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AN EXEGETICAL STUDY OF
FIRST CORINTHIANS 10:14-22

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by
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June 1957

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is necessary from time to time to restudy sections of Scripture which have been especially important and meaningful to the Church, in order to determine what Scripture really says. One does this for personal satisfaction and edification and for the benefit of the Church. One such passage which deserves special attention is the section from verse 14 to verse 22 in the tenth chapter of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians which treats of the Lord's Supper. This pericope has been the subject of countless exegetical, doctrinal, and practical treatments from the days of the earliest Church Fathers up until the present era. Theologians have come a long way in their methods, and the studies from which they take their data in the study of this problem are becoming more and more voluminous. But due to differences in method and in personal inclinations and beliefs of individual scholars, or because of strict church rules regarding doctrinal definition, the various results of scholarship lack unanimity on all major issues dealing with 1 Corinthians 10:14-22 and even in some seemingly incontrovertible points.

The purpose of the writer treating this pericope is to satisfy his desire to become more intimately acquainted with the meaning of Paul's message in this passage. By

sketching the background and context of the pericope and giving a careful exegesis of the text, its terms and grammar, the writer hopes to demonstrate the timeless importance of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the Christian Church. From this exegetical treatment, then, we hope to infer the doctrinal and practical implications of Paul's teachings.

Since the material available for our study is virtually unlimited in quantity and variety, the writer has chosen to examine primarily some of the most recent materials dealing with this subject. At the same time a few of the better known older works were consulted for the purpose of presenting an overall view of the scholarship on this subject. This study intends to be comprehensive, but will by no means be exhaustive because of the distinct limitations of the writer and the scope of the Bachelor of Divinity thesis. The writer's primary intention is not to prove the adequacy of this passage as the sedes doctrinae for the Lutheran doctrine of the "real presence" in the Lord's Supper.

CHAPTER II

THE BACKGROUND OF 1 CORINTHIANS 10:14-22

The Corinthians and the Israelites

In this passage, 1 Cor. 10:14-22, there are two great interacting thematic questions. For the Corinthians the questions are implicitly relevant, "Is it possible for a Christian to divide his spiritual allegiance?" and "What should the Lord's Supper really mean to the Christian?"

Already the question arises as to whom allegiance is due when Paul initially attacks the problems of the Corinthians with a view to their solution. The party spirit had already begun to becloud the real issues of allegiance. "You do not belong to Apollos, or Peter, or Paul; you belong to Christ" (1 Cor. 1:12,13). Here in the tenth chapter another aspect of the same basic problem arises. "Since you as a group ought not divide your allegiance but pledge it to Christ alone, just so you as individuals cannot possibly divide your personal or spiritual allegiance. You cannot mix Christianity with doses of paganism, and expect to emerge untainted." The whole situation of the Corinthians has suggested to Paul a striking likeness to the situation of ancient Israel. Here was the Church of Corinth, a Christian community, a nucleus of God's people placed into the midst of a city infested with immorality, paganism, idol worship. The effect on the Corinthian Christians was

not surprising. They imitated the evil ways of their neighbors, borrowing, among other things, their religious habits. But this was accomplished so gradually and imperceptibly that the people still thought they worshipped the true God in a manner inoffensive to Him. When indicted for this offense, they already had a long way to return to the true worship of God. Paul knows that his flock in Corinth certainly was being tempted by its evil surroundings, and that many who were still given full status in the congregation there, were busily engaged in customs and practices which were heathen.

Fortunately for the Corinthian Church the analogy between them and Israel was not complete. They were still being tempted by their evil surroundings (v. 13). At this point they were being beset by the dangers of heathenism which constitutes a distinct appeal of Satan. But to them also was presented the admonition to adhere to Christ, and this was the "temptation" of the Gospel. The two "temptations" must do battle in the Christian.

In verses 1-10 Paul tells his congregation, "A good way to see what your situation is, is to look at Israel." God had taken His people out of Egypt and away from the tutelage of Pharaoh and now they were all traveling the same road through the wilderness. At a certain point God caused Israel to pass safely through the Red Sea, but that very sea drowned Pharaoh and his men of war. Before them appeared the cloud which led them through the wilderness.

This signified a very important happening. "This inaugurated the congregation, and, as it were, baptized them to him (Moses), bound them to serve and follow him."¹

Israel was baptized, according to Paul, through these two incidents to a new leader in the person of Moses, and to a renewed loyalty to God. Dods says regarding this,

Baptism means much; but if it means anything, it means that we commit and pledge ourselves to the life we are called to by Him in whose name we are baptized. It draws a line across the life, and proclaims that to whomsoever in time past we have been bound, and for whatsoever we have lived, we now are pledged to this new Lord, and are to live in His service. Such a pledge was given by every Israelite who turned his back on Egypt and passed through that sea which was the defense of Israel and destruction to the enemy. The crossing was at once actual deliverance from the old life and irrevocable committal to the new. They died to Pharaoh, and were born again to Moses. They were baptized unto Moses.²

Meyer also says,

both (the cloud and the sea) together form the undivided type of baptism. The type appropriated the subjects to Moses as his; the antitype appropriated them to Christ as His redeemed one; and in both instances this is done with a view to their salvation, as in the one case from temporal bondage and ruin, so in the other from that which is spiritual and eternal.³

Thus in the minds of Israel their deliverance was supernatural

¹Charles Hodge, An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1891), pp. 171-2.

²Marcus Dods, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, in The International Critical Commentary (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1889), VII, 231.

³August Heinrich Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to the Corinthians, translated from the 5th edition of the German by D. Douglas Bannerman (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1884), p. 219.

and their guidance was supernatural.

The Spiritual Food

Furthermore, in the wilderness wanderings the Israelites experienced other heavenly gifts. With one accord they came to Moses, their leader, and asked for food and drink. For the first time since they were forced into Egypt in quest of food were they assailed by hunger pangs and parched tongues. But where in the desert could food be supplied? God provided the whole congregation of Israel with enough to eat and to drink. The Authorized Version translates verse three: "And did all eat the same spiritual meat." The Revised Standard Version uses for "spiritual" the word "supernatural." That indeed it was. The nature of manna, its origin, and also its strange disappearance were truly supernatural. But the meaning "spiritual" can also be meaningfully retained. Hodge suggests several possible meanings for the term "spiritual." It could mean partaking of the nature of a spirit, or it could mean celestial, or even spiritual in the sense of typical. Yet here the term is not basically involved with any of these concepts. Nor yet is "spiritual" employed as a contrast to "carnal." Therefore Hodge says it should not be taken in the sense of Calvin to mean an Old Testament sacrament. The meaning of "spiritual" food and drink is that it was given by the Spirit. That is, it was provided by God's

special intervention, and with the accompanying knowledge.⁴

The Israelites knew to a man that their God was the source of all the support which they enjoyed during their stay in the wilderness. In fact Paul asserts that they were accompanied all the way by none other than Christ. This source of salvation, unbeknown to the Israelites, was the promised Savior.

The thoughts to which Paul here gives expression are the following: (1) To guard and help the Israelites in their journey through the wilderness, Christ accompanied them, namely, in His pre-existent divine nature, and consequently as the Son of God (= λόγος of John), who afterwards appeared as man; (2) The rock, from which the water that they drank flowed, was not an ordinary rock, but an actual one, although of supernatural and heavenly origin, inasmuch as it was the real self-revelation and manifestation of the Son of God, who invisibly accompanied the host on its march; it was, in other words, the very Christ from heaven, as being His own substantial and efficient presentation of Himself to men; (3) Such being the state of the case as to the rock, it must of necessity be a rock that followed, that accompanied and went with the children of Israel in their way through the desert; for Christ in His pre-existent condition, the heavenly "substratum," so to speak, of this rock, went constantly with them, so that everywhere in the wilderness His essential presence could manifest itself in their actual experience through the rock with its abundant water; and, in point of fact, did so manifest itself again and again. In drinking from the rock, they had their thirst quenched by Christ, who, making the rock His form of manifestation, supplied water from Himself, although this marvelous specialty about the way in which their thirst was met remained hidden from the Israelites.⁵

Some commentators say that this "spiritual" food was

⁴Hodge, op. cit., pp. 172-3.

⁵Meyer, op. cit., pp. 220-1.

the counterpart of the Sacraments. The deliverance in cloud and sea means Baptism and likewise the eating of the spiritual food signifies the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. For the wilderness food continually spoke to them of God's nearness and reminded them that they were God's people.⁶ It was given them to sustain them on their journey to the promised land and also to quicken faith in God.⁷ Lietzmann comments on the typical significance of the wilderness food:

Die Speisung mit Manna ist Typ des Abendmahlsbrottes, der Trunk aus dem Felsen Horeb ist Typ des Abendmahls-trankes. Aber für Paulus ist diese Typologie nicht bloss ein symbolisches Handeln Gottes, sondern sie gibt realen Tatsachen Ausdruck. Jene Taufe und jenes Abendmahl waren wirkliche "Sakramente," denn der Felsen Horeb, der den Zug des Volkes wunderbar begleitete und die Himmelspeise immer weiter spendete, war niemand anders als der präexistente Christus selbst.⁸

"Nevertheless with most of them God was not pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness" (v. 5). It seems that the Israelites, having experienced a spiritual deliverance and living on spiritual food and drink and being guided by spiritual guidance, felt that heaven was secure.

The Israelites of the Exodus are here introduced as exemplifying a common experience. They accepted the position of God's people, but failed in its duties. They perceived the advantages of being God's subjects, but shrank from much which this implied. They were willing to be delivered from bondage but found themselves overweighted by the responsibilities and risks

⁶Dods, op. cit., p. 232.

⁷Ibid., p. 233.

⁸D. Hans Lietzmann, An die Korinther I. II. im Handbuch zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1949), IX, 45.

of a free life. They were in contact with the highest advantages men need possess, and yet failed to use them.⁹

Israel's link to God was generally an outward link. That is, they as a people did not appropriate the spiritual gifts of God in a spiritual manner. They filled their bellies with husks, the kernel they discarded. When the Tempter came along they had no resistance, and they forthwith lost their lives. "And thus the wilderness came to be spotted all over with the burial places of those who had left the Red Sea behind them."¹⁰

The Sacraments

Paul reminds the Corinthians that the Israelites had in effect received a Baptism and had enjoyed the Lord's Supper. But that did not serve as a magical formula to save them from the evil they had committed. Today we would say that these acts were not effective ex opere operato. The sacraments are no guarantee of protection against punishment for disloyalty, as, for example, idolatry.

