HEKHAL · READER'S EDITION

KATA ΜΑΘΘΑΙΟΝ 26

Christ in Gethsemane

Matthew 26:36–46 · ho Iesous en Gethsemani

Hekhal Targum Project (machine-assisted draft; pending scholarly review)

PROVISIONAL EDITION · MACHINE-ASSISTED · NOT YET REVIEWED BY A CREDENTIALED EDITOR

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About this edition

King James Version of 1611, public domain. The Greek text follows the Stephanus 1550 Textus Receptus, which underlies the KJV translation and is itself in the public domain. Synoptic parallels are noted where Mark 14:32–42 and Luke 22:39–46 preserve material the Matthean text compresses or omits. Hekhal hosts the passage as the new-Jacob node of the Christian Esoteric Exegesis throughline: the night struggle, the holding on, the renaming of the human relation to God through the cup not removed.

TRADITION	christian-mysticism
LANGUAGE	Greek
PERIOD	Composed c. 80–90 CE; Greek manuscript tradition
ATTRIBUTION	Ascribed to the apostle Matthew; modern critical view: anonymous Greek-speaking Jewish-Christian community drawing on Mark and the Q sayings tradition
TRANSLATION	Hekhal Targum Project (machine-assisted draft; pending scholarly review)
LICENCE	Public domain
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> What this is: a machine-assisted, provisional translation. Every rendering choice and every unresolved reading is recorded in the apparatus beside the text. If you read the original and something looks wrong, write to community@hekhal.org; corrections are credited.

Between the supper and the arrest, on the night of the betrayal, Jesus crosses the Kidron with his disciples and enters a garden on the slope of the Mount of Olives. He takes three of them apart, withdraws further still, falls on his face, and prays a prayer that the Synoptic tradition records three times: *let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt*. He prays alone while the three sleep. The agony resolves into the arriving torchlight of the arresting party, and into the kiss.

The passage is the christological completion of the Peniel figure within the Christian Corpus on Hekhal. Where Jacob holds on through the night and is renamed Israel, Christ holds on through the night and dies, and the death is itself the new name. The patristic reading runs from Origen and John Chrysostom through Gregory the Great into the dyothelite settlement of the Sixth Ecumenical Council, where Maximus the Confessor's reading of the Gethsemane prayer becomes the principal scriptural proof for the doctrine of two wills in Christ.

Hekhal preserves the Greek opposite the King James English so that the reader can track the working terms: the figure of the cup (*poterion*), the verb of the agony (*lupeisthai*, *ademonein*), the petition's *plen ouch hos ego thelo* on which Maximus's argument turns. The bilingual text is the register in which the doctrine of the two wills is legible at the level the text works on.

CROSS-REFERENCES

- Two wills (dyothelitism), Maximus the Confessor's reading of Gethsemane as the proof of Christ's distinct human and divine wills.
- Kenosis (κένωσις), the self-emptying figure to which the agony belongs.

- Typos (τύπος), the figural mode in which Jacob at Peniel reads forward into Christ in the garden.
- Quadriga, the four senses, lightly applied.

Christ in Gethsemane

MATTHEW 26:36–46

CANONICAL

GREEK · GREEK NEW TESTAMENT · RECEIVED TEXT

MATTHEW 26:36–39 · THE GARDEN AND THE FIRST PRAYER

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

37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even

ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΘΘΑΙΟΝ 26 · ΛϚ-ΛΘ

Τότε ἔρχεται μετ᾽
αὐτῶν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰ
χωρίον λεγόμενο
Γεθσημανῆ, καὶ λέγει τοῖ
μαθηταῖς· Καθίσατε αὐτο
ἕως οὗ ἀπελθὼ
.προσεύξωμαι ἐκ

unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And 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.

1

καὶ παραλαβὼν τὸν
Πέτρον καὶ τοὺς δύο υἱοὺ
Ζεβεδαίου ἤρξατ
.λυπεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖ

τότε λέγει αὐτοῖς·
Περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχ
μου ἕως θανάτου· μείνατ
ὧδε καὶ γρηγορεῖτε μετ
.ἐμο

καὶ προελθὼν μικρὸν
ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ πρόσωπο
αὐτοῦ προσευχόμενος κα
λέγων· Πάτερ μου, ε
δυνατόν ἐστιν, παρελθάτ
ἀπ᾽ ἐμοῦ τὸ ποτήριο

τοῦτο· πλὴν οὐχ ὡς ἐγ

.θέλω ἀλλ᾽ ὡς σ

2

MATTHEW 26:40–44 · THE SLEEP AND THE SECOND AND THIRD PRAYERS

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

42 He 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.

43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were

ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΘΘΑΙΟΝ 26 · Μ-ΜΔ

καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς τοὺς

μαθητὰς καὶ εὑρίσκε

αὐτοὺς καθεύδοντας, κα

λέγει τῷ Πέτρῳ· Οὕτω

οὐκ ἰσχύσατε μίαν ὥρα

;γρηγορῆσαι μετ᾽ ἐμο

γρηγορεῖτε καὶ μ

προσεύχεσθε, ἵνα μ

εἰσέλθητε εἰς πειρασμόν

heavy.

