

The Answering Service

FROM AMERICA'S PROMISE

Answers to questions from Radio and Tape Listeners

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Question No. 1:

Why do you use unfermented grape juice instead of wine in your communion service? Didn't they use wine at the Passover and the Lord's Supper?

Answer:

As Israel often did things which they were not supposed to do, thus leading themselves into error; the emphasis of such a question should be upon what they were instructed to do, rather than what they actually did. What were God's instructions to Israel concerning the drink (the cup) as a symbol in the ritual of Passover, and Lord's Supper? We see that this is not a question of whether or not it is lawful to drink wine at any time; but rather, what was in the cup at the Lord's Last Supper, at which time He instituted Communion as a memorial of His sacrifice for us.

Most people assume that fermented wine was prescribed for use in the Passover meal. While some Jewish literature suggests this, the Bible does not! In fact, fermented food of any kind was disallowed: "Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. YE SHALL EAT NOTH-ING LEAVENED; In all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.." (**Ex. 12:19-20**)

"Unleavened bread," as it appears in your King James Version Bible, is translated from the Hebrew words MOTZAH LECHEM. The literal definitions of these two words bring some light to the question. Motzah means "to be sweet," implying that it is not soured by fermentation. Lechem means "food," as anything which is consumed. The literal translation of the phrase should read, "unfermented food." In the Old Testament, where ever the word "bread" appears, it literally means "food," which could include bread as well as other sustenance.

My dictionary defines LEAVENING, "The act or process of causing to ferment by leaven." Thus, we see that the word "leavened" is synonymous with "fermented." Bread dough ferments when it rises into a fluffy loaf, caused by the yeast cells in the dough manufacturing gas bubbles. It is the same agent (yeast), and the same process (leavening), which causes grape juice to become wine. Wine is a leavened product.

Exodus 13:7 states, in regard to the Passover, "... neither shall there be leaven (anything fermented) seen with thee in all thy quarters."

Deuteronomy 16:4 is, also, interesting when read in the Hebrew: "And there shall be no leavened thing (not bread only) seen with thee in all thy coast seven days: ..." These instructions seem to clearly indicate that the use of ANYTHING fer-

mented (leavened) was forbidden for the duration of the Passover feast. This obviously-precludes fermented wine. So much for the Passover, what about the Lord's Supper?

In the account of the Last Supper, the word "wine" is not used in the Bible, although many mistakenly assume that it was. In the actual account, the terms "the cup," and "the fruit of the vine" are used. Neither of these terms suggest fermentation. Indeed, the exact opposite is suggested by the context. We are told that the bread (unleavened) represents His body, and the cup (contents therein) represents His blood. Since leaven is symbolic of sin, we use unleavened bread to represent His sinless body. Would it then make sense to use a leavened drink to represent His blood? No! The obvious intent here is for both emblems, bread as well as drink, to be unleavened, or unfermented. Any food or drink in which the process of fermentation has happened is a leavened product, and inappropriate for use in representing the sinless person of Jesus.

Some who advocate the use of wine in preference to grape juice have put forth the argument that the leavening agent in wine is killed by the alcohol in the finished product, thus eliminating the leaven from the juice. But this is a specious argument, as well as illogical. If God had simply wanted the leaven dead He wouldn't have insisted upon the Israelites refraining from allowing their bread to rise, since yeast is certainly killed when it is baked.

Symbolically speaking, as leaven represents sin, fermented wine is the same as fermented bread; and, conversely, fresh grape juice is the same as unleavened bread. The comparison is not complicated.

Question No. 2:

What was Paul's "thorn in the flesh," in 2 Corinthians 12:7?

Answer:

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." **2 Cor. 12:7**

This is one of the most interestingly-unique verses in the Bible. Very few theologians attempt a legitimate probe into its meaning because of the ramifications of such a search. These words are salient and meaningful, especially when seen in the Greek text, from which we get our English translation. Notice the phrase, "...the messenger of Satan..." The word "messenger" is translated from the Greek word "ANGELOS." This is the same word which is usually transliterated into our English word "angel." The word "Satan," as it appears in your Bible, is a transliteration of the Greek word "satana." Properly translated (instead of transliterated) it would render its true meaning as "ADVERSARY."

This "thorn in the flesh" was called "an angel of satan" as read in the Greek text. If properly-translated into English, it reads, "a messenger of my adversary." The meaning, in either case, is the same. To understand it, we must find out what Paul's adversary was. It obviously had something to do with his flesh, since he called it "a thorn IN THE FLESH."

In **Romans 7:21-3**, Paul states, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and

bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." He reiterates in **Galatians 5:17**, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: **and these are contrary the one to the other:** so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Paul's own flesh is clearly defined, in these verses, as his adversary. The flesh and its weaknesses, is the adversary of every man. Therefore, we reason that a physical impairment was the "thorn," which was a message to Paul from his adversary (his own flesh). To isolate this "thorn" we need to look further.

In **Galatians 4:13-15**, Paul describes his "infirmity of the flesh." "Ye know how through **infirmity of the flesh**, I preached the gospel unto you at the first, And my temptation (test) **which was in my flesh** ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me." So we see that 1) Paul had a physical weakness; 2) The Galatians were receptive of him, and supportive insomuch that 3) They would have offered their eyes to Paul. Why would they have offered their eyes?

Evidently, Paul had a problem with his. Poor vision was his "thorn in the flesh." Near the end of Paul's letter to the Galatians, he takes the pen from his scribe and personally writes some concluding remarks with his own hand; which lettering he describes as, "a large letter," since he could not see well enough to write small letters. (**Gal. 6:11**)

Paul prayed three times about his weakness. (**2 Cor. 12:8**) God answered, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My

strength is made perfect in weakness." (**vs 9**)

It seems God wanted Paul's work done by a man with a great handicap (no glasses, then), a handicap which would tend to glorify the message of Christ and the Gospel and prevent the exaltation of the message bearer.

Question No. 3:

I've heard that a graduated income tax, like the one we have in America, is one of the 10 points of The Communist Manifesto. Is that true?

Answer:

The Communist Manifesto, created by the joint efforts of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, was put into print in 1848. Written first in German, it was later translated into French. The English version followed in 1850. It is a general outline of the goals toward which the secret Communists work, as they infiltrate and occupy the governments in non-Communist nations.

It is startling to notice the similarities between this blueprint for Communist conquest and our present government administrators' legislative trends. The graduated income tax is only one of the many similarities. Here, quoted from Samuel Moore's translation of The Communist Manifesto, are the ten points used by Marx, himself, to identify the revolution:

1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.
2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.
3. Abolition of all right of inheritance.

- 4.** Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.
- 5.** Centralization of credit in the hands of the State, by means of a national bank with State capital and exclusive monopoly.
- 6.** Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.
- 7.** Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State, . . .
- 8.** Equal liability of all to labor. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.
- 9.** Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; . . .
- 10.** Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children's factory labor in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, etc. . ."

In his preface to these ten points, Karl Marx said, "These measures will, of course, be different in different countries. Nevertheless in the most advanced countries (these) will be pretty generally applicable:"
