

Matthew 27:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.

Analysis

Vinegar to drink mingled with gall (ὄξος μετὰ χολῆς, oxos meta cholēs)—Mark 15:23 specifies **wine mingled with myrrh**, a narcotic painkiller offered by charitable Jewish women to condemned men. **Gall** (χολή) may translate the myrrh, or Matthew may allude to Psalm 69:21: **They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.**

He would not drink—Jesus refuses to dull his senses. He will taste death fully, experiencing unmediated wrath for sin. The cup he prayed might pass (Matthew 26:39) he now drinks to the dregs, refusing even lawful relief.

Historical Context

Roman crucifixion was designed to maximize suffering through asphyxiation, exposure, and pain. Charitable Jews sometimes offered drugged wine to condemned criminals as a mercy. Jesus's refusal shows his determination to bear sin's full penalty consciously.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Why was it necessary for Jesus to refuse pain relief and experience suffering fully?
2. How does this refusal relate to the cup Jesus prayed about in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39, 42)?

Interlinear Text

ἔδωκαν αὐτῷ πιεῖν ὄξος μετὰ χολῆς μεμιγμένον· καὶ
They gave him drink vinegar with gall mingled and
G1325 G846 G4095 G3690 G3326 G5521 G3396 G2532

γευσάμενος οὐκ ἦθελεν πιεῖν
when he had tasted not thereof he would drink
G1089 G3756 G2309 G4095

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 69:21 (Parallel theme): They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Mark 15:23 (Parallel theme): And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.

Matthew 27:48 (Parallel theme): And straightway one of them ran, and took a spunge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink.