

THE CUP JESUS DRANK MATTHEW 26:39

Introduction:

William Barclay said we should read this passage on our knees. Visiting the site where this event happened is always a favorite visit when you visit Jerusalem. The old olive trees still stand in the garden around the church which is maintained by the priests of the Franciscan order.

It is a revealing moment in the last hours of Jesus. He has just come from the observance of Passover and the institution of the Lord's Supper with His disciples. Earlier He given the His final message of comfort found in John 1-17.

Evidently as they walked past the time, down the hill and across the brook Kidron, the weight of the night settled on Jesus. He had brought the disciples this olive orchard on other occasions. Evidently it belonged to a friend.

When they entered the grove of tree, Jesus said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray." Then He took Peter, James and John and went further into the grove. He said to this inner circle, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death. Stay here and watch with me."

Then Jesus went even further into the grove, fell on His face , and prayed, "O my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

Later He would return to the three only to find them asleep, but after an admonition He would return to His place of prayer and present the same petition again.

My attention is captured by the cup. Obviously there was not a literal cup for Jesus to drink, but rather it is a symbol. What was this cup? Who gave Him the cup? What was in the Cup? Did He drink the cup? Consideration of this cup should prepare us to drink from the cup on this table in a few minutes.

Consider the cup that Jesus drank with me.

I. WHAT WAS IN THE CUP?

To understand the cup you need to spend some time reading the Old Testament. Especially read the Psalms and the prophets. From the references there you will learn about the cup. Jesus was using the metaphor from the Old Covenant to interpret His experience.

1. All the sins of the world.

The prophets spoke of a cup in which God gathered all of the sins of the people. What Jesus confronted in the Garden was the

climax of His mission which involved becoming a sacrifice for the sins of the world. The question He faced in the garden was one of being ready to bear the sins of the world. Was He ready to become the sin offering for the world?

We must remember that Jesus was drawing back from death. He was reacting to a particular kind of death. A death for the sins of the whole world

2. The wrath of God against the sins of the world.

In other Old Testament references the cup holds the wrath of God against sin. O how God hates sin. O how awful is His wrath against sin. Was the sinless Son of God ready to experience the wrath of God against sin? Was He ready to really take our place under the judgment of God?

This is the reason that He prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Was this the only way that redemption could be made for sinners like us? O what a cup!

II. WHO GAVE HIM THE CUP?

The soldiers would offer Him a cup full of sour wine when they crucified Him, but this is a different cup.

1. The God of salvation gave Him the cup.

We must be clear. It was the God of salvation who gave Him the cup. This was the plan of the Father. The eternal plan for redemption meant that the just must die for the unjust, that the innocent must die for the guilty, that the sinless must be made sin for us.

2. His Father gave Him the cup.

Did you notice that He addressed the prayer to His Father. "O my Father!" Actually Mark tells us that He addressed the prayer to "Abba, Father." Abba is the more intimate Aramaic word for Father. It is not some angry deity that is forcing this up upon His helpless son, but rather the Eternal Abba with whom He has had a relationship from all eternity.

The eternal Father gave Him the cup to drink because of His love for sinners like us. There was no other plan. There was no other way. If sinners are to be reconciled to God and forgiven, then He must drink the cup.

III. HOW DID HE DRINK THE CUP?

Here we come to the core of the prayer. It is a prayer of surrender.

1. He drank the cup voluntarily.

"Not as I will, but as You will." He welcomed the cup voluntarily. He was not forced to the ordeal of the Cross, but embraced it freely.

2. He drank the cup fully.

And it must be said that He drank every drop of it. He did not sip the cup, but rather He drank all of it. He really did become sin for the world. He really did bear our sins in His body on the tree. He really did undergo the wrath of God in those three hours of darkness. We was drinking the last drops of the cup when He cried, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me." He was then where we deserved to be. He was then in our place.

IV. WHY DID HE DRINK THE CUP?

1. He drank the cup because of His love for the Father.

It was His heart to obey the Father, even to the extent of dying the sinners death. He did it because it was important to Him to do the will of His Father.

2. He drank the cup because of His love for sinners.

O what love! Not one ever loved You like Jesus. He did not just die for You, He actually died Your death.

Because He drank His cup, we will drink a cup of memory. We will remember what it cost him to drink the cup for us. We will express our gratitude and our worship. We will want to renew our commitment to follow His steps and do the will of God even as He did.

Let us come to the table and worship Him.