

Mark 15:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.

Analysis

At Golgotha, 'they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not' (ἐδίδουν αὐτῷ ἐσμυρνισμένον οἶνον, ὃς δὲ οὐκ ἔλαβεν). This mixture was offered to crucifixion victims as mild sedative dulling pain. Jesus refused—He would endure the cross's full horror fully conscious. This demonstrates voluntary suffering and complete obedience to the Father's will. Jesus wouldn't anesthetize Himself to escape suffering's reality. He must fully experience God's wrath against sin to accomplish atonement. His refusal also fulfilled prophecy (Psalm 69:21, 'in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink'). Later, He accepted sour wine (Mark 15:36), fulfilling Scripture. Jesus' conscious suffering ensures His complete identification with our pain and His sufficient atonement for sin.

Historical Context

Wine mixed with myrrh (or gall, Matthew 27:34) was customarily offered to crucifixion victims as primitive pain relief. Myrrh had narcotic properties, dulling sensation. Proverbs 31:6-7 advised, 'Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish... let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.' Jewish women in Jerusalem apparently provided this mercy to condemned criminals. Jesus' refusal meant experiencing crucifixion's full agony. This decision ensured conscious obedience throughout suffering, fulfilling the Father's will completely. Later (Mark 15:36), someone offered Him sour wine (vinegar, oxos)—common soldier's drink—which He tasted before dying (John 19:30). This fulfilled

Psalm 69:21 precisely. Early church saw significance in Jesus' refusal then acceptance—controlling His suffering according to prophetic pattern.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Why did Jesus refuse the drugged wine that would have dulled His suffering on the cross?
2. What does Jesus' fully conscious endurance of crucifixion teach about the necessity of complete, willing obedience in accomplishing atonement?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἐδίδουν	αὐτῷ	πιεῖν	ἐσμυρνισμένον	οἶνον·	ό	δὲ
And	they gave	him	to drink	mingled with myrrh	wine	G3588	but
G2532	G1325	G846	G4095	G4669	G3631		G1161
οὐκ							ελαβεν
it not	he received						
G3756	G2983						

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 26:19 (Parallel theme): And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

Matthew 27:34 (Parallel theme): They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.

Luke 22:18 (Parallel theme): For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org