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

3

τὸ μὲν πνεῦμα πρόθυμον
.δὲ σὰρξ ἀσθενή

πάλιν ἐκ δευτέρου ‖
ἀπελθὼν προσηύξατ
λέγων· Πάτερ μου, εἰ ο
δύναται τοῦτο παρελθεῖ
ἐὰν μὴ αὐτὸ πία
.γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σο

καὶ ἐλθὼν εὗρεν ‖
αὐτοὺς πάλι
καθεύδοντας, ἦσαν γὰ
αὐτῶν οἱ ὀφθαλμο
.βεβαρημένο

καὶ ἀφεὶς αὐτοὺς πάλιν ‖
ἀπελθὼν προσηύξατο ἐ

τρίτου τὸν αὐτὸν λόγο

.εἰπώ

4

MATTHEW 26:45–46 · THE HOUR AND THE BETRAYER

45 Then 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.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

5

ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΘΘΑΙΟΝ 26 · ΜΕ–Μς

τότε ἔρχεται πρὸς τοὺς μ
μαθητὰς καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς
Καθεύδετε λοιπὸν κα
ἀναπαύεσθε· ἰδοὺ ἤγγικε
ἡ ὥρα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς το
ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται εἰ
.χεῖρας ἁμαρτωλῶ

ἐγείρεσθε, ἄγωμεν· μ
ἰδοὺ ἤγγικεν ὁ παραδιδού
.μ

6

▽

A reading

Jacob holds on through the night and is renamed Israel. Christ holds on through the night and dies, and the death is itself the new name.

The garden is across the Kidron, on the slope of the Mount of Olives, at the foot of the path Jesus has walked many evenings during the week of his coming into the city. The name *Gethsemane* (Γεθσημανῆ) preserves a Hebrew or Aramaic compound meaning *oil press*. The press is the place where the olive is crushed to yield what feeds the lamps of the

Temple and what anoints the priesthood and the kings. The setting names the event before the event names itself.

Jesus takes three with him: Peter, James, John. The same three he took up Tabor six days after Caesarea Philippi (Mt 17:1, Mk 9:2, Lk 9:28). The framing parallel is structural and intentional. The three who saw the face shining as the sun are the three who are asked to watch through the agony. The narrative is binding the two scenes together. The witnesses of the bright counterpart are the witnesses of the dark one.

The Greek of the agony is precise. The verb *lupeisthai* (λυπεῖσθαι), to be grieved, pairs with *ademonein* (ἀδημονεῖν), a rarer term that names a distress without place to land, a being-out-of-one's-element. Mark intensifies the pair (*ekthambeisthai kai ademonein*, Mk 14:33), to be utterly amazed and out of place. Luke alone preserves the detail of the sweat as *thromboi haimatos*, drops of blood (Lk 22:44, in the longer text), and the angel that strengthens him (Lk 22:43). The synoptic differences matter: Matthew compresses, Mark intensifies the affect, Luke surrounds the agony with consolation. The three versions disclose the scene from three angles; together they preserve what no single account would.

The literal sense holds. A man who knows what is coming, who has spent the evening telling his closest friends that one of them will betray him, that all will fall away, that the rooster will crow before Peter denies him three times, is now in the garden where the thing he has spoken of is about to be set in motion. He prays that it might pass. He prays a second time, with the petition altered: *if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done*. He prays a third time, the text says, *saying the same words*. The threefold prayer is the structural marker of the agony.

The figure of the cup (*poterion*, ποτήριον) carries the weight of the Hebrew prophets. The cup of wrath is given to the nations in Jeremiah 25; the cup of staggering is set before Jerusalem in Isaiah 51:17–22. To drink the cup is to take into oneself what was poured out for judgment. The petition is intelligible only against this background. The cup is not a metaphor for difficulty. It is a figure with prophetic content, and what it figures is the bearing into the body of the consequence of sin not one's own.

