

Isaiah 51:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again:

Analysis

Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again: The threefold divine identification—"thy Lord" (adonayikh, אֲדֹנָיִךְ), "the LORD" (YHWH), "thy God" (elohayikh, אֱלֹהֶיךָ)—emphasizes covenant relationship. Particularly significant is "that pleadeth the cause" (yarib 'ammo, יָרִיב עַמּוֹ), depicting God as legal advocate or champion fighting for His people, reversing the role of prosecuting judge (vv. 17-20).

The removal of the cup signals judgment's completion. "I have taken out of thine hand" uses perfect tense, indicating accomplished fact from God's perspective—the cup is removed, finished. "Thou shalt no more drink it again" (lo tosifi lishtotah 'od, לֹא תוֹסִיף לִשְׁתוֹתָהּ עוֹד) provides absolute assurance: never again. This isn't temporary reprieve but permanent removal of divine fury from God's people.

From a Reformed perspective, this finds ultimate fulfillment in Christ's atonement. He drank the cup fully (Matthew 26:39, John 18:11), exhausting God's wrath against sin. For those in Christ, the cup is permanently removed—"no more" means God's fury will never return to judge believers (Romans 8:1, John 5:24). This verse grounds eternal security in divine promise: God Himself removes the cup and swears it will never return. The doctrine of justification appears here—judgment is

past, wrath is satisfied, and God now pleads His people's cause rather than prosecuting their sins.

Historical Context

This promise would have seemed impossible during Babylonian exile. How could God promise never again to judge when Israel repeatedly violated covenant? Yet the promise rests on God's character, not Israel's performance. Historically, the return from exile initiated fulfillment—though second temple Judaism faced challenges, no judgment matched Babylonian destruction's severity.

Ultimate fulfillment comes through Christ's new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34), where sins are remembered no more (Hebrews 8:12). Church history shows that though believers face persecution, discipline, and temporal suffering, they don't experience the cup of God's fury—Christ drank it. Even Reformation martyrs facing execution testified to God's comfort, not His wrath. The cup's permanent removal distinguishes believers' suffering (sanctifying discipline) from unbelievers' judgment (punitive wrath).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does God's shift from judge to advocate affect your confidence in approaching Him?
2. What does 'no more drink it again' teach you about God's treatment of confessed sin?
3. How should this permanent removal of God's fury cup shape your assurance of salvation?

Interlinear Text

כֹּה	אֲמַר	אֲדֹנָי יְהוֹה	יְהוָה	וְאֵלֶּה יְהוָה	יְרִיב
H3541	Thus saith	thy Lord	the LORD	and thy God	that pleadeth
	H559	H113	H3068	H430	H7378
	עַמּוֹ	הֵנָּה	לָקַחְתִּי	מִיָּדְךָ	אֶת
	the cause of his people	H2009	Behold I have taken out	of thine hand	H853
	H5971		H3947	H3027	
כּוֹס	הַתְרַעֵלָה	אֶת	קִבְעֵת	כּוֹס	חֲמַתִּי
of the cup	of trembling	H853	even the dregs	of the cup	of my fury
H3563	H8653		H6907	H3563	H3808
				H2534	
תּוֹסֵף	לִשְׁתּוֹתָהּ	עוֹד:			
thou shalt no more	drink it again	H5750			
H3254	H8354				

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 49:25 (References Lord): But thus saith the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.

Proverbs 22:23 (References Lord): For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

Isaiah 51:17 (References 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.

Isaiah 62:8 (References Lord): The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured:

Jeremiah 50:34 (References Lord): Their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

Psalms 35:1 (References Lord): Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me.

Joel 3:2 (Parallel theme): I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.

1 Samuel 25:39 (References Lord): And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

Micah 7:9 (References Lord): I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.