

Communion: The Special Day 5-5-13

Imagine for a moment you had just come upon the idea of being a Christian. For the first time you have opened the Bible, and there found the commandment of I Corinthians 11 pertaining to communion. You ask yourself “when should I partake of this?” How would you find out the answer?

Perhaps you would look around and see how others partake of communion. A survey of when denominations partake of communion will find:

Catholic church – daily offered/yearly required

Baptist – monthly/quarterly

LDS - weekly

SDA – quarterly

Jehovah’s Witnesses – once a year at Passover

Presbyterian – monthly

Methodist – once a month & on religious holidays

Again the great confusion of denominationalism arises. Is there a commanded day in the Bible? I Corinthians 11:26 says “*For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes*”. Here is not a commanded day, but a commanded way – as often as, or regularly. If it must be regularly, what are the logical answers to that? Should it be annually? The only annual day that makes sense is the Passover, the day of Jesus’ death and the holy day that communion started from. Weekly? The day of the week might be on Saturday, which is the Old testament Sabbath? Perhaps it does not matter, and it can be as often as we choose? How “Often As”?

Let us look at a key passage: “*But we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them at Troas, where we stayed seven days. Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.*” Acts 20:6-7

In this passage we have our answer, both directly and indirectly. First, we must rule out the annual observation. Paul clearly did not partake of it on the Passover, since it was after the subsequent feast of Unleavened Bread he gathered to observe it. Second, we must rule out it being as often as we believe it should be, since even Paul (an apostle) could not call together Christians to observe it when he arrived (remember he was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem too, Acts 20:16), but had to wait for its regular observation. Finally, we see that it was not the last day of the week, but the first. Of all the “logical” times we might observe it, we have ruled them out and find that the example here of the first day of the week is the only reasonable time.

But what if there is more than a logical and exclusive example? What if there is also a prophetic day of worship, of communion observation? In Psalm 118:19-26 we find mention of a prophetic event: “*The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the*

LORD'S doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it."

Jesus spoke of this "day" in Matthew 21:42. So did the Apostles: "*let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'*" (Acts 4:10-11). Do you see the rejection of the stone is associated with the day of His death; and the placing of the chief cornerstone with the resurrection of Christ? Jesus was rejected by the Jews, and event that culminated on the cross (Isaiah 53:3). When He arose, He described all authority as being given to Him (Matthew 28:18). Thus, the prophetic day that the Lord had made, the day of His setting as the cornerstone, is the day of His resurrection. This is the first day of the week (Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:1)

But there is still more. Scripture also speaks to the day of the stone being set as being reflected in the stones that would follow.

"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:19-20).

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:4-5)

When was the first of these new stones set? When was the household of faith revealed? The day of Pentecost, which was the first day of the week (acts 2).

Finally, we can consider to the great import placed on that first day ever, found in Genesis 1. Scripture indicates that then God created the light, and He called it "day". We are a new creation; "*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new"* (2 Corinthians 5:17). So it is fitting that we would have our memorial on the same day that creation began, that the Lord made the day, as our day.

We should rejoice that we have a commanded way to observe communion, and that the evidence clearly points us to it being regularly on the first day of the week. Even more, we have a prophetic day, the first day God created. *This is the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*