

"COMMUNION IN THE LORD'S CHURCH"

By Dr. Hoyt W. Allen, Jr.

Concerning the subject of Jesus' body being the literal body and blood, several interpretations have been given. The one which many follow is very common with the Roman Catholic Church. When the priest prays over the bread and juice it is called "Transubstantiation". That is, he (the priest) has the power to literally change the contents of the bread and juice to Christ's body and blood. The Roman Catholic Lateran Council of 1215 determined this. I contend that when Jesus said "This is my body and blood..." (Matthew 26:26,28) the terms were to be considered as metaphors, which means "Likeness". Other examples would be found in:

- 1) Matthew 8:22 "Let the dead bury the dead." Literally, this is impossible, but metaphorically it can be true - let the spiritually dead bury the dead and come and follow me.
- 2) Genesis 49:9 "Judah is a lion's whelp (cub)..." Literally, this is not possible, but metaphorically it can be true.
- 3) Jer. 1:18 Was Jeremiah a literal city, pillar, or wall?
- 4) Jer. 2:13 Is God a fountain of living water, literally?
- 5) John 7:37 Can one drink Jesus, literally? No, but metaphorically yes!
- 6) I Cor. 10:24 Is Jesus really a rock? Literally no, but metaphorically yes!

Jesus' words about the communion emblems is teaching a mystery that there was life in the blood and Passover Lamb (Gen. 9:4; Lev. 7:26,27; Acts 15:20). Jesus was thus declaring that His life was offered as the means of salvation to mankind. His blood represents His life (John 6:54-56; Col. 1:20; Heb. 9:12,14, 22).

When Jesus said "This is my body...blood...", as he lifted up the literal bread and the juice, yet he was present IN THE FLESH. Thus, the emblems were not His literal body and blood, but a likeness or a comparison. If one does not understand this in such light, then there will be difficulty understanding Luke 14:26 which says to "Hate your parents...", (Preferring another ahead of Christ is a better translation).

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