



[Matthew 26:39-44](#)

(39) Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." (40) Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. (41) "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak." (42) He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done." (43) When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. (44) So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

New International Version

Perhaps it was not just the approaching physical torture that [Jesus](#) dreaded as He made this plea to His Father. For every microsecond of eternity (with the possible two exceptions of His time in Mary's womb and His human babyhood), He had enjoyed a level of consciousness, involvement, control, and communication with [God](#) the Father that no other human could even begin to comprehend. It must have been almost intolerable for the Son of God, the great YHWH of the [Old Testament](#), to contemplate being totally unconscious and "out of the picture," even for a mere 72 hours.

Jesus' agony no doubt included the foreknowledge of the spiritual torture of billions of sins committed throughout human history being laid on His innocent head. Jesus knew that His mind would soon become besmirched, infected, and injected with every filthy [sin](#) that man had ever committed in the past and would commit from that time on.

God tells us in [I Corinthians 15:56](#), "The sting of death is sin." Most of us have been stung by a spider, bee, wasp, or hornet. The pain of an insect sting increases rapidly as its poison spreads through the blood vessels, deep into the body part that has been stung, and it can sometimes be almost unbearable. Nevertheless, it is impossible for us to imagine a fraction of the spiritual agony that those billions of "stings of death" caused our Savior as all the sins of [the world](#) were laid upon Him.

With all His might, He strove to dwell on better things ([Philippians 4:8](#)). He struggled to look beyond those hours of torture, despite His foreknowledge of their severity. Jesus knew what would happen after this day of agony and shame that was just beginning. More than any other human being who ever lived, He understood what lay beyond the split second of death and His short stay in the tomb. Just hours before this prayer in Gethsemane, He had spoken joyfully to His Father about their approaching reunion and regaining His former glory ([John 17:5](#), 11, 13).

How did King Nebuchadnezzar feel when God gave him back his status as a real human being and a great king after living the existence of the lowest, slinking animal in the wild ([Daniel 4:29-36](#))? How much more did Jesus look forward to waking [after three days](#) and three nights in the tomb as the Eternal God!

Did Jesus look forward to His death? No. He looked beyond His hours of suffering and beyond the instant of His death. He looked forward to life!

— Staff

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