

Now Concerning Spiritual Things
an historical account of one man's walk with God

4305 Bretton Bay Lane
Dallas, Texas 75287-6712

Copyright June 25, 2003
Jim Ash letter No. 57

V-972-267-7187 F-972-267-7399
email: jimashsr@juno.com

A Brief Treatise on
THE LORD'S SUPPER

As Spiritual Nutrition Which Provides
Physical Health and Well Being

This sacrament, ordinance or ceremony, instituted by Jesus after the Passover supper on the night of his betrayal, is a memorial to His death to be observed until He comes again. This "second coming" refers to the Millennium when Christ will return to earth with His bride, the Church, to rule and reign for a thousand years.¹ At that time Christians will cease to observe this memorial to His death, as the apostle Paul wrote, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death *till He comes again*."²

Different Christian churches or denominations refer to this sacrament as "The Lord's Supper," "Communion," "The Eucharist" or "The Lord's Table." In order to fully understand the meaning embodied in this memorial service, it is essential to know the meaning of the Hebrew word "beriyth," Strong's #1262, translated as "covenant" in scripture. In brief, covenant means "a cutting, or a compact made by passing between two pieces of flesh, wherein two men *covenant* or agree to hold all their assets and liabilities in common for the needs (not the wants) of the other party, without limit, even to the death of either party in defending against a common foe."

Cutting covenant by two men predates the writing of the Bible³ and was the first formal enforceable agreement for the selfish, common interests of both parties. In ancient times, depending on the part of the world in which the covenant was cut, there were as many as ten steps in covenant cutting. The last step is a covenant meal where both parties would take bread, break it and say something like, "This is my body which is broken for you. Even when my body is destroyed in death, this covenant lives on in my children," after which they would eat the bread. Then they would take a cup containing a small quantity of the blood of both parties (taken from a superficial cut on the hand, wrist

or arm) and say something like, "When my blood has been shed for you, this covenant will live on through my children," after which they would drink the co-mingled blood from the common cup. This signified that the two parties were truly one in all aspects. Since the Jews were forbidden to drink blood, wine was substituted for blood when Jews cut covenant. Covenants were cut between two men irrespective of their relative strengths or weaknesses. For example, a man of insignificant financial assets could cut covenant with a man of great wealth. Expressed another way, one who was poor and weak might cut covenant with one who was rich and powerful.

The reason cutting covenant is not fully explained in the Bible is because the practice was common and widely known by those who lived during and before "Bible times."⁴

Before one takes communion, he should examine himself (1 Cor. 11:28) that he might partake of the emblems in a worthy manner (1 Cor. 11:27). That means one should come before the Lord in this ceremony at peace with God, his neighbor and himself (that's everyone), having been cleansed by confession and repentance of every known sin, including unforgiveness. Do not take communion if you harbor sin of any kind, including unforgiveness. If we come to the Lord's Table with unconfessed sin in our lives, we may eat and drink the judgment of God upon ourselves, which may cause weakness, sickness and death as it occurred in the city of Corinth. (2 Cor. 11:29, 30).

We are to participate in this ceremony discerning the Lord's (physical) body, given on the altar of the cross, to proclaim His death until He comes again (1 Cor 11:26, 29). This is a remembrance of His death which satisfied the curse of the law,⁵ the wages of sin (death) forever, and therefore provides to every believer eternal Life in heaven at our death or our Rapture,⁶ whichever comes first, and an abundant life on earth. That *abundance* includes strength, health and "wholeness." (1 Cor 11:20). The Communion, according to scripture, is a ceremony of the impartation of strength, health and life (1 Cor 11:30). Christians have been known to overcome illness and disease by taking Communion regularly.

¹See Revelation 20:4.

²1 Corinthians 11:26.

³One source for this statement is a book written by **H. Clay Trumbull** entitled, THE BLOOD COVENANT, A Primitive Rite and Its Bearings on Scripture, published by Impact Christian Books, Inc., Kirkland, MO 63122.

