

## **Christ the Model: The Death of Christ—Gleanings from EGW**

The plan by which alone man's salvation could be secured, involved all heaven in its infinite sacrifice. The angels could not rejoice as Christ opened before them the plan of redemption, for they saw that man's salvation must cost their loved Commander unutterable woe. In grief and wonder they listened to His words as He told them how He must descend from heaven's purity and peace, its joy and glory and immortal life, and come in contact with the degradation of earth, to endure its sorrow, shame, and death. He was to stand between the sinner and the penalty of sin; yet few would receive Him as the Son of God. He would leave His high position as the Majesty of heaven, appear upon earth and humble Himself as a man, and by His own experience become acquainted with the sorrows and temptations which man would have to endure. All this would be necessary in order that He might be able to succor them that should be tempted. Hebrews 2:18. When His mission as a teacher should be ended, He must be delivered into the hands of wicked men and be subjected to every insult and torture that Satan could inspire them to inflict. He must die the cruelest of deaths, lifted up between the heavens and the earth as a guilty sinner. He must pass long hours of agony so terrible that angels could not look upon it, but would veil their faces from the sight. He must endure anguish of soul, the hiding of His Father's face, while the guilt of transgression--the weight of the sins of the whole world--should be upon Him. {PP 64.2}

Every pang endured by the Son of God upon the cross, the blood drops that flowed from His head, His hands and feet, the convulsions of agony which racked His frame, and the unutterable anguish that filled His soul at the hiding of His Father's face from Him, speak to man, saying, It is for love of thee that the Son of God consents to have these heinous crimes laid upon Him; for thee He spoils the domain of death, and opens the gates of Paradise and immortal life. {SR 225}

Upon Christ as our substitute and surety was laid the iniquity of us all. He was counted a transgressor, that He might redeem us from the condemnation of the law. The guilt of every descendant of Adam was pressing upon His heart. The wrath of God against sin, the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His Son with consternation. All His life Christ had been publishing to a fallen world the good news of the Father's mercy and pardoning love. Salvation for the chief of sinners was His theme. But now with the terrible weight of guilt He bears, He cannot see the Father's reconciling face. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt. {DA 753.1}

The cross of Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. In Christ glorified they will behold Christ crucified. Never will it be forgotten that He whose power created and upheld the unnumbered worlds through the vast realms of space, the Beloved of God, the Majesty of heaven, He whom cherub and shining seraph delighted to adore--humbled Himself to uplift fallen man; that He bore the guilt and shame of sin, and the hiding of His Father's face, till the woes of a lost world broke His heart and crushed out His life on Calvary's cross. That the Maker of all worlds, the

Arbiter of all destinies, should lay aside His glory and humiliate Himself from love to man will ever excite the wonder and adoration of the universe. As the nations of the saved look upon their Redeemer and behold the eternal glory of the Father shining in His countenance; as they behold His throne, which is from everlasting to everlasting, and know that His kingdom is to have no end, they break forth in rapturous song: "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His own most precious blood!" {GC 651.2}

All the sorrow and agony that Abraham endured through that dark and fearful trial were for the purpose of deeply impressing upon his understanding the plan of redemption for fallen man. He was made to understand in his own experience how unutterable was the self-denial of the infinite God in giving His own Son to die to rescue man from utter ruin. To Abraham no mental torture could be equal to that which he endured in obeying the divine command to sacrifice his son. {3T 369.1}

God gave His Son to a life of humiliation, self-denial, poverty, toil, reproach, and to the agonizing death of crucifixion. But there was no angel to bear the joyful message: "It is enough; You need not die, My well-beloved Son." Legions of angels were sorrowfully waiting, hoping that, as in the case of Isaac, God would at the last moment prevent His shameful death. But angels were not permitted to bear any such message to God's dear Son. The humiliation in the judgment hall and on the way to Calvary went on. He was mocked, derided, and spit upon. He endured the jeers, taunts, and reviling of those who hated Him, until upon the cross He bowed His head and died. {3T 369.2}

Could God give us any greater proof of His love than in thus giving His Son to pass through this scene of suffering? {3T 369}

Those who think of the result of hastening or hindering the gospel think of it in relation to themselves and to the world. Few think of its relation to God. Few give thought to the suffering that sin has caused our Creator. All heaven suffered in Christ's agony; but that suffering did not begin or end with His manifestation in humanity. The cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that, from its very inception, sin has brought to the heart of God. Every departure from the right, every deed of cruelty, every failure of humanity to reach His ideal, brings grief to Him. When there came upon Israel the calamities that were the sure result of separation from God,--subjugation by their enemies, cruelty, and death, --it is said that "His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel." "In all their affliction He was afflicted: . . . and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Judges 10:16; Isaiah 63:9. {Ed 263.1}

His Spirit "maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." As the "whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together" (Romans 8:26, 22), the heart of the infinite Father is pained in sympathy. Our world is a vast lazar house, a scene of misery that we dare not allow even our thoughts to dwell upon. Did we realize it as it is, the burden would be too terrible. Yet God feels it all. In order to destroy sin and its results He gave His best Beloved, and He has put it in our power, through co-operation with Him, to bring this scene of misery to an end. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be

preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."  
Matthew 24:14. {Ed 263.2}

Jesus, when preparing for some great trial or some important work, would resort to the solitude of the mountains and spend the night in prayer to His Father. A night of prayer preceded the ordination of the apostles and the Sermon on the Mount, the transfiguration, the agony of the judgment hall and the cross, and the resurrection glory. {MH 509.1}

Christ did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, "It is finished." John 19:30. The battle had been won. His right hand and His holy arm had gotten Him the victory. As a Conqueror He planted His banner on the eternal heights. Was there not joy among the angels? All heaven triumphed in the Saviour's victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost. {DA 758.1}

To the angels and the unfallen worlds the cry, "It is finished," had a deep significance. It was for them as well as for us that the great work of redemption had been accomplished. They with us share the fruits of Christ's victory. {DA 758.2}

The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered." Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption. The salvation of man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. Jesus has opened the way to the Father's throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God. {GC 489.1}

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Proverbs 28:13.

