



The Sufferings  
of Christ

Ellen G. White



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This booklet is a compilation of four articles in the Signs of the Times from 1879 plus the chapter "it is finished" in the Desire of Ages and the final chapter of Great Controversy. As you study through these pages Christ will be presented before you in a much brighter light which will bring the sufferings of our Saviour and His Father intimately closer for the purpose of deepening our understanding of the sinfulness of sin so that we may receive the spirit of repentance from Christ who only knows that Father as the Father knows Him and thus is the only qualified mediator to impart to us a true understanding of the sufferings of the Father. May these pages be food for your soul.

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## Foreword

The movie theatres were packed as the Hollywood screens portrayed the man, Jesus of Nazareth, wrongfully accused, sentenced to death and brutally murdered upon the cross. Countless millions shed tears over the countless gruesome scenes depicting the bodily anguish of the Son of God for 24 hours. The credits begin to roll and as the throngs leave the picture theatre, the horrific scenes are filed away alongside the countless other emotionally stirring scenes offered by Hollywood's seducing sophistry lulling humanity back into an ignorant slumber.

What am I to gain by beholding the cross? Christ himself said "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." (John 12:32). The cross operating in a divine pattern, through the visible scenes of Christ's suffering, has drawn me to behold the suffering which actually killed the Son of God, for He did not die of the bodily wounds sustained, but the guilt of my sins and your sins, the anguish of feeling separated from His Father because of the sins He was carrying, the belief that this separation was irreconcilable, broke the heart of the Son of God. But wait, there's more. Revelation 13:8 tells us that He is the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. As I have consumed the words upon the pages here to follow, I have been invited into a very intimate experience into the sufferings of not only Christ, but of the Father also. I believe that we can only experience true repentance for sin, which we can only receive through Christ (Acts 5:31; Romans 2:4; 2Corinthians 7:10; 2Peter 3:9), when we have a much deeper understanding of the suffering we have caused, and are causing the one whom we have wronged. Because Christ is the full revelation of the Father, it is through contemplating His sufferings from the foundation of the world that I have gained a deeper insight into the sufferings of our Heavenly Father. The fruit this has yielded in my experience is a repentance for my sins heretofore unknown to me and a gratitude toward God's mercy, long suffering and righteousness of inexpressible magnitude. It has kindled a fire deep inside of me, a yearning for others to share in an experience that is not based on following mere form but driven by a sense gratitude for the grace that has been imparted to a sinner such as I. This booklet is an open invitation into this experience. I invite you to delve into these pages, to consume and contemplate the "Sufferings of Christ."

Ruben Olschewsky  
October 2017

## **GOD IS LOVE**

“God is love.” And his matchless love manifested toward fallen man, in the gift of his beloved Son, amazed the holy angels. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” He was the Father’s “appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.” He was the “brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.” And he upheld “all things by the word of his power.” He possessed divine excellence and greatness. It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell. And Christ “thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Yet he “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

The Son of God consented to die in the sinner’s stead, that man might, by a life of obedience, escape the penalty of the law of God. His death did not slay the law, lessen its holy claims, nor detract from its sacred dignity. The death of Christ proclaimed the justice of his Father’s law in punishing the transgressor, in that he consented to suffer the penalty in order to save fallen man from its curse. The death of God’s beloved Son on the cross shows the immutability of God’s law. His death magnifies the law and makes it honorable, and gives evidence of its changeless character. From his own lips is heard, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” The death of the divine Son justified the claims of the divine law. In order to more fully realize the value of redemption, it is necessary to understand what it cost. In consequence of limited views of the sufferings of the divine Son of God, many place a low estimate upon the great work of the atonement.

