What Was In That Cup?



(Matthew 26:36-44 and Selected Scriptures)
4/14/2017

Why was that "cup" so abhorrent to Christ? What was so repulsive about drinking of that cup?

I. **It was a <u>HEAVY</u> Cup, Filled with the <u>Weight</u> of the Sin of the World** (Isaiah 53:6; 1 Peter 2:24)

II. **It was a <u>HOT</u> Cup, Filled with the <u>Fury</u> of God the Father's Wrath against Sin. (**Galatians 3:13; Psalm 22:14-15)

III. **It was a <u>DARK</u> Cup, Filled with the Hellish <u>Separation</u> from God the Father** (Matthew 27:45-46)

IV. **It was a <u>BITTER</u> Cup, Filled with the <u>Shame</u> of the Sin of the World** (Hebrews 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

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1 Peter 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

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"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us--for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree'"

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I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

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(Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:45-46)

Psalm 22:1 - My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?

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Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

IV. It was a <u>BITTER</u> Cup, Filled with the <u>Shame</u> of the Sin of the World
(Hebrews 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

Hebrews 12:2
Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21
For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

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Introduction: Matthew 26

V. 36
"Gethsemane" - The name means "oil press." This ancient garden, which still remains to this day, was on the west side of the Mount of Olives.

V. 37
"Two sons of Zebedee" = James and John

Jesus often brought this inner circle of Peter, James, and John to be eye-witnesses of certain events (Mt. 17:1) . . . *"That in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established"* (Mt. 18:16).

"Sorrowful" - to <u>grieve</u> over the separation which was about to take place (Mt.27:46).

"Heavy" - to be <u>distressed</u> because of the weight of the sin He would bear for the world (I Pet. 2:24).

V. 38
The impending judgment from Heaven which was to fall upon Jesus so deeply grieved His soul so that He felt as if He would die even at this point.

"Watch" - stay awake so as to <u>pray</u>

V. 39
The cup that Jesus was to drink was <u>not</u> drunk in the Garden, but later that day (Jn. 18:11) at <u>Calvary</u>

Jesus didn't fear death. "Many godly people have been (wrongly) arrested, beaten, and slain because of their faith. But only Jesus experienced being made sin and a curse for mankind" (Wiersbe, p. 97) (II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13).

"This <u>cup</u>" - not speaking of the mere physical suffering Jesus would have to endure, but of the spiritual agony He would endure and drink for all of humanity.

Later that day from 12:00 - 3:00 p.m., "darkness" would mysteriously cover the earth (Mk. 15:33), as the Son of God would become a *"curse"* by hanging on the cross (Gal. 3:13), bearing the *"iniquity of us all"* (Is. 64:6), and as the Father would turn His back on His own Son (Mt. 27:46).

In that *"cup"* were all of the vile sins you committed, are committing, and would commit.

In that *"cup"* was death, as Christ would *"taste death for every man"* (Heb. 2:9).

The pure, spotless, undefiled, holy soul of Jesus was repulsed by the thought of becoming a sin offering and experiencing the equivalent of our hell on that cross.

"Not as I will, but as thou wilt" - When Christ became man, He totally subjected Himself to the will of the Father (Jn. 6:38 - *"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."*)

For Him to ever violate the will of the Father would be to sin. This was an impossibility for the Son of God.

Although Jesus wished not to be accursed for those three hours on the cross, severed for the first time in eternity from the presence and power of the Father, He was willing to do the will of the Father no matter what the cost!

V. 40

"Asleep" **-** Due to the intense pressures of the hour, the disciples gave in to the suggestion of the devil to sleep their problems away rather than pray their problems away.

V. 41

"Watch and pray" **-** stay awake and alert so as to pray.

"That ye enter not into temptation" **-** daily prayer is the only secret to overcoming the strong solicitations to evil that will come our way.

"Deliver us from evil" needs to be our daily prayer (Mt. 6:13).

Note: Proud self-confidence will always result in prayerlessness.

There is a time for sleep and there is a time for prayer. This was no time for sleep. The biggest trial Peter would ever face was minutes away!

"The spirit" **-** a believer's inner regenerated spirit, which is the aspect of man (which separates him from the animal realm) which alone is eager (***"willing"***) to commune with God.

"The flesh is weak" **-** Our bodies and old nature succumb and seek to gratify the impulses of the carnal body.