Yet despite the supernatural food most of the Israelites were overthrown in the wilderness, because their idolatry, immorality and disloyalty provoked the anger of God. The same thing will happen to you (v.22), warns the apostle, if you are guilty of similar sins; you will not escape because you have been duly baptized and have partaken of the Eucharist. There is no magical power in the sacraments.¹¹

⁹Dods, op. cit., p. 230.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 237.

¹¹A. J. B. Higgins, The Lord's Supper in the New Testament (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1952), p. 67.

For the Corinthians, therefore, the story of the wilderness wanderings is not to be just an interesting historical incident. The very fact that these accounts survive were to make them important for the Corinthian Christians. "Now these things are warnings for us not to desire evil as they did" (v. 6). "Now these things happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come" (v. 11). "Just because you are members of the Corinthian congregation, have been baptized, and now partake of the Lord's Supper is no guarantee that sinful practices won't hurt you," Paul means to say.

The Four Prohibitions

The next four verses contain four prohibitions for the Corinthians in the light of what has been said before. "Do not be idolaters" (v. 7), "We must not indulge in immorality" (v. 8), "We must not put the Lord to the test" (v. 9), "nor grumble" (v. 10). Here, coupled with each prohibition, is an appropriate example of Israel's disloyalty and a description of the punishment meted out. Avoid these occasions to sin! This points us back to the saying of Paul in the previous chapter, verse 25, "Every athlete exercises self-control in all things." Israel's journey certainly was shamefully hampered by the excess baggage of discontent, disloyalty, and lust. And that basically is the problem of the Corinthians. Lietzmann paraphrases Paul's concern,

Obwohl sie also dergestalt sämtlich ebensowut wie ihr mit Taufe und Himmelsspeise ausgestattet waren, ging doch die Mehrzahl zugrunde, weil sie böse Gelüste hatten; das laszt zur Warnung dienen.¹²

Regarding Temptation

Paul now focuses all attention on the situation at hand. " . . . upon whom the ends of the world are come" is a meaningful expression. It means nothing less than the eschatological *καρρός*. The foreshortening of history and the glimpse of God's people of old brings to bear a powerful consciousness of time. In view of the recent developments of redemptive history, which also itself gave purpose and status to the Christian community in Corinth, the last days and Christ's coming again were perilously imminent. But with the approaching end, the *τέλος*, temptation also became a greater threat. Those who are true and loyal to Christ can be sure of one thing--that as long as they are Christ's they will experience temptation. And conversely, if any man feels in himself the security which accompanies an existence not fraught with temptations and hardships, let him take heed! He may be falling! So when Paul speaks to the Corinthians, he makes it crystal clear what is to be expected in the Christian life. It is filled with temptation (*πειρασμός*). What Paul here says has been of utmost comfort for believers ever since the words were

¹²Lietzmann, op. cit., p. 45.

uttered. First, the temptations are ἀνθρώπινοι πειρασμοί. That is, the force of the onslaught of temptation is measured by the Almighty Hand so that no more is given us than we are able to bear. It also means that the temptations are such as are common to man. As Lietzmann puts it, "eine für Menschen normale ertragbare Versuchung."¹³ Our worst temptation is bearable and has already been borne. But the true comfort in all of this is that God is our strength, providing both a way out of the trial or testing and giving us supernatural strength to combat a supernatural force. Thus in every instance temptation is for the ultimate strengthening of the Christian's faith. The temptation then, strictly speaking, is something only Christians can experience. For it places before him two ways between which he is to choose. With God on the side of the Christian he is able to make the proper choice.

Paulus fürchtet, das der scheinbar harmlose Verkehr mit den Heiden sittliche Schäden und Rückfall ins Heidentum zur Folge haben könne; darin besteht die "Versuchung."¹⁴

The Threat of Idolatry

Paul's words are pointed and unequivocal. "Therefore, my beloved, shun the worship of idols" (v. 14). Therefore, Διόπερ, of course, denotes the powerful application by Paul of the example of the Israelites to the perilous state

¹³Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁴Ibid.

of the Corinthians about idolatry. It gives final point to all that has been urged from verse one onward. It points with emphatic finger to the line of past history.¹⁵

The worship of idols must be shunned. The whole action is bound up in the word φεύγετε. This designation for running away is to be taken in a moral sense, flee from, avoid, shun. The object of this separation is expressed by the prepositional phrase ἀπὸ τῆς εἰδωλολατρίας. Separate yourselves, and seek safety from this horrible thing! It is certainly a great threat to your spiritual welfare. More will be said about this threat in connection with verses 20 and 21.

The word εἰδωλολατρεία was the designation for the heathen worship practices. The word can be compared to the λατρεία, the name for the Jewish worship in their temple. Εἰδωλολατρεία, although perhaps etymologically not composed from εἶδωλον and λατρεία, nevertheless has the same meaning as if the latter two forms were combined. This word meant an especially gross sin and appears prominently in the "catalog of vices" found in 1 Cor. 5:10,11; 6:9, and numerous other places.¹⁶

¹⁵G. G. Findlay, St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, in The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), II, 862.

¹⁶Friedrich Büchsel, "Εἰδωλόθυτον, εἶδωλον," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 377.

Eating τὰ εἰδωλόθυσια might become a stepping stone to idolatry in some instances.¹⁷ The Corinthians did not give enough consideration to what they were doing. Are we to dine with our heathen relatives?¹⁸ Such practice could be entirely unobjectionable. So some felt that it did not make any difference where this eating was done. But as soon as it was done in the idol's temples or in connection with any worship-feast, it became eo ipso an act of idolatry.¹⁹ What then are the steps to idolatry? (a) buying meat in the shambles; (b) eating this meat. Notice that the above two steps are unobjectionable in themselves (v. 25). But if these actions (c) gave "offense to Jews or Greeks or to the church of God" (v. 32), they ought to be avoided; (d) eating the meat in heathen temples; (e) whether one takes the matter seriously or lightly, the circumstances are idolatrous; (f) regardless of its human import, such behavior can only be an abomination to God. This practice stands out in bold relief when placed under the searchlight of the questions of verse sixteen: "Is not the Lord's Supper the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ?" The rhetorical questions have this significance: "Surely you know this; is it not self-evident to you?" The answer to these

¹⁷Archibald Thomas Robertson, The Epistles of Paul, in Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Harper and Brothers, c.1931), IV, 153.

¹⁸Pods, op. cit., p. 5.

¹⁹Hodge, op. cit., p. 177.

questions is "yes!" So the whole issue of participating in idolatry must be judged in the light of what the Corinthian Christians already know and believe about the Lord's Supper.

Paul's Entreaty

This admonition to flee idolatry, then, is part of Paul's stirring appeal. His first appeal is by the word ἀραπητοί (v. 14). This word is really the transition from admonition to entreaty. The Corinthians are worthy of the care and trouble Paul goes to in admonishing them, because they are dear to him, because they are beloved first of God! Paul's second appeal is very adroit. "I speak as to sensible men; judge for yourselves what I say" (v. 15). The term he uses is ὡς φρονίμοις. This is an important phrase. It is not a word of sarcasm as Paul voices it in 2 Cor. 11:19, but is, instead, a plea that they make proper use of the mind, φρενῶν, which God has given them.²⁰ He says φρόνιμος and not βόφος.²¹ The former is an appeal to their native intelligence, to men of sense, men capable of seeing the force of an argument.²² The latter would indicate an appeal to some kind of authority which could be consulted in the matter. The whole matter needed not learning or experience to tell them which would be the wise and prudent course to follow. It is as clear-cut,

²⁰Robertson, op. cit., p. 154.

²¹Findlay, op. cit., p. 863.

²²Hodge, op. cit., p. 185.

black-on-white as that; something that anyone who had attained the age of reason could decide clearly. Of course, this is a very effective device to set the Christians to thinking about these serious matters.

Three assumptions are of utmost importance to the development of this discussion: (a) The Christians of Corinth had a good acquaintance with the Old Testament and the history of God's people; (b) They knew well what the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was, and that it was an extremely important element in their worship of the Lord; (c) They were acquainted with heathen practices and ritual, many of them having left them to turn to Christ.

This, then, is Paul's whole purpose for entering into a discussion of the meaning of the Lord's Supper. It can be assumed that the Corinthians needed to have a better understanding of what was happening to them in the Lord's Supper. The way Paul intends to accomplish his purpose is by drawing an analogy between the Lord's Supper and the heathen cult-meals. The sacramental references in the first part of Paul's message have already set the stage and encouraged their minds to think about this matter called the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

In the discussion to follow, we shall examine the concepts that Paul uses in expounding the importance of the Sacrament. We shall then see how it was possible for Paul to compare and contrast it with idol worship and therefore to utter his serious admonition.

CHAPTER III

THE CUP OF BLESSING

When Paul addresses himself to the issue of idolatry among the Corinthians, he draws a parallel between the Lord's Supper with its relation to the true worship of God and idolatrous cult-meals with their relation to idol worship. Paul's explanation of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 10:14-22), while intended originally to serve as a warning for the Corinthians, is, however, a commentary of utmost importance for the true understanding of the meaning of the Lord's Supper.

For a thorough exegesis of the 1 Cor. 10 passage, it is essential that the other accounts of the Lord's Supper be carefully scrutinized and the results matched against 1 Cor. 10. And, conversely, the 1 Cor. 10 text will lend meaning and understanding to the other Verba passages of Scripture, and thus enable one to formulate a trustworthy doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Bornkamm writes with respect to 1 Cor. 10:16,17:

Aus zwei Gründen sind diese Sätze von höchster Wichtigkeit und Bedeutung: erstens, weil sie der einzige authentische Kommentar sind im Neuen Testament zu den Einsetzungsworten und mit dem hier ausgesprochenen Gedanken der realen sakramentalen communio nicht nur die paulinische, sondern auch die synoptische Abendmahlsformel interpretieren.¹

¹Günther Bornkamm, "Herrenmahl und Kirche bei Paulus," New Testament Studies, II (February, 1956), 20^h-5.

The 1 Cor. 10 passage is an important source of information on the Lord's Supper. For subsequent Christendom these truths became essential for the formulation of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.² We shall now give consideration to these.

The Cup of Blessing--the Third Cup of the Passover Meal

Τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν , The Cup of Blessing which we bless (1 Cor. 10:16a). In order to determine the origin of the phrases the "cup of blessing" and the "bread which we break" it is necessary to determine what sort of meal the Last Supper of Jesus with His disciples was.

In spite of the claims of the school of comparative religion which arose in Germany around the turn of the century that the Last Supper was not a Passover meal, able scholarship of men like Dalman and Jeremias has shown that the Last Supper was a Passover meal. Most scholars today accept this fact.