The plan of redemption, embracing the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ, was first preached to Adam. It was to him the star of hope, lighting up the dark and dreaded future. Adam saw that Christ was the only door of hope through which he could enter and have life. The plan of saving sinners through Christ alone was the same in the days of Adam, Noah, Abraham, and every successive generation of those who lived before the advent of Christ, as it is in our day. The patriarchs, prophets, and all the holy martyrs from righteous Abel, looked forward to a coming Saviour, in whom they showed

their faith by sacrificial offerings. At the crucifixion the typical system of sacrifices was done away by the great antitypical offering. The sacrifice of beasts shadowed forth the sinless offering of God's dear Son, and pointed forward to his death upon the cross. But at the crucifixion type met antitype, and the typical system there ceased; but not one jot or tittle of the moral code was abrogated at the death of Christ.

The Son of God is the center of the great plan of redemption, which unit plan covers all dispensations. He is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." He is the Redeemer of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam in all the ages of human probation. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Christ is the substance or body which cast its shadow back into former dispensations. And when Christ died the shadow ceased. The transgression of the moral code made the shadowy system necessary. And at the death of Christ, which event had been shadowed forth by the blood of beasts from the time of Adam, these offerings, and not the law of God, the violation of which had made them necessary, was abolished.

The gospel preached to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses was to them good news; for their faith embraced a coming Saviour. A more clear and glorious light now shines upon the Christian world; for in the Jewish age the cross cast its shadow away back to the time when Adam left his Eden home. That which was faith to the ancients, who lived before Christ, is assurance to us, as we see that Christ has come, as foretold by the prophets. It is as essential, no more so, and no less, that we have faith in a Redeemer who has come and died our sacrifice, as it was for the ancients to believe in a Redeemer to come, whom they represented by their typical sacrifices.

The Son of God, in becoming man's substitute, and bearing the curse which should fall upon man, has pledged himself in behalf of the race to maintain the sacred claims and exalted honor of his Father's law. His work and mission was to convince men of sin, which is the transgression of that law, and through the divine mediation, bring them back to obedience to his perfect law. The Father has given the world into the hands of Christ, that through his mediatorial work he may completely vindicate the binding claims and the holiness of every principle of his law.

After Christ was baptized of John in Jordan, he came up out of the water, and bowing upon the banks of the river, he prayed with fervency to his Heavenly Father for strength to endure the conflict with the prince of darkness in which he was about to engage. The heavens were opened to his prayer and the light of God's glory, brighter than the sun at noonday, came from the throne of the Eternal, and, assuming the form of a dove with the appearance of burnished gold, encircled the Son of God, while the clear voice from the excellent glory was heard in terrible majesty, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

Here was the assurance to the Son of God that his Father accepted the fallen race through their representative, and that he had granted them a second trial. The communication between Heaven and earth, between God and man, which had been broken by the fall of Adam, was resumed. He who knew no sin, became sin for the race, that his righteousness might be imputed to man. Through the perfection of Christ's character, man was elevated in the scale of moral value with God; and through the merits of Christ, finite man was linked to the Infinite. Thus the gulf which sin had made was bridged by the world's Redeemer.

But few have a true sense of the great privileges which Christ gained for man by thus opening Heaven before him. The Son of God was then the representative of our race; and the special power and glory which the Majesty of Heaven conferred upon him, and his words of approval, are the surest pledge of his love and good will to man. As Christ's intercessions in our behalf were heard, the evidence was given to man that God will accept our prayers in our own behalf through the name of Jesus. The continued, earnest prayer of faith will bring us light and strength to withstand the fiercest assaults of Satan.

The light and strength of one day to the Christian will not be sufficient for the trials and conflicts of the next. Satan is now constantly changing his temptations, as he did with Christ. Every day we may be placed in new positions, and may have new and unexpected temptations. We may as consistently expect to be sustained on the morrow by food eaten today, as to depend upon present light and present blessings for future strength. Weak and sinful man cannot be safe unless God shall daily manifest his light and impart to him his strength.