⁴Ibid., This is the common theme of the book.

⁵See Galatians 3:13.

⁶See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

Dr. Walter Fletcher, Pastor of Prayer Development and Spiritual Renewal at Hillcrest Church in Dallas, Texas, tells this story:

“When we first became Pastors of a small Church in Kentucky, we soon noticed that many members would be absent on Sunday morning due to illness. We then began to teach on Communion and serve it to the congregation each Sunday or the following Wednesday. A year after we began serving Communion *each week*, there seldom were absences on Sunday from illness.”

In the Introduction to his book on Communion entitled The Meal That Heals, Perry Stone, Jr. writes, “I believe those who will receive and practice this revelation [healing in Communion] will be impacted for life. Just as God brought the Hebrew nation out of bondage and ‘not a feeble person was among the tribes,’ I believe it is God’s will to heal the church spiritually, emotionally and physically. Therein lies the message of this book, *The Meal that heals*.”⁷

In the early 1900's, the Holy Spirit baptism experience (Acts, chapter 2) began to occur simultaneously in several parts of the world. One such place was the Parish Hall of St. Mary’s Church near Sunderland, England where Church of England vicar A. A. Boddy began holding what he called “Holy Ghost meetings.”⁸ It was here that Smith Wigglesworth received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Wigglesworth grew to be a powerful man of God. He preached in many countries around the world including the United States, Europe, South Africa and Australia.⁹ Fourteen people were raised from the dead in his healing ministry¹⁰ and he took Communion every day. On March 12, 1947, in perfect health, he closed his eyes and slipped into eternity at the age of eighty-seven.¹¹

The Communion ceremony comprises two elements, bread (usually unleavened) and wine or grape juice (blood of the grape) which symbolically represent the body and blood

⁷**Perry Stone, Jr.**, The Meal That Heals, published by The International Offices of Voice of Evangelism, Inc. Cleveland, Tennessee 37320, p. viii.

⁸**H. A. Maxwell Whyte**, The Power of The Blood, Whitaker House publishers, New Kissing, PA. pp. 41, 42.

⁹**Smith Wigglesworth**, The Complete Collection of His Life Teachings, Compiled by Roberts Liardon, Published by Albury Publishing, Tulsa, Oklahoma. p. 10.

¹⁰**Albert Hibbert**, SMITH WIGGLESWORTH, The Secret of His Power, Published by Harrison House, Tulsa, Oklahoma, p.44.

¹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 15, 16 & back cover.

of our Lord. Jesus instituted the first Communion after the Passover supper on the night of His betrayal with these words as recorded in Matthew 26:26-28:

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, ‘Take, eat, this is My body.’ Then He took the cup [of wine], and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the **new covenant**, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.’” (bracketed insertion and bold emphasis added).

Here is the partial meaning and blessing of taking “The Lord’s Supper:”

The Bread and the Cup (Wine or Blood of the Grape)

1. In preparation for the cross and the covenant Communion meal, Jesus said,

“My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed and My blood is drink indeed.” (from John chapter 6).

2. Knowing the scriptures as we do, and knowing that Jesus knew them, including everything that lay ahead that night and the following day, here is what I believe He was saying to the twelve disciples that night: “I’m getting ready to go to the cross tomorrow and *cut covenant for you and me*. I am about to give My life to protect you from and to defeat our common foe (Satan), which you cannot do. I’m about to give My body and shed My blood on the altar of My cross to cleanse you from the past and present activity of our common enemy. As your *covenant partner*, I am going to do both your part and My part on the cross, since my blood is both the blood of man and the blood of God, the reason I had to come as the son of man and the Son of God. All you need to do to become My *covenant partner* and obtain access to *all the resources at My command* is to accept by faith what I am about to do and believe in Me as the Son of God. Then you will have the blessings and the protection I must die to give you. In this manner, My body given for you to eat, and My blood given for you to drink is the fulfillment of *My covenant* I will cut with you on the cross tomorrow. Thereafter he who eats the communion bread (symbolic of My body) and drinks the communion cup (symbolic of My blood) does indeed show forth *My covenant death* on the cross until I come again.”

