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## Gethsemane - The Cups - Part 1

### Reading

Matthew 26:39, 42, 44

### Introduction

#### The two cups

Every word our Lord said was fraught with deepest meaning, and all the more when in the garden of Gethsemane. It was there He prayed, “All things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from me (Mk. 14:36). This statement automatically will lead to the questions, “What did He mean by that prayer and what was the cup He desired to be removed?” Herein we must make a distinction.

- a) Matthew, Mark and Luke each refer to two cups.
  - i) Matthew records, “He took the cup” (Matt. 26:27) and then, “let this cup pass from me” (Matt. 26:39).
  - ii) Mark wrote, “He took the cup” (Mk. 14:23) and then, “Take away this cup” (Mk. 14:36).
  - iii) Luke wrote, “This cup is the new testament” (Lk. 22:20) and then, “Remove this cup” (Lk. 22:42).
- b) That which is clear is that there is a relationship between the first and second references to the “cup” in each passage, but that does not mean they indicate the same thing.
  - i) The cup of Matt. 26:27; Mk. 14:23; and Lk. 22:20 was a piece of pottery molded by the hand of man.
  - ii) The cup of Matt. 26:39; Mk. 14:36; and Lk. 22:42 was the cup of divine forsaking. This is the one we are considering.

### What This Prayer Was Not

When the Lord prayed this prayer He was not:

- a) Praying that He would be released from the agony of mind and heart He was experiencing. He knew there was the need for Him to be perfected by the experiences every saint could experience. This was for Him to be fully qualified to be our high Priest (Heb. 2:10). He must know the personal sorrow of unreserved yielding to the will of God.
- b) An indication of a clashing of the wills between He and God in which when He finally resigned to the inevitable. The Lord was not putting on a spiritual front when He said, “Not my will, but thine, be done” (Lk. 22:42). Let it be clear, there was never any “putting on a front” or clashing of the wills between the Lord and God. The Lord’s goal in life was, “I come to do thy will” (Heb 10:9) and again, “I do always those things that please Him” (Jn. 8:29). Had there ever been any divergence of opinion between divine persons then Christ could never have been a sacrifice for sin, for He Himself would have sinned, because he would have been going against the will or purpose of God.
- c) Complaining to God. It has been said that the Lord complained to God and then Psalm 22 is quoted. This is a failure to recognize the distinction between what the psalmist said and what the Lord said. When the Lord quoted the first clause of Psalm 22, two matters are observed:
  - i) This was never said to be the fulfillment of a prophecy! The only utterance of the Lord from the cross, which was said in order to fulfill the scripture was, “I thirst”. Note what the verse says, “After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst” (Jn. 19:28).
  - ii) The Lord quoted NOTHING from the Psalm apart from the first clause, therefore, to quote the following words of the Psalm with the indication that the Lord said them is error.

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### What The Lord Was Not When He Drank The Cup

I want to state very plainly that in those three hours of darkness when He drank the cup of God's justice:

- a) He was not being "satanized". To use John 3:14 to teach that since the serpent is God's way of describing the devil (Gen. 3:1), therefore, on the cross the Lord was "satanized" is blasphemy.
- b) Neither does 2 Corinthians 5:21 when He was made "sin" teach that He was made a sinner. When our Lord was being made an offering for sin, He was most holy. In Leviticus 6:17 when God gives directions concerning the offerings, He caused it to be written, "It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it unto them for their portion of my offerings made by fire; it is most holy, as is the sin-offering, and as the trespass-offering." Prior to this the Lord had said, "The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (Jn. 14:30). Thus, before Calvary He was holy, and on the cross He was holy. The Lord did not say that the prince of this world found nothing which he could hold against the Lord; nor in anything He did; nor any judgment by Him; nor in when, how, or what He said or did anything. There was no sin in Christ, no sin nature to get a grasp of, and no hidden sin that no human knew anything about. Christ was immaculately holy in every way, every day.
- c) Neither did man have any part in the vicarious sufferings of the Lord for our sins! The scriptures are clear, it was the LORD who laid on Christ the iniquity of us all (Isa. 53:6). It was the cup the Father gave Him to drink (Jn. 18:11).

### What Was That "Cup"?

The cup our Lord drank was the bitter experience of enduring the rod of divine justice, the punitive sufferings for sins not His own. It is illustrated by a "cup" containing that which goes into an individual, whereas a "baptism" is that which illustrates that which He went into. The "cup" is symbolized at the memorial feast where:

- a) It indicates the ratification of the New Covenant (testament) (Lk. 22:20).
- b) It indicates the punishment for sin from the hand of the Lord. "Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out (Isa. 51:17). "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation" (Rev. 14:10).

Being the Blood of the covenant:

- a) It assures the security of that which is pledged. When God promised the land to Abraham, it was and is an eternal guarantee that can never be nullified (Gen. 15:7-18). It is the foundation for the fulfilling of God's purposes concerning Christ as King (Zech. 9:9) and the deliverance of His people (Zech. 9:11). Only by this can the covenant purposes of God be fulfilled.
- b) It brings one under the rule of another to ultimately confirm their character to His. This is shown by the ratifying of the old covenant of which it is recorded, "And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words" (Ex. 24:7-8).
- c) It is the foundation for making us "perfect", "thoroughly fitted" for the work God has for us to do. "Through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (Heb. 13:20-21).

It is no wonder the Lord was "not comfortable, not at home" in the garden. That which He faced was unnatural for Him. For the Lord to be forsaken by God and entering into death was unnatural. The "cup" the Lord sought release from was the execution of the judgment of God against sin, which meant, His being forsaken by God. These are depths we have no comprehension of.

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When we appreciate that “cup” and its precious blessings to us personally, “Shed for you” (Lk. 22:20); and applicable for the whosoever, “Shed for many” (Mk. 14:24); praise God it is for, “the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28).

*. . . . To be continued*

*. . . Rowan Jennings*