It is of the highest importance that God manifest his will to us in the daily concerns of life; for the most important results frequently depend upon small occurrences. The more we become acquainted with God through his divine light, the more sensible shall we become of our weaknesses, and that we cannot live without him. We should ever feel that we need a sure guide to direct our faltering steps.

## IN THE DESERT

The life of a living Christian is a life of living prayer. The path of the just shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The Christian's life is one of progression. He goes forward from strength to strength, from grace to grace, and from glory to glory, receiving from Heaven the light which Christ, at infinite cost to himself, made it possible for man to obtain. The Christian cannot let his light shine properly unless he receives an increase of the divine illumination, corresponding with his growth in the knowledge of Bible truths. The strength and glory from the accessible Heavens will qualify him to meet the new temptations and bear the heavier responsibilities which are ever before him. Untried scenes await the Christian. New dangers surround him. And unexpected temptations constantly assail him. Our great Leader points us to the open Heavens as the only source of light and strength.

After his baptism, the Son of God entered the dreary wilderness, there to be tempted by the devil. For nearly six weeks he endured the agonies of hunger. For forty days he ate and drank nothing. This made his suffering greater than anything which man would ever be called to endure. Christ was bearing the guilt of the transgressor. He realized the power of appetite upon man; and in behalf of sinful man, he bore the closest test possible upon that point. Here a victory was gained which few can appreciate. The controlling power of depraved appetite, and the grievous sin of indulging it, can only be understood by length of the fast which our Saviour endured that he might break its power.

Satan had gained the victory over man in almost every temptation on the point of appetite. The Son of God saw that man could not of himself overcome this powerful temptation and he had such infinite love for the race that he left the royal courts of Heaven, and clothed his divinity with humanity, that with his long human arm he might reach to the very depths of human woe, while with his divine arm he grasps the Infinite. He came to earth to unite his divine power with our human efforts, that through the strength and moral power which he imparts, we may overcome in our own behalf. Oh! what matchless condescension for the King of glory to come down to this world to endure the pangs of hunger and the fierce temptations of a wily foe, that he might gain an infinite victory for man. Here is love

without a parallel. Yet this great condescension is but dimly comprehended by those for whom it was made.

It was not the gnawing pangs of hunger alone which made the sufferings of our Redeemer so inexpressibly severe. It was the sense of guilt which had resulted from the indulgence of appetite that had brought such terrible woe into the world, which pressed so heavily upon his divine soul. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

With man's nature, and the terrible weight of his sins pressing upon him, our Redeemer withstood the power of Satan upon this great leading temptation, which imperils the souls of men. If man should overcome this temptation, he could conquer on every other point.

Intemperance lies at the foundation of all the moral evils known to man. Christ began the work of redemption just where the ruin began. The fall of our first parents was caused by the indulgence of appetite. In redemption, the denial of appetite is the first work of Christ. What amazing love has Christ manifested in coming into the world to bear our sins and infirmities, and to tread the path of suffering, that he might show us by his life of spotless merit how we should walk, and overcome as he had overcome, and that we might become reconciled to God.

As the human was upon Christ, he felt his need of strength from his Father. He had select places of prayer. He loved the solitude of the mountain in which to hold communion with his Father in Heaven. In this exercise he was strengthened for the duties and trials of the day. Our Saviour identifies himself with our needs and weaknesses, in that he becomes 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 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 divine support and comfort which his Father was ready to impart to his Son, who had left the joys of Heaven and chosen his home, for the benefit of man, in a cold and thankless world. Christ found joy and comfort in communion with his Father. Here he could

unburden his sorrows that were crushing him. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief.