It is true He died upon the cross a most cruel death; yet others, for His dear sake, have suffered equally, so far as bodily torture is concerned. Why, then, was the suffering of Christ more dreadful than that of other persons who have yielded their lives for His sake? If the sufferings of Christ consisted in physical pain alone, then His death was no more painful than that of some of the martyrs. {2T 214.1}

But bodily pain was but a small part of the agony of God's dear Son. The sins of the world were upon Him, also the sense of His Father's wrath as He suffered the penalty of the law transgressed. It was these that crushed His divine soul. It was the hiding of His Father's face--a sense that His own dear Father had forsaken Him--which brought despair. The separation that sin makes between God and man was fully realized and keenly felt by the innocent, suffering Man of Calvary. He was oppressed by the powers of darkness. He had not one ray of light to brighten the future. And He was struggling with the power of Satan, who was declaring that he had Christ in his power, that he was superior in strength

to the Son of God, that the Father had disowned His Son, and that He was no longer in the favor of God any more than himself. If He was indeed still in favor with God, why need He die? God could save Him from death. {2T 214.2}

Christ yielded not in the least degree to the torturing foe, even in His bitterest anguish. Legions of evil angels were all about the Son of God, yet the holy angels were bidden not to break their ranks and engage in conflict with the taunting, reviling foe. Heavenly angels were not permitted to minister unto the anguished spirit of the Son of God. It was in this terrible hour of darkness, the face of His Father hidden, legions of evil angels enshrouding Him, the sins of the world upon Him, that the words were wrenched from His lips: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" {2T 214.3}

The death of the martyrs can bear no comparison with the agony endured by the Son of God. We should take broader and deeper views of the life, sufferings, and death of God's dear Son. When the atonement is viewed correctly, the salvation of souls will be felt to be of infinite value. In comparison with the enterprise of everlasting life, every other sinks into insignificance. But how have the counsels of this loving Saviour been despised! The heart has been devoted to the world, and selfish interests have closed the door against the Son of God. Hollow hypocrisy and pride, selfishness and gain, envy, malice, and passion, have so filled the hearts of many that Christ can have no room. {2T 215.1}

After the death of Christ the disciples were well-nigh overcome by discouragement. Their Master had been rejected, condemned, and crucified. The priests and rulers had declared scornfully, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him." Matthew 27:42. The sun of the disciples' hope had set, and night settled down upon their hearts. Often they repeated the words, "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." Luke 24:21. Lonely and sick at heart, they remembered His words, "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Luke 23:31. {AA 25.1}

Jesus had several times attempted to open the future to His disciples, but they had not cared to think about what He said. Because of this His death had come to them as a surprise; and afterward, as they reviewed the past and saw the result of their unbelief, they were filled with sorrow. When Christ was crucified, they did not believe that He would rise. He had stated plainly that He was to rise on the third day, but they were perplexed to know what He meant. This lack of comprehension left them at the time of His death in utter hopelessness. They were bitterly disappointed. Their faith did not penetrate beyond the shadow that Satan had cast athwart their horizon. All seemed vague and mysterious to them. If they had believed the Saviour's words, how much sorrow they might have been spared! {AA 25.2}

Crushed by despondency, grief, and despair, the disciples met together in the upper chamber, and closed and fastened the doors, fearing that the fate of their beloved Teacher might be theirs. It was here that the Saviour, after His resurrection, appeared to them. {AA 26.1}

For forty days Christ remained on the earth, preparing the disciples for the work before them and explaining that which heretofore they had been unable to comprehend. {AA 25}

The plan by which alone man's salvation could be secured, involved all heaven in its infinite sacrifice. The angels could not rejoice as Christ opened before them the plan of redemption, for they saw that man's salvation must cost their loved Commander unutterable woe. In grief and wonder they listened to His words as He told them how He must descend from heaven's purity and peace, its joy and glory and immortal life, and come in contact with the degradation of earth, to endure its sorrow, shame, and death. He was to stand between the sinner and the penalty of sin; yet few would receive Him as the Son of God. He would leave His high position as the Majesty of heaven, appear upon earth and humble Himself as a man, and by His own experience become acquainted with the sorrows and temptations which man would have to endure. All this would be necessary in order that He might be able to succor them that should be tempted. Hebrews 2:18. When His mission as a teacher should be ended, He must be delivered into the hands of wicked men and be subjected to every insult and torture that Satan could inspire them to inflict. He must die the cruelest of deaths, lifted up between the heavens and the earth as a guilty sinner. He must pass long hours of agony so terrible that angels could not look upon it, but would veil their faces from the sight. He must endure anguish of soul, the hiding of His Father's face, while the guilt of transgression--the weight of the sins of the whole world--should be upon Him. {PP 64.2}

Oh, was there ever suffering and sorrow like that endured by the dying Saviour! It was the sense of His Father's displeasure which made His cup so bitter. It was not bodily suffering which so quickly ended the life of Christ upon the cross. It was the crushing weight of the sins of the world, and a sense of His Father's wrath. The Father's glory and sustaining presence had left Him, and despair pressed its crushing weight of darkness upon Him and forced from His pale and quivering lips the anguished cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" {2T 209.1}

Poor, weak, miserable man spat in the face of the King of glory, while a shout of brutal triumph arose from the mob at the degrading insult. They marred with blows and cruelty that face which filled all heaven with admiration. They will again behold that face, bright as the noonday sun, and will seek to flee from before it. Instead of that shout of brutal triumph, they will wail because of Him. {EW 179.1}

Jesus will present His hands with the marks of His crucifixion. The marks of this cruelty He will ever bear. Every print of the nails will tell the story of man's wonderful redemption and the dear price by which it was purchased. The very men who thrust the spear into the side of the Lord of life will behold the print of the spear and will lament with deep anguish the part which they acted in marring His body. {EW 179.2}

