

The Lord's Supper

by

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What is the true meaning of the Lord's Supper? In the realm of Christendom there are a number of views on this subject four of which I will explain the first is;

Transubstantiation

This is the view of Roman Catholicism and it teaches that the elements the bread and the wine are actually changed into the body of the Messiah by Priestly consecration. Therefore whenever the bread is served it is a new offering of Messiah's sacrifice. Because they believe that the bread becomes the real body and the wine the real blood, the bread was made available to all. However, the wine recently has only been available to the Priesthood in case they drop any, and became guilty of dropping the blood of Messiah whilst serving the laity. So now the wafers they use are dipped into the goblet of wine and placed on the person's tongue. Because they believe this it has been used as a basis for antisemitism against Jewish people, and enraged the mobs encouraging them to attack the Jewish parts of the towns.

They base their belief in Transubstantiation on the words of Jesus who said "This is my body and This is my blood" along with [John 6:53-56](#) where Jesus spoke of 'eating my body and drinking my blood'. So they believe the elements actually become the physical body and blood of Messiah.

Conclusion

This is not the Biblical interpretation of the 'Lord's Supper' for a few reasons; First Yeshua had not even died when He said these words in [Luke 22:19-20](#). He used the present tense when He said 'this is my body / and this is my blood' it can't be true as He was not dead and this makes this teaching senseless.

Furthermore, in v19 He said 'This is my body' but in v20 He did not say this is my blood. He said "This is the cup of the New Covenant in my blood" and if transubstantiation is correct this statement becomes useless. Also the John 6 passage where Jesus speaks of eating His body and drinking His blood is not spoken in the context of understanding communion. Another evidence is that transubstantiation denies the completeness of Messiah's sacrifice, because we read in the book of Hebrews that Messiah died once for all, and there is no need of a further sacrifice of Messiah in the Mass.

Consubstantiation

This view of the 'Lord's Supper' is the Lutheran view, it does not agree with the previous view, but it does believe that the body and blood of Messiah are present in the elements.

This is the reason it is not a 'Transubstantiation' meaning the elements change, rather it is a 'Consubstantiation' meaning it's already there although the substances themselves do not change.

The reason for this argument is the same as the Catholics therefore the answer is the same so I will not repeat it.

The Spiritual Presence

This was the view of John Calvin and the Reform Churches and it teaches that the body and the blood of Messiah are spiritually present but not physically present. The basis for this teaching is because the ordinances are a sacrament and a sacrament always conveys an element of grace. This view is also incorrect as a sacrament neither conveys a spiritual presence or a physical presence.

A Memorial

This view was held by Zwingli and the Reformers and is the correct view and Biblical view, the 'Lord's Supper' is a memorial and this is seen in Luke 22:19. The Apostle Paul uses this view in 1Cor 11:24-25 and it makes the point that the key thing about the Lord's Supper is it is a memorial of the remembrance of Jesus and is further emphasized in 1Cor 11:26 as Paul states that we are "Showing the Lord's death till He come" and by showing His death we are fulfilling the commandment till He comes.

Observing the Ordinance

The Lord's Supper is correctly said to be a term for the 'Agape' supper which was a meal which used to precede the communion service. As in the Early church they first had a supper and it would end with a breaking of bread service. The term Communion comes from the Greek word 'Koinonia' found in 1Cor 10:16 and is probably the most commonly used term.

The Frequency of the Lord's Supper

In the study of the Lord's supper its clear that among the members of the early church the practice differed .In Acts 2:46 they seemed to practice it on a daily basis, while in Acts 20:7 they seemed to practice it weekly. In fact there is no specific command which states when this should be done, it can be weekly,daily or monthly on Sunday as most churches seem to do.

We can see in 1Cor 11:26 it states "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes" . If we look at Luke 22:19 Jesus said "This do in remembrance of Me" So I believe the frequency should be decided by each individual church.

In conjunction with the passage in Luke 22 it should be remembered that Yeshua made this statement in conjunction with the Passover, which happened yearly which means that the absolute minimum it should be practiced is once a year. It should be when the local body of the church are all present (1Cor 11:18, 20-34). It is not proper to practice it alone or one on one as it is supposed to be for the whole of the church to display oneness in remembrance before the Lord as was Passover.

The Elements

The Bread

This should always be unleavened bread because wherever in the Bible leaven is used it is the symbol of sin. God would not allow leaven in the home at Passover and when Jesus institutionally introduced it it was unleavened or sinless as was He in order to be our sacrifice.

The Wine

The second element should be red wine or liquid of some kind because its supposed to represent blood. However, many churches use grape juice because many believers may well have been delivered from alcoholism. Yeshua would first serve the bread and then the wine and so believers should partake of both, because in Catholicism only the Priest would be able to partake of the wine for the reasons I have explained previously.

Prerequisites

Only believers should partake of this love feast, and then only if they have been baptised. In the early church people where baptised immediately after declaring faith, but today there could be a considerable amount of time before baptism takes place.

Self Examination

This prerequisite is that one should always examine ones self before partaking of the Lord's Supper as requested in 1Cor 11:27-28. This is because there are dangers in partaking in the Lord's Supper while ones life is not in line with scripture .For this reason there are some churches that practice

what is called 'closed communion' that only members may partake for obvious reasons. Those reasons are spelled out in [1Cor 11:29-31](#);

“For he that eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgement unto himself, if he discerns not the body. For this reason many are weakly and sick, and many sleep. But if we discern ourselves we should not be judged.”

God will discipline those who treat the Lord's Supper lightly, and do not examine themselves first.

Having explained the Lord's Supper from a Biblical perspective I will now go on to explain one of the texts that have been mentioned.

1 Cor11:17-34

Paul here is dealing with a group of people who are used to a different type of feast than what he had in mind for the Lord's Supper. They were used to orgies, and eating to excess and so it was necessary for him to rebuke some of them in v20-22 and remind them to eat at home but to respect the Lord's Supper.

The other texts mentioned are not really relevant in the subject of communion.

Final Conclusion

The Jewish account of these things is quite accurate as far as it goes concerning the things of the Tanakh. However it is clear that most Jewish people as well as unbelievers in Yeshua as the Meshiach, have stood rigidly to Jewish Holy writ and do not accept the Christian position. It is also noteworthy, that Jews think anyone who names the name of Christ is a Christian. This is not at all biblically accurate, Roman Catholics are not Biblical Christians, neither Christadelphians or Rosicrucian's and a host of others who do not hold the strict doctrine of Biblical New Covenant writ. As a Messianic Jew I fully understand both sides of the argument and their reasons for their argument.

Furthermore on the matter of the fear of infection as a result of the bread being handled by the minister, and of sharing the same cup, one would hope that if they are that ill they would not come to church. I do not deny there is a slim chance of that happening, but in 34 years I have never seen or heard of it. Plus I personally do not handle the bread apart from taking it out of its container. And I do not handle the wine but supply a napkin to wipe the cup after each one has used it. So I would think that this lessens the risk somewhat of getting infection. But may I add that it was a command of the Lord that we have the Lord's Supper in memorial till He come. So I will endeavor to continue to serve Kiddush as I have always done at least until the congregation requests it of me to do something different. Having said that I would change my operations in the event of an epidemic arising. But as I always explain Kiddush is a Jewish word meaning 'sanctification' and its just to sanctify the meeting for the Lord it is not communion as we generally understand it.