DID JESUS DRINK OF THE FRUIT OF THE VINE?

Some brethren say He did, and quote Matt. 26:29, "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom"; Mark 14:25, "I will drink no more", etc.; Luke 22:18 says about the same.

No one would deny that Jesus ever drank of the fruit of the vine. But to assert that He drank of the fruit of the vine which he said was His blood that He gave to His disciples commanding them to drink of it, is a presumption. Any one can assert anything, but to prove it is different. It takes testimony to prove a thing. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21). Jesus and Paul both say "in the mouth of two of three witnesses shall every word be established" (Matt. 18:16; 2 or. 13:1). We must consider these positive rules.

The Bible reveals just what Jesus said and did, relative to the communion. Matt. 26:27, "Jesus took the cup", No. 1, "and gave thanks", No. 2, "and gave it unto them", No. 3, "saying, Drink ye all (disciples) of it; for this is my blood", etc. Nothing said about His drinking of it.

Mark 14:23, "And He took the cup", No. 1, "and when He had given thanks", No. 2, "He gave it to them", No. 3, "and they (disciples) drank of it", No. 4, and He said unto them, "This is my blood", etc. Mark does not say that Jesus partook.

Luke 22:17, "And He took the cup", No. 1, "and gave thanks", No. 2, "and said, Take this", No. 3, "and divide it among yourselves", No. 4. Nothing said about His drinking of the cup.

Some may ask, " What did He mean when he said, 'I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine'?" I don't know. It is the Lord's word, not mine. It contains no commands to me.

I do know that Jesus said, "I came eating and drinking" (Matt. 11:19). Under the first commission He taught His disciples to "eat and drink" such things as were given to them (Luke 10:7). Jesus, by a great miracle, made wine for the marriage (John 2:6-8). Both Jesus and His disciples drank of this wine. But it was not the communion-wine.

But back to Jesus' drinking of the cup in the communion. Listen! "For which is greater—the man at the table or the servant who waits on him? Is not the man at the table? Yet I am a servant among you" (Luke 22:27).

We have seen just what Jesus did in every act, and just what He said. It is certain that He did not eat and drink at the communion service; but He said He was among them as the one that served—waited on the table. So, how can we believe

that He ate of the body and drank of the blood? There is no way to prove that He did. Luke 22:18, "For I say unto you that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come". If Jesus ate and drank with them, the kingdom had come; and the kingdom did not come until on the day of Pentecost, nearly two months later. While He "came eating and drinking", yet I cannot believe that He ate of His body and drank of His blood with His disciples the night He instituted it and served it to them. I have no objections to His having done so, but there are no statements in the Bible leading me to believe that He did. Without such a statement I am without proof. I cannot believe He partook, for "Faith cometh by hearing . . . the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). "Through Thy precepts I get understanding" (Psa. 119:104). I see no reason why He should have partaken. I can see why He gave it to the Church that they might "do this in memory" of Him and thus "show His death".

When a congregation comes to His table to partake of the loaf and of the cup each member "in spirit and truth" goes back, mentally, to His cross, and "discerns His body" and blood seeing by faith His sacrifice for our sins.

Now, I know that I can learn and I welcome any reply that can show me my error, if I am in error. I want to be right in faith and practice. I know "the truth shall make you free". Let's all read and thus search for truth.

Submitted in love,

BOB MUSGRAVE,
Elk City, Okla.

Remarks

We appreciate Bro. Musgrave's eforts to set us right on this question. The celebrated logician Mr. Locke has somewhere said in substance that "we ought always to choose that which is more evident in preference to that which is less so". Now this observation applies very well to the matter before us. Bro. Musgrave's points go to show the propriety and excellency of always "holding fast the form of sound words, which cannot be condemned". But I believe he has missed the mark on this matter. Jesus says, "I will not drink **henceforth** of **this** fruit of the vine until", etc. By "this fruit of the vine" He evidently refers to that used in the communion. "Henceforth", from **ap arti** in the Greek, means "from this time onward" (Webster). Mr. Godby, the translator, says, "Aparti, translated 'from henceforth', means instantaneously, '**from the very moment**'.Hence you see the problem is solved, and the question is settled". A. T. Robertson, author of the greatest Greek gramar ever prepared for-

English students, says, "This language (**ap arti**) rather implies that Jesus Himself partook of the bread and the wine" (**Word Pictures**, Vol. 1, p. 210). Substituting "from the (or this) very moment" for "henceforth" we have: "I will not, from this very moment, drink of the fruit of the vine" etc.; which shows that He had done so just before speaking these words.

In Mark 14:23, as Bro. Musgrave has pointed out, He says, "I will drink **no more**", etc. This means the same as Matthew's "from this very moment" or "henceforth". The meaning is: "From this very moment I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in the Kingdom". The Kingdom came, as Bro. Musgrave says, on Pentecost.

Luke 22:18, according to the Revised Version and many others, reads the same as does Matt. 26:29. The implication in each reference is that He partook.

Jesus was not a servant in the same sense in which we speak of a servant. He was their Master-Servant, both Master and Servant. There is a similar case recorded in Luke 24:30-35. He acted as servant, even as 'He sat at meat with them"; for "As He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them . . . He was known of them in the breaking of bread". He was their servant here, just as He was in Luke 22:17-20, 27. Yet He "sat at meat with them". It was His own table at which He served when He instituted the Communion. Paul calls it "the table of the Lord" (1 Cor. 10:21). And Jesus says, "Ye may eat aind drink at my table, in my kingdom" (Luke 22:30). A servant, in the ordinary sense, is one who serves at the table of another.

I can see as much reason for Jesus partaking of the communion when it was instituted as I can for His being baptised, which was "to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15); or, as rendered by Wilson and Campbell and others, "to fully establish every ordinance".

Jesus said He would, at some future time, "drink of the fruit of the vine" (Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18). There was as much reason for His doing so at the institution of the communion as at any other time.

Submitted in love for Bro. Musgrave and for all the brethren and for the truth as it is in Jesus.

J. D. PHILLIPS.

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