As they were gathered about the table, He said in tones of touching sadness, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And He took the cup,

and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." {DA 643.1}

Christ knew that the time had come for Him to depart out of the world, and go to His Father. And having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end. He was now in the shadow of the cross, and the pain was torturing His heart. He knew that He would be deserted in the hour of His betrayal. He knew that by the most humiliating process to which criminals were subjected He would be put to death. He knew the ingratitude and cruelty of those He had come to save. He knew how great the sacrifice that He must make, and for how many it would be in vain. Knowing all that was before Him, He might naturally have been overwhelmed with the thought of His own humiliation and suffering. But He looked upon the twelve, who had been with Him as His own, and who, after His shame and sorrow and painful usage were over, would be left to struggle in the world. His thoughts of what He Himself must suffer were ever connected with His disciples. He did not think of Himself. His care for them was uppermost in His mind. {DA 643.2}

On this last evening with His disciples, Jesus had much to tell them. If they had been prepared to receive what He longed to impart, they would have been saved from heartbreaking anguish, from disappointment and unbelief. But Jesus saw that they could not bear what He had to say. As He looked into their faces, the words of warning and comfort were stayed upon His lips. Moments passed in silence. Jesus appeared to be waiting. The disciples were ill at ease. The sympathy and tenderness awakened by Christ's grief seemed to have passed away. His sorrowful words, pointing to His own suffering, had made little impression. The glances they cast upon each other told of jealousy and contention. {DA 643.3}

*Note: At the most difficult time of His life, Jesus thought of others.*

*Note: At the most difficult time in their lives, the disciples thought of themselves.*

God's appointments and grants in our behalf are without limit. The throne of grace is itself the highest attraction because occupied by One who permits us to call Him Father. But God did not deem the principle of salvation complete while invested only with His own love. By His appointment He has placed at His altar an Advocate clothed with our nature. As our Intercessor, His office work is to introduce us to God as His sons and daughters. Christ intercedes in behalf of those who have received Him. To them He gives power, by virtue of His own merits, to become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. And the Father demonstrates His infinite love for Christ, who paid our ransom with His blood, by receiving and welcoming Christ's friends as His friends. He is satisfied with the atonement made. He is glorified by the incarnation, the life, death, and mediation of His Son. {6T 363.3}

No sooner does the child of God approach the mercy seat than he becomes the client of the great Advocate. At his first utterance of penitence and appeal for pardon Christ

espouses his case and makes it His own, presenting the supplication before the Father as His own request. {6T 364.1}

The Lord Jesus thought it necessary to make many things clear to His disciples which He did not open to the multitudes. He plainly revealed to them the reason of the hatred manifested toward Him by the scribes, Pharisees, and priests, and told them of His suffering, betrayal, and death; but to the world He did not make these matters so plain. He had warnings to give to His followers, and He unfolded to them the sorrowful developments that would take place, and what they were to expect. He gave to His followers precious instruction that even they did not comprehend until after His death, resurrection, and ascension. When the Holy Spirit was poured out upon them, all things were brought to their remembrance, whatsoever He had said unto them. {TM 35.2}

*And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.* Mark 15:25. {SD 220.1}

The spotless Son of God hung upon the cross, His flesh lacerated with stripes; those hands so often reached out in blessing, nailed to the wooden bars; those feet so tireless on ministries of love, spiked to the tree; that royal head pierced by the crown of thorns; those quivering lips shaped to the cry of woe. And all that He endured--the blood drops that flowed from His head, His hands, His feet, the agony that racked His frame, and the unutterable anguish that filled His soul at the hiding of His Father's face--speaks to each child of humanity, declaring, It is for thee that the Son of God consents to bear this burden of guilt; for thee He spoils the domain of death, and opens the gates of Paradise. He ... offers Himself upon the cross as a sacrifice, and this from love to thee. He, the Sin-Bearer, endures the wrath of divine justice, and for thy sake becomes sin itself. {SD 220.2}

Then Jesus and all the retinue of holy angels, and all the redeemed saints, left the city. The angels surrounded their Commander and escorted Him on His way, and the train of redeemed saints followed. Then, in terrible, fearful majesty, Jesus called forth the wicked dead; and they came up with the same feeble, sickly bodies that went into the grave. What a spectacle! What a scene! At the first resurrection all came forth in immortal bloom, but at the second the marks of the curse are visible on all. The kings and noblemen of the earth, the mean and low, the learned and unlearned, come forth together. All behold the Son of man; and those very men who despised and mocked Him, who put the crown of thorns upon His sacred brow and smote Him with the reed, behold Him in all His kingly majesty. Those who spat upon Him in the hour of His trial now turn from His piercing gaze and from the glory of His countenance. Those who drove the nails through His hands and feet now look upon the marks of His crucifixion. Those who thrust the spear into His side behold the marks of their cruelty on His body. And they know that He is the very one whom they crucified and derided in His expiring agony. And then there arises one long protracted wail of agony, as they flee to hide from the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords. {SR 418.1}

All are seeking to hide in the rocks, to shield themselves from the terrible glory of Him whom they once despised. And, overwhelmed and pained with His majesty and exceeding glory, they with one accord raise their voices, and with terrible distinctness exclaim, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" {SR 419.1}

But it was not the spear thrust, it was not the pain of the cross, that caused the death of Jesus. That cry, uttered "with a loud voice" (Matt. 27:50; Luke 23:46), at the moment of death, the stream of blood and water that flowed from His side, declared that He died of a broken heart. His heart was broken by mental anguish. He was slain by the sin of the world. {DA 772.2}

The guilt of every descendant of Adam of every age was pressing upon His heart; and the wrath of God and the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His Son with consternation. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. Every pang endured by the Son of God upon the cross, the blood drops that flowed from His head, His hands and feet, the convulsions of agony which racked His frame, and the unutterable anguish that filled His soul at the hiding of His Father's face from Him, speak to man, saying, It is for love of thee that the Son of God consents to have these heinous crimes laid upon Him; for thee He spoils the domain of death, and opens the gates of Paradise and immortal life. He who stilled the angry waves by His word and walked the foam-capped billows, who made devils tremble and disease flee from His touch, who raised the dead to life and opened the eyes of the blind, offers Himself upon the cross as the last sacrifice for man. He, the sin-bearer, endures judicial punishment for iniquity and becomes sin itself for man. {SR 225.1}

