ransom.

The perfect sinless humanity of Jesus which was broken = laid down in death as a ransom, on behalf of the Church and all Mankind.

The Cup = pictures the sacrificial sufferings of Jesus as the Great Sin Offering, and by grace it includes the privilege we have to share in His cup of sufferings as members of his body, and thus be a part of the sin-offerings which will seal the New Covenant.

Let's first consider the Unleavened Bread - a symbol of the ransom.

We read in Matt. 26:26:

"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."

The Broken Bread we realize was unleavened, picturing how our Lord was pure, holy, undefiled, separate from sinners.

Yes, he had no leaven which pictures sin. He was perfect.

The Bread was broken showing how our Lord's body was laid down in death as a ransom for all.

And so, as we partake of the broken bread, it symbolizes to us our partaking of the perfect Merit of the Ransom sacrifice of our Lord's broken body, which is in turn brings to us Justification. We are covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness by having Faith in our Lord's ransom merit.

We realize only the Church receives the merit of Lord's sacrifice at the present time as we read in 1 Cor. 10:17 - Diaglott.

vs. 17 Diaglott:

"Because there is One Loaf, we the Many are One Body; for we all partake of the One Loaf."

Yes only the Church now has the privilege of being members of the body "BECAUSE" we all partake of the loaf or bread, - the ransom Merit of Christ.

In the Kingdom we realize all mankind will partake of the bread or ransom merit of our Lord, as read in John 6:51:

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Thus we see how all the world of mankind will partake of the bread, which we are told **came down from heaven**, that is they will partake of Jesus Ransom merit in the Kingdom.

But oh, how thankful we are for the privilege of partaking of that bread now, so that we could receive justification and if faithful become members of the body of Christ.

"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."

Now we will call upon Bro. Tom Ruggirello to ask the Lord's blessing upon our participation of this bread.

IS THERE ANYONE WHO DESIRED TO PARTAKE BUT WAS NOT SERVED? IF SO PLEASE RAISE YOUR HAND.

We read in Matt. 26:27-29:

"And he took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the NEW COVENANT which is shed for many for the remission of sin."

We believe this memorial cup pictures the great sufferings of our Lord as a Sin Offering, and the privilege we have of sharing in it..

This cup is referred to in Matthew 20:22,23 where Jesus said:

MATT. 20:22,23

"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

They say unto him, We are able! -- And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with."

Here we see the cup of our Lord's suffering referred to. But also the added feature of how we would have the privilege of sharing the cup of Christ's sufferings as part of his body - part of His sin-offering.

This same sharing of the cup of sufferings is what is brought out in the memorial when our Lord said, "This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins" -- and they were told to drink all of it!

The phrase, "This is my cup of the new covenant," is in essence saying, this cup is what will make the New Covenant possible. It is what will seal the New Covenant and thereby bring it into operation.

In Hebrews 9 Paul tells us it was the blood of bulls and goats that sealed or made the old law covenant possible. Then he goes on to show how this was a type of the sealing of the New Covenant.

But it would be sealed with better sacrifices (plural). That is the sin offering sacrifices of Jesus and the church.

The same thought is what is brought out in Lev. 16 Day of Atonement sacrifices. It was Aaron's sin offerings in 2 parts, that of a bullock and a goat that brought about atonement and the blessings of Israel.

These pictured the sacrificial sufferings of Jesus as the Head and the offering he makes of the Church as his body members, which will result in sealing or bringing into operation the New Covenant which will bless all mankind.

We believe this was similarly what Jesus had in mind when he said, "This is my blood of the new covenant."

Then Jesus said, "I want you to drink all of it." That is, drink all of it so theres none left. We notice he didn't say that of the bread, eat ye all of it, because the world will also eat or partake of the ransom merit.

But only the church will drink of the cup, that is share in the sufferings of our Lord to seal the new covenant.

As Jesus said in John 6: In verse 51 we read how Jesus was the bread from heaven, which he would give for the life of the world, and any one who would eat that bread would live forever. Thus we see all mankind would eat of the bread in the kingdom.

But then in verse 56 he shows how only the church would drink of the cup. JOH 6:56 "He that eateth my flesh, **AND** drinketh my blood, (that is the memorial cup) dwelleth in me, and I in him."

That is why Jesus said, "drink yea all of it." For never again throughout all eternity would this privilege be offered again.

WE believe what the Lord was saying could best be understood if we were to paraphrase the memorial cup statement.

"This cup pictures my blood, that is my own personal blood that I shed on your behalf. But in addition I want you, my body members to realize it includes your blood as well, for you are part of my body. Thus think of the cup as symbolizing both my sufferings for you, and the privilege I'm giving you of sharing in my sufferings.

For I'm going to offer you to God as part of my sin offering sacrifice. Thus together our blood which was pictured by the blood of the bullock and goat, will seal the New Covenant, and bring blessings to all the families of the earth.

Therefore I want you to drink all of it so there is none left, in order to picture that no one else but you my church will have this privilege of suffering with me.

Oh brethren could we ever appreciate enough this glorious privilege that our Lord has given us! As we go thru our trials, pain, sickness, and heartaches, may we think of this memorial cup.

May we reflect that it is only because we have been given this privilege of suffering with the Lord as part of His sin offering, that we could share in the glories to follow.

Blessings that we can't even begin to comprehend. The joy of giving life to all mankind in the kingdom, and then to go on forever experiencing ever new facets of our heavenly fathers glorious eternal plan.

"And he took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to them saying, drink ye all of it. For this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sin."

Now we'll ask Bro. Dariusz to ask the Lord's blessing upon the cup.

We'd like to ask if there are any that would have liked to have been served but that have been overlooked.

Please raise your hand.

As is our usual custom, we have made packets of the emblems available for anyone who would like to take emblems with you to help serve one of the brethren who could not attend our service.

In MATT. 26:30 we read, "And when they had sung an hymn they went out into the Mt. of Olives."

And so let us follow in their footsteps.

At the conclusion of the singing of the hymn, we will not conclude in prayer but will continue to meditate, contemplate the sacrifice of our Lord.

Let us also refrain from the usual greetings and exchanges - saying of good byes - that we might continue in this frame of mind throughout the remainder of this night.

Recalling the trying experiences our Lord went thru this night, ending with his crucifixion on the morrow.

Let us conclude with the singing of Hymn 326.