

The Cup: What are all of these references?

- * Jesus prayed this in the Garden:

Matthew 26:39 (NIV)

39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

- * Jesus rebuked Peter when He said:

John 18:11 (NIV)

11 Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

- * Jesus said this to the disciples at the "last supper:"

Luke 22:20 (NIV)

20 In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

- I. As we learn from scripture and from the history of our Judeo-Christian faith, God is The Master of imagery, types and shadows. He often uses metaphors to describe "this great salvation" Paul speaks of!!

A. The Cup is one such example! We see it used throughout scripture.

1. Through the Old Testament we find several scriptures that refer to the:

- a) The cup of fury- Isaiah 51:17
- b) The cup of judgement- Habakkuk 2:16
- c) The cup of trembling- Isaiah 51:22
- d) The cup of horror and desolation- Psalm 75:8

2. The Psalmist uses this phrase:

Psalm 116:13 (NIV)

13 I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.

- B. When we worship through communion each week, we are reflecting on what Jesus and His disciples practiced in their Jewish faith called the Passover meal or more specifically The Seder Meal.

1. It has come to be called among Christians as communion or the Last Supper.
2. Because of much anti-Semitic feelings and the fast pace of the early church to move away from anything Jewish, the name was changed.
3. Regardless of our efforts to distance ourselves, this practice can be best understood in its Jewish context!

C. During this Jewish Seder meal, which was a celebration of God delivering Israel from Egypt, “the cup” at the table was filled four times to reflect four principles of God’s deliverance.

1. The first cup was the “kiddush” or cup of “sanctification.”
2. The second cup was called the “cup of plagues.”
3. The third cup was the “cup of redemption” or “blessing.”
4. The fourth cup was called the “cup of hallel” or “praise.”

D. Do you see anything familiar in that list of four cups?

1. The third cup or the “cup of redemption” or sometimes called “the cup of blessing.”
2. Notice what Paul said when referring to this act of communion:

1 Corinthians 10:16 (NKJV)

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

II. As I often say, become a “student of your salvation”!!! Learn what your Loving Savior has provided for you at no cost to you! But also learn the great cost to Him!

A. Paul describes it this way:

Romans 5:17-19 (NLV)

17 The power of death was over all men because of the sin of one man, Adam. But many people will receive His loving-favor and the gift of being made right with God. They will have power in life by Jesus Christ. 18 Through Adam’s sin, death and hell came to all men. But another Man, Christ, by His right act makes men free and gives them life. 19 Adam did not obey God, and many people become sinners through him. Christ obeyed God and makes many people right with Himself.

1. I often hear people talk about themselves in relation to

- their faith, church life and their behavior in general!
2. To put things straight and in God's perspective read this:

Isaiah 64:6 (NIV)

6 All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; (the Orthodox Jewish Bible calls it "garments of menstruation") we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

3. So, we should get the point: The best we can do isn't good enough!

- B. 600 years before "The Word was made Flesh", or before Jesus was born to Joseph and Mary or 600 years before the coming of the Jewish Messiah, Isaiah said this:

Isaiah 53:1-6 (NIV)

1 Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. 3 He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. 4 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

1. THIS WAS THE CUP JESUS TOOK FOR US!!
2. Every time we take "the cup of communion" we should remember that Jesus drank it before us and for us!
3. Jesus taking this cup for us was no small matter:

Luke 22:44 (NLT)

44 He prayed more fervently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood.

- * We are no longer separated from God! We have been brought near! We are called "children of God!" We have relationship and fellowship with our Heavenly Father once again! We can again walk with Him!
- * All because of THE CUP!