

“Let this cup pass away from me”

The Study Note for Matthew 26:39 (NWT) says this:

"Jesus no doubt felt great concern over the reproach that his death as one charged with blasphemy and sedition could bring on God, moving him to pray that this “cup” pass away from him."

Here is the whole quote from within that scripture, followed by the parallel scripture quotes:

(Matthew 26:39) “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me. Yet, not as I will, but as you will.”

(Mark 14:36) “*Abba*, Father, all things are possible for you; remove this cup from me. Yet, not what I want, but what you want.”

(Luke 22:42) “Father, if you want to, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, let, not my will, but yours take place.”

Jesus said *"let this cup pass away from me", "remove this cup from me", "remove this cup from me".* Jesus is well known for redirecting attention away from himself and towards his Father. (Mr 10:18) If Jehovah's reputation was on the line it seems to me that Jesus would have referred to that instead of himself by saying something like this: "Do not let your name be reproached."

Next Jesus said *"not as I will", "not what I want", "not my will"* making it perfectly clear that it was not his wish to die.

Then he said *"but as you will", "but what you want", "but yours take place"* so that all would know that he, a perfect man equal to Adam, was fully willing to do God's will, even though it was against his own wishes, unlike Adam who chose his own desires over obedience to God.

Why did it matter? Because if Jesus wanted to die then he would merely be fulfilling his own desires and not God's. Or if it wasn't that big of a deal to Jesus, then doing things Jehovah's way wouldn't really count for much either. No, but Jesus had to feel strongly about it for his decision to have value. For instance if you wanted to prove your young child's obedience to you, so you put out cookies and told him not to eat them, it wouldn't be much of a test if your child only mildly liked the kind of cookies you set out and was indifferent to them.

The following scriptures show just how strongly Jesus felt about it:

(Matthew 26:37, 38) And taking along Peter and the two sons of Zeb'e-dee, he began to feel grieved and to be greatly troubled. ³⁸ Then he said to them: "I am deeply grieved, even to death. Stay here and keep on the watch with me."

(Luke 22:44) But he was in such agony that he kept praying more earnestly; and his sweat became as drops of blood falling to the ground.

The point was that this perfect and obedient man would choose God's will over his own.

Perhaps the words of Jesus' prayer were set down in writing for the record to counter Adam's unfaithful act and to prove that the human race is not all bad and therefore worthy of redemption. Because Jesus, a true human with all of our weaknesses and desires, willingly chose to submit to Jehovah even to death, against his own very strong and intrinsic desires.

Temptation

(Matthew 26:41) Keep on the watch and pray continually, so that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit, of course, is eager, but the flesh is weak."

(Mark 14:38) Keep on the watch and pray continually, so that you do not come into temptation. The spirit, of course, is eager, but the flesh is weak."

(Luke 22:40-46) On arriving at the place, he said to them: "Carry on prayer so that you do not enter into temptation." ⁴¹ And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw away, and he bent his knees and began to pray, ⁴² saying: "Father, if you want to, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, let, not my will, but yours take place." ⁴³ Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴ But he was in such agony that he kept praying more earnestly; and his sweat became as drops of blood falling to the ground. ⁴⁵ When he rose from prayer and went to the disciples, he found them slumbering, exhausted from grief. ⁴⁶ He said to them: "Why are you sleeping? Get up and keep praying, so that you do not enter into temptation."

What temptations were the apostles in danger of giving in to there in the garden of Gethsemane while they slept? Though Jesus seemed to easily fend off the temptations of the devil after his baptism (Luke 4:5-13) the temptation to avoid death had a much stronger pull on him. Perhaps Jesus was not asking his apostles to pray just because of temptation to themselves, but to join him in a collective prayer to ward off temptation since he was intensely struggling with his own. No doubt he knew that the apostles were humble and generous in their prayers and would not pray just for themselves, but would request help and strengthening for all of them, including for Jesus.

Jesus said "*the flesh is weak.*" He did not say 'your flesh is weak', he said "***the*** *flesh is weak*". That included Jesus' own flesh. Yes the intense natural desires of his humanity were a potential stumbling block to him:

(Matthew 16:23) But turning his back, he said to Peter: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, because you think, not God's thoughts, but those of men."