Satan, with his fierce temptations, wrung the heart of Jesus. Sin, so hateful to His sight, was heaped upon Him till He groaned beneath its weight. No wonder that His humanity trembled in that fearful hour. Angels witnessed with amazement the despairing agony of the Son of God, so much greater than His physical pain that the latter was hardly felt by Him. The hosts of heaven veiled their faces from the fearful sight. {SR 225.2}

His perfect obedience to His Father's commandments was the cause of His crucifixion. {Councils to writers and editors 100}

After the crucifixion of Christ, the priests and rulers did not feel the sense of victory which they had expected. They did not rejoice at their success in silencing the voice of the Great Teacher. They were afraid. Already His death was calling attention to His life and character. The priests were convicted that their attempts at revenge had failed; and they dreaded a dead Christ more, far more, than they had ever feared a living Christ. . . . {SD 237.2}

The light of heaven encircled the tomb, and the whole heaven was lighted by the glory of the angel. The angel approached the grave, and rolling away the stone as if it had been a pebble, he sat upon it. Then his voice was heard, Son of God, come forth; Thy Father calls Thee; and Jesus came forth from the grave with the step of a mighty conqueror.

There was a burst of triumph, for the heavenly family were waiting to receive Him; and the mighty angel, followed by the army of heaven, bowed in adoration before Him as He, the Monarch of heaven, proclaimed over the rent tomb of Joseph, "I am the resurrection, and the life." {SD 237.3}

All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capacities, they are replenished with life from the Source of all life. He is the spring, the fountain, of life. . . . The life which He had laid down in humanity, He again took up and gave to humanity. "I am come," He says, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." . . . {SD 237.4}

Poor, weak, miserable man spat in the face of the King of glory, while a shout of brutal triumph arose from the mob at the degrading insult. They marred with blows and cruelty that face which filled all heaven with admiration. They will again behold that face, bright as the noonday sun, and will seek to flee from before it. Instead of that shout of brutal triumph, they will wail because of Him. {EW 179.1}

Christ saw in Jerusalem a symbol of the world hardened in unbelief and rebellion, and hastening on to meet the retributive judgments of God. The woes of a fallen race, pressing upon His soul, forced from His lips that exceeding bitter cry. He saw the record of sin traced in human misery, tears, and blood; His heart was moved with infinite pity for the afflicted and suffering ones of earth; He yearned to relieve them all. But even His hand might not turn back the tide of human woe; few would seek their only Source of help. He was willing to pour out His soul unto death, to bring salvation within their reach; but few would come to Him that they might have life. {GC 22.1}

The Majesty of heaven in tears! The Son of the infinite God troubled in spirit, bowed down with anguish! The scene filled all heaven with wonder. That scene reveals to us the exceeding sinfulness of sin; it shows how hard a task it is, even for Infinite Power, to save the guilty from the consequences of transgressing the law of God. Jesus, looking down to the last generation, saw the world involved in a deception similar to that which caused the destruction of Jerusalem. The great sin of the Jews was their rejection of Christ; the great sin of the Christian world would be their rejection of the law of God, the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. The precepts of Jehovah would be despised and set at naught. Millions in bondage to sin, slaves of Satan, doomed to suffer the second death, would refuse to listen to the words of truth in their day of visitation. Terrible blindness! strange infatuation! {GC 22.2}

His mission was to reconcile God and man, to unite the finite with the infinite. This was the only way in which fallen men could be exalted through the merits of the blood of Christ to be partakers of the divine nature. Taking human nature fitted Christ to understand man's trials and sorrows, and all the temptations wherewith he is beset. Angels who were unacquainted with sin could not sympathize with man in his peculiar trials. Christ condescended to take man's nature and was tempted in all points like as we, that He might know how to succor all who should be tempted. {2T 201.1}

As the human was upon Him, He felt His need of strength from His Father. He had select places of prayer. He loved to hold communion with His Father in the solitude of the mountain. In this exercise His holy, human soul was strengthened for the duties and trials of the day. Our Saviour identifies Himself with our needs and weaknesses, in that He became a suppliant, a nightly petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, to come forth invigorated and refreshed, braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things. He is a brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil. He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and privilege. He required all the stronger divine support and comfort which His Father was ready to impart to Him, to Him who had, for the benefit of man, left the joys of heaven and chosen His home in a cold and thankless world. Christ found comfort and joy in communion with His Father. Here He could unburden His heart of the sorrows that were crushing Him. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. {2T 201.2}

From the first the great controversy had been upon the law of God. Satan had sought to prove that God was unjust, that His law was faulty, and that the good of the universe required it to be changed. In attacking the law he aimed to overthrow the authority of its Author. In the controversy it was to be shown whether the divine statutes were defective and subject to change, or perfect and immutable. {PP 69.1}

When Satan was thrust out of heaven, he determined to make the earth his kingdom. When he tempted and overcame Adam and Eve, he thought that he had gained possession of this world; "because," said he, "they have chosen me as their ruler." He claimed that it was impossible that forgiveness should be granted to the sinner, and therefore the fallen race were his rightful subjects, and the world was his. But God gave His own dear Son--one equal with Himself--to bear the penalty of transgression, and thus He provided a way by which they might be restored to His favor, and brought back to their Eden home. Christ undertook to redeem man and to rescue the world from the grasp of Satan. The great controversy begun in heaven was to be decided in the very world, on the very same field, that Satan claimed as his. {PP 69.2}

It was the marvel of all the universe that Christ should humble Himself to save fallen man. That He who had passed from star to star, from world to world, superintending all, by His providence supplying the needs of every order of being in His vast creation--that He should consent to leave His glory and take upon Himself human nature, was a mystery which the sinless intelligences of other worlds desired to understand. When Christ came to our world in the form of humanity, all were intensely interested in following Him as He traversed, step by step, the bloodstained path from the manger to Calvary. Heaven marked the insult and mockery that He received, and knew that it was at Satan's instigation. They marked the work of counteragencies going forward; Satan constantly pressing darkness, sorrow, and suffering upon the race, and Christ counteracting it. They watched the battle between light and darkness as it waxed stronger. And as Christ in His expiring agony upon the cross cried out, "It is finished" (John 19:30), a shout of triumph rang through every world and through heaven itself. The great contest that had been so long in progress in this world was now decided, and Christ was

conqueror. His death had answered the question whether the Father and the Son had sufficient love for man to exercise self-denial and a spirit of sacrifice. Satan had revealed his true character as a liar and a murderer. It was seen that the very same spirit with which he had ruled the children of men who were under his power, he would have manifested if permitted to control the intelligences of heaven. With one voice the loyal universe united in extolling (praise, admire, worship) the divine administration. {PP 69.3}

