

John 18:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath:
the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

Analysis

Jesus's rebuke is immediate and emphatic: **"Put up thy sword into the sheath"** (βάλε τὴν μάχαιραν εἰς τὴν θήκην/bale tēn machairan eis tēn thēkēn). The aorist imperative βάλε (bale) means "cast, throw, put"—a forceful command to immediately cease armed resistance. Peter's attempt to prevent Jesus's arrest directly opposed the Father's will, making it satanic in nature—recall Jesus's "Get behind me, Satan" to Peter in Matthew 16:23.

Then Jesus asks the rhetorical question: **"the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"** (τὸ ποτήριον ὃ δέδωκέν μοι ὁ πατήρ, οὐ μὴ πῖω αὐτό;/to potērion ho dedōken moi ho patēr, ou mē piō auto). The ποτήριον (potērion, "cup") metaphorically represents suffering, judgment, and divine wrath throughout Scripture (Psalm 75:8, Isaiah 51:17). The perfect tense δέδωκεν (dedōken, "has given") emphasizes the Father's completed sovereign appointment of Christ's suffering.

The double negative οὐ μὴ (ou mē) with the subjunctive creates the strongest possible negation in Greek—"I absolutely will drink it." This is not passive resignation but active obedience. Jesus drinks the cup of God's wrath against sin so His people never taste that cup (Revelation 14:10). The possessive "my Father" reveals the relational context of Jesus's obedience—He submits not to abstract fate but to His loving Father's will.

Historical Context

The cup metaphor would resonate deeply with Jesus's disciples and John's readers, steeped in Old Testament imagery. Prophets described God's judgment as a cup of trembling and fury that Jerusalem must drink (Isaiah 51:17-22, Ezekiel 23:31-34). The Passover cup ceremony, which Jesus had just reinterpreted in the upper room (Luke 22:20), provided immediate context—the new covenant in His blood. In the ancient world, drinking someone's cup could signify sharing their fate or accepting their appointed portion. Jesus's willing acceptance of His Father's cup meant embracing the full penalty for sin—physical torture, spiritual desolation, and death itself.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's rebuke of Peter challenge our attempts to avoid suffering or protect ourselves from God's appointed trials?
2. What is the significance of Jesus describing His suffering as a cup given by the Father, not imposed by Satan or human enemies?
3. In what ways does Christ's drinking the cup of God's wrath secure our salvation and spare us from judgment?

Interlinear Text

εἶπεν	οὖν	ὁ	Ἰησοῦς	τῷ	Πέτρῳ	Βάλε	τὴν	μάχαιραν
said	Then	G3588	Jesus	G3588	unto Peter	Put up	G3588	sword
G2036	G3767		G2424		G4074	G906		G3162
σου	εἰς	τὴν	θήκην·	τὸ	ποτήριον	ὃ	δέδωκέν	μοι
thy	into	G3588	the sheath	G3588	the cup	which	hath given	me
G4675	G1519		G2336		G4221	G3739	G1325	G3427
ὁ	πατὴρ	οὐ	μὴ	πίω	αὐτό			
G3588	my Father	G3756	G3361	drink	it			
	G3962			G4095	G846			

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 26:39 (Parallel theme): And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Matthew 20:22 (References Jesus): But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

John 20:17 (References Jesus): Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

John 15:10 (Word): If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

Hebrews 12:2 (References Jesus): Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Matthew 26:42 (Parallel theme): He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

2 Corinthians 10:4 (Parallel theme): (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

Luke 22:42 (Parallel theme): Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

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