This, then, helps us identify the elements Paul speaks about in 1 Cor. 10:16. What were the events which took place during the Passover Meal and so during the Last Supper?

²M. Reu, "Can We Still Hold to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper?" in Two Treatises on the Means of Grace (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1952), p. 57.

The Last Supper of Jesus with His disciples was eaten in the manner of Jewish tradition. In the Jewish manner the Passover meal began with the Kiddush, the blessing of the cup, and the preliminary dish. Then the Paschal lamb was served and the second cup was mixed. But before the eating of the main meal, the Paterfamilias held the Pass-over devotions. This was climaxed with an interpretation of the elements of the meal by the events of the Exodus from Egypt.

~~After the second cup had been passed, the housefather took one unleavened bread lying on the table, broke it into pieces, lifted up one of the broken pieces and said: "This is the bread of misery which our fathers ate in Egypt."~~³

~~Then the meal itself was eaten. Before and after the meal are spoken the two "Graces." Then the third cup, the "cup of thanksgiving" or "cup of benediction" was passed.~~

~~The Paterfamilias took it in his right hand, lifted it up a span above the table (λαβών), and with his eyes on the cup said the Grace "for all", which in the days of Jesus probably had the following wording: (1) Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Thou who feedest the whole world with goodness, grace, and mercy; (2) We give thanks to Thee, O Lord our God, that Thou hast caused us to take possession of a good and large land; (3) Have mercy, O Lord our God, on Israel, Thy people, and on Jerusalem, Thy city, and upon Zion, the dwelling-place of Thy glory, and upon Thy altar and upon Thy temple. Praise be to Thee, O Lord, who buildest Jerusalem.~~⁴

³Reu, op. cit., p. 69.

⁴Joachim Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, translated from the German by the Reverend A. Ehrhardt (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), pp. 111-2.

The company joined in with an "Amen." Then the fourth cup was distributed. The meal ended with the singing of the Hallel.

The Cup of Blessing which Paul refers to in 1 Cor. 10:16 is the same as the third cup of the Passover meal which was distributed after the main meal and known as the "cup of thanksgiving" or the "cup of benediction."

The Cup of Blessing--*Εὐλογία*

Now that we have identified this cup, knowing that it originated in the Passover meal, we ask, why is it given the title "cup of blessing--*εὐλογία* ?

The cup of "blessing" or "benediction" was no doubt so called because of the blessing spoken over it by the housefather. We shall briefly consider what the idea of blessing meant to the Jew.

The word *εὐλογέω* (*εὐλογία*) most accurately represents the Greek meaning of the Hebrew בֵּרַךְ , which is the term employed for this action over the cup, and which is used in the Septuagint more than four-hundred times.⁵

The term בֵּרַךְ in the Old Testament means the conveying of a blessing, the quality of being blessed.

⁵Herman Wolfgang Beyer, "*Εὐλογία*," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 752.

Wenn es in Bewegung gerät, etwa wenn ein Vater sein Kind segnet, so ist die Wirkung unaufhaltsam, es sei denn, dass sie durch ebenso starke Gegenkräfte durchkreuzt würde. Menschen und Dinge, auf die Segen gekommen ist, sind wie geladen mit dieser Kraft, können sie weiterleiten, ja sie wirken auf alles, was mit ihnen in Berührung kommt. In vollem Umfange gilt das Gesagte, wenn der Segen unmittelbar von der Gottheit stammt. Dann ist er eine "übernatürliche, von der Gottheit ausgehende Förderung . . . menschlichen Tuns und Ergehens."⁶

Das hbr **שָׁרַף** bedeutet nicht nur das Segnen oder den Segensspruch, sondern zugleich das "Gesegnetsein," das Mit-Segen-Gefülltsein, so wie auch die konkreten "Segnungen" die daraus folgen, Glück, Macht usw.⁷

A person has the ability to convey blessings upon his heirs. Before his death he can convey it, and once he has pronounced the blessing it is irrevocable. All blessings come from God; a man can convey the blessing of God, which is not, however, the conveying of magical powers, but much more.⁸

Paul's use of the Greek word *εὐλογεῖν* means the same as the Hebrew **שָׁרַף** without inclusion of the magic or mystical.⁹ Therefore the word *εὐλογεῖν* was used when one spoke of blessing things. It thus meant to consecrate. For the Jew it was necessary to bless the food before eating.

⁶Ibid., p. 753.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., p. 757.

Inbesondere spricht der Jude den Lobespruch als Tischgebet. Es ist für ihn strenge Vorschrift, dasz er nichts genießt, bevor er nicht einen Segen gesprochen hat. Es ist dem Menschen verboten, von dieser Welt ohne Segensspruch zu genießen; wer von dieser Welt ohne Segensspruch genießt, begeht eine Veruntreuung.¹⁰

So it was especially at the Passover that much was made of the prayers and blessings. These prayers acknowledged God the Father as the owner, provider, and dispenser of all blessings. The benediction or consecration was, therefore, not spoken with the elements as the focal point but with God as the One blessed by men. "Gepriesen (עֲרִיבָה, εὐλογητός) seist du, Jahwe unser Gott, König der Welt."¹¹ It is through this action of men that God blesses and consecrates the food about to be enjoyed by them. It is also through this blessing, praising, and thanking God which men engage in that the term εὐχαριτέω came to be used by Paul (1Cor. 11:24). This word is used interchangeably with εὐλογέω. The same act over the cup can be expressed by both words.¹²

Although the "cup of blessing" (τῆς εὐλογίας) is ordinarily not to be understood actively in its original concept--the cup which brings blessing, nevertheless, those who partook of the cup of blessing as well as of the bread

¹⁰Ibid., p. 758.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Charles Hodge, An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1891), p. 187.

considered that they received a share of this blessing.¹³
This idea is certainly not foreign to our idea today of
blessings imparted to the communicant through the sacrament.

ὁ εὐλογοῦμεν --this clause indicates that the ποτήριον
 εὐλογίας, the third cup of the Passover meal, was re-
 tained as part of the new Christian celebration. The
 present tense suggests repeated action.

The Cup of Blessing was retained in the newly institu-
 ted meal because of the unprecedented words of Christ
 which accompanied its distribution, "This cup is the New
 Covenant in My Blood," and the command, implicit or ex-
 plicit (1 Cor. 11:24c) to repeat the action.

The phrase, ὁ εὐλογοῦμεν, thus indicates to us
 (that the use of the cup was not only) a permanent part of
 the frequent celebration of the Lord's Supper. It also
 meant that at the celebration the blessing was spoken over
 the cup in the same manner in which Jesus blessed it.
 And in so far as the Corinthians and Paul had received the
 correct words of Jesus from oral tradition and usage (cf.
 1 Cor. 11:23f.), the blessing was spoken over the cup with
 the same words of Jesus.

Furthermore, these words, ὁ εὐλογοῦμεν, served to
 distinguish this cup of which Paul was speaking from any

¹³August Heinrich Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to the Corinthians, translated from the 5th edition of the German by D. Douglas Bannerman (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1884), p. 229.

other cup in any other possible connection. This very cup over which one repeats the words of Jesus is the only cup which bears this special blessing and the particular significance which brings one into partnership with Christ.¹⁴

¹⁴Beyer, op. cit., p. 760.

CHAPTER IV

THE BREAD WHICH WE BREAK

The Bread--ἄρτος

Τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἔστιν ; (1 Cor. 10:16b). This phrase parallels the "cup of blessing" saying in verse 16a and refers to the other element in the Lord's Supper, namely, the unleavened bread. The reference to the bread here must, like the cup, find its origin in the Passover meal. It was the unleavened bread which was distributed after the passing of the second cup.¹

The very fact that this element of bread is called ἄρτος has been used by the critics of the school of comparative religion to demonstrate that the Last Supper was not a Passover celebration.² Their claim is that, if unleavened bread had really been used by Jesus, the accounts would have called the bread ἄζυμος (unleavened bread), instead of the simple term ἄρτος. Jeremias adequately shows that ἄζυμος is not an exclusive term to denote unleavened bread. For, in the Old Testament, both ἄζυμος

¹Supra, p. 19.

²Hans Lietzmann, *Messe und Herrenmahl* (Bonn: A. Marcus und E. Weber's Verlag, 1926), p. 211.

and ἄρτος can be expressed by only one word ὀψῆς.

In the Greek versions of the Old Testament both the Septuagint and Aquila render ὀψῆς consistently with ἄρτος.³ This evidence certainly does not tolerate the strict construction of Lietzmann and others. Jesus did use unleavened bread.

The term ἄρτος itself, as Robinson suggests, may be derived from the verb ἄρω, to join or fit (flour mixed with water and baked).⁴

The Breaking of Bread

Τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλάμεν "The bread which we break," Here also, as with the cup, there is repeated and continuing action. The tense of the verb shows this is a ritual which was customary in the Church. It also was always carried out in connection with the blessing of the cup in a single, meaningful ceremony.

The question then arises, does the phrase here, "the bread which we break," refer to the same ceremony which in other places of the New Testament is known simply as the "breaking of bread"? Furthermore, is this ceremony always the celebration of the Lord's Supper?

³ Joachim Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, translated from the German by the Reverend A. Ehrhardt (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), pp. 37-9.

⁴ Archibald Thomas Robertson, The Epistles of Paul, in Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Harper and Brothers, c.1931), IV, 155.

First we should investigate how the phrase "breaking of bread" originated. Jeremias cites Lightfoot:

Now, as H. Lightfoot . . . saw long ago, the phrase "breaking of bread" was never used in Judaism to describe a meal, but only (a) the actual breaking of the bread into pieces, or (b) the ritual at the beginning of the meal. The description of the holy meal as "the breaking of bread" is the completely new usage of the primitive Church, which can hardly be explained otherwise than a cryptogram: the non-Christian was not supposed to understand its meaning.⁵

The breaking of bread (κλάω) is therefore a technical term for the Jewish custom of breaking the bread before a meal, from קָטַץ , cleave, divide, or סָבַץ , break. It took place only after the company had responded to the Grace with their "Amen." The expression κλάω ἀρτον is foreign to classical Greek. The absolute use of κλάω is also a Semitism.⁶

The reason for the "breaking" is that in Palestine it was the custom not to cut the loaf with a knife but to break it with the hands.⁷ The breaking of the bread for the purpose of distribution was necessitated by the large size and flat shape of the bread. Although the breaking of the bread is mentioned in all four accounts, it was a rather subordinate element in the celebration of the

⁵Jeremias, op. cit., pp. 83-4.