The kingdom of grace was instituted immediately after the fall of man, when a plan was devised for the redemption of the guilty race. It then existed in the purpose and by the promise of God; and through faith, men could become its subjects. Yet it was not actually established until the death of Christ. Even after entering upon His earthly mission, the Saviour, wearied with the stubbornness and ingratitude of men, might have drawn back from the sacrifice of Calvary. In Gethsemane the cup of woe trembled in His hand. He might even then have wiped the blood-sweat from His brow and have left the guilty race to perish in their iniquity. Had He done this, there could have been no redemption for fallen men. But when the Saviour yielded up His life, and with His expiring breath cried out, "It is finished," then the fulfillment of the plan of redemption was assured. The promise of salvation made to the sinful pair in Eden was ratified. The kingdom of grace, which had before existed by the promise of God, was then established. {GC 347.2}

Thus the death of Christ--the very event which the disciples had looked upon as the final destruction of their hope --was that which made it forever sure. While it had brought them a cruel disappointment, it was the climax of proof that their belief had been correct. The event that had filled them with mourning and despair was that which opened the door of hope to every child of Adam, and in which centered the future life and eternal happiness of all God's faithful ones in all the ages. {GC 348.1}

Purposes of infinite mercy were reaching their fulfillment, even through the disappointment of the disciples. While their hearts had been won by the divine grace and power of His teaching, who "spake as never man spake," yet intermingled with the pure gold of their love for Jesus, was the base alloy of worldly pride and selfish ambitions. Even in the Passover chamber, at that solemn hour when their Master was already entering the shadow of Gethsemane, there was "a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest." Luke 22:24. Their vision was filled with the throne, the crown, and the glory, while just before them lay the shame and agony of the garden, the judgment hall, the cross of Calvary. It was their pride of heart, their thirst for worldly glory, that had led them to cling so tenaciously to the false teaching of their time, and to pass unheeded the Saviour's words showing the true nature of His kingdom, and pointing forward to His agony and death. And these errors resulted in the trial--sharp but needful--which was permitted for their correction. {GC 348}

***Note:** The reason the disciples never heard what Christ was telling them about His death was because they were focused on having things their way and because they sought recognition for themselves. If they had been like Jesus – humble and meek, they would have understood. This is a lesson for my life. Am I willing to be submitted to Christ that I*

*will listen and follow the promptings of His Spirit, or will I chose to "have it my way," and expect His blessing what I want.*

The Two Monumental Pillars:

The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper are two monumental pillars, one within and one without the church. Upon these ordinances Christ has inscribed the name of the true God.--Manuscript 27 1/2, 1900. {Ev 273.2}

*The Lord's Supper a Continuing Memorial*--The symbols of the Lord's house are simple and plainly understood, and the truths represented by them are of the deepest significance to us. In instituting the sacramental service to take the place of the Passover, Christ left for His church a memorial of His great sacrifice for man. "This do," He said, "in remembrance of Me." This was the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. The one was to close forever; the other, which He had just established, was to take its place, and to continue through all time as the memorial of His death.--Review and Herald, June 22, 1897. {Ev 273.3}

*Feet Washing More Than a Form*--We do not come to the ordinances of the Lord's house merely as a form. . . . {Ev 274.1}

He has instituted this service, that it may speak constantly to our senses of the love of God that has been expressed in our behalf. . . . This service cannot be repeated without one thought linking itself with another. Thus a chain of thought calls up remembrances of blessings, of kindnesses, and of favors received from friends and brethren, that have passed out of mind. The Holy Spirit, with its quickening, vivifying power, presents the ingratitude and lack of love that have sprung from the hateful root of bitterness. Link after link of memory's chain is strengthened. The Spirit of God is at work upon human minds. The defects of character, the neglect of duties, the ingratitude to God, are brought to the remembrance, and the thoughts are brought into captivity to Christ.--Review and Herald, June 7, 1898. {Ev 274.2}

*Heart Preparation*--In the early days of the advent movement, when our numbers were few, the celebration of the ordinances was made a most profitable occasion. On the Friday before, every church member endeavored to clear away everything that would tend to separate him from his brethren and from God. Hearts were closely searched; prayers for a divine revelation of hidden sin were earnestly offered; confessions of overreaching in trade, of ill-advised words hastily spoken, of sins cherished, were made. The Lord came near, and we were greatly strengthened and encouraged. --Manuscript 102, 1904.

*The Purpose of the Ordinance of Service*-- Reconciliation one with another is the work for which the ordinance of feet washing was instituted. By the example of our Lord and Master, this humiliating ceremony has been made a sacred ordinance. Whenever it is celebrated, Christ is present by His Holy Spirit. It is this Spirit that brings conviction to hearts. {Ev 275.1}

As Christ celebrated this ordinance with His disciples, conviction came to the hearts of all save Judas. So we shall be convicted as Christ speaks to our hearts. The fountains of the soul will be broken up. The mind will be energized, and, springing into activity and life, will break down every barrier that has caused disunion and alienation. Sins that have been committed will appear with more distinctness than ever before; for the Holy Spirit will bring them to our remembrance. The words of Christ, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," will be clothed with new power.--Review and Herald, Nov. 4, 1902. {Ev 275.2}

*Test of the Heart*--This ordinance of feet washing was made a religious service. . . . It was given as something to test and prove the loyalty of the children of God. When modern Israel observes the sacramental ordinance, this ceremony should precede the partaking of the emblems of the Lord's death. {Ev 275.3}

This ordinance was given for the benefit of Christ's disciples. And Christ meant all that He said when His lips uttered the words, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. . . . If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." He designed by this to test the true state of the heart and mind of those who participated therein.--Manuscript 8, 1897. {Ev 275.4}