Through the day he labored earnestly to save men from destruction. He healed the sick, he comforted the mourning, and brought cheerfulness and hope to the despairing. He brought the dead to life. After his work was finished for the day, he went forth, evening after evening, away from the confusion of the city, and his form was bowed in some retired place, in supplication to his Father. At times the bright beams of the moon shone upon his bowed form. And then again the clouds and darkness shut away all light. The dew and frost of night rested upon his head and beard while in the attitude of a suppliant. He frequently continued his petitions through the entire night. If the Saviour of men, with his divine strength, felt the need of prayer in our behalf, how much more should feeble, sinful mortals feel the necessity of prayer—fervent, constant prayer on their own account! When Christ was the most fiercely beset by temptation, he ate nothing. He committed himself to God, and through earnest prayer, and perfect submission to the will of his Father, came off conqueror.

“It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord.” Our tables are frequently spread with luxuries not healthful nor necessary, because we love these things more than we love freedom from disease and a sound mind. Jesus sought earnestly for strength from his Father. This the divine Son of God considered of more value even for himself than to sit at the most luxurious table. He has given us evidence that prayer is essential to us in order to receive strength to contend with the powers of darkness, and to do the work allotted us to perform. Our own strength is weakness, but that which God gives will make every one who obtains it more than conqueror.

## IN GETHSEMANE

Jesus had often resorted to Gethsemane with his disciples for meditation and prayer. They were all well acquainted with this sacred retreat. Even Judas knew where to lead the murderous throng, that he might betray Jesus into their hands. Never before had the Saviour visited the spot with his heart so full of sorrow. It was not bodily suffering from which the Son of God shrank, and which wrung from his lips in the presence of his disciples these mournful words: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." "Tarry ye here," said he, "and watch with me." He was bowed to the earth with mental anguish, and in an agony he prayed to his Heavenly Father. He felt the iniquity of sin, and the wrath of God against the violators of his holy law.

Christ was amazed with the horror of darkness which enclosed him. The temptations of Satan were almost overpowering. These words, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," were borne upon the sympathizing air, to his disciples, in tones of startling agony. The sins of a lost world were upon him, and a sense of his Father's anger in consequence of sin was crushing him. He arose from his prostrate position, and, yearning for the sympathy of his disciples, he came to them and found them sleeping. He roused Peter and said to him, "Simon, sleepest thou?" What, couldest not thou, who so recently was willing to go with me to prison and to death, watch with thy suffering Master one hour? "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." At the most important time, the disciples were found sleeping. It was the very time when Jesus had made a special request for them to watch with him. He knew that terrible temptations were before his disciples. He took them with him, that they might be a strength to him, and that the events they should witness that night, and the lessons of instruction they should receive, might be indelibly printed upon their memories. This was necessary that they might be strengthened for the test just before them.

But instead of watching with Christ, they were burdened with sorrow, and fell asleep. Even the ardent Peter was asleep, who, only a few hours before, had declared that he would suffer, and, if need be, die for his Lord. At the most critical moment, when the Son of God was in need of their sympathy

and heartfelt prayers, they were found asleep. They lost much by thus sleeping. Our Saviour designed to fortify them for the severe test of their faith to which they would soon be subjected. If they had spent that mournful period in watching with the dear Saviour and in prayer to God, Peter would not have been left to his own feeble strength, to deny his Lord. The Father sent an angel from his presence to strengthen the divine sufferer. Could mortals view the amazement and sorrow of the angels as they watched in silent grief the Father separating his beams of light, love, and glory, from his Son, they would better understand how offensive is sin in his sight. As the Son of God in the garden of Gethsemane bowed in the attitude of prayer, the agony of his spirit forced from his pores sweat like great drops of blood. It was here that the horror of great darkness surrounded him. The sins of the world were upon him. He was suffering in man's stead, as a transgressor of his Father's law. Here was the scene of temptation. The divine light of God was receding from his vision, and he was passing in to the hands of the powers of darkness. In the agony of his soul he lay prostrate on the cold earth. He was realizing His Father's frown. The cup of suffering Christ had taken from the lips of guilty man, and proposed to drink it himself, and, in its place, give to man the cup of blessing. The wrath that would have fallen upon man, was now falling upon Christ.

