

The Cup Analogies: The Cup of National Discipline, Jer 25:15–16; the Cup of Blessing, Ps 23:5; the Cup of Salvation, Ps 116:13; the Cup of the Cross, Matt 20:20–22; 26:39, 42; the Cup of Eucharist or Thanksgiving, 1 Cor 11:24–25; Eucharist Requires Recall: Vectors, Associations, & the Neural Network: the Bread & Cup Vectors

- (1) The Cup of National Discipline. The fall of Babylon at the end of the seventy years of captivity is described prophetically by Jeremiah with the cup analogy:

Jeremiah 25:15 - Thus the Lord, the God of Israel, says to me, “Take this cup of the wine of wrath from My hand and cause all the nations to whom I send you to drink it.

v. 16 - “They will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them.”

- (2) The Cup of Blessing. David describes the logistical supply line and divine protection as an overflowing cup of provision:

Psalm 23:5 - You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows.

- (3) The Cup of Salvation. Salvation is described as the content of a cup by the psalmist in:

Psalm 116:13 - I shall lift up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord.

- (4) The Cup of the Cross. The cup of salvation is made possible by the cup of sins that our Lord drank on the cross. This is the cup to which our Lord refers in His response to Salome’s request to let her sons sit by Him in the Millennium: Matthew 20:20–22. Jesus also refers to this cup in His two Gethsemane prayers in Matthew 26:39, 42.

- (5) The Cup of Eucharist or Thanksgiving. The Greek noun **εὐχαριστία (eucharistia)** means thanksgiving, an expression of gratitude.

It may also be referred to as the Cup of Remembrance, the Greek noun **ἀνάμνησις (anamnēsis)** means “to call to mind.”

Both these words are found in the passage that institutes the Eucharist for Church Age believers:

1 Corinthians 11:24 - Having given thanks [**εὐχαριστέω (eucharisteō): to express gratitude**], He broke it [**the bread**], and said, “This keeps on being My body which keeps on being a substitute for you. Keep on doing this for the purpose of remembering [**ἀνάμνησις (anamnēsis): to recall to mind**] Me.

In verse 24 we see the introduction of the bread vector, a visual or spoken trigger that results in recall of a pertinent doctrine.

The neurons of the brain will respond to a given certain stimulus by recalling information associated with it. The stimulus may be called a vector since it influences the recall of stored information in the brain’s memory traces.

The more a person retains in long-term memory that is associated with a given vector, the greater the amount of information recalled.

Thus a vector is a stimulus that excites one neural memory trace, but this trace has common characteristics with other information stored in other memory traces. When two pieces of data are brought into the conscious mind, an association is formed. When multiple memory traces join them, a constellation is formed.

For example, when observing the Eucharist the bread serves as a vector designed to stimulate recall of other information associated with the ritual.

It may be remembered that the bread represents the impeccability of Christ, forming an association. Impeccability may remind the participant of the Lord's qualification to be our substitute which stimulates recall of Jesus as our Mediator, which may remind him of the hypostatic union, which may stimulate the recall of kenosis, which may remind him of the prototype divine dynasphere, all of which are associated with the idea of the Lord's body being the qualified target of the imputation of our sins. These memories form a constellation of firing neurons working simultaneously during the time allotted for concentration on the bread vector.

This sets up the introduction of the cup vector in the next verse:

1 Corinthians 11:25 - In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new testament of my blood [αἷμα (*haima*)]; keep on doing this as often as you drink it for the purpose of remembering [ἀνάμνησις (*anamnēsis*): to recall to mind] Me.

This vector is said to be associated with His blood. Taken literally, the bread and blood vectors have led to the idea of transubstantiation:

The miraculous change by which according to Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox dogma the Eucharistic elements at their consecration become the body and blood of Christ while keeping only the appearances of bread and wine.¹

This erroneous doctrine was defined in 831 by Abbot Paschasius Radbertus \pas-kā'-zhē-as rad-bert'-as\ and, because of the Protestant Reformation, the doctrine was affirmed in session 21 of the Council of Trent in 1562.

In this passage the use of the word αἷμα (*haima*: blood) is figurative and refers to the work of Christ on the cross and therefore is symbolic of the cup of the cross where Jesus is judged for our sins.

The figurative use of *haima* is addressed by Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich under paragraph 2b of their definition:

¹ Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.v.: "transubstantiation."

2. Figurative b.: blood and life as an expiatory sacrifice: 1.—Especially of the blood of Jesus as a means of expiation. Especially in the words of institution of the Lord's Supper, Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; cf. 10:16; John 6:53–55; 1 John 5:6, 8.²

The blood vector therefore refers to the work of Christ on the cross. Consumption of the wine serves as a vector which stimulates recall of associated doctrines related to our Lord's sacrifice. Recalled are the doctrines that relate to the imputation of all human sins to the body of Christ in which they are judged. The spiritual death of Christ occurred during this time after which our eternal salvation was made secure under the doctrine of propitiation.

Jewish tradition for the Passover feast required that unfermented grape juice be boiled symbolizing the judgment of sins in Christ with Whom we are identified.

Consumption of unfermented grape juice is an identification of the believer with the finished work of Christ on the cross, the absence of fermentation symbolic of the absence of sin's condemnation: the baptism of the cup.

When Jesus drank the cup containing our sins He was cursed. When we drink of the cup we are blessed since all sin was judged in Him.

At the last Passover, the cup that the Lord took and identified with His blood is the third cup of the Seder and is referred to by the Jews as the cup of Redemption, a reminder of Messiah's work on the cross.

² Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilber Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 22–23.