

## **54. Commemorative Ordinances**

“ON the fourteenth day of the month, at even, the Passover was celebrated, its solemn, impressive ceremonies commemorating the deliverance from bondage in Egypt, and pointing forward to the sacrifice that should deliver from the bondage of sin. When the Savior yielded up His life on Calvary, the significance of the Passover ceased, and the ordinance of the Lord’s supper was instituted as a memorial of the same event of which the Passover had been a type.” - PP 539.

“It would be well to spend a thoughtful hour each day reviewing the life of Christ from the manger to Calvary. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination vividly grasp each scene, especially the closing ones of His earthly life. By thus contemplating His teachings and sufferings, and the infinite sacrifice made by Him for the redemption of the race, we may strengthen our faith, quicken our love, and become more deeply imbued with the spirit which sustained our Savior. If we would be saved at last, we must all learn the lesson of penitence and faith at the foot of the cross.” - 4T 374.

### **SELECTED REFERENCES**

PP 537-539; DA 642-651; 652-661; [9] Pages 393-399; [8] Article, “Lord’s Supper”; [12] Pages 93-101.

Memorize: 1 Corinthians 11:25, 26.

### **A. “THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.”**

Read carefully the connected story: Mark 14:12-17; Luke 22:14-16; John 13:2-17; Mark 14:22-25; John 13:21-35.

“I saw that the angelic host were filled with amazement as they beheld the sufferings and death of the King of glory. But I saw that it was no marvel to them that the Lord of life and glory, He who filled all heaven with joy and splendor, should break the bands of death, and walk forth from His prison house a triumphant conqueror. Therefore, if either of these events should be commemorated by a day of rest, it is the crucifixion. But I saw that neither of these events was designed to alter or abrogate God’s law; on the contrary, they give the strongest proof of its immutability.

“Both of these important events have their memorials. By partaking of the Lord’s supper, the broken bread, and the fruit of the vine, we show forth the Lord’s death until He comes. The scenes of His sufferings and death are thus brought fresh to our minds. The resurrection of Christ is commemorated by our being buried with Him by baptism, and raised out of the watery grave, in likeness of His resurrection, to live in newness of life.” - EW 216, 217.

### **B. THE PREPARATORY SERVICE OF HUMILITY.**

“His ministry was nearly completed; He had only a few more lessons to impart. And that they might never forget the humility of the pure and spotless Lamb of God, the great and efficacious Sacrifice for man humbled Himself to wash the feet of His disciples.” - 4T 374.

“When the disciples entered the supper room, their hearts were full of resentful feelings. Judas pressed next to Christ on the left side; John was on the right. If there was a highest place, Judas was determined to have it, and that place was thought to be next to Christ. And Judas was a traitor.

“Another cause of dissension had arisen. At a feast it was customary for a servant to wash the feet of the guests, and on this occasion preparation had been made for the service. The pitcher, the basin, and the towel were there in readiness for the feet washing, but no servant was present, and it was the disciples’ part to perform it. But each of the disciples, yielding to wounded pride, determined not to act the Part of a servant. All manifested a stoical unconcern, seeming unconscious that there was anything for them to do. By their silence they refused to humble themselves. . . .

“The disciples made no move toward serving one another. Jesus waited for a time to see what they would do. Then He, the divine Teacher, rose from the table. Laying aside the outer garment that would have impeded His movements, He took a towel, and girded Himself. With surprised interest the disciples looked on, and in silence waited to see what was to follow. ‘After that He pours water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.’ This action opened the eyes of the disciples. Bitter shame and humiliation filled their hearts. They understood the unspoken rebuke, and saw themselves in altogether a new light.

“So Christ expressed His love for His disciples. . . . He had a full consciousness of His divinity; but He had laid aside His royal crown and kingly robes, and had taken the form of a servant. One of the last acts of His life on earth was to gird Himself as a servant, and perform a servant’s part. . . .

“Judas, in choosing his position at table, had tried to place himself first, and Christ as a servant served him first. John, toward whom Judas had felt so much bitterness, was left till the last. But John did not take this as a rebuke or slight. As the disciples watched Christ’s action, they were greatly moved.”

“Solemnly Christ said to Peter, ‘If I wash thee not, thou has no part with Me.’ The service which Peter refused was the type of a higher cleansing. Christ had come to wash the heart from the stain of sin. In refusing to allow Christ to wash his feet, Peter was refusing the higher cleansing included in the lower. He was really rejecting his Lord. It is not humiliating to the Master to allow Him to work for our purification. The truest humility is to receive with thankful heart any provision made in our behalf, and with earnestness do service for Christ. . . .

“With the spirit they then had, not one of them was prepared for communion with Christ. Until brought into a state of humility and love, they were not prepared to partake of the paschal supper, or to share in the memorial service which Christ was about to institute. Their hearts must be cleansed. Pride and self-seeking create dissension and hatred, but all this Jesus washed away in washing their feet.

“In His life and lessons, Christ has given a perfect exemplification of the unselfish ministry which has its origin in God. God does not live for Himself. . . . This ideal of ministry God has committed to His Son. Jesus was given to stand at the head of humanity, that by His example He might teach what it means to minister. His whole life was under a law of service. He served all, ministered to all. Thus He lived the law of God, and by His example showed how we are to obey it. . . .

“More was meant than the washing of the feet of guests to remove the dust of travel. Christ was here instituting a religious service. By the act of our Lord this humiliating ceremony was made a consecrated ordinance. . . . It was to be observed by the disciples, that they might ever keep in mind His lessons of humility and service. This ordinance is Christ’s appointed Preparation for the sacramental service. While pride, variance, and strife for supremacy are cherished, the heart cannot enter into fellowship with Christ. We are not prepared to receive the communion of His body and His blood. Therefore it was that Jesus appointed the memorial of His humiliation to be first observed.” - DA 644-650.

## **C. THE LORD’S SUPPER.**

### **1. Its introduction and purpose. 1 Corinthians 11:23-34; 5:7,11.**

“Christ was standing at the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. He, the spotless Lamb of God, was about to present Himself as a sin offering, and He would thus bring to an end the system of types and ceremonies that for four thousand years had pointed to His death. As He ate the Passover with His disciples, He instituted in its place the service that was to be the memorial of His great sacrifice. The national festival of the Jews was to pass away forever. The service which Christ established was to be observed by His followers in all lands and through all ages. . . .

“The ordinance of the Lord’s supper was given to commemorate the great deliverance wrought out as the result of the death of Christ. Till He shall come the second time in power and glory, this ordinance is to be celebrated. It is the means by which His great work for us is to be kept fresh in our minds.” - DA 652, 653.

### **2. Importance of attendance.**

“Christ’s example forbids exclusiveness at the Lord’s supper. It is true that open sin excludes the guilty. This the Holy Spirit plainly teaches. 1 Corinthians 5:11. But beyond this none are to pass judgment. God has not left it with men to say who shall present themselves on these occasions. For who can read the heart? Who can distinguish the tares from the wheat? ‘Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.’”

“When believers assemble to celebrate the ordinances, there are present messengers unseen by human eyes . . . . These unseen visitants are present on every such occasion. There are witnesses present who were present when Jesus washed the feet of the disciples and of Judas. More than human eyes beheld the scene.

“None should exclude themselves from the communion because some who are unworthy may be present. [He who washed the feet of Judas, longs to wash every heart from the stain of sin.] Every disciple is called upon to participate publicly, and thus bear witness that he accepts Christ as a personal Savior. It is at these, His own appointments, that Christ meets His people, and energizes them by His presence. Hearts