⁶Ibid., p. 120.

⁷A. J. B. Higgins, The Lord's Supper in the New Testament (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1952), p. 56.

Passover meal as well as in the Last Supper of Jesus.⁸

This ἀφρός, then, is the element which Jesus used in the usual manner of the Jews. It was customary, as said before, for the housefather to explain the meaning of the elements to the family. Jesus made use of this opportunity to speak the important words of interpretation over the bread which for us have become the formula of institution and distribution. Instead of saying, "This is the bread of misery . . ." He said, "This is My body!"

If the term "breaking of bread" indicated a familiar ritual and was a metonymy for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, this is not always so apparent in some of the allusions to "breaking of bread" in the New Testament. The expression occurs in Acts 2:42 and perhaps refers here to the sacred meal or Agape-feast which the early Church practiced. According to the account of 1 Corinthians 11:20ff., Paul distinguishes between the meal and the Lord's Supper, although both meals were partaken of in the same gathering.

The phrase "breaking of bread" was not at first an exclusive designation for the Lord's Supper.⁹ But because of the significance and importance which Christ attached to the bread at the last Passover meal, "the breaking of

⁸M. Reu, "Can We Still Hold to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper?" in Two Treatises on the Means of Grace (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1952), p. 95.

⁹Ibid.

bread" soon became a name for the Christian Lord's Supper.¹⁰ But to say the "breaking of bread" was a name given the Sacrament with the intention of concealing its true meaning from the uninitiated (disciplina arcani) is a theory which is difficult to establish with any degree of certainty.

As was said before, the bread, like the cup, was given a new significance, and the new interpretation of Jesus became the Words of Institution for all subsequent celebrations of the Sacrament. In the same way, therefore, the "breaking of bread" might mean, in a narrower sense, the very ritual of speaking the Words of Institution over the elements.¹¹

¹⁰Higgins, op. cit., p. 56.

¹¹Jeremias, op. cit., p. 36.

CHAPTER V

THE CUP-BREAD ORDER

The Problem

There is yet one more weighty problem contained in verse 16 of 1 Cor. 10 which should be discussed. Since the synoptic accounts of the Lord's Supper, with the possible exception of Luke, and St. Paul's account in 1 Cor. 11, all record the Words of Institution in the order bread first, then the cup, the question arises, why does Paul here speak first of the Cup of Blessing before mentioning the bread? Did Paul intend to indicate in this way that there was any change in the order? Or was there some other reason for speaking of the cup first and then mentioning the bread?

The Short Text of Luke

The so-called "short text" of the Words of Institution contained in the Gospel of Luke brings the problem into greater prominence and compels a careful exegesis of 1 Cor. 10:16 not to ignore this question of the cup-bread order. Is the short text the intended original reading of Luke rather than the longer traditional text which includes a second reference to the cup after the bread? If the short text is the correct one, is there a possibility that the cup should be mentioned before the bread

in the Words of Institution? These questions take on added importance when we consider that Luke depended to some degree upon Paul for his subject matter when writing his Gospel and Acts.

The words which are not considered part of this "short text" are bracketed by Nestle but included in the body of his text, whereas the Revised Standard Version consigns them to the footnotes. They form verses 19b and 20 of Luke 22 and are translated:

(body) "which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. . . ."

The short text, Luke 22:17-19a, reads:

And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body. . . ."

If the short text of Luke could be proved to be the original, there would be more evidence that the order of cup-bread is the correct sequence of the distribution.

When Reu wrote his treatise on the Lord's Supper he held that the shorter form of Luke was nearer the original.

He argued:

And there can hardly be a doubt that this short form is the original text of Luke. Two reasons demand that: (1) it is easy to explain that in later editions of the Gospel of Luke, at a time when the letters of Paul with the text of 1 Cor. 11:24,25 and the Gospels of Matthew and Mark became known and were read side by side, the original short form of Luke was supplemented from the forms of Paul, Matthew and Mark,

while it would be a very strange and unexplainable procedure that a late copyist should have shortened the longer form and retained nothing but the words: **ΤΟΤΟ ΕΒΤΥ ΤΟ ΛΩΜΑ ΜΟΥ** ; (2) the so-called longer form could not be written by Luke because it contains such a surprising grammatical mistake as Luke, who always wrote a correct, even beautiful Greek, could not have written. The long form is the product of a very awkward and clumsy redactor. He supplemented the short form of Luke by taking over literally the corresponding form of Paul. If he had done more than this, he would have written a complete text and one that is linguistically correct. But now he added to the Pauline **ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν τῷ αἵματι μου** the words **τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυννόμενον** from Mark 14:24 and did not notice that in order to fit grammatically to the accepted Pauline version they ought to be changed from the nominative to the dative reading **τῷ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυννόμενον**. As the Greek words of the long version now read they speak not of the blood that was shed, but of the cup that was shed, because the nominative **τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυννόμενον** of the transmitted long text can grammatically only refer to **ποτήριον** and not to the dative **τῷ αἵματι**. It is impossible to assume that Luke made such a mistake.¹

Reu feels that an additional reason for Luke's omission of the second cup saying is a "well-founded reserve of Luke (disciplina arcani) over against the first readers of his Gospel."²

On the other hand, many scholars have taken the opposite view. Higgins discounts this latter argument in the following manner:

According to the former of these (arguments) verses 19b and 20 were omitted in certain circles in order to preserve the arcanum or esoteric secret of the

¹N. Reu, "Can We Still Hold to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper?" in Two Treatises on the Means of Grace (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1952), pp. 77-8.

²Ibid., pp. 78-9.

sacred rite, just as in Hellenistic custom the actual words of the mysteries must not be divulged except to initiates. The objection to this explanation of the genesis of the short text is that one would surely have expected "this is my body" also to be omitted as part of the secret.³

In his preface to the second German edition (1949) of The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, Jeremias states that since the publication of his first edition he had changed his opinion about the Luke text: "I no longer think it possible for reasons of textual criticism to hold that the shorter text of Luke (Luke 22.19a) is original."⁴ Higgins' suggestions thus become particularly important to the understanding of the 1 Cor. 10 passage.

The shorter text is peculiar in its order cup--bread. The same order is, indeed, found in 1 Cor. 10.16,21, but this signified nothing, since Paul in his account of the Last Supper follows the normal order. It has also been claimed that the so-called evidence supplied by Luke for a Eucharist with the elements in the reverse of the usual order is supported by that of the Didache 9 ("First, as regards the cup: We give thanks"). It seems more probable, however, as Jeremias argues, that in 9,10.1-5 we have to do with the agape or common fellowship meal which is followed by the Eucharist proper, for the words in 10.6 ("If any is holy, let him come; if any is not, let him repent. Maranatha (Our Lord, come)") really only fit the introduction of a Eucharist, and not its conclusion. There is, therefore, no evidence here for the order cup--bread; and in the Didache 14 the weekly Eucharist is described as the breaking of bread and the giving of thanks, with no details as to the order of distribution of the elements.⁵

³A. J. B. Higgins, The Lord's Supper in the New Testament (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1952), p. 39.

⁴Joachim Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, translated from the German by the Reverend A. Ehrhardt (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), p. v.

⁵Higgins, op. cit., pp. 38-9.

I would suggest that the text of Luke as we have it now is the original one, and that it is a combination by the evangelist of two traditions, the one consisting of verses 15-19a, and the other of verses 19a-20. Luke (and those who left his account of the Last Supper unchanged) felt no difficulty in the presence of the two cups, because the first was not regarded as a eucharistic cup. The omission of verses 15-19a, while those who were responsible for the change in the sequence of verses to 15, 16, 19a, 17, 18 were not satisfied with the anomalous order cup--bread in the shorter text as it came to them.⁶

Bruce states his objections to the authenticity of the short text on somewhat different grounds:

In this version two things are to be noted: first, the inversion of the actions; second, the omission of all reference to the blood in connection with the wine. The existence of such a reading as that of D and the Old Latin version raises questions, not only as to Luke's Text, but as to church practice in the Apostolic age and afterwards; or, assuming as a possibility that Luke wrote as D represents, have we here another instance of editorial discretion--shrinking from imputing to Jesus the idea of drinking His blood? If with D we omit all that follows *ὡμὴ μου*, then it results that Luke has left out all the words of our Lord setting forth the significance of His death uttered (1) at Caesarea Philippi; (2) on the occasion of the request of Zebedee's sons; (3) the anointing at Bethany; (4) the institution of the Supper. (2) and (3) are omitted altogether, and (1) is so reported as to make the lesson non-apparent.⁷

A Solution to the Problem

First of all, it must be stated that from the 1 Cor. 10:16 account it is not apparent that the cup actually

⁶ Ibid., p. 40.

⁷ Alexander Balmain Bruce, The Synoptic Gospels, in The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), I, 625-6.

preceded the bread in the Lord's Supper, nor is Paul in any way trying to reverse this order. If this were so, the effort would be rendered fruitless by the usual order which he himself claims is the traditional and correct one in 1 Cor. 11. Evidently Paul has a different, more compelling reason for this order.

The fact that the various arguments in favor of the longer text of Luke seem to outweigh the arguments for the short text, also helps to uphold our thesis.

Since also Paul in 1 Cor. 10:16 speaks of the cup of "blessing," there can be no doubt that this cup which is mentioned before the bread is the one in use in the daily celebration of the Lord's Supper, whereas the cup in the short text of Luke which precedes the bread is not the cup of the Lord's Supper, nor is it in use outside of the Passover at the time of Paul in the Christian Church. Paul's cup is not the cup of the short text of Luke.

Paul's reason for mentioning the bread after the cup is found in the words of the next verse. Bornkamm says that Paul's reason for mentioning the bread at the place where he does is to progress to the next point naturally and logically--"we are the body of Christ."⁸ And since we are the body of Christ we ought not be joined to idols. Thus Paul hastens on to clinch the very arguments

⁸Günther Bornkamm, "Herrenmahl und Kirche bei Paulus," New Testament Studies, II (February, 1956), 205.

he advanced in verse 14.

Paul mentions the cup first, not because at the sacrificial feasts men thought less about food than about a pleasant meeting primarily for enjoying wine (they came for eating and drinking), but because he means to speak at more length about the bread, and in connection with it, especially to discuss the Israelitic partaking of the sacrifices, as it suited his theme of the meat offered to idols. For this reason he begins here by disposing briefly of the point concerning the cup.⁹

⁹August Heinrich Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistles to the Corinthians, translated from the 5th edition of the German by D. Douglas Bannerman (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1884), p. 228.