3. The prophet Isaiah gives us this explanation of what Jesus purchased for us with his body (symbolically the bread of life) on the cross:

“He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our guilt and iniquities; the chastisement [needful to obtain] peace and well-being for us was upon Him, and with the stripes [that wounded] Him we are healed and made whole.”¹²

4. That means He bore *for us* on *His* cross **our** sins, sufferings, pains, sickness, diseases and infirmities; **hence, we need not bear them.** And on His body were laid 39 stripes¹³ by which we are healed. In summary, **(1) He bore in His body all the consequences of (a) the Adamic sin nature and (b) our personal sins, past and present and (2) with his stripes He purchased our healing.**

The Cup, Wine or Blood of the Grape.

1. When “*the cup*” is blessed and drunk as the “blood of the new covenant” it is symbolically the blood of Jesus as the co-mingled blood of man and God, which gave Him the *legal right* to cut covenant with or between man and God. Therefore when we drink of “the cup” we signify that we are in covenant with Jesus, *even to our death, if necessary.* With that understanding, it is better that we not take Communion if we are not committed to Jesus as Lord, even to our death if necessary, as His covenant partner. But when we drink of “the cup” in true covenant with Him, that frees Him to bless us in ways He is unable to do otherwise.

2. Scripture states that “life is in the blood.”¹⁴ Since we symbolically drink the blood of Jesus, we take into our physical body ***the life of Jesus, which heals, strengthens and restores our body.*** Jesus didn’t have to “call in sick” a single day of His ministry! As we take Communion regularly in covenant with the Lord Jesus, illnesses will begin to diminish simultaneously with the restoration of health and wholeness in our physical bodies.

3. Scripture also states that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.¹⁵ Jesus shed His blood on the altar of the cross for everyone, once and for all, ascended

into heaven and placed it on the mercy seat.¹⁶ That means each time we take Communion, we take into our physical body that which ***cleanses us of the effects of sin,*** hence, a further contribution to our physical, mental and emotional health and well being.

4. When drinking “the blood of the new covenant,” each party pledges (is obligated) to provide the needs of the other party, if called on. That is a powerful statement when one Party in the covenant is the Lord Jesus! However, covenant is a two-way street. The failure of one party to perform his covenant responsibilities to the other Party, makes him subject to the curses of nonperformance (Read Deut 28:15-68). Hence, the cup of blessing may become a cup of cursing (1 Corinthians 11:30).

The blood of Jesus which symbolically is the Communion cup:

5. “Speaks” and is “alive”(Genesis 4:10).
6. Protects us against the enemy of death (Exodus 12:13).
7. Contains Righteousness (Luke 11:51).
8. Seals the covenant with Christ (Matthew 26:28).
9. Atones for our sins committed in ignorance (Hebrews 9:7)
10. Blesses us (1 Corinthians 10:16).
11. Provides for eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:12).
12. Is the covenant which God has commanded (Hebrews 9:20).
13. Remits our sins (Hebrews 9:22).
14. Cleanses us from all sin, the cause of weakness, sickness and death (1 John 1:7).
15. Gives us power to overcome the enemy (Revelation 12:11).
16. Makes us Gentiles one with Israel (Ephesians 2:12, 13).
17. Purges or cleanses us from dead works (Hebrews 9:14).

¹²Isaiah 53:5, The Amplified Bible.

¹³According to tradition, Jesus was scourged with thirteen blows of a three-thonged whip; hence 39 stripes, one short of the legal maximum of both Roman and Jewish laws (Deuteronomy 25:1-3; 2 Corinthians 11:24).