"...those of men." Jesus was a man, which is why Peter's words were a stumbling block to him.

When Jesus said "*The spirit, of course, is eager, but the flesh is weak.*" he was also referring to himself, further identifying the reason for his fervent prayers. And his prayerful request for strength so as not to give in to temptation was granted:

(Hebrews 5:7) During his life on earth, Christ offered up supplications and also petitions, with strong outcries and tears, to the One who was able to save him out of death, and he was favorably heard for his godly fear.

Silent Lamb

Jesus did not have to run away if he wished to escape capture and death. With mere words he could have secured his release. (John 7:45, 46) But he chose not to, which is why, although he actually did speak to Pilate, he was described as a silent lamb because he did not say anything in order to gain his freedom.

(Isaiah 53:7) He was oppressed and he let himself be afflicted, But he would not open his mouth. He was brought like a sheep to the slaughter, Like a ewe that is silent before its shearers, And he would not open his mouth. (Acts 8:32)

(John 19:10) So Pilate said to him: "Are you refusing to speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and I have authority to execute you?"

(John 7:45, 46) Then the officers went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, and the latter said to them: "Why did you not bring him in?" ⁴⁶ The officers replied: "Never has any man spoken like this."

Even without words Jesus could have easily escaped, as he did when the large crowd wanted to throw him off of the brow of the mountain.

(Luke 4:28-30) Now all those hearing these things in the synagogue became filled with anger, ²⁹ and they rose up and rushed him outside the city, and they led him to the brow of the mountain on which their city had been built, in order to throw him down headlong. ³⁰ But he went right through their midst and continued on his way.

Glorified

(John 12:23) But Jesus answered them: "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified."

What "*hour*" is Jesus speaking of? (John 7:30) The hour of his sacrificial death. He will be glorified at that hour (moment). (Jn 12:16; 17:1)

Here Jesus is also talking about his imminent death. Sending out Judas to finish his act of betrayal Jesus set in motion what was to come. Jesus points out that not only will he be glorified by his death, but God will also be glorified by it. (Jn 12:28)

(John 13:31, 32) When, therefore, he had gone out, Jesus said: "Now the Son of man is glorified, and God is glorified in connection with him." ³² God himself will glorify him, and he will glorify him immediately.

Though Peter may have died in a different manner than Jesus, he too was executed and died a martyr's death. And yet Jesus said his death "*would glorify God*", not bring reproach upon Him.

(John 21:19) He said this to indicate by what sort of death he would glorify God. After he said this, he said to him: "Continue following me."

Reproach

I can find no scriptural evidence that reproach was brought upon Jehovah in any way by Jesus' death. Though it would seem that Jesus himself may have been shamed by his death.

(Hebrews 6:6) but have fallen away, it is impossible to revive them again to repentance, because they nail the Son of God to the stake again for themselves and expose him to public shame.

Blasphemy and Seditious

Let's consider the Study Note for Matthew 26:39 again:

"Jesus no doubt felt great concern over the reproach that his death as one charged with blasphemy and sedition could bring on God,..."

In reading the scriptures that describe the treatment Jesus received at his death I found no evidence that those mocking him had anything negative to say about Jehovah. (Mt 27:27-44; Mr 15:16-32; Lu 23:35-39)

Thinking about it logically, the people of the time could be put into one of two categories: those that believed Christ to be the Son of God, and those that did not. (Any who did not even know who Jesus was would fall into the second category.)

Now those that believed in Christ knew the charges of blasphemy and sedition were false charges. After all, someone cannot be blaspheming if he is telling the truth.

Those that did not believe Christ to be the Son of God may have believed him to be guilty of blasphemy and sedition, but since they did not believe he was God's Son they would not have affiliated Jesus' so called "crimes" with God, and therefore no reproach would have been directed at Jehovah. At Matthew

27:63 they even called him an "*impostor*". And in the next verse they refer to his "*deception*" showing that they did not believe his claim to be God's son.

So i can think of no reason why Christ's death would have brought any reproach upon Jehovah. Can you?

What do *you* think?

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