Σῆμα Χριστοῦ

While discussing the various kinds of κοινῶν,

we shall consider briefly what the phrase σῆμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ

(σῆμα Χριστοῦ) means in 1 Cor. 10:16.

The word σῆμα finds its meaning root in Old Test-

ament usage, yet this meaning had been lowered and expanded

CHAPTER VI

PARTICIPATION IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

Κολωνία is Related to *Σῶμα Χριστοῦ*

Τὸ ποτήριον . . . τὸν ἄρτον, οὐχὶ *Κολωνία* (τοῦ αἵματος) τοῦ *βώματος* τοῦ *Χριστοῦ* ἔβλεν;

The cup, the bread, is it not a participation of (the blood) the body of Christ? The important words in verses 16 and 17 which sum up the entire action of the Lord's Supper are *Κολωνία*, participation, *βώματος Χριστοῦ*, in the body of Christ.

For Paul the *Κολωνία* concept was firmly attached to the Lord's Supper. In the verses we are discussing, three kinds of *Κολωνία* can be distinguished. Each of these kinds of *Κολωνία* has an intimate connection with the "Body of Christ." The Body of Christ is related to the elements of the Lord's Supper and to those who eat the Lord's Supper, and this relation is expressed by the word *Κολωνία*.

Σῶμα Χριστοῦ

Before discussing the various kinds of *Κολωνία*, we ought to consider briefly what the phrase Body of Christ (*βῶμα Χριστοῦ*) means in 1 Cor. 10:16.

The word *βῶμα* finds its meaning rooted in Old Testament ideas, yet this meaning has been tempered and expanded

in scope by its use in the New Testament. J. A. T. Robinson has compiled the material which is pertinent to the $\sigma\mu\alpha$ motif. For Robinson this word $\sigma\mu\alpha$ has special significance.

He says:

One could say without exaggeration that the concept of the body forms the keystone of Paul's theology. In its closely interconnected meanings, the word $\sigma\mu\alpha$ (soma) knits together all his great themes. It is from the body of sin and death that we are delivered; it is through the body of Christ on the Cross that we are saved; it is into His body the Church that we are incorporated; it is by His body in the Eucharist that this Community is sustained; it is in our body that its new life has to be manifested; it is to a resurrection of this body to the likeness of His glorious body that we are destined. Here, with the exception of the doctrine of God, are represented all the main tenets of the Christian Faith--the doctrines of Man, Sin, the Incarnation and Atonement, the Church, the Sacraments, Sanctification, and Eschatology. To trace the subtle links and interaction between the different senses of this word $\sigma\mu\alpha$ is to grasp the thread that leads through the maze of Pauline thought.¹

$\Sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ and $\sigma\alpha\rho\kappa\iota\varsigma$ are the two Greek words for body which Paul uses in his Epistles. But in Hebrew there is no word for body. $\Gamma\psi\kappa$, flesh, is the only theologically important word, but, like the other parts of the body, it is primarily another example of where a part or aspect of a man stands for the whole man.

But $\sigma\mu\alpha$ for Paul contains all the meanings attached to $\sigma\alpha\rho\kappa\iota\varsigma$. It is a much broader term. It stands for the whole man, not distinguishing in him a dichotomy or trichotomy or any single part of the body. $\Sigma\omega\mu\alpha$, while it

¹John A. T. Robinson, The Body (London: SMC Press Ltd., 1952), p. 9.

can be identified with ἁρτίς as the bearer of sin and corruption, is also the bearer of man's resurrection. The redemption of the ἁρτίς is a possibility. Σῶμα, therefore, is the link between Paul's doctrine of man and his whole gospel of Christ.²

What does Paul mean by his references to the Body of Christ? He means the total Christ, of course. For Christ was made man, He had a body. And He dwelt among us and became obedient to the Law, cross, and death. The human body, then, which is the only body He had, is the body Paul is referring to in 1 Cor. 10:16 when speaking of the communion (κοινωνία) of the elements in the Lord's Supper.

The Meaning of κοινωνία

How is it that κοινωνία comes to be used by Paul to express what happens in the Lord's Supper?

κοινωνία or κοινωνός is the word for the concept גִּבּוּרִיּוּת, Genossenschaft, Verband, communion, participation, sharing. The word has always had religious meaning or overtones. The Chaburah of the Old Testament was a table-fellowship. The גִּבּוּרִיּוּת-בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל, "sons of fellowship" were at least ten in number and customarily (postexilic) ate the fellowship meal on the eve of the Sabbath. Thus also this same group would assemble for the eating of the annual

²Ibid., pp. 1-33.

Passover. No doubt this practice was carried over to the days of the early Church (ΚΛΩΝΤΕΣ ΚΑΤ' ΟΙΚΟΝ ἄρτου, Acts 2:42), the fellowship meals, the Agape feasts, and the celebration of the Lord's Supper, while among some Jewish Christians it was still customary to join in the Passover once a year.³

Κοινωνία means: (a) fellowship, relationship; (b) generosity, fellow-feeling; (c) sign or proof of fellowship, contribution; (d) participation, sharing τινός in something. A κοινωνός is one who engages in κοινωνία, that is, partakes of something with someone else. κοινωνός is used with the dative or genitive, with prepositions ἐν or μετά, or absolutely.⁴ In ch. 10:16 κοινωνία is used with the genitives αἵματος and σώματος.

The Κοινωνία of the Elements

When one asks which are the elements in the Lord's Supper, the correct answer would include not only bread and wine, but also the body and blood of Christ. This is substantiated in the Synoptic accounts and Paul (1 Cor. 11), where we have all four elements mentioned in the same connection in the Lord's Supper. But in the 1 Cor. 10:16 passage this is made more certain. For here Paul explicitly

³Friedrich Hauck, "Κοινωνία," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), III, 803.

⁴W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, editors and translators, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c.1957), pp. 439-40.

says that the cup is the communion (*KOLVVVIA*) of the blood of Christ, the bread is the communion (*KOLVVVIA*) of the body of Christ. This *KOLVVVIA* means a sharing of some kind. Just what kind of a sharing or communion it is, is hard to distinguish. But it means that while we avoid the use of unnecessary or even faulty constructions to describe the *KOLVVVIA* of Christ with the elements, we must take this to mean that here in the Lord's Supper there is the closest possible relationship of the cup and the blood, the bread and the body, when the Lord's Supper is celebrated.

Therefore, in the first place, in 1 Cor. 10:16, Paul is speaking of some kind of *KOLVVVIA* not of persons, but of the elements with each other. Werner Elert supports this meaning of *KOLVVVIA* by citing evidence from ancient church usage, that even the phrase "communion of saints" of the Creed is actually a reference of this *KOLVVVIA* of the elements.

Jeder Christ der alten Kirche des Ostens vernahm in jeder Eucharistie vor der Distribution den Ruf *τὰ ἄγια τοῖς ἁγίοις*, und er war keinen Augenblick im Zweifel, was damit gemeint sei. *τὰ ἄγια* ist nicht Plural sondern Dual und bedeutet die konsekrierten Elemente, dementsprechend *koinonia* die Abendmahlskoinonia und die ganze Formel das Abendmahlssakrament. Ins Lateinische Übertragen bedeuten dann in der Formel *sanctorum communio* die *sancta* nicht, wie manche Forscher vermuteten, Sakramente in der Mehrzahl sondern ebenfalls die konsekrierten Elemente und das Ganze ebenfalls nur das Abendmahlssakrament. Die Formel ist sakramental gemeint. Dasz in einem Credo auch eines Sakraments gedacht wird, ist nicht auffällig, denn in andern Morgenländischen Bekenntnissen wird an der entsprechenden Stelle auch die Taufe genannt. Wir werden dieses Verständnis der Formel *τῶν ἁγίων ΚΟΛΒΒΙΑ* im ostkirchlichen Sprachgebrauch noch genauer zu verfolgen haben, weil es für das

Thema Abendmahl und Kirchengemeinschaft in der alten Kirche des Ostens von grundlegender Wichtigkeit ist.⁵

The *Koinwvia* of Men with the Body and Blood of Christ

The purpose of the Lord's Supper, however, is not fulfilled when there is *Koinwvia* only between the elements. It is fulfilled only when Christians have *Koinwvia* with Christ and consequently with one another.

The Sacrament, then, is the place where in a special way Christians partake of Christ. The Words of Institution, "Take eat, this is my body," demonstrate this. In the 1 Cor. 10:16,17 passage, the very same participation is indicated in several ways.

The first clause of v. 17, *ὅτι εἰς ἄρτος*--because there is one loaf, indicates this. The bread or loaf is food; it serves no other purpose than that of being eaten. The whole idea of food in the sacrament indicates the part men take in the sacrament. They eat it. And by eating the bread, they partake of the Body of Christ. The very action is pin-pointed by the last phrase of v. 17-- *ἐκ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν*--we partake of the one bread. The word rendered by "partake," according to scholars, is no longer different in meaning from *Koinwvros*. "The utmost that can safely be said about St. Paul's use of the second

⁵Werner Elert, Abendmahl und Kirchengemeinschaft in der Alten Kirche hauptsächlich der des Ostens (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1954), pp. 13-4. p. 9 English

word (ΜΕΤΈΧΕΙΝ) is that he seems to use it by preference to indicate 'partaking' of food."⁶

This partaking of Christ's body is something which men repeat every time they attend the Sacrament. But at the same time the participation in the Body of Christ does not cease when men come away from the Lord's Altar. The personal κοινωνία of a man with the Body of Christ continues.

Κοινωνία with One Another

Ἐν ὧμα οἱ πολλοὶ ἕβμεν A third meaning of κοινωνία is that which exists between those who are in the Body of Christ. As we have seen, κοινωνία with the Body of Christ is extended to all of the persons who eat the Lord's Supper.

An important fact that must immediately be noted is that the use of ὧμα here is not called ὧμα Χριστοῦ as in verse 16, but rather a ὧμα made up of those who individually are members of the Body of Christ. Should, then, the Body of Christ be used at all in connection with this third kind of κοινωνία, or must we be content to talk here only of the κοινωνία of believers? On the other hand, if we could talk of the κοινωνία of believers as being the ὧμα Χριστοῦ, must this phrase be interpreted metaphorically?

⁶L. S. Thornton, The Common Life in the Body of Christ (Westminster: Dacre Press, c.1942), p. 322.

Notably in Romans 12:5 and 1 Corinthians 12:27 Paul calls the believers the Body of Christ. We can safely assume that here, too, Paul thinks of "the many" as being the Body of Christ. But how is the problem of interpretation of $\epsilon\omega\mu\alpha \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$ to be solved?

