

Matthew 26:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

Analysis

He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee—the same inner circle who witnessed the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1) now witness the agony. James and John, who boasted they could drink Christ's cup (Matthew 20:22), would now see what that cup truly contained. **Began to be sorrowful and very heavy** (λυπεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖν, *lupeisthai kai adēmonein*)—the Greek conveys deep grief and distressing anxiety, an overwhelming spiritual anguish.

The word *adēmonein* suggests being 'away from home,' utterly disoriented—the spotless Son experiencing alienation from the Father as he contemplated bearing sin. This was not physical fear of death but horror at becoming sin itself (2 Corinthians 5:21), the cup of divine wrath against all human rebellion.

Historical Context

Peter, James, and John formed Jesus's closest circle throughout his ministry. They alone witnessed the raising of Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:37), the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8), and now the Gethsemane agony. This progression reveals Christ's deliberate discipleship pattern—from resurrection power to transfiguration glory to substitutionary suffering, preparing them to understand the full scope of his messianic mission.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. Why did the same disciples who saw Christ's glory on the mountain of Transfiguration need to witness his agony in the garden?
2. What does the intensity of Christ's emotional distress reveal about the nature of the atonement he was about to accomplish?
3. How does understanding that Jesus's sorrow was spiritual (bearing sin) rather than merely physical (fearing death) deepen your appreciation of his sacrifice?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	παραλαβὼν	τὸν	Πέτρον	καὶ	τοὺς	δύο	υἱοὺς
And	he took with him	G3588	Peter	And	G3588	the two	sons
G2532	G3880		G4074	G2532		G1417	G5207
Ζεβεδαίου	ἤρξατο	λυπεῖσθαι	καὶ	ἀδημονεῖν			
of Zebedee	and began	to be sorrowful	And	very heavy			
G2199	G756	G3076	G2532	G85			

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 4:21 (Parallel theme): And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

Matthew 17:1 (References Peter): And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

Mark 5:37 (References Peter): And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

