WHY DID JESUS BREAK THE LOAF?

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I think this is the key to the whole question of "the breaking of the loaf."

I have seen many articles on how to break the loaf, but none on **why** Jesus **did** (and we **should**) break the loaf. If we can learn **why** He broke it, it may help us to learn **how** He broke it. I admit that if Jesus broke off His piece and ate it before giving the loaf to His disciples, and the breaking of the loaf means nothing but for each to get his portion; then I admit that the congregation that has the practice of the one serving at the table breaking off his portion and eating it before the loaf is passed to the congregation, is Scriptural.

But if the giving of thanks and breaking the loaf as Jesus did is a process of divine law by which He prepared or qualified it as the communion of His body; then I will say that the congregation that has the practice of the one serving at the table breaking the loaf in two—separating it—is Scritpural.

I believe and teach that the offering of thanks and the breaking of the loaf is a process by which the loaf is qualified to be the body of the Lord, in the communion service.

The communion service is a matter of divine law, and must be observed lawfully. Every act must be scripturally applied, and the mind must be in a proper state or condition. The service must be in memory of Christ's great sacrifice for mankind. We must discern His body, and show His death till He come (1 Cor. 11: 23-28).

Question: Do we observe the communion to discern His body as He walked among men, or as He is now seated on His throne, or as He was crucified on the cross?

Answer: We look by an eye of faith to the scene on the cross, where we hear His words: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit"; and "He gave up His spirit" (Luke 23: 46). Leaving His body dead on the cross. When the separation came His body died. It takes a separation (of body and spirit) to constitute a death. "The body without the spirit is dead" (Jas. 2:26). In Eccl. 12: 5-7 Solomon uses these metaphors of death: "the silver cord is loosed, the golden bowl is broken, the pitcher is broken at the fountain, the wheel broken at the cistern." Now, back to the loaf of which He says "This is my body." It is never called His body before thanks are given and the loaf broken. But after

breaking the loaf, He said: "This is my body"; "take, eat." Matt. 26:26. The thanksgiving and breaking qualify the loaf for His body. "The bread which we break, is it not a communion of His body?" 1 Cor. 16: 16. In other words, when we give thanks and break the loaf, it becomes His body. So we see that the breaking of the loaf is not just to get our portion of it. The thing we do in getting our bite to eat is not called "break." The command to us is to eat.

Question: Why break the loaf? Death is a separation, and the word "break" means to separate. No word in our language could describe death so well as the word **break.** The act of breaking the loaf shows the very act of death—it shows Christ's body in death.

Some may ask: "How many times should the loaf be broken?" I answer: As many times as Jesus died. He offered His body "once for all" (Heb. 10: 10). He died once (Rom. 6: 9). He was dead, but is now alive (Rev. 1:18). So one breaking shows His death. That is all the Bible speaks of. One gives thanks and breaks. But all eat.

So we can surely see why Jesus broke the loaf—to qualify it as His body in death, for us. But we must break it to prepare or qualify it as His body or to show the sacrifice He made for us. We must do it to keep before us His death for us. So there is a design in the breaking of the loaf, and we see in it His body sacrificed for us.

Let every reader of **The Truth** study this question with an open Bible. I welcome Bro. Phillips' remarks, or reply. I ask only that you study both sides: that is why we both are writing on the subject. May God bless and help us all to get the truth. Read 2 Tim. 2: 15.

Remarks

I trust that this brotherly exchange of views is edifying to our readers. I appreciate Bro. Musgrave's desire to follow only "that which is written" (1 Cor. 4: 6).

The word "**broke**", translating **eklase,** is third person, singular number, first aorist, indicative mood, active voice, and is defined "**to break off**; in N. T. **to break** bread."—Bagster. This is the verb used of Christ's breaking the loaf, and describes the action performed.

In 1 Cor. 10: 16, however, we have this: "The loaf which we break." "We break", translating **kloomen,** is first person, plural, present tense, indicative mood, active voice; from **klaoo,** "to

break off." The passage, coupled with verse 17, reads: "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one loaf, and one body: for we are all partakers of the one loaf."

"We" is plural—and "we break" the loaf. "We, being many",—all in the congregation—as many as "partake of the one bread," "break" it in obedience to the command: "This do" (Luke 22: 19).

"The blood is the life"—nephesh, life soul—"thereof" (Lev. 17: 14). Speaking prophetically of the death of Christ, Isaiah says, "He poured out His soul"—nephesh, life, soul—"unto death" (Isa. 53: 12). This was done when He shed His blood (John 19: 34). Seeing the pale loaf on the table and the red wine in the cup, the bread being His body and the wine His blood, is the most perfect picture of death one can think of.

The breaking of the loaf could hardly signify the separation of His body and spirit; nor can it signify the shedding of His blood. "This is my body broken (lit., "being broken") for you" (1 Cor. 11: 24). Each breaking his own piece from the loaf, signifies the breaking of His body (for it was broken many times) better than merely breaking it in two.—J. D. P.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

By W. A. Ethridge

The Sunday School is purely an invention of men. There is no divine authority back of the Sunday School. There was no Sunday School in the church in the days of the apostles. Robert Raikes of London, England, founded the first Sunday School in 1771; thereby, making it 1730 years too late to be by divine authority. Those who practice the Sunday School class system do so by the authority of Robert Raikes, and not by divine authority.

There is no example in the divine record of the apostles having ever used the Sunday school class system; and for that reason, the system is only a tradition of men, and not a divine example. If a congregation of Christians can do their whole duty and be saved in the end without the use of the Sunday school class system, then it must be non-essential; and if non-essential, it is not needed; if it is not needed, it is not commanded; if it is not commanded, it is not a duty, for we read, "The whole duty of man is to fear God, and keep his command-