This war of "spirit versus flesh" is a real one (Gal. 5:17) which can only be won by the spirit if you daily feed the spirit and allow the Holy Spirit to control you.

Whenever the Spirit prods you to do something, do it. This is the secret to the Spirit-filled life.

V. 42

"O my Father" **-** the depth of Christ's intimacy with the Father and agony at the thought of His being separated from the Father drives Him to plead a second time.

V. 43

"Asleep again" - They woke up momentarily only to fall back into slumber.

When the temptation to sleep conflicts with your doing the will of god, fight it! Fight it out of love for Christ and His will!

V. 44

Christ intensely requested that the Father remove the bitter, hellish cup of spiritual suffering and separation. Although an angel was sent to strengthen Christ (Lk. 22:43), *"being in agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground"* (Lk. 22:44).

The Bible uses the cup metaphor several times…

Ps 116:13 - the cup of salvation
Isa 51:17 - the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling
Jer 16:7 - the cup of consolation
Eze 23:33 - the cup of astonishment and desolation
Hab 2:16 - the cup of the LORD'S right hand
Zec 12:2 - a cup of trembling
1Co 10:21 - the cup of devils
Re 14:10 - the cup of his indignation
Re 16:19 - the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

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Isaiah 53:6
All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

"The Lord laid on Him" - This was the "cup" Jesus dreaded most (Mt. 26:39).

"Laid on Him the iniquity" - He is our "scape goat"; He bore the weight of the world's iniquity (I. Cor. 5:21). He became a curse for us (Gal. 3:13).

"Of us <u>all</u>" - Not a limited atonement (cp. I Jn. 2:2; I Tim. 2:4, 6; I Tim. 4:10; Heb. 2:9), Christ had to be divine to pay for the whole world's sins.

Because of His infinite suffering, we will avoid eternal suffering.

1 Peter 2:24
Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

"Our sins" - The sins that riveted Christ to the cross were not His own (for He had none), but it was our sins that nailed Him there.

Christ personally took our sins upon Himself on Calvary's cross and suffered an infinite equivalent of our eternity in Hell (Is. 53:4 - *"Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.")*

The Just One bore the penalty of the unjust (this was not fair; but it was gracious!).

"That" - in order that; giving a purpose for Christ's death.

Christ took our place and paid our penalty in order that after we became saved and died in reference to sin, we would live for righteousness.

Christ died a death that wasn't right, so that we could live a life that was right.

Note: When we became the recipients of eternal life, *"we became dead to sins"* (Rom. 6:7-13). This does not mean that we do not sin anymore. It does mean that we do not have to obey the demands of the flesh and of Satan any more" (Anderson, p. 44).

We don't have to behave like we once did. We don't have to allow gutter language to flow from our lips or vile actions come from our limbs any more!

His receiving undeserved lacerations (cuts and wounds) led to our undeserved healing.

Theodoret (393-458 A.D.) said: "The doctor suffered on the cross; and the sick received the healing."

(note: The healing referred to in this context is spiritual not physical. Although Jesus did bear men's sicknesses before He did (Mt. 8:17), earthly healing was not in the atonement.

V. 24b

We are to be different than we once were. One area of distinct difference, is in how we respond to personal injustices targeted at us.

We can forgive because we have been forgiven (Eph. 4:32 - *"And be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.")*

All of us once wandered away as sheep do (Is. 53:6), but now have been turned back (by God) to the heavenly Paster and Overseer of your souls.

Jesus our loving Shepherd cares for us even when we are unjustly treated (Rom. 8:35-39) and our faithful Overseer looks out for us when the enemy seeks to destroy us.

He guards our souls! (4:19)

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V. 45

The last 3 hours of Christ's death on Calvary are the most important and significant moments of human history.

During these short 180 minutes (or 10,800 seconds), the most vital work for humanity was accomplished.

After the scorning of the crowd and after the saving of the penitent thief (Lk. 23:43), a mysterious, eerie darkness started to fall upon the earth.

A "shepherd stands staring at the now blackened sky. Only seconds before he had stared at the sun. Now there is no sun. The sky is black. No thunder. No lightening. No clouds. The sheep are restless. The feeling is eerie. What is this hellish darkness? What has happened?" (Max Lucado)

Perhaps a scream is heard in the distance. Many, pointing to the sky, momentarily forget about those on the crosses. Then the crowd begins to break up and hurry toward the gates. The men cease their work, and the women fling their shawls over their heads and run with their children to get shelter from what seems to be a brewing storm.