¹⁴See Genesis 9:4.

¹⁵See Hebrews 9:22.

¹⁶See Hebrews 9:12.

18. Justifies us (Romans 5:9).
19. Redeems us (Ephesians 1:7).
20. Sanctifies us (Hebrews 13:12).
21. Washes our sins away (Revelation 1:5).
22. Obtains forgiveness for us (Ephesians 1:7).

Communion is symbolic of everything that was accomplished on the cross, the most significant, historical event the world had seen since Adam's sin in the garden of Eden. The cross was the fulcrum event in time that successfully leveraged the power of God to overthrow Satan's authority which was stolen from Adam in the garden of Eden. *Satan's authority remained unchallenged during the four thousand years from Adam's sin in the garden of Eden to the ministry and the cross of Jesus!*

I admonish you to bless yourself by taking communion at least once every week. Today there are believers who take communion every day. Do you have health problems? Is Jesus Lord of your life? Are all of your sins confessed before God on a regular basis and do you walk in forgiveness? If so, why not make preparations at home to serve communion each day and watch your health improve. Communion is *the meal that heals*. There is no way to estimate the blessings therein.

Satan comes to steal, kill and destroy man and anything that provides protection from his attacks or reclaims that which he has stolen from us (such as our health) is *spiritual warfare*. During my prayer time on Friday, June 13, 2003, the Lord gave me the following prophetic word concerning Communion as *spiritual warfare*:

“Communion is *spiritual warfare* in that it is an act of reclamation, the reclamation of that which has been stolen from man by the enemy. Improved health is one of the blessings of regular Communion. Improved spiritual well being is the blessing of daily Communion. And the additional blessing of daily Communion is, as I have said to you – ‘I will reveal to you spiritual revelational knowledge of the Communion bread and cup *as you take Communion*.’ There is yet more to be known, received and revealed by taking Communion daily. It is a memorial to My death and nothing in the history of man was as important as that act, for death precedes resurrection. The cross is the focal and pivotal point of man's history. It is the fulcrum by which man's loss in the garden of Eden was and is being restored. So you cannot celebrate that event without opening the door of spiritual revelation from

Me. For you see, *I remember the cross*. Your memory of that event blesses Me and allows Me to bless you as a result. My son, anything that blesses Me will return a hundred fold. I have said it and I will bring it to pass.”

“Continue to seek, ask and knock at the door of spiritual revelation for that is the only source of true knowledge, says the Lord.”

Retrospectively, it is interesting to note that this prophetic word was given to me two days before the final lesson I was teaching at Hillcrest Church on the subject of “Spiritual Warfare Training.” This was a twelve-lesson series taught from a manuscript I am working on. The subject matter in this letter will be added as an additional chapter in the book.

Dale and I are now taking Communion daily at home. On Monday morning, June 16, 2003, while we were taking Communion, I read aloud the above prophetic word. *As I was reading the prophecy*, Dale was shown a vision of the Lord Jesus on His knees praying in Gethsemane. Although Peter, James and John were with Him that night, three times Jesus left them to agonize alone in prayer – to earnestly beseech the Father to find another way so He could avoid the degradation, the shame, the curse, the cruelty, the beating, the agony, the desertion of the cross. After the third time, Jesus, reconciled to the will of the Father and the cross, returned to the three who were again asleep, and said, “Rise,[wake up] let us be going. See, My betrayer [Judas] is at hand.”¹⁷

Communion is a memorial – a way for us to remember His death on the cross until He comes again, for, as He said to me, “*I remember the cross*.”¹⁸

¹⁷For the full account of the Gethsemane experience, see Matthew 26:26-42 and Mark 14:32-40, Luke 22:39-48, John 18:1-5. Bracketed insertions added.

¹⁸For the expanded biblical record on Communion, read Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:17-20, John chapter 6 and 1 Corinthians chapters 10 and 11.