

"CUPS" IN THE BIBLE

In ancient times, the cup came to symbolize one's lot in life. Each individual has a limited life span—one cup, you might say, in the great ocean of history. That cup might be filled with God's blessing or His wrath.*

The "Cup of Suffering"

In John 18:11, Jesus commanded Peter, **"Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"** [NIV]. This is "the cup" that would be the judgment of the world's sins. This represents God's wrath, judgment and punishment handed to the Lord for Him to drink when He was nailed to Calvary for us. The cup was the agony endured by Christ when He was made sin for us (W. Wilson).

The "Cup of Salvation"

Psalms 116:13, **"I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD."** [NIV]. To take the "cup" or "lift up the cup of salvation", just means to express thanksgiving to the Lord for saving us. Calling on the Name of the Lord means to make a sincere act of devotion in recognition of the greatness of His salvation.

Psalms 16:5, **"LORD, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure."** [NIV] This pictures Christ's life, and His chosen portion which was what God had given Him.

The "Cup of Joy"

Psalms 23:5, **"My cup overflows."** [NIV]. David described the fullness of joy and peace which was his portion because of the Lord's goodness to him (Walter Wilson).

David exults God in the psalm and acknowledges his life is full of God's blessing.

The "Cup of Communion"

1 Cor. 11:23-26—**The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.** [NIV].

1 Cor. 10:16—**Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ.**

The "cup of communion" and the "cup of thanksgiving" are one and the same cup. With it Christians celebrate and express thanks for God's deliverance from sin. We can drink the cup of God's blessing because Jesus drank the cup of suffering.

In the ancient world, the cup also represented friendship and acceptance. A host would offer a cup of wine to a guest, who would accept it in a gesture of friendship. Unquestionably, we can see the communion cup as an offer of friendship and acceptance from Christ, our host, to us.*

The "Cup of Demons"

1 Cor.10:21, **"You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's Table and the table of demons."**

In Paul's day, worshippers of pagan gods often held feasts, dedicating the cup to them. These were open social events in many cities and Christians were tempted to participate. But the apostle warns that taking part in such meals would symbolize fellowship with false gods, which are demons. We should only take the cup of Christ, and give Him our exclusive allegiance. *

The "Cup of Wrath"

Psalm 75:8, **"For in the hand of the LORD *there is* a cup, and the wine is red; it is fully mixed, and He pours it out; surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth drain *and* drink down."** [NKJV].

God has some awful judgments stored up for His unfaithful people. Notice that is not a diluted cup here. It's full strength. This is going to be full strength, the full mixture of God's wrath on the unsaved, those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior (C.G. Lindeman). Read in particular Rev.16, 19.

*Revell Bible Dictionary, 1990

Soli Deo Gloria!