

Mark 14:36

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.

Analysis

Gethsemane's anguish reveals Jesus' humanity and divinity. 'Abba, Father' combines Aramaic intimacy (Abba—'Papa') with Greek formality (Patēr), expressing the relationship's depth. This unique address appears only here in the Gospels (also Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:6 describing believers' Spirit-enabled prayer). 'All things are possible unto thee' affirms God's omnipotence—no external constraint limits Him. Yet Jesus prays 'take away this cup,' referring to divine wrath He must drink (see Isaiah 51:17, Jeremiah 25:15). The 'cup' isn't merely physical death but bearing sin's curse and experiencing God-forsakenness. 'Nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt' displays perfect submission of human will to divine will. This isn't fatalism but active choosing—Jesus voluntarily accepts the Father's plan. The two wills (human and divine) in one person demonstrates the hypostatic union. This prayer models Christian submission while honestly expressing human emotion and desire.

Historical Context

Gethsemane ('oil press') was an olive grove on the Mount of Olives where Jesus often prayed. The Passover full moon illuminated the garden. Jesus' emotional distress—'exceeding sorrowful unto death' (14:34), falling on ground (14:35), sweating blood (Luke 22:44)—shows genuine human agony. He knew crucifixion's horror from witnessing Roman executions: flogging, public humiliation, hours of suffocating torture, complete abandonment. But the physical suffering paled

before spiritual agony: the sinless one becoming sin (2 Corinthians 5:21), experiencing the Father's wrath. The disciples' sleep (14:37, 40, 41) during His greatest need prefigured their scattering (14:50), emphasizing Jesus' isolation. Yet the Father's 'cup' couldn't be removed—no other way existed for redemption.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' honest struggle in prayer give you permission to bring real emotions to God?
2. Where do you need to move from 'what I will' to 'what thou wilt' in submitted trust?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἔλεγεν	Αββα	ὁ	πατήρ	πάντα	δυνατά	σοι·	
And	he said	Abba	G3588	Father	all things	are possible	unto thee	
G2532	G3004	G5		G3962	G3956	G1415	G4671	
παρένεγκε	τὸ	ποτήριον	ἀπ'	ἐμοῦ	τοῦτο·	ἀλλὰ	οὐ	τί
take away	G3588	cup	from	me	this	but	not	what
G3911		G4221	G575	G1700	G5124	G235	G3756	G5101
ἐγὼ	θέλω	ἀλλὰ	τί	σύ				
I	will	but	what	thou				
G1473	G2309	G235	G5101	G4771				

Additional Cross-References

Galatians 4:6 (Parallel theme): And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

John 5:30 (Parallel theme): I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

John 12:27 (Parallel theme): Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

2 Timothy 2:13 (Parallel theme): If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

Mark 10:27 (Parallel theme): And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

John 18:11 (Parallel theme): 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?

Titus 1:2 (Parallel theme): In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

Philippians 2:8 (Parallel theme): And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.