Some commentators immediately demand that the $\epsilon\omega\mu\alpha$ with which men have this $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\omega\nu\iota\alpha$ must be a "metaphor" of the Body of Christ.

It is to this latter truth that our metaphor, and behind it the conception of corporate personality, bears witness. The Body of Christ is in some way Christ himself and the members of his Body are in some way his members. Perhaps the truth can be stated no more exactly than that; the conception of corporate personality cannot be reduced to logical terms, and that is why Paul rationalizes it into metaphors--"in Christ," "dead and risen with Christ," "Body of Christ."⁷

Robinson, however, rightly asserts: "His underlying conception is not of a suprapersonal collective, but of a specific personal organism."⁸

But it is of great importance to see that when Paul took the term $\epsilon\omega\mu\alpha$ and applied it to the Church, what it must have conveyed to him and his readers was (to employ a distinction which itself would have surprised him) something not corporate but corporal. It directed the mind to a person; it did not of itself suggest a social group. Hence, as Prof. A. M. Ramsey has well remarked, "to call the Church $\tau\omicron \epsilon\omega\mu\alpha \tau\omicron\upsilon \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$ was to draw attention to it not primarily as a collection of men, but primarily as Christ Himself in His own being and life."⁹

⁷Ernest Best, One Body in Christ (London: S. P. C. K., 1955), p. 111.

⁸Robinson, op. cit., p. 51.

⁹Ibid., p. 50.

consequently, one must be chary of speaking of "the metaphor" of the Body of Christ. Paul uses the analogy of the human body to elucidate his teaching that Christians form Christ's body. But analogy holds because they are in literal fact the risen organism of Christ's person in all its concrete reality. What is arresting is his identification of this personality with the Church. But to say that the Church is the body of Christ is no more of a metaphor than to say that the flesh of the incarnate Jesus or the bread of the Eucharist is the body of Christ. None of them is "like" His body (Paul never says this); each of them is the body of Christ, in that each is the physical complement and extension of the one and the same Person and Life. They are all expressions of a single Christology.¹⁰

the body cannot in fact consist only of "one member", but must be "many" (v. 14). The point of the verses that follow (15-21) is not that the different members must be united among themselves (the question of schism does not enter till v. 25, and then it is quite incidental to the passage), but precisely that there must be more than one member if there is to be a body at all.¹¹

Percy insists on defining the Body of Christ as Christ Himself:

Hiernit stimmt auch I Kor. 10,16f. Überein: "Der Segensbecher . . . Brote teil." Das eine Brot, das die vielen zu einem Leibe macht, ist ja eben der Leib Christ, d.h. wie I Kor. 12.12 angedeutet wurde und wie ich hier später näher ausführen werde, Christus selbst.¹²

Essentially, the question "What is the Body of Christ?" will be answered fully only when we examine the essence of this unity of believers, the way men become part of this unity, and the blessings men receive from this unity.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 51.

¹¹Ibid., p. 59.

¹²Ernst Percy, Der Leib Christi in den Paulinischen Homologumena und Antilegomena (Lund: Hakan Ohlssons Boktryckeri, 1942), pp. 6-7.

Unity in the Body of Christ

First, what is the unifying factor of the Body of Christ? Is the Church that which unifies the Body of Christ, or is it the Sacrament? It is correct to say with Best that since unity and the Body of Christ are often mentioned without any reference to the Eucharist, neither this unity nor the Church is created by the Eucharist.¹³ But the fact cannot be denied that Paul himself directly grounds the unity of the Church as the Body of Christ in the sacramental loaf, itself already declared to be the Body of the Lord: "Because there is one loaf, we, that are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf."¹⁴

Εἶς

The unity motif of our passage (1 Cor. 10:17) is further expressed by the word εἶς, ἓν. This word has important implications as to why the Christians have become one with the σῶμα Χριστοῦ. By the Fall of Adam into sin, men have inherited a common lot. The whole human race is corrupt. All men are subject to sinning and to death. This all proves men's counterpart with Adam and their unity with one another in this common lot. Adam, the first man, was naturally the "head" the "first-born" of

¹³Best, op. cit., pp. 106-7.

¹⁴Robinson, op. cit., p. 56.

all other men.¹⁵ This is a historical fact and embraces the entire history of the world.¹⁶

So steht alle Schöpfung in einer grossen Schicksalsgemeinschaft, das Geschlecht Adams aber steht darüberhinaus in einer Gemeinschaft der Schuld. Es ist mit dem Stammvater eins in der Sünde und damit der Verantwortung für die Weltnot. Keiner steht ausserhalb. Alle stehen sie ἐν Ἀδὰμ.¹⁷

But Christ is in word and deed truly the Antitype of Adam. Here are two real men, "in doppelten ἀνθρώπου und ein doppelten ἐνός."¹⁸

Wie der πρῶτος Ἀδὰμ schon in der jüdischen Tradition das Haupt der Menschenkinder heisst . . . so heisst der εἰς ἀνθρώπος Ἰησοῦς die Würdenamen, in immer neuen Formen die Beziehung des Einen zu allen und zugleich doch die Einzigartigkeit des Einen unter allen sichergestellt.¹⁹

The rule which Christ exercises over men in His Body is His accomplishment because of His becoming the Head of all men through His redemptive work. Christ, not Adam, is the One after Whom the new manner of being is patterned. This consolidates the believers with Him into His Body. "We can certainly say that there is a potential solidarity of all men with Christ and a real

¹⁵Ethelbert Stauffer, "Εἰς," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 434.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 435.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 436.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

solidarity of all believers with Him."²⁰

The Many

The fact need not be demonstrated any further here that all men who ever lived, because of Adam's sin, have come under the wrath of God and so are by nature physical and spiritual descendents of Adam. But here it must be noted that οἱ πολλοί and οἱ πάντες are the ones which are spoken of as having been made partakers of the second Adam, Jesus. Jesus added the words, when He pronounced the blessing, that these gifts--broken bread and red wine--were for the "many."²¹ What does the "many" mean? Jeremias states that post-Christian interpretations of Isaiah 53 on the part of later Judaism consider the term to designate the "house of Israel," or the "whole of Israel." But to gain a more accurate meaning for οἱ πολλοί, Jeremias advocates referring back to pre-Christian interpretations of Isaiah 53. From these it is certain that the "many" includes also the Gentiles.²²

Therefore ὑπὲρ πολλῶν in the words of institution has not, as we already have seen, an exclusive meaning (many, but not all) but, as is common in Semitic speech, an inclusive meaning (the sum total, consisting of many). Accordingly the translation of

²⁰Best, op. cit., p. 38.

²¹Joachim Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, translated from the German by the Reverend A. Ehrhardt (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), p. 154.

²²Ibid., pp. 148-50.

τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν has to be: "which is going to be shed for the whole world."²³

In Greek "many" is in opposition to "all" and has an exclusive connotation ("many, but not all"), but, as we have seen, the Hebrew ׀ׁׂ׃ can have an inclusive connotation ("the whole, comprising many individuals"). This linguistic usage comes about, because Hebrew and Aramaic have no word for "all" in the plural.²⁴

The οἱ γὰρ πάντες therefore, serves to explain more fully the preceding οἱ πολλοί . For here the Greek term "all" is used; "all" who partake of that one bread! Here a reference to Mark's Words of Institution (14:24) will show that the "many" meant others besides just the disciples. The "many" and "all" idea was not understood to mean just those who were present at that moment. Thus the "all" referring to those ἐν Ἀδάμ and the "all" of the Sacramental words are equally inclusive.

How is it that all men can be included in the εἶμα
Χριστοῦ ?

He is a new head to the human race; righteousness and life pass over from him and neutralize the sin and death passed over from Adam. Christ is heavenly and he shares his heavenly nature with men. It is at this point that there is some confusion; Christ shares his heavenly nature with men but do all of them effectively partake of it? Perhaps the only thing to say is that while all are offered it some refuse it and so prevent its effective operation in themselves.²⁵

²³Ibid., p. 151.

²⁴Ibid., p. 124.

²⁵Best, op. cit., p. 42.

Christ's redemptive work is available to all men because of His universal suffering and death for the remission of all men's sins. Yet the enjoyment of these blessings is restricted only to those who partake (*ΜΕΤΈΧΕΙΝ*) of the loaf. There is then an availability for all men of these blessings.

Every table fellowship is a fellowship of life; table fellowship with Jesus is more. This is evident from that table fellowship which Jesus gave to sinner and outcasts. Orientals, to whom symbolic actions mean more than to us, immediately understood that the admission of the outcasts to table fellowship with Jesus meant an offer of salvation to the guilty sinners, and the assurance of forgiveness. Hence the passionate objections of the Pharisees ("This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them", Luke 15.2, cf. Mark 2.15-17), who assumed that the pious could have table fellowship only with the righteous. In this way they revealed an understanding of our Lord's intention to accord to sinners worth before God, and they objected to the placing of sinners on the same level as the righteous.²⁶

The cup and bread, then, are the means and medium of enjoying this fellowship. But, as stated above, the Eucharist is not the means of entering this fellowship, but is the means of maintaining this fellowship. The Baptism into Christ and belief in the Atonement gives the Christian his membership in this fellowship. For the Christian the Lord's Supper becomes one of the most important phases of his existence. For a man cannot be a Christian by himself; he must as a member of the Christian

²⁶Jeremias, op. cit., p. 136.

community partake with his fellow Christians in the Sacrament.²⁷ We can have fellowship in everything else before we have fellowship in the Supper. Lord's Supper fellowship is the final step in fellowship, not the first.²⁸

When men enter the fellowship of the *εὐχάριστιον*, they are thereupon (a) with Christ and (b) with other Christians. The fellowship can be correctly understood only if Christ is placed at the center of this whole relationship. It is necessary for each individual Christian to be united first with Christ in His Body, and then the fellowship with one another becomes a reality.

²⁷Best, op. cit., pp. 24-5.

²⁸H. P. Hamann, Jr., "The Lord's Supper in Lutheran Doctrine and Practice," The Australasian Theological Review, XXV (March-June, 1954), 16-7.

CHAPTER VII

THE LORD'S ALTAR AND HEATHEN ALTARS, 1 COR. 10:18-22

The Threat of Idols

When a believer partakes of the Lord's Supper, he is giving evidence of his membership or part in the Body of Christ. He is at the same time taking part in the Body of Christ. To the Corinthians Paul would say, "This membership in Christ which you seem to take for granted has a very important meaning as far as your manner of living is concerned. All this means flee from the worship of idols!"

Before we take up Paul's admonition, we ought to answer the questions, "Who were the Corinthian deities? What constituted the threat to the spiritual well-being of Paul's parishoners?"