*For All Time in Every Country*--In the place of the national festival which the Jewish people had observed, He instituted a memorial service, the ordinance of feet washing and the sacramental supper, to be observed through all time by His followers in every country. These should ever repeat Christ's act, that all may see that true service calls for unselfish ministry.--Signs of the Times, May 16, 1900. {Ev 275.5}

*To Be Often Commemorated*--In this last act of Christ in partaking with His disciples of the bread and wine, He pledged Himself to them as their Redeemer by a new covenant, in which it was written and sealed that upon all who will receive Christ by faith will be bestowed all the blessings that heaven can supply, both in this life and in the future immortal life. {Ev 276.1}

This covenant deed was to be ratified by Christ's own blood, which it had been the office of the old sacrificial offerings to keep before the minds of His chosen people. Christ designed that this supper should be often commemorated, in order to bring to our remembrance His sacrifice in giving His life for the remission of the sins of all who will believe on Him and receive Him. This ordinance is not to be exclusive, as many would make it. Each must participate in it publicly, and thus say: "I accept Christ as my personal Saviour. He gave His life for me, that I might be rescued from death."--Review and Herald, June 22, 1897. {Ev 276.2}

We are too easily satisfied with our attainments. We feel rich and increased with goods and know not that we are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Now is the time to heed the admonition of the True Witness: "I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be

clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." {5T 214.3}

In this life we must meet fiery trials and make costly sacrifices, but the peace of Christ is the reward. There has been so little self-denial, so little suffering for Christ's sake, that the cross is almost entirely forgotten. We must be partakers with Christ of His sufferings if we would sit down in triumph with Him on His throne. So long as we choose the easy path of self-indulgence and are frightened at self-denial, our faith will never become firm, and we cannot know the peace of Jesus nor the joy that comes through conscious victory. The most exalted of the redeemed host that stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, clad in white, know the conflict of overcoming, for they have come up through great tribulation. Those who have yielded to circumstances rather than engage in this conflict will not know how to stand in that day when anguish will be upon every soul, when, though Noah, Job, and Daniel were in the land, they could save neither son nor daughter, for everyone must deliver his soul by his own righteousness. {5T 215.1}

No one need say that his case is hopeless, that he cannot live the life of a Christian. Ample provision is made by the death of Christ for every soul. Jesus is our ever-present help in time of need. Only call upon Him in faith, and He has promised to hear and answer your petitions. {5T 215.2}

Oh, for a living, active faith! We need it; we must have it, or we shall faint and fail in the day of trial. The darkness that will then rest upon our path must not discourage us or drive us to despair. It is the veil with which God covers His glory when He comes to impart rich blessings. We should know this by our past experience. In that day when God has a controversy with His people this experience will be a source of comfort and hope. {5T 215.3}

It is now that we must keep ourselves and our children unspotted from the world. It is now that we must wash our robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. It is now that we must overcome pride, passion, and spiritual slothfulness. It is now that we must awake and make determined effort for symmetry of character. "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." We are in a most trying position, waiting, watching for our Lord's appearing. The world is in darkness. "But ye, brethren," says Paul, "are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." It is ever God's purpose to bring light out of darkness, joy out of sorrow, and rest out of weariness for the waiting, longing soul. {5T 215.4}

After Jesus had been nailed to the cross, it was raised and with great force thrust into the place which had been prepared for it in the ground, tearing the flesh and causing the most intense suffering. To make the death of Jesus as shameful as possible, two thieves were crucified with Him, one on each side. The thieves were taken by force, and after much resistance on their part, their arms were thrust back and nailed to their crosses. But Jesus meekly submitted. He needed no one to force His arms back upon the cross. While the thieves were cursing their executioners, the Saviour in agony prayed for His enemies,

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." It was not merely agony of body which Christ endured; the sins of the whole world were upon Him. {EW 176.2}

As Jesus hung upon the cross, some who passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads as if bowing to a king, and said to Him, "Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save Thyself. If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." Satan used the same words to Christ in the wilderness-- "If Thou be the Son of God." The chief priests, elders, and scribes mockingly said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him." The angels who hovered over the scene of Christ's crucifixion were moved to indignation as the rulers derided Him and said, "If He be the Son God, let Him deliver Himself". They wished there to come to the rescue of Jesus and deliver Him, but they were not suffered to do so. The object of His mission was not yet accomplished. {EW 177.1}

We must gather about the cross. Christ and Him crucified should be the theme of contemplation, of conversation, and of our most joyful emotion. We should keep in our thoughts every blessing we receive from God, and when we realize His great love we should be willing to trust everything to the hand that was nailed to the cross for us. {SC 103.3}

The soul may ascend nearer heaven on the wings of praise. God is worshiped with song and music in the courts above, and as we express our gratitude we are approximating to the worship of the heavenly hosts. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth" God. Psalm 50:23. Let us with reverent joy come before our Creator, with "thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." Isaiah 51:3. {SC 104.1}

Jesus demands all. When we are brought to yield to his claims, and give up all then, and not till then, will he throw around us his arms of mercy. But what do we give, when we give all? A sin-polluted soul to Jesus, to purify, to cleanse by his blood, and save from death by his matchless love. And yet I saw that some thought it hard to give up all. I am ashamed to hear it spoken of, ashamed to write it. {2SG 259.3}

Do we talk about self-denial? What did Christ give for us? When you think it hard that Christ requires all, go up to mount Calvary and weep there over such a thought. Behold the hands and feet of your Deliverer torn by the cruel nails, that you may be washed from sin by his own blood. {2SG 260.1}

Those who feel the constraining love of God ask not how little may be given, in order to obtain the heavenly reward; they ask not for the lowest standard, but aim at a perfect conformity to the will of their Redeemer. With ardent desire they will yield all, and manifest zeal proportionate to the value of the object they are in pursuit of. What is the object? Immortality, eternal life. {2SG 260.2}