The disciples roused from their slumber to find their Master standing over them in a state of mental and bodily anguish such as they never before had witnessed. They saw the grief and agony of His pale face, and the bloody sweat upon His brow, for "his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." The disciples were grieved that they had fallen asleep, so that they could not pray and sympathize with their suffering Lord. They were speechless with sorrow and surprise.

The suffering Son of God leaves his disciples, for the power of darkness rushes upon him with an irresistible force which bows him to the earth. He prays as before, and pours out the burden of his soul with stronger crying and tears. His soul was pressed with such agony as no human being could endure and live. The sins of the world were upon him. He felt that he was separated from his Father's love; for upon him rested the curse because of sin. Christ knew that it would be difficult for man to feel the grievousness of sin, and that close contact and familiarity with sin would so blunt his moral sensibility, that sin would not appear so dangerous to him, and so

exceedingly offensive in the sight of God. He knew that but few would take pleasure in righteousness, and accept of that salvation which, at infinite cost, he made it possible for them to obtain. While this load of sin was upon Christ, unrealized, and unrepented of by man, doubts rent his soul in regard to his oneness with his Father.

In this fearful hour of trial Christ's human nature longed even for the sympathy of his disciples. A second time he rose from the earth and went to them and found them sleeping. This was not a deep sleep. They were in a drowse. They had a limited sense of their Lord's suffering and anguish. In tenderness Jesus stood for a moment bending over them, and regarding them with mingled feelings of love and pity. In these sleeping disciples he sees a representation of a sleeping church. When they should be watching, they are asleep.

"Watch ye, therefore; for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping." The church of God is required to fulfill her night-watch, however perilous, and whether long or short. Sorrow is no excuse for her to be less watchful. Tribulation should not lead to carelessness, but to double vigilance. Christ has directed the church by his own example, to the source of their strength in times of need, distress and peril. The attitude of watching is to designate the church as God's people indeed. By this sign the waiting ones are distinguished from the world, and show that they are pilgrims and strangers upon the earth.

How cruel it was for the disciples to permit sleep to close their eyes, and slumber to chain their senses, while their divine Lord was enduring such inexpressible mental anguish. If they had remained watching, they would not have lost their faith as they beheld the Son of God dying upon the cross. This important night-watch should have been signalized by noble mental struggles and prayers which would have brought them strength to witness the terrible agony of the Son of God. It would have prepared them, as they should behold his sufferings upon the cross, to understand something of the nature of the overpowering anguish which he endured in the garden of Gethsemane. And they would have been better able to recall the words he had spoken to them in reference to his sufferings, death, and resurrection; and amid the gloom of

that trying hour some rays of hope would have lighted up the darkness, and sustained their faith.

Christ had told them before that these things would take place; but they did not understand him. The scene of his sufferings was to be a fiery ordeal to his disciples, hence the necessity of watchfulness and prayer. Their faith needed to be sustained by an unseen strength, as they should experience the triumph of the powers of darkness. He knew the power which the prince of darkness used to paralyze the senses of his disciples at this time when they should be watching. At this crisis, when they would meet with a great loss, they are found asleep. Again the powers of darkness press upon him with renewed force, bowing him to the earth. He leaves his disciples with a determination to conquer the prince of darkness, that man may not be held in chains of hopeless despair. Giving his disciples one look of the tenderest compassion he left them and bowed a third time in prayer, using the same words as before. The divine sufferer shuddered with amazement at this mysterious and terrible conflict.

Human minds cannot conceive of the insupportable anguish which tortured the soul of our Redeemer. The holy Son of God had no sins or griefs of his own to bear. He was bearing the griefs of others, for on him was laid the iniquities of us all. Through divine sympathy he connects himself to man, and submits as the representative of the race to be treated as a transgressor. He looks into the abyss of woe opened for us by our sins, and proposes to bridge the gulf with his own person. Those who cannot see the force of the sacred claims of God's law cannot have a clear and definite understanding of the atonement.