Findlay characterizes the heathen influences in the city of Corinth:

The presiding deities of this maritime city were the sea-god Poseidon, under whose patronage the famous Isthmian games were held, and Aphrodite, whose temple crowned the Acrocorinthus. The cultus of Aphrodite (worshipped in her debasing form as Aphr. Pandemos) dates back, it is supposed, to prehistoric Phoenician times; its features were more Oriental than Greek--especially the institution of the ιερόδουλοι, or priestess-courtesans, of whom more than a thousand were attached to the shrine of the goddess. Temples of Serapis and Isis were also conspicuous at Corinth, representing the powerful leaven of Egyptian superstition that helped to demoralise the empire. The luxury and refinement of the elder Corinth were associated with its vice; so notorious was its debauchery that κορινθιαία ελευθερία was a euphemism for

whoredom; in our own literature "a Corinthian" still means a polished rake.¹

Lietzmann, too, well describes how the Corinthian city was one place where a pantheon of gods and religions could exist, where new religions, old religions, and syncretistic religions flourished. The Greek counterparts of the Roman deities, the mystery religions, various types of monotheism, religions of Egypt, Judaism, and Christianity existed side by side.² How difficult it was for Christians not to become entangled in the religious practices of their heathen neighbors, spouses, parents, or overlords!

Israel's Regard of Worship

Behold Israel after the flesh, *κατὰ ἄρκα* (v. 18). Look at a nation, a people, whose ways are well-known to you! "Israel after the flesh" is distinguished from the Christian Church, the true Israel of God.³ "Israel after the Spirit" is a figure which Paul employs to designate the believers. But now he says, "Look at the Jews, as a nation, and see what their habits are."⁴

¹G. G. Findlay, St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, in The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), II, 734.

²D. Hans Lietzmann, An die Korinther I. II. in Handbuch zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1949), IX, 50.

³John A. T. Robinson, The Body, (London: SMC Press Ltd., 1952) p. 21.

⁴Charles Hodge, An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1891), p. 191.

Οὐχ οἱ ἐσθίουρες τὰς θουσίας κοινῶν τοῦ
 θουλακτηρίου εἶναι; What is the Jewish experience?

For the Jew, eating the sacrifices and offerings which God commanded were of greatest importance (Lev. 7:15; 8:31; Deut. 12:18). "The very purpose for which Jews participated was to join in the sacrificial feasts and all they stood for."⁵

Here indeed there is no spiritual or figurative communion; for "to eat of the sacrifices" is to partake bodily of the altar or to be bodily a partaker of the altar. And the altar with its sacrifice is indeed also a bodily thing, bodily common and distributed among the eaters of the sacrifices.⁶

There is, furthermore, the cultic aspect to be considered; "Behold Israel after the flesh: have not they which eat the sacrifices communion with the altar?" (1 Cor. 10.18), says Paul: and the subsequent verses show that he intends to say that the eating of sacrificial meat brings the priests and participants in sacrificial meals into a very close relationship to God. Especially instructive is a passage which positively ascribes an atoning effect to the cultic meal: "Where (is it said) that the eating of the sacred sacrifices brings atonement to Israel? The Scripture teaches: "And He (Jahwe) hath given it (the sin-offering) to you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord," Lev. 10.17. How so? The priests eat, and for the masters (who provide the sacrifice) the atonement is made."⁷

This is what Paul means when he calls the attention of the Corinthians to the importance which the Jews attach

⁵Hodge, op. cit., p. 191.

⁶H. B. Hemmeter, "Luther's Position on the Lord's Supper," Concordia Theological Monthly, X (November, 1939), 741-2.

⁷Joachim Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, translated from the German by the Reverend A. Ehrhardt (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), p. 158.

eating of the sacrifices and partaking in the worship of God at the Jewish altar.

Idols Themselves are Nothing

Up to this point, therefore, Paul has employed two examples to demonstrate to the Corinthians the realness of partaking in the meals dedicated to God. The Jews knew it was their sacrifices which kept them in favor with God. The Christians knew that participation in the Lord's Supper kept them in the Body of Christ. And idol-worshippers felt their sacrifices gave them a share in the life of their gods.

Paul asks: *τί οὖν φημι; ὅτι εἰδωλόθυτον τί ἐστιν; ἢ ὅτι εἰδωλον τί ἐστιν;* Am I trying to say that meat offered to idols, or an idol itself is anything? "Don't misunderstand me!"

er will nicht sagen, dass er sich bei der heidnischen Opfermahlzeit um die Verbindung mit einem wirklichen Gott handle; er will die Erkenntnis der Nichtigkeit der Götzen nicht aufheben (8.4-6). Er spricht dem heidnischen Opfer also die göttliche Wahrheit ab.⁸

I am still as vehemently opposed to the worship of these false gods (which are no gods) as I was before."

Is *εἰδωλόθυτον* anything? *εἰδωλόθυτον* is meat offered to idols. This expression is used only by Jews

⁸Heinz-Dietrich Wendland, Die Briefe an die Korinther, in Das Neue Testament Deutsch (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1954), VII, 73-4.

and Christians. The pagan called it *ζερόθυτον* "devoted". "It refers to sacrificial meat, part of which was burned on the altar, part was eaten at a solemn meal in the temple, and part was sold in the market for home use."⁹

To the Jew *εἶδωλόθυτον* was "worse" than nothing. He was prohibited from eating or partaking of such a sacrifice. To eat the meat would render him unclean as if he had touched a corpse; but worse, it would indicate his fall from Jewry.¹⁰

Götzenopferfleisch in diesem Sinne war nicht, was hineingeht zur heidnischen Kultstätte sondern was herauskommt. In diesen strengen Verbote des Götzenopferfleisches zeigt sich die völlige Verschllossenheit des Judentums gegen allen religiösen Synkretismus. Die Begründung des Verbote damit, dass das Fleisch Opfer an die Toten bzw. im Dienste der Nichtigkeiten ist, beweist, dass dies Verbot in erster Linie religiös, dh durch das, freilich gesetzlich verstandene, erste Gebot begründet war, nicht durch abergläubische Verstellung, Furcht vor Geistern uä.¹¹

For the Christian, however, Paul says, it is not wrong to go to the market to buy the meat for food. However, there are some precautions to take (1 Cor. 8:1-13). Do not give offense to those who do not understand what you are doing and who do not know about the liberty a Christian has in this matter. Above all, do not yourself

⁹W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, editors and translators, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c.1957), p. 220.

¹⁰Friedrich Büchsel, "*Εἶδωλόθυτον*, *εἶδωλον*," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 376.

¹¹Ibid.

give up the assurance you have that "yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist" (1 Cor. 8:6).¹²

A true Christian regarded the idols (εἰδωλα) as little as he did the sacrificial meat. And by the words of verse 19, Paul does not accord the εἰδωλα any status either.

The Greek term εἰδωλον meant "image," a picture or reflection in the water, a shadow, a form of a ghost, or the inhabitants of the underworld. The word also referred to the work of the sculptor or craftsman which served to represent some living, moving entity. It also became a term used by philosophers to mean unreality, imitation, copy. It was a parallel to ψεῦδος and an antonym of ἀλήθεις .¹³

Das deutsche Wort "Götze" gibt nicht ganz wieder, was die LXX mit εἰδωλον meint. Götze (=Abgott) ist der Gegenstand eines falschen Kultus, εἰδωλον ist das Wirklichkeitslose, das von törichtem Menschen an die Stelle des wirklichen Gottes gesetzt ist. Auch Philo und Josephus kennen diesen Sprachgebrauch von εἰδωλον.¹⁴

In the New Testament (with the exception of the Gospels) the word εἰδωλον designates the heathen gods and their images or idols.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., pp. 373-4.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 374.

An der Verwendung von εἰδωλον zur Bezeichnung der heidnischen Götter in den Paulusbriefen haftet die Frage: wie weit sind die heidnischen Götter für Paulus Wirklichkeiten? Dass sie im Vergleich mit Gott keine Götter sind, ist Paulus selbstverständlich I Th 1,9, ebenso dass sie ihrem Wesen nach nicht Götter Gl 4,8, sondern Erzeugnisse menschlicher Sünde und Torheit sind, R 1,23. Aber hinter ihrem Kultus standen ihm die Dämonen I K 10,19; vgl 8,5, so dass es ihm mit einer aufgeklärten Nichtachtung dieses Kultus nicht getan war. Dt. 32,17: ἔθουσαν δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῶν hatte ihm volle Geltung. Er ist in dieser Bezeichnung durchaus Jude.

Wie weit man im Sinne des Paulus die Dämonen und die Götter gleichzusetzen, wie weit man sie zu unterscheiden hat, bleibt bei der Spärlichkeit der Aussagen unklar. I K 8,5 ist wohl so zu verstehen, dass hinter den heidnischen Göttern eine Wirklichkeit steht, eben die Dämonen. Aber andererseits sind die Dämonen für Paulus sicher nicht das, was die Heiden von ihren Göttern glauben; sie betrügen die Menschen, dass sie an jene Götter glauben.¹⁵

For Paul the heathen idols are not God, they are not even gods, they are nothing "good."

Idols Represent Demons

But a second reason why the Christians are to avoid the idols is that they provoke the Lord to jealousy (v. 21). It is violating the basic provision of the Moral Law to give allegiance to any other god. Furthermore, the worship of these non-entities is pure folly since they cannot taste, hear, smell, speak, or move, and are more helpless than those who call upon them (1 Cor. 12:2).

But there is an even more compelling reason for avoiding

¹⁵Ibid., p. 375.

the worship of idols. Verse 20 says: Ἄλλ' ὅτι ἃ θύουσιν, δαιμονίαίς καὶ οὐ θεῷ θύουσιν. The dumb idol is not capable of good. Rather behind the idol is a diabolical force which is opposed to God and is bent on the destruction of God's creatures. These are demons (δαιμονία).

That is the etymology of δαιμόνιον? Perhaps the original idea came from "dismembering" or "rending" and referred to a ghoulish spirit. It meant also an intangible supernatural power.¹⁶

The next thought the term conveyed was that of a deity or divinity, then the lesser gods, demigods, and teraphim. "Diese Gestalten mögen ursprünglich auch "Geister" gewesen sein, entscheidend ist aber, dass sich ihr Charakter zu der Zeit, wo sie genannt werden, schon geändert hat."¹⁷ Besides this, the term denoted a "force," as yet unknown, which played into human affairs. From this the next step was to include in the idea that which would befall man, the Fates, destiny, death, the one who determined life's length, then the one that determined everything good or bad, the (νοῦς) or the god-quality in man, the deities of the stars, or mediatory spirits which mediated between gods and men.¹⁸

¹⁶Werner Foerster, "Δαιμόνιον," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 1-2.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁸Ibid.

In time "δαιμόνιον" became a name for the guiding principle of the *κόσμος*, which later became embodied in philosophical thought systems.¹⁹ Δαιμονία also were departed spirits, unburied, to be incarnated; apparitions, ghosts, spectres which are present at all times in all places especially at night in all kinds of form, animals, or other objects. To the Greek mind everything connected with δαιμονία was synonymous with "gods."²⁰

The Old Testament does not know of the Greek "demons." There are only very few instances where there are any comparable examples in the Old Testament. The witch of Endor raised the spirit of Samuel from the grave. The term is also used of sacrificing to false gods (Lev. 17:7). The "Angel of the Lord," אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה or ἄγγελος, is perhaps comparable to the mediatory spirits of Greek thought.²¹

When the word δαιμόνιον was used in the Septuagint it was a reference to the heathen gods לֵאלֹהֵי נָכְרִים, a foreign god in whose worship the Jews did not participate.²²

Closely related to δαιμόνιον is the term δαίμων. This expression meant to the Jews the power or spirit of the Devil, or the spirits who were in league with Satan. Not unrelated to this concept was the idea of Strafengel

¹⁹Ibid., p. 6.

²⁰Ibid., p. 8.

²¹Ibid., pp. 10-11.

²²Ibid., p. 12.

or Satansengel, the permissive will of God in allowing evil.²³

In the New Testament δαιμόνιον, in line with Old Testament thought, is usually used, and refers to the evil spirit (πνεῦμα) which possesses a man. These spirits are given the various adjectives, ἀκάθαρτον, πονηρόν, ἄλλαν (καὶ κωφόν), ἀβθενείας, πύθων.²⁴ Δαιμόνιον is never used of spirits of the dead, since the dead sleep until the Resurrection. It never denotes a mediator between God and Satan. On the contrary, the New Testament has established most certainly the gulf that exists between these two.²⁵

Even though the Epistles of the New Testament do not speak much about the demons, they by no means overlook or doubt their reality and existence.

Vielmehr ist für Paulus nicht nur die Zauberei Verkehr mit Dämonen, sondern auch der "reguläre" heidnische Kultus kann in Verbindung mit Dämonen bringen, I K 10, 20f. So sehr auch die Götterbilder nichts sind und der Christ zu allem die Freiheit hat: hinter dem Heidentum stehen die Dämonen.²⁶

Paul's greatest concern about idol worship is the fact that it is really worship of Satan.

For such as worship idols and therefore Satan, it is to them as if they were possessed with Satan. Whether

²⁵Ibid., p. 17.

²⁶Ibid.

this possession manifested itself as mental or physical sickness, or whether it was spiritual sickness, it bespeaks a temporary or permanent alienment with Satan against God's order. Possession of the Devil is the complete demolition and turning aside of the creative measure of God's person in a man, an attempt to destroy man and to paralyze the "I," so that it seems the demon is the one who actually speaks for the possessed man.²⁷

Because of these strong connotations (the heathen idols are really demons, destroyers of man, enemies of God) the Corinthians are to shrink from them as the worst possible curse. Presumably, then, there were those in the Corinthian Church who were not sensible of the danger.

Christians Cannot Worship Demons

Οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαιμονίων γινέσθαι.

The Corinthians need this stern insistence of Paul. There is nothing half-hearted about the θέλω; it is imperative or jussive in force.

It was of great importance for the Corinthians to know that it did not depend on their intention whether they came into communion with devils. The heathen did not intend to worship devils, and yet they did it; what would it avail, therefore, to the reckless Corinthians, who attended the sacrificial feasts of the heathen to say that they did not intend to worship idols? The question was not, what they meant to do, but what they did; not, what their intention was, but what was the import and effect of their conduct.²⁸

²⁷ Ibid., p. 19.

²⁸ Hodge, op. cit., p. 194.

If a Corinthian thinks homage to a false idol is of no consequence (since the thing worshipped is nothing), he must take warning that the gap of "nothingness" is filled up by the Devil. In reality he is then worshipping the Devil, and is in league or fellowship with the Devil.

And this is serious. Οὐ δύνασθε ποτήριον κυρίου πίνειν καὶ ποτήριον δαιμονίων δύνασθε τραπέζης κυρίου μετέχειν καὶ τραπέζης δαιμονίων. You cannot! The phrase is repeated to exclude any possibility of misunderstanding. The parallelism reinforces the prohibition. You are not able to! This οὐ δύνασθε with the infinitive obviously does not govern the physical act, but it deeply involves the moral act. It is impossible for the moral intentions that correspond to these physical acts to mesh and agree!

Christians Cannot Partake of the Table of Demons

The action which is morally impossible, πίνειν and μετέχειν with the heathen, is prohibited not once but twice! It is bad enough if heathen continually give themselves to the worship of idols. But when Christians who eat the Lord's Supper also eat this, that is an affront to the holiness of God.

This eating and drinking of the heathen was a practice not unlike that to which Christians were accustomed.

Best categorizes these cult-meals:

Cult-meals may be divided roughly into three types:
 (a) there is the meal of the cult-society in which the members express their common fellowship and

perhaps commemorate a dead founder; (b) there is the meal within the precincts of a god's temple at which the god is supposed to preside; (c) (much less frequently) there is the meal in which it is considered that the god himself is eaten. The mythical rending and eating of Dionysios Zagreus by the Titans is represented in the Orphic cult by the division and eating of the sacrificial animal, which is supposed to be the god himself.²⁹

these cult-meals are those of the second type in which a measure of fellowship was created between the god and his worshippers but they were not regarded either as eating him or becoming him. If the believer were to participate both in Christ and in the god of the Temple he would be the *κοινωνός* of both, and that would be impossible because it would create a link between Christ and the god.³⁰

Lietzmann says:

Das macht die Warnung des Paulus verständlich: beim Abendmahl nehmt ihr den Herrn Christus in euch auf, beim Götzenfest fährt der Dämon in euch--das ist unvereinbar miteinander.³¹

By partaking of the "table" Paul means the altar and its sacrifice. This is a most concrete, tangible form of worship, therefore a most obvious system of carrying out idolatrous practices. Those who take part in these meals put themselves out of communion with Christ.³²

Paul's Final Appeal

ἢ παραζηλοῦμεν τὸν κύριον; καὶ ἰσχυρότεροι αὐτοῦ;

²⁹Ernest Best, One Body in Christ (London: S. P. C. K. 1955), p. 88.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 90-1.

³¹Lietzmann, op. cit., p. 50.

³²Best, op. cit., p. 90.

ἔβμεν; (v. 22). This is Paul's final appeal in this matter. It is, even so, an appeal to their common sense and better knowledge. Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He? Every Corinthian Christian knew the words, "I the Lord Thy God am a jealous God." This is part of the First Commandment, and Paul intimates, "Surely no one of you is so foolish that he thinks it is possible to engage in idolatrous practices, hoping to escape the notice of God! "Or do you people think maybe you can do it in defiance of God, while He looks on, jealous as He might be, but powerless to act?" Rather, the act of idolatry is serious enough of itself; the consequences are worse! "The Corinthian Christians ought not to attend these feasts unless they intend to excite against themselves in the highest measure the displeasure of the Lord."³³

This last appeal clinches the argument Paul gave at the beginning of this pericope. "You are God's chosen people. But, as ever, the Lord wants obedience and not sacrifice. He wants you and not part of you. You belong to Him; do not join the heathen and give yourself to a false God." The Lord's Supper is a means of forgiveness, a supernatural power for saving men, but not a good luck charm against infidelity and heathen practices.

Under no circumstances can the worship of the true God and heathen idols be mixed!

³³Hodge, op. cit., p. 195.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

Paul's purpose for writing this pericope to the Corinthians was twofold. One purpose was to cause them to see the impossibility of syncretizing Christianity with idolatry. The other was to give them a higher regard for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Sacrament was to be a mark of their Christianity, a strengthening of godliness, and a means of separating them from their evil surroundings. It was not meant to be a charm against evil and punishment. Paul uses Israel as an example for the warning of the Corinthians. Paul, calling upon their intelligence and ability to distinguish between right and wrong, urges the Corinthians to flee the worship of idols.

The historical origin of the Last Supper was that it was the last Passover celebration of the Lord with His disciples. Perhaps all the conflicts regarding its origin will never be solved, but the evidence in favor of the Passover meal far outweighs the contrary evidence.

Then it follows that the cup of blessing and the unleavened bread can be identified as parts of the traditional Jewish Passover. The words of Paul, "The cup of blessing which we bless" and "The bread which we break," refer to the familiar use of the Lord's Supper among the Christians. The action of blessing and breaking may also refer to the

celebration, that is, the actual rite of consecrating the elements for use in the Sacrament.

Why the cup is spoken of before the bread will always be an interesting point for discussion. Although it is unwise to make any conclusive statements as to why Paul does this, we ought to assume that his purpose is not to indicate a change in the actual order of celebration.

Luke's short text of the Words of Institution is probably not very helpful in substantiating a reversal of order. In the first place, the short text speaks not of the cup of blessing retained in the Lord's Supper, but of the second cup of the Passover, distributed before the main meal.

Secondly, critics are more and more of the opinion that the longer text of Luke is the more genuine.

Paul's purpose for mentioning the cup first is perhaps for the purpose of making clearer the main purpose for his message: "You are the Body of Christ."

The Body of Christ bespeaks also participation in the Body of Christ. This is of three kinds: (a) the participation of the bread and wine with the body and blood of Christ; (b) the participation in Christ of those who eat the Sacrament; (c) the participation of those who eat the Body of Christ with one another. This latter is designated as "one body," that is, the Body of Christ.

The "Body of Christ" ought not be interpreted metaphorically. For it is that human body which Christ had upon earth and has even now. Some scholars feel that the

Body of Christ should be interpreted metaphorically, at least when speaking of Christians, that is, the Church.

Basic to Paul's argument, then, is the fact that men who eat the Sacrament participate with Christ. So those who eat the sacrifices to idols are partaking with them. Although the issue may not seem to be a problem, since idols were considered to be nothing at all, yet Paul explains that in reality men worship and are partakers with demons. And this is a moral and spiritual impossibility.

Thus in this message Paul is calling upon the Corinthians to re-evaluate their life, and if they have become entangled in any form of idolatry they should separate themselves from idols and rededicate themselves to Christ.

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