

Matthew 26.³⁶⁻⁴⁶

³⁶Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, “Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.”

³⁷And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. ³⁸Then saith he unto them, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.”

³⁹And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

⁴⁰And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, “What, could ye not watch with me one hour? ⁴¹Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

⁴²He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, “O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.”

⁴³And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, “Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.”

This is our 44th reading for Lent.

According to the traditional chronology of Jesus’ final week, the events recorded in today’s reading took place on Thursday evening.

1. Upon arriving at Gethsemane, Jesus informed his disciples, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.”

- ? Put Jesus’ words in your words?
- ? What sort of pain feels like it can kill?
- ? What, do you suppose, did the disciples think and feel when they heard Jesus confess that he was experiencing a pain that felt like it could kill him?
- ? How does the following passage relate to Jesus’ confession?

“And lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people” (Mos. 3.⁷).

- ? How do you feel and what do you think knowing that had anyone else been asked to suffer as Jesus did they would not have survived the ordeal?
- ? What does this tell you about Jesus?
- ? What does it tell you about his suffering?

2. We have examined Jesus’ use of the “cup” as a metaphor for his suffering before. But, we will take the opportunity to examine it once more. In seeking relief from his terrible ordeal, Jesus asked, “remove this cup from me.”

- ? Have you ever wondered why, in this terrible moment, Jesus resorted to a metaphor—the metaphor of a cup—rather than just saying outright what he meant: “stop the pain,” “make it end,” or some such sentiment?
- ? Why, do you think, did he resort to this particular imagery of a cup?

? What is the significance of the “cup”?

Consider the following passages.

Mosiah 3. ²⁵⁻²⁷	Psalms 11. ⁶	Psalms 75. ⁸
Isaiah 51. ^{17& 22}	Jeremiah 25. ^{15-17, 27}	Jeremiah 51. ⁷⁻⁹
Ezekiel 23. ³²⁻³⁴	Revelation 14. ¹⁰⁻¹¹	Revelation 16. ¹⁹
Revelation 17. ⁴⁻⁶	Alma 40. ²⁶ ;	D&C 29. ¹⁷
DC 43. ²⁶	DC 101. ¹¹	

? After reading these passages, what do you think was “in” Jesus’ cup?

The following words and phrases are associated with this cup:

“Torment... as a lake of fire and brimstone”
“Be moved and mad”
“Awful view of... guilt and abominations”
“Be drunken, and spue, and fall”
“Shrink from the presence of the Lord”
“Astonishment and desolation”
“State of misery and endless torment”
“Wrath of God”
“Snares, fire and brimstone”
“Indignation”
“Horrible tempest”
“Fierceness of his wrath”
“Dregs”
“Cast out”
“Fury”
“Unclean”
“Cup of trembling”

? What does all of this language suggest to you about the nature of Jesus’ suffering?

3. Close your eyes and imagine that you are present in the garden of Gethsemane and witness Jesus’ “agony.”
 - ? What does Jesus look like?
 - ? What does the garden feel like?
 - ? What, do you think, would you want to say to him if you had been there?
 - ? Take so time in your upcoming prayers to say these things?
4. Jesus warned his disciples, “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.”
 - ? This is good counsel at all times, but how might it have been particularly pertinent to the disciples on this night and in light of Jesus’ suffering?
 - ? What do you think and feel when you contemplate the possibility that Lucifer and his hosts were likely present in the garden tempting Jesus and thus threatening anyone else in the vicinity?
5. We are repeatedly informed that the disciples were sleeping.
 - ? How does this fit with the disciples’ continual lack of insight and preparedness?