Origen's *Commentary on Matthew* reads the threefold prayer as a graded descent into the human condition. The first petition asks for removal; the second accepts the drinking on

condition; the third repeats the second without qualification. The progression is not the progression of resignation. It is the progression of a will that aligns itself with another will across the duration of the night. John Chrysostom's *Homilies on Matthew* 83 and 84 develop this pastorally: the agony is given so that the disciple in his own agony will not despair. Christ has been here. The path is real ground.

Gregory the Great, in the *Moralia in Job*, reads the sleep of the disciples as the figure of the Church's drowsiness in the hour of trial. The disciples sleep not from indifference but from heaviness; their eyes are weighted (*bebaremenoi*, βεβαρημένοι). The pastoral lesson is severe and forgiving at once: even the closest sleep, and the watching falls back upon the one praying.

The decisive patristic reading is Maximus the Confessor's. In the *Disputation with Pyrrhus* and the *Opuscula theologica et polemica*, Maximus takes the Gethsemane prayer as the principal christological proof-text for what would be settled at the Sixth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople III, 680–681) as dyothelitism: the doctrine that Christ has two wills, one divine and one human, distinct and unconfused, the human will conformed to but not absorbed by the divine.

Maximus reads *not as I will, but as thou wilt* as the locus classicus. If Christ had only one will, the petition would be incoherent: the divine will cannot pray to itself for a different outcome. The petition presupposes a real human will distinct from the divine will, and the prayer is precisely the act in which the human will conforms itself to the divine, not by erasure but by free yielding. The doctrine that the will of the man Jesus and the will of the Father are two and that they meet in Gethsemane in agreement-without-fusion is one of the most consequential pieces of patristic exegesis. The two-wills argument is routed through the lexicon entry on dyothelitism; the bilingual text on this page is its scriptural ground.

The throughline to Peniel is now legible. Jacob is left alone in the dark on the far side of the Jabbok. Christ is left alone in the dark on the far side of the Kidron. Jacob wrestles with a man whose name is withheld; Christ wrestles with a will whose name is *Father* and whose answer is silence. Jacob is wounded; Christ is sweat-bloodied. Jacob holds on until daybreak and is renamed Israel. Christ holds on until the torches arrive and is delivered to the cross, and the death is the renaming of the human relation to God. The pattern is

one and the same; what changes is the cost. Where Peniel closes with a sunrise and a limp, Gethsemane closes with a kiss and an arrest. The escalation is the figure's completion.

The Spanish mystical tradition reads the same shape at the level of the soul. John of the Cross's *noche oscura del espíritu*, the night of the spirit, is the soul's Gethsemane: a stripping in which consolation is removed, the cup is not removed, and the contemplative is left to hold on without sensible support. Teresa of Avila's *Interior Castle* tracks the same descent through the sixth and seventh dwellings. The mystical-theological reading does not equate the saint's night with Christ's. It reads the saint's night as participation in Christ's, on the same axis, at a different scale.

The hour arrives. Jesus speaks the third time, and his speech changes register: *sleep on now, and take your rest*, and then immediately, *rise, let us be going*. The two sentences read as contradiction; they are the literary signature of the resolution. The agony has been carried; what remains is the walking out to meet the betrayer. The will has aligned. The cup is not removed and will be drunk. The garden empties into the road, and the road into the cross, and the cross into the renaming.

God will sometimes come to you in the dark, through struggle. Sometimes the cup is removed. Sometimes the cup is not removed and is given to be drunk. The Christian reading is that the latter case is the one in which the figure is completed and the human relation to God is given a new name.

The Greek of the agony is built on a small set of working terms. *Lupeisthai* (λυπεῖσθαι), to be grieved, is the ordinary Septuagint term for the soul's sorrow. *Ademonein* (ἀδημονεῖν) is rarer and harder to render: a being-out-of-place, a distress without footing. Mark adds *ekthambeisthai* (ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι), to be utterly astonished or shaken, intensifying the affect. *Perilypos* (περίλυπος), exceeding sorrowful, in 26:38 is the term Septuagint Psalm 41:6 (LXX 41:7) uses of the soul: *why art thou cast down, O my soul*. The Matthean text is quoting the psalter under its breath. The figure of the cup, *poterion* (ποτήριον), carries Jeremiah 25 and Isaiah 51 forward into the garden. The petition's pivot is *plen ouch hos ego thelo all' hos sy* (πλὴν οὐχ ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλ' ὡς σύ): the *plen* (nevertheless) is the hinge on which Maximus's two-wills argument turns.

Colophon

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