People in fear say: "What is this? What's going on?"

What is amazing is that noon time is the time that the sun is at its highest point, at its zenith.

The means God used to darkness the earth is uncertain. We know that "the sun was darkened." (Lk. 23:45)

A prolonged eclipse is one answer, or a miraculous Heaven-sent darkening of the sun is another.

"Over all the land" - the word "land" can also mean "earth" (SEE: quote from Jim Bishop, "The Day Christ Died", p. 327).

This darkness "was as though all of creation was sympathizing with the Creator. There were three days of darkness in Egypt before the Passover (Ex. 10:21-23) and there were three hours of darkness before the Lamb of God died for the sins of the world" (Wiersbe, p. 103).

The darkening of the sun marks the time of God's Judgment. God's Son was judged for our sin! (NOTE: The "Day of the Lord" will be initiated by darkness! - Joel 2:31; Rev. 6:12, 17; cp. Amos 5:20; Zeph. 1;14-15).

God's judgment of those in hell involves darkness (II Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Mt. 8:12).

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" - This is a quote from Psalm 22:1; read Ps. 22:1, 7-8, 13-18).

From 12:00 - 3:00, Christ fully drank of that bitter cup He so much dreaded. (SEE: Mt. 26:36-42).

The phrase "exceedingly sorrowful" (mt. 26:38) indicates an unfathomable depth of anguish and sorrow.

What was that "cup"? It was the spiritual suffering (the "travail of his soul" - Is. 53:11) as He took upon Himself the full brunt of the sin of the world (Is. 53:4-6).

The contents of this cup involved the poisonous, toxic, dark, putrefying, cursed sin of the world that Jesus took upon Himself (II Cor. 5:21).

This horrible cup of agonizing pain and suffering was a cup given by God the Father. Jesus was "smitten of God, and afflicted" (Is. 53:4).

"The LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (is. 53:6)

"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; he hath put him to grief. . . [the Father made] his soul an offering for sin" (Is. 53:10)

The most horrible contents of the cup of which Jesus drank was the momentary yet infinite separation between He and the Father.

As Jesus "bore our sins in his own body ont he tree" (I Pet. 2:24), the Father as it were turned His back on His Son and forsook Him. For the first time in eternity, a split, a schism, a separation between the Father and the Son occurred.

At no time in history or eternity past had the Son ever been abandoned. from the Father.

Christ experienced not only a physical death, but during those 3 hours on the cross He "tasted" a spiritual death (which involved the separation of his soul from the Father.

God the Father and the Son had known perfect intimacy in eternity past. Together, the triune Godhead planned creation. "Let us make man in our image."

Together, the Father and Soon created the universe - "by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:2; cp. Col. 1:16; Jn. 1:3)

The Father and Son both confused the languages at Babel (Gen. 11:7); the Father and Son both desired that a prophet be sent to preach to Israel - Is. 6:8).

Together the Father and Son had an unfathomable love (Jn. 17:23-24, 26). Since they shared the same nature, they knew each other more fully and completely than any other could (Mt. 11:27). While on earth, Christ desired nothing more than to please the Father (Mt. 3:17; Mt. 17:3; Jn. 8:29).

The Father and Son had a unity that was so personal and intimate (Jn. 17:21, 23) because together they were one in essence and nature (Jn. 10:30).

Yet on the cross an abandonment occurred.

Jesus "endured the cross despising the same" (Heb. 12:2)

He was made a "curse for us" in order to remove us from "the curse of the Law." (Gal. 3:13).

"The Bridge Story"

IV. It was a <u>BITTER</u> Cup, Filled with the <u>Shame</u> of the Sin of the World
(Hebrews 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

Hebrews 12:2
Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Author and Finisher
The Architect and Builder
The Originator and Creator
The Beginner and the Ender
The Designer and the Doer
The Pioneer and Perfecter
. . . Christ initiated the work for our salvation and completely finished the work of our salvation.

"It is finished!" (Jn. 19:30).

It is totally presumptuous for man to plan his salvation (Prov. 14:12; 16:25) and think he can do enough to earn it by himself (Ti. 3:5; Eph. 2:8).

"Our faith" **-** Our faith or beliefs is not our idea; it was Christ's. What Christians believe -- Christ authored it and finished it.

