

# The Broken Body

I Cor. 11: 24

Doctor John Kelman has told us a story of the war;

There was a certain word in Corinth for dinner for men, women, children etc. and there a common meal to gether.

This was put on a certain day and he came round on some part of the town bringing what he could.

A friend of his was walking along a trench when he spied a soldier boy resting in his khaki overcoat. He spoke a friendly word to the lad but received no answer. Stooping down he saw the thin, red line of blood upon the face that told its own story. "Then," said he, "with an overwhelming rush the words swept over me: 'This is my body which is broken for you.'" Standing there by the ruined trench and the broken boy, the man got a new picture of the Upper Room. He understood the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians as he had never understood before. He saw Calvary in France. He had a flash-light vision of the cross that was clearer than all the time-exposures of the gospel story with which he was so familiar.

A sad feature developed. People became selfish and gluttonous for Christ was no longer at the table. So Paul would not praise them for their actions.

He did not desire them to learn of the common meal but wanted them to see Christ in it so he said I Cor. 11: 22-26.

What does Christ mean when He says, "This is my body which was broken for you." It is the body crucified, given in our stead we use broken bread to symbolize this precious broken body.

Jesus was the man of decoration, decorated with crown of thorns, scarlet robe and mocking wand of authority. But above all was decorated with the cross. As we look at the cross and see Him hanging there His words come to us with a great meaning "This is my body broken for you!"

# I. my body - incarnation

The first traces of a doctrine of incarnation we found in suggestions that Christ came to this life from another. The earliest of these is of Paul and the most definite is that of Phil. 2: 5-9.

Parallel to this is a briefer statement II Cor. 8: 9. "who though He was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, that ye through His poverty might become rich."

In John's Gospel the latest of all the N.T. writings this doctrine takes definite shape. "In the beginning was the word etc. --- and the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father"

For incarnation to come about God caused Himself in the person of His Son to be born of a woman who was in Him both God and man.

starting point. Every idea, to amount to anything, must have a body. We express this in a more stately way in the saying: "Incarnation is the law of progress." What does this big word, "Incarnation" mean? Why, it simply means putting flesh on to something, giving it a body or house to live in. If we think of this a moment, we shall see that that Incarnation of Jesus was not an isolated or abnormal event but simply a supreme illustration of a very familiar law. What an all-inclusive law it is: Every idea that would mold the world today must build for itself a body of some sort so that it may function in this material world.

Let us now go a second step: of all possible forms of incarnation, the personal is the highest. Every building is the incarnation of the architect's plan; every invention is the incarnation of some man's imagination, but a human life is the highest form of expression of which we know. For example, the Mikado of Japan is Japan in the flesh. That is to say the Japanese regard him as the living symbol of all that is most glorious in the history and life of the Island Empire. The Mikado, in his relation to the Japanese gives us some idea of what Jesus is to his followers. He is the embodiment of Christianity. He is

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The perfect Christian, but back of this he is a complete picture of the love and power of God. (Jesus is the place where God has broken through into the life of the world.) God tried for centuries to find a body; to break through in the life of the patriarchs and prophets and leaders of the olden days; to give the world his picture; but none of the houses suited him. He could find nowhere to dwell and so he fashioned the body of Jesus for his earthly residence. "A body hast thou prepared for me. Lo, I am come to do thy will, O God."

II. Broken body - Crucifixion. You will find lots of people who like to read stories of doing but never care about doing the doing thing.

Many care nothing for a Broken Christ. They do not believe in broken health for country or religion. Do not believe in broken families for a son or daughter to go on missions or property broken to build the Kingdom.

One man gave third of his estate to the church so that he could hold up his deposit box before the Lord and say "This is my property which is broken for you."

A father and mother lost a son in foreign mission and had a daughter living on the same field so that they could hold the family before the Lord and say "This is our family which is broken for you."

We need many times to break our

1. Stubborn wills
2. Selfish pride
3. Egotism

} and say them as broken for thee.

III. "For you" - In this simple and short text is contained two main doctrines of X<sup>m</sup>ity.

1. Incarnation - This is my body
2. Atonement - Broken for you.

That is the wonderful thing about the death of Jesus: that it concerns me! The death of Savonarola doesn't concern me. He died for his boldly asserted opinions. He didn't die for me. The death of Caesar doesn't concern me. He died from Pompey's thrust but not for me. The death of Scott, the explorer, doesn't concern me. He died amid the Arctic snows, paying the price for his bold adventure into the far north. He died for Science and Discovery but not for me. Paul died as a martyr; died because he was bold enough to preach a Christian gospel in pagan Rome. He died for Christ but not for me. But Jesus died, not as a hero or martyr but for me, and if I don't get hold of these two words I don't understand Calvary.

Dr. Chamberlain tells of a devotee who was converted by his preaching at the sacred city of Benares, India. This man had dragged himself many miles upon his knees and elbows to bathe in the Ganges. He had a terrible heart hunger for cleansing. The burden of his sin was more than he could bear. "If I can but reach the Ganges," he thought, "this bondage and fear will be taken away." Weak and emaciated from his long pilgrimage he dragged himself to the river's edge and praying to Gunga, crept into it; then, getting out, he lay on the river's bank and moaned: "The pain is still here." Just at that moment he heard a voice from the shadow of a banyan tree nearby. It was the missionary telling the story of the cross. The devotee listened, drinking it all in; then, rising first to his knees and then to his feet and unable to restrain himself, he clapped his hands and cried: "That is what I want; that is what I want."

Aye, that is what we all want. Even as the poor pilgrim by the Ganges, let us each say: "That is what I want."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me.

Let me hide myself in Thee."

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But if Jesus ended at the  $\dagger$  we still would have Him for doing it but at same time as all men we would be most miserable. But as it has turned out we thank Christ for dying for us and we bless God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for their combined power that emptied the grave. That same power will empty every grave that has ever been made.