

Mark 10:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

Analysis

Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized (τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω πῖεσθε, καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθήσεσθε, to potērion ho egō pinō piesthe, kai to baptisma ho egō baptizomai baptisthēsesthe). Jesus prophesies James and John will share in His sufferings, though not in the way they imagine.

The "cup" (ποτήριον, potērion) throughout Scripture symbolizes divine wrath, judgment, and suffering (Psalm 75:8; Isaiah 51:17; Jeremiah 25:15). In Gethsemane, Jesus prays, "Take away this cup from me" (Mark 14:36)—the cup of bearing sin's penalty. James and John will drink from this cup of suffering: James becomes the first apostolic martyr (Acts 12:2), beheaded by Herod Agrippa around AD 44; John suffers persecution, exile to Patmos (Revelation 1:9), and outlives all other apostles, witnessing the church's trials.

The "baptism" (βάπτισμα, baptism) metaphorically represents being overwhelmed by suffering, submerged in affliction. Jesus uses this imagery for His crucifixion—being plunged into death. The disciples will share Christ's sufferings, experiencing persecution, rejection, and martyrdom for the gospel's sake.

Historical Context

Jesus' prediction proved accurate in apostolic history. James died approximately AD 44 (Acts 12:1-2), the first of the Twelve martyred. Early church tradition records John's suffering—exiled to Patmos during Domitian's persecution (AD 81-96), possibly surviving an execution attempt in boiling oil (though this tradition is less certain). All apostles except John died as martyrs. Jesus' prophecy prepared them for the reality that following Him means suffering, not earthly glory. The early church understood that sharing Christ's sufferings was privilege, not tragedy (Philippians 3:10; 1 Peter 4:13).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' prediction that they will share His cup and baptism redefine what it means to be 'close to Jesus' in His kingdom?
2. What does Jesus' certainty about their future suffering teach about God's sovereign purposes in allowing His faithful servants to experience persecution?
3. How do you respond when following Christ leads to suffering rather than success, rejection rather than recognition?

Interlinear Text

οἱ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Δυνάμεθα ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν
G3588 **And** **said** **unto him** **We can** G3588 **And** **Jesus** **said**
G1161 G2036 G846 G1410 G1161 G2424 G2036

αὐτοῖς Τὸ μὲν ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίεσθε πίεσθε καὶ
unto him G3588 **indeed** **of the cup** **that** **I** **Ye shall** **Ye shall** **and**
G846 G3303 G4221 G3739 G1473 G4095 G4095 G2532

τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτισθήσεσθε βαπτισθήσεσθε
G3588 **with the baptism** **that** **I** **am baptized withal** **am baptized withal**
G908 G3739 G1473 G907 G907

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 1:9 (References Jesus): I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Acts 12:2 (Parallel theme): And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.