It was soul-anguish that wrenched from the lips of God's dear Son these mournful words: "Now is my soul troubled,—my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." Christ's soul was bearing a weight of anguish because of the transgression of God's law. He was overwhelmed with horror and consternation at the fearful work sin had wrought. His burden of guilt was so great because of man's transgression of his Father's law, that human nature was inadequate to bear it. His inexpressible anguish forced from his pores large drops of blood, which fell upon the ground and moistened the sods of Gethsemane.



The sufferings of martyrs can bear no comparison with the sufferings of Christ. The divine presence was with them, in their physical sufferings. There was the hiding of the Father's face from his dear Son. Humanity staggered and trembled in that trying hour. It was anguish of soul beyond the endurance of finite nature. It was woe condensed that brought from the trembling lips of the noble sufferer these words: "Now is my soul troubled." "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Again from his pale lips are heard these words: "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." The awful moment had come which was to decide the destiny of the world. Angels are waiting and watching with intense interest.

The fate of the world is trembling in the balance. The Son of God may even now refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty man. He may wipe the blood sweat from his brow, and leave the world to perish in their iniquity. Will the Son of the infinite God drink the cup of humiliation and agony? Will the innocent suffer the curse of God to save the guilty? It was here the mysterious cup trembled in his hand, and the destiny of a ruined world was balanced. The world's Redeemer sees that the transgressors of his Father's law must perish under his displeasure. He sees the power of sin and the utter helplessness of man to save himself.

The woes and lamentations of a doomed world come up before him, and his decision is made. He will save man at any cost of himself. He has accepted his baptism of blood, that perishing millions through him might gain everlasting life. He left the heavenly courts where all was purity, happiness, and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world which had fallen by transgression. He will not leave man in his sins. He will reach to the very depths of misery to rescue him. The sleeping disciples see not that their beloved Teacher is fainting. He falls to the earth, and is dying. Where are his disciples to place their hands tenderly beneath the head of their suffering Master, and bathe that brow, marred indeed more than the sons of men? Our Saviour trod the wine-press alone and of all the people there was none with him.

Christ suffered not alone. Saith he, "I and my Father are one." God suffered with his Son. The sacrifice that an infinite God has made in giving up his Son to reproach and agony, cannot be comprehended by man. In giving his Son for the sins of the world, God has evidenced his boundless love to man. The

angels who had learned to do Christ's will in Heaven, were anxious to comfort him. But what can they do? Such sorrow, such agony, is beyond their power to alleviate. They have never felt the sins of a ruined world, and with astonishment they behold the object of their adoration subject to grief. Although the Father does not remove the cup from the trembling hand and pale lips of his Son, sends an angel to give him strength to drink it. The angel raises the Son of God from the cold ground, and brings him messages of love from his Father. He is strengthened and fortified. He has the assurance that he is gaining eternal joy for all who will accept redemption.

## THE ARREST

The fearful hour in Gethsemane is passed. Our divine Saviour has accepted the cup to drain it to the dregs. In behalf of man he has conquered in the hour of temptation. Serenity and calmness are now seen in the pale and blood-stained face. And the third time he comes to his disciples and finds them overcome with sleep. Sorrowfully and pityingly he looked upon them, and said, "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." Even while these words were upon his lips, he heard the footsteps of the mob that was in search of him. Judas took the lead, and was closely followed by the high priest. Jesus aroused his disciples with these words. "Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." The countenance of Christ wore an expression of calm dignity. The traces of his recent agony were not visible as he walked forth to meet his betrayer.

Jesus steps out in front of his disciples, and inquires, "Whom seek ye?" They answer, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replies, "I am he." At these words the mob stagger backward; and the priest, the elders, the hardened soldiers, and even Judas, fall powerless to the ground, giving ample opportunity for Christ to release himself if he chose. But he stands as one glorified amid that coarse and hardened band. As Jesus said, "I am he," the angel which had ministered to him in his anguish, moved between him and the murderous mob. They see a divine light glorifying the Saviour's face, and a dove-like form overshadowing him. Their sinful hearts are filled with terror. They cannot stand for a moment in the presence of divine glory, but fall as dead men to the ground.