"Our faith" is summarized by Paul in I Cor. 15:3-4.

"For" **-** for the sake of; because of. One day the "shame" of the cross will be replaced with the "joy" of what it accomplished.

"The joy" **-** this is what motivated Christ to put up with the humiliating shame of Golgotha. It was the joy of fulfilling His own plan; doing the will of the Father; and making payment to acquire a Bride, that gave Him endurance to the finish line.

That which motivates you ought to be to please your Heavenly Father, to fulfill His plan and hear His *"Well done thou good and faithful servant"* (Mt. 25:21).

As Christ *"ran"* the course His Father had for Him,t he focus that allowed Him to drink the bitter cup of suffering and torment (Mt. 26:39) was the *"joy"* of acquiring a Bride by His bloody death (Eph. 5:25; I Pet. 1:19).

Paul spoke of his converts as his "*joy and crown"* (Phil. 4:1; cp. I Th. 2:19).

"Endured" - the same word translated *"patience"* (v. 1)

"The cross" - He became a curse for us on Calvary's cross (Gal. 3:13).

"Set down" - Christ is pictured as seated because His work of salvation is completed! It is done! It is finished! His mission is accomplished!

"The right hand" -
the place of power (Exod. 15:6, 23; Ps. 89:13, 118:16; Is. 48:13)
the place of pleasures (Ps. 16:11)

2 Corinthians 5:21
For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

"For" – For you see; here Paul expands on his previous thought of reconciliation (v. 20). And says in effect be reconciled to God and here is how you can be reconciled. Christ paid your sin debt and now provides righteousness.

"For <u>he</u>" – God took the initiative in providing for our salvation.

"Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9)

It was no mistake or foiled plan that brought Christ to Calvary's cross; it was the Father's plan.

"Who knew no sin" – the word "knew" (ginosko) "expresses knowledge gained by experience" (Rogers, citing D.W. Burdick, p. 403).

Christ being God and thereby being omniscient knew all things; that is, He knows about all things, but he never experienced the effects of sin personally.

Christ's sinlessness is taught repeatedly:

John 8:46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

John 19:4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

Heb 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin.

Heb 7:26 For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

"Holy" - There is no sin in Him.

"Harmless" - There is no badness in Him.

"Undefiled" - There is no impurity in Him.

"Separate from sinners" - There is no connection between Christ and sinners (as far as His nature is concerned).

1Pe 2:22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

1Jo 3:5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

Jesus is called "the Holy One and the Just" by Peter (Acts 3:14)

"Made Him to be sin" – Does <u>not</u> mean "that God made Him a sinner (Hughes, p. 126), but a sin offering."

In what sense was Christ <u>"made…sin</u> for us"?

1) He bore our sins in His own body (1 Pet. 2:24)
2) He was made a sin offering for us (Isaiah 53)

“Christ was not made a sinner, nor was He punished for any sin of His own. Instead, the Father treated Him as if He were a sinner by charging to His account the sins of everyone who would ever believe. All those sins were charged against Him as if He had personally committed them, and He was punished with the penalty for them on the cross, experiencing the full fury of God’s wrath unleashed against them all.” (MacArthur, p. 215).

“This is what happened during those three dark hours on Good Friday. Though all analogies or explanations of what happened fall short, they provide a glimpse. For example, think of Christ’s heart as a sea hemmed in by the mountains of our festering sin. Then imagine our sins coursing down the mountains into his heart until all the mountains of evil slide into the sea. Or think back to the magnifying glass you played with as a child. If held under the sun’s rays, it could start a fire. Remember how if you focused the white spot of its concentrated light on a leaf or a bug (only boys did this!), it would begin to burn. Our sins were focused on Christ on the cross, and He suffered the fiery wrath of God. On the cross Christ was robed in all that is heinous and hateful as the mass of our corruption poured over him. Wave after wave of our sin was poured over Christ’s sinless soul. Again and again during those three hours His soul recoiled and convulsed as all our lies, hatreds, jealousies, and pride were poured upon his purity. “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us – for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree’ “ (Gal. 3:13). (MacArthur, p. 126)

“On the cross God treated Jesus as if He had lived our lives with all our sin, so that God could then treat us as if we lived Christ’s life of pure holiness. Our iniquitous life was legally charged to Him on the cross, as if He had lived it, so that His righteous life could be credited to us, as if we lived it” (MacArthur, p. 217).