A great multitude followed the Saviour to Calvary, many mocking and deriding; but some were weeping and recounting His praise. Those whom He had healed of various infirmities, and those whom He had raised from the dead, declared His marvelous works with earnest voice, and demanded to know what Jesus had done that He should be treated as a malefactor. Only a few days before, they had attended Him with joyful hosannas, and the waving of palm branches, as He rode triumphantly to Jerusalem. But many who had then shouted His praise, because it was popular to do so, now swelled the cry of "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" {SR 221.1}

Upon arriving at the place of execution, the condemned were bound to the instruments of torture. While the two thieves wrestled in the hands of those who stretched them upon the cross, Jesus made no resistance. The mother of Jesus looked on with agonizing suspense, hoping that He would work a miracle to save Himself. She saw His hands stretched upon the cross--those dear hands that had ever dispensed blessings, and had been reached forth so many times to heal the suffering. And now the hammer and nails were brought, and as the spikes were driven through the tender flesh and fastened to the cross, the heart-stricken disciples bore away from the cruel scene the fainting form of the mother of Christ. {SR 221.2}

Jesus made no murmur of complaint; His face remained pale and serene, but great drops of sweat stood upon His brow. There was no pitying hand to wipe the death dew from His face, nor words of sympathy and unchanging fidelity to stay His human heart. He was treading the winepress all alone; and of all the people there was none with Him. While the soldiers were doing their fearful work, and He was enduring the most acute agony, Jesus prayed for His enemies--"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34. That prayer of Christ for His enemies embraced the world, taking in every sinner who should live, until the end of time. {SR 222.1}

Oh, was there ever suffering and sorrow like that endured by the dying Saviour! It was the sense of His Father's displeasure which made His cup so bitter. It was not bodily suffering which so quickly ended the life of Christ upon the cross. It was the crushing weight of the sins of the world, and a sense of His Father's wrath. The Father's glory and sustaining presence had left Him, and despair pressed its crushing weight of darkness upon Him and forced from His pale and quivering lips the anguished cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" {2T 209.1}

Jesus had united with the Father in making the world. Amid the agonizing sufferings of the Son of God, blind and deluded men alone remain unfeeling. The chief priests and elders revile God's dear Son while in His expiring agonies. Yet inanimate nature groans in sympathy with her bleeding, dying Author. The earth trembles. The sun refuses to behold the scene. The heavens gather blackness. Angels have witnessed the scene of suffering until they can look no longer, and hide their faces from the horrid sight. Christ is dying! He is in despair! His Father's approving smile is removed, and angels are not permitted to lighten the gloom of the terrible hour. They can only behold in amazement their loved Commander, the Majesty of heaven, suffering the penalty of man's transgression of the Father's law. {2T 209.2}

*Note: While Angels turned their faces from the scene of Christ's suffering, millions of people went to see The Passion of Christ and viewed it as just another movie. That shows the impact of TV and DVD on our society.*

Because all our power is derived from Christ, these offerings are to flow from us to God. They are to keep ever before us the claim of redemption, the greatest of all claims, and the one that involves every other. The realization of the sacrifice made in our behalf is ever to be fresh in our minds and is ever to exert an influence on our thoughts and plans. Christ is to be indeed as one crucified among us. {6T 479.1}

*"Know ye not that . . . ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. What a price has been paid for us! Behold the cross, and the Victim uplifted upon it. Look at those hands, pierced with the cruel nails. Look at His feet, fastened with spikes to the tree. Christ bore our sins in His own body. That suffering, that agony, is the price of your redemption. The word of command was given: "Deliver them from going down to perish eternally. I have found a ransom." {6T 479.2}*

Know you not that He loved us, and gave Himself for us, that we in return should give ourselves to Him? Why should not love to Christ be expressed by all who receive Him by faith as verily as His love has been expressed to us for whom He died? {6T 479.3}

Christ is represented as hunting, searching, for the sheep that was lost. It is His love that encircles us, bringing us back to the fold. His love gives us the privilege of sitting together with Him in heavenly places. When the blessed light of the Sun of Righteousness shines into our hearts, and we rest in peace and joy in the Lord, then let us praise the Lord; praise Him who is the health of our countenance and our God. Let us praise Him, not in words only, but by the consecration to Him of all that we are and all that we have. {6T 479.4}

Their Saviour had been rejected and condemned, and nailed to the ignominious cross. The Jewish priests and rulers had declared, in scorn, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him." But that cross, that instrument of shame and torture, brought hope and salvation to the world. The believers rallied; their hopelessness and conscious helplessness had left them. They were transformed in character, and united in the bonds of Christian love. Although without wealth, though counted by the world as mere ignorant fishermen, they were made, by the Holy Spirit, witnesses for Christ. Without earthly honor or recognition, they were the heroes of faith. From their lips came words of divine eloquence and power that shook the world. {TM 67.1}

After the resurrection the priests and rulers circulated the report that Christ did not die upon the cross, that He merely fainted, and was afterward revived. Another report affirmed that it was not a real body of flesh and bone, but the likeness of a body, that was laid in the tomb. The action of the Roman soldiers disproves these falsehoods. They broke not His legs, because He was already dead. To satisfy the priests, they pierced His

side. Had not life been already extinct, this wound would have caused instant death. {DA 772.1}

But it was not the spear thrust, it was not the pain of the cross, that caused the death of Jesus. That cry, uttered "with a loud voice" (Matt. 27:50; Luke 23:46), at the moment of death, the stream of blood and water that flowed from His side, declared that He died of a broken heart. His heart was broken by mental anguish. He was slain by the sin of the world. {DA 772.2}

His perfect obedience to His Father's commandments was the cause of His crucifixion. {CW 100}

After the death of Christ the disciples were well-nigh overcome by discouragement. Their Master had been rejected, condemned, and crucified. The priests and rulers had declared scornfully, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him." Matthew 27:42. The sun of the disciples' hope had set, and night settled down upon their hearts. Often they repeated the words, "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." Luke 24:21. Lonely and sick at heart, they remembered His words, "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Luke 23:31. {AA 25.1}