The angel withdrew, and left Jesus standing calm and self-possessed, with the bright beams of the moon upon his pale face, and still surrounded by prostrate, helpless men, while the disciples were too much amazed to utter a word. As the angel removes, the hardened Roman soldiers start to their feet, and, with the priests and Judas, they gather about Christ as though ashamed of their weakness, and fearful that he would yet escape out of their hands. Again the question is asked by the world's Redeemer. "Whom seek ye?" Again they answer, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I have told you that

I am he. If, therefore, ye seek me, let these go their way." In this hour of humiliation Christ's thoughts are not for himself, but for his beloved disciples. He wishes to save them from any further trial of their strength.

Judas, the betrayer of our Saviour, does not forget his part, but comes close to Jesus, and takes his hand as a familiar friend, and bestows the traitor's kiss. Jesus says to him, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" His voice trembled with sorrow as he addressed deluded Judas. "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" This most touching appeal should have aroused the conscience of Judas, and touched his stubborn heart; but honor, fidelity, and even human tenderness seemed to have left him. He stood bold and defiant, showing no disposition to relent. He had given himself up to the control of Satan, to work wickedness, and he had no will to resist. Jesus did not resist the traitor's kiss. In this he gives us an example of forbearance, love, and pity, that is without a parallel.

Though the murderous throng are surprised and awed by what they have seen and felt, their assurance and hardihood returns as they see the boldness of Judas in touching the person of Christ, whom so recently they had seen glorified. They lay violent hands upon Jesus, and are about to bind those precious hands that had ever been employed in doing good.

As the disciples saw that band of hardened men lie prostrate and helpless on the ground, they thought surely their Master would not suffer himself to be taken. The same power that prostrated that hireling mob could have kept them there, and Jesus could have passed on his way unharmed. They are disappointed and indignant as they see the cords brought forward to bind the hands of him whom they love. Peter in his vehement anger strikes rashly, and cuts off an ear of the servant of the high priest.

When Jesus saw what Peter had done, he released his hands, already held by the Roman soldiers, and, saying, "Suffer ye thus far," he touched the ear of the wounded man, and instantly it is made whole. Even to his enemies, who are bound to take his life, he here gives unmistakable evidence of his divine power. Jesus said to Peter, "Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it

must be?" "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Jesus said unto the chief priest, and captains of the temple, who helped compose that murderous throng, "Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not; but the Scriptures must be fulfilled."

When the disciples saw that Jesus did not deliver himself from his enemies, but permitted himself to be taken, they forsook him and fled, leaving their Master alone. Christ had foreseen this desertion, and had told them in the upper chamber before it took place, of what they would do: "Behold the hour cometh, yea, is not come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

The Saviour of the world was hurried to the judgment hall of an earthly court, there to be derided and condemned to death, by sinful men. There the glorious Son of God was "wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities." He bore insult, mockery, and shameful abuse, until his "visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men."

Who can comprehend the love here displayed? The angelic host beheld with wonder and with grief Him who had been the majesty of Heaven, and who had worn the crown of glory, now wearing the crown of thorns, a bleeding victim to the rage of an infuriated mob, who were fired to insane madness by the wrath of Satan. Behold the patient sufferer! Upon his head is the thorny crown! His life blood flows from every lacerated vein! All this was in consequence of sin! Nothing could have induced Christ to leave his honor and majesty in Heaven, and come to a sinful world, to be neglected, despised, and rejected, by those he came to save, and finally to suffer upon the cross, but eternal, redeeming love, which will ever remain a mystery.

Wonder, O Heavens, and be astonished, O earth! Behold the oppressor and the oppressed! A vast multitude inclose the Saviour of the world. Mockings and jeerings are mingled with the coarse oaths of blasphemy.

