

# Bite Size Bible Study

## Communion #140

By Pastor Lee

In our congregation we take Communion at the beginning of each month. Other groups take Communion at other times – every meeting, once a year, etc. Some call it Holy Communion, others Eucharist, still others The Lord's Supper. For most it is a Christian sacrament in which bread (body) and wine (blood) are consumed as memorials of Christ's death and resurrection. These symbols are to represent the realization of the spiritual union between Christ and the individual.

*Then, taking a cup of wine, he made the b'rakhah (blessing) and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on, I will not drink the 'fruit of the vine' until the Kingdom of God comes." Also, taking a piece of matzah (unleavened bread), he made the b'rakhah, broke it, gave it to them and said, "This is my body, which is being given for you; do this in memory of me." He did the same with the cup after the meal, saying, "This cup is the **New Covenant**, ratified by my blood, which is being poured out for you.*

Luke 22:17-20 CJB

**New Covenant!** How many times have we read over that and not realized that this is a covenant? What was Jesus implying in saying this?

A covenant is a binding agreement between two people or tribes or nations. In Ancient times it was a bloody ritual performed by the two who were making the covenant. Israel had made many covenants. One person or group was generally the stronger (suzerain) and the lesser (vassal) was accepting the leadership and care of the stronger and made specific promises to the stronger. The stronger in turn made specific promises to the lesser. It signified a binding mutual relationship.

The ritual involved cutting a sacrificial animal in two and laying the pieces side by side. The two would walk between the pieces and recite the conditions of the covenant, which had been written beforehand and two copies made. The purpose was to prove that each understood the conditions and that if one or the other broke the covenant he would be treated like that animal and destroyed. The final part of the ritual was that the animal would be prepared for a fellowship meal and the two would sit at table in a kinship relationship.

One of the stipulations of any covenant is that each party read it at specified times. This insured that each party would remember what they had promised each other.

What are some of the advantages of this New Covenant?

*But now the work Yeshua has been given to do is far superior to theirs, just as the covenant he mediates is*

*better. For this covenant has been given as Torah (teachings) on the basis of better promises.*

Hebrews 8:6 CJB

The one everyone talks about is having our sins forgiven.

*For this is my blood, which ratifies the New Covenant, my blood shed on behalf of many, so that they may have their sins forgiven.*

Matthew 26:28 CJB

The promise of eternal life is also a big one.

*It is because of this death that he is mediator of a new covenant. Because a death has occurred which sets people free from the transgressions committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.*

Hebrews 9:15 CJB

What are not spoken of so much are the many instructions for living that He has given us in the Gospel accounts; in the form of parables, stories and the way He lived His life.

Paul sums it up nicely in writing to the people of Corinth.

*I speak to you as sensible people; judge for yourselves what I am saying. The "cup of blessing" over which we make the b'rakhah (blessing) — isn't it a sharing in the bloody sacrificial death of the Messiah? The bread we break, isn't it a sharing in the body of the Messiah?.*

1 Corinthians 10:15-16 CJB

Our responsibility in this covenant is to accept the leadership of our suzerain, Jesus. To follow, as best we can, His teaching and to be the 'feet on the ground' representing His way of life.

*"If you love me, you will keep my commands (teaching or instructions); and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another comforting Counselor like me, the Spirit of Truth, to be with you forever.*

John 14:15-16 CJB

*And the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) too bears witness to us; for after saying, " 'This is the covenant which I will make with them after those days,' says Adonai: 'I will put my Torah on their hearts, and write it on their minds' . . . 'And their sins and their wickednesses I will remember no more.' Now where there is forgiveness for these, an offering for sins is no longer needed.*

Hebrews 10:15-18 CJB

The next time we take the Communion let's remember that we are recalling again our covenant promises with our Suzerain King – Jesus. We are remembering His promises to us as well as our promises to Him.

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