Jesus had several times attempted to open the future to His disciples, but they had not cared to think about what He said. Because of this His death had come to them as a surprise; and afterward, as they reviewed the past and saw the result of their unbelief, they were filled with sorrow. When Christ was crucified, they did not believe that He would rise. He had stated plainly that He was to rise on the third day, but they were perplexed to know what He meant. This lack of comprehension left them at the time of His death in utter hopelessness. They were bitterly disappointed. Their faith did not penetrate beyond the shadow that Satan had cast athwart their horizon. All seemed vague and mysterious to them. If they had believed the Saviour's words, how much sorrow they might have been spared! {AA 25.2}

Crushed by despondency, grief, and despair, the disciples met together in the upper chamber, and closed and fastened the doors, fearing that the fate of their beloved Teacher might be theirs. It was here that the Saviour, after His resurrection, appeared to them. {AA 26.1}

For forty days Christ remained on the earth, preparing the disciples for the work before them and explaining that which heretofore they had been unable to comprehend. He spoke of the prophecies concerning His advent, His rejection by the Jews, and His death, showing that every specification of these prophecies had been fulfilled. He told them that they were to regard this fulfillment of prophecy as an assurance of the power that would attend them in their future labors. "Then opened He their understanding," we read, "that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at

Jerusalem." And He added, "Ye are witnesses of these things." Luke 24:45-48. {AA 26.2}

During these days that Christ spent with His disciples, they gained a new experience. As they heard their beloved Master explaining the Scriptures in the light of all that had happened, their faith in Him was fully established. They reached the place where they could say, "I know whom I have believed." 2 Timothy 1:12.

*Note: While there are only 5 or 6 times mentioned of Christ's appearing after His death, this quote explains what He was doing during the 40 days. Although the Bible indicates that He appeared 5 or 6 times, and leaves us to wonder what He was doing, this quote indicates that He spent this time with the disciples teaching them. They had so much to re-learn.*

The consecrated messengers who in the early days of Christianity carried to a perishing world the glad tidings of salvation, allowed no thought of self-exaltation to mar their presentation of Christ and Him crucified. They coveted neither authority nor pre-eminence. Hiding self in the Saviour, they exalted the great plan of salvation, and the life of Christ, the Author and Finisher of this plan. Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever, was the burden of their teaching. {AA 209.1}

If those who today are teaching the word of God, would uplift the cross of Christ higher and still higher, their ministry would be far more successful. If sinners can be led to give one earnest look at the cross, if they can obtain a full view of the crucified Saviour, they will realize the depth of God's compassion and the sinfulness of sin. {AA 209.2}

Christ's death proves God's great love for man. It is our pledge of salvation. To remove the cross from the Christian would be like blotting the sun from the sky. The cross brings us near to God, reconciling us to Him. With the relenting compassion of a father's love, Jehovah looks upon the suffering that His Son endured in order to save the race from eternal death, and accepts us in the Beloved. {AA 209.3}

Without the cross, man could have no union with the Father. On it depends our every hope. From it shines the light of the Saviour's love, and when at the foot of the cross the sinner looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy, for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain. {AA 209.4}

Through the cross we learn that the heavenly Father loves us with a love that is infinite. Can we wonder that Paul exclaimed, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"? Galatians 6:14. It is our privilege also to glory in the cross, our privilege to give ourselves wholly to Him who gave Himself for us. Then, with the light that streams from Calvary shining in our faces, we may go forth to reveal this light to those in darkness. {AA 210.1}

But God suffered with His Son. Angels beheld the Saviour's agony. They saw their Lord enclosed by legions of satanic forces, His nature weighed down with a shuddering, mysterious dread. There was silence in heaven. No harp was touched. Could mortals have viewed the amazement of the angelic host as in silent grief they watched the Father separating His beams of light, love, and glory from His beloved Son, they would better understand how offensive in His sight is sin. {DA 693.2}

The worlds unfallen and the heavenly angels had watched with intense interest as the conflict drew to its close. Satan and his confederacy of evil, the legions of apostasy, watched intently this great crisis in the work of redemption. The powers of good and evil waited to see what answer would come to Christ's thrice-repeated prayer. Angels had longed to bring relief to the divine sufferer, but this might not be. No way of escape was found for the Son of God. In this awful crisis, when everything was at stake, when the mysterious cup trembled in the hand of the sufferer, the heavens opened, a light shone forth amid the stormy darkness of the crisis hour, and the mighty angel who stands in God's presence, occupying the position from which Satan fell, came to the side of Christ. The angel came not to take the cup from Christ's hand, but to strengthen Him to drink it, with the assurance of the Father's love. He came to give power to the divine-human suppliant. He pointed Him to the open heavens, telling Him of the souls that would be saved as the result of His sufferings. He assured Him that His Father is greater and more powerful than Satan, that His death would result in the utter discomfiture of Satan, and that the kingdom of this world would be given to the saints of the Most High. He told Him that He would see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied, for He would see a multitude of the human race saved, eternally saved. {DA 693.3}

*Note: When Christ took responsibility for the sins of all mankind, it separated Him from His Father. And while Jesus couldn't see His Father, His Father did not leave Him stranded. God sent an angel to Christ with the message, "I love you Son!" This was the only communication that took place indirectly between God and His Boy after Jesus was separated by our sins from His Father. The power He received from this message of love was a benchmark Christ clung to until He shouted, "It is Finished!" and died. The assurance of our Father's love is everything when life gets tough.*

*"We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but One that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 4:15, A.R.V. {MH 424.4}*

It is through the gift of Christ that we receive every blessing. Through that gift there comes to us day by day the unfailing flow of Jehovah's goodness. Every flower, with its delicate tints and its fragrance, is given for our enjoyment through that one Gift. The sun and the moon were made by Him. There is not a star which beautifies the heavens that He did not make. Every drop of rain that falls, every ray of light shed upon our unthankful world, testifies to the love of God in Christ. Everything is supplied to us through the one unspeakable Gift, God's only-begotten Son. He was nailed to the cross that all these bounties might flow to God's workmanship. {MH 424.5}

*"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 3:1.*

"Men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear,  
Neither hath the eye seen a God besides Thee,  
Who worketh for him that waiteth for Him."

Isaiah 64:4, A.R.V. {MH 425.1}