

# Matthew 26:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

## Analysis

**Findeth them asleep** (εύρισκει αὐτοὺς καθεύδοντας, heuriskei autous katheudontas)—while Christ agonized under the weight of impending sin-bearing, the disciples slumbered. **What, could ye not watch with me one hour?** (οὐκ ἴσχύσατε μίαν ὥραν γρηγορῆσαι μετ' ἐμοῦ, ouk ischusate mian hōran grēgorēsai met' emou)—the question carries both disappointment and gentle rebuke. The word grēgorēsai means to 'stay alert, vigilant,' not merely remain awake.

Jesus directs the question specifically to Peter—the same Peter who hours earlier boasted 'Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended' (Matthew 26:33). The contrast is devastating: Peter could not stay alert for one hour, yet Christ would remain faithful through six hours of crucifixion. This scene exposes human weakness and divine strength, our failure and his faithfulness.

## Historical Context

The Jewish day was divided into twelve hours of daylight and four night watches of three hours each. Jesus's request for 'one hour' of watchful prayer was minimal—yet the disciples failed even this. This failure foreshadowed Peter's coming denial and the disciples' scattering (Matthew 26:56). The scene occurred during Passover, when Jews commemorated their forefathers' deliverance—yet the disciples slept while the true Passover Lamb prepared for sacrifice.

## Related Passages

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**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. Why did Peter, who made the boldest claims of loyalty, receive the sharpest rebuke for sleeping, and what warning does this give about self-confidence?
2. How does the disciples' failure to watch for one hour highlight the truth that salvation depends entirely on Christ's work, not human effort?
3. In what areas of your spiritual life are you 'sleeping' when Christ calls you to watch and pray?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ εὑρίσκει αὐτοὺς  
And he cometh unto the disciples And findeth them  
G2532 G2064 G4314 G3588 G3101 G2532 G2147 G846

καθεύδοντας καὶ λέγει τῷ Πέτρῳ Οὕτως οὐκ ἴσχύσατε  
asleep And saith unto Peter What not could ye  
G2518 G2532 G3004 G3588 G4074 G3779 G3756 G2480

μίαν ὥραν γρηγορῆσαι μετ' ἐμοῦ  
G1520 hour watch with me  
G5610 G1127 G3326 G1700

## Additional Cross-References

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**Mark 14:37** (References Peter): And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?

**Luke 22:45** (Parallel theme): And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

**Matthew 26:43** (Parallel theme): And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

**Matthew 26:35** (References Peter): Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

**Luke 9:32** (References Peter): But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

**Matthew 25:5** (Parallel theme): While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

**Matthew 26:38** (Parallel theme): Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.