MEMORIAL OF THE LORD'S SUPPER
A SUGGESTED ORDER OF SERVICE

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
– 1 Corinthians 11: 26 –

Scripture references are to the 1984 British text of the *New International Version*.

THE LORD JESUS commemorated the Passover in Jerusalem in the evening of its prescribed date, Nisan 14 (Matthew 26: 17, 20; Mark 14: 12, 17; Luke 22: 7). In keeping with Jewish tradition, the day began at *sunset* and ended 24 hours later. So Nisan 13 would end when Nisan 14 began (Exodus 12: 1-8). The 'evening' hours preceded the 'day' hours (compare with Genesis 1: 5, etc.). The length of the Jewish day varied somewhat, but it would roughly correspond to a 24-hour period which began at 6:00 p.m. (18:00). Jesus instituted the 'last supper' immediately following the Passover meal (Matthew 26: 26, 27; Luke 22: 20; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26). It has been the practice of the Christian church since then to remember this sacred event, in one form or another.

When to Observe the Memorial?
There is disagreement among churches on the manner and frequency of keeping the Lord's Supper. Those associated with UK Bible Students, and many other Bible Students, choose to commemorate it once a year, as one would an anniversary. However, we believe the date and frequency of its observance is less important than the fact of its institution.

To see the *calculations* we have applied to locate the Memorial date for the current year, see the pertinent article listed under *Forthcoming Events* at our website <ukbiblestudents.co.uk/events.htm>

Jesus did not mandate, nor is there indicated in the Bible, a specific order of service, other than the general outline recorded in the New Testament. The following represents merely what appeals to us as a tested, reasonable approach, adapted from the general practice of Bible Students elsewhere. Instead of unleavened bread – 'leaven' in the Scriptures represents sin – you may use matzo; and instead of alcoholic wine, to which some object, a good quality grape juice. These provisions can be bought at any food shop or supermarket, especially around the time of the Jewish Passover.

The order of service given in this article may be modified if you are keeping the Memorial alone. In any case, common sense as to the details should prevail, all being done in a spirit of reverence and humility. The service is intended to bless, not frustrate or condemn the participant. Nor should it be overly long or marred by frivolous chatter. The focus should be the sacrifice of Jesus and the benefits to each of us as a believer, represented by the emblems and our partaking of them. The service is not creedal, and any consecrated Christian, regardless of doctrinal affiliation, is eligible to take part.

If you are not able to keep the Memorial on the date determined for the current year, it would be suitable to keep it *exactly one calendar month* later – that is, the 14th of the following month. *See* Numbers 9: 6-11.

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1. Start with one or more solemn hymns to guide the minds of the assembly in the direction of our Lord and His sacrificial death.

2. A prayer may then be offered for God's blessing on the service.

3. The one officiating, or another, might read an account of the Last Supper.

4. The one officiating, or another, might give a brief account of the Passover in the Old Testament, explaining how it was a picture of Jesus, the fulfilment – the 'Passover lamb' (1 Corinthians 5: 7).

5. Someone may then ask a blessing over the bread and on those who will partake of it, that all might have a full appreciation of its significance as a symbol of our Lord's body, sacrificed for all.

6. One of the pieces of bread may then be broken, and our Lord's words spoken: 'Take and eat; this is my body' (Matthew 26: 26). The plate should then be served to those partaking. [*The force of this emblem is that of justification by faith, the result of the ransom-sacrifice.*]

7. When passing and partaking of the emblems, silence is recommended as the participants meditate on the sacredness of the occasion.

8. A prayer may then be invoked over the cup, expressing thankfulness and requesting the Lord's blessing on those participating. Jesus' words may be repeated: 'Drink from it, all of you' (Matthew 26: 27). The cup should then be served in quietness. [*The force of this emblem is that of consecration, new life arising out of Jesus' spilt blood, His death.*]

9. The service may be ended with a suitable hymn ('When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives'; Mark 14: 26).

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