His lowly birth and humble life are commented upon by unfeeling wretches. His claim to be the Son of God is ridiculed by the chief priests and elders, and the vulgar jest and insulting derision are passed from lip to lip. Satan was

having full control of the minds of his servants. In order to do this effectually, he commences with the chief priests and elders, and imbues them with religious frenzy. They are actuated by the same satanic spirit which moves the most vile and hardened wretches.

There is a corrupt harmony in the feelings of all, from the hypocritical priests and the elders down to the most debased. Christ, the precious Son of God, was led forth, and the cross was laid upon his shoulders. At every step was left blood which flowed from his wounds. Thronged by an immense crowd of bitter enemies and unfeeling spectators, he is led away to the crucifixion. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

## AT THE CROSS

His sorrowing disciples follow him at a distance, behind the murderous throng. He is nailed to the cross, and hangs suspended between the heavens and the earth. Their hearts are bursting with anguish as their beloved Teacher is suffering as a criminal. Close to the cross are the blind, bigoted, faithless priests and elders, taunting, mocking, and jeering: "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. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him with the scribes and elders, 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. He trusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said I am the Son of God."

Not one word did Jesus answer to all this. Even while the nails were being driven through his hands and the sweat-drops of agony were forced from his pores, from the pale quivering lips of the innocent sufferer a prayer of pardoning love was breathed for his murderers: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." All Heaven was gazing with profound interest upon the scene. The glorious Redeemer of a lost world was suffering the penalty of man's transgression of the Father's law. He was about to ransom his people with his own blood. He was paying the just claims of God's holy law. This was the means through which an end was to be finally made of sin and Satan, and his vile host to be vanquished.

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 that broke his heart. 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?"

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 on no longer, and hide their faces from the horrid sight. Christ is in despair! He is dying! His Father's approving smile is removed, and angels are not permitted to lighten the gloom of the terrible hour. They could only behold in amazement their loved Commander suffering the penalty of man's transgression of the Father's law.

Even doubts assailed the dying Son of God. He could not see through the portals of the tomb. Bright hope did not present to him his coming forth from the tomb a conqueror, and his Father's acceptance of his sacrifice. The sin of the world with all its terribleness was felt to the utmost by the Son of God. The displeasure of the Father for sin, and its penalty which was death, were all that he could realize through this amazing darkness. He was tempted to fear that sin was so offensive in the sight of his Father that he could not be reconciled to his Son. The fierce temptation that his own Father had forever left him, caused that piercing cry from the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Christ felt much as sinners will feel when the vials of God's wrath shall be poured out upon them. Black despair like a pall of death will gather about their guilty souls, and then they will realize to the fullest extent the sinfulness of sin. Salvation has been purchased for them by the suffering and death of the Son of God. It might be theirs if they would accept of it willingly, gladly; but none are compelled to yield obedience to the law of God. If they refuse the heavenly benefit, if they choose the pleasures and deceitfulness of sin, they can have their choice, and at the end receive their wages, which is the wrath of God and eternal death. They will be forever, separated from the presence of Jesus, whose sacrifice they had despised. They will have lost a life of happiness, and sacrificed eternal glory, for the pleasures of sin for a season.

Faith and hope trembled in the expiring agonies of Christ, because God had removed the assurance he had heretofore given his beloved Son of his



approbation and acceptance. The Redeemer of the world then relied upon the evidences which had hitherto strengthened him, that his Father accepted his labors and was pleased with his work. In his dying agony, as he yields up his precious life, he has by faith alone to trust in Him whom it has ever been his joy to obey. He is not cheered with clear, bright rays of hope on the right hand nor on the left. All is enshrouded in oppressive gloom. Amid the awful darkness which is felt even by sympathizing nature, the Redeemer drains the mysterious cup to its dregs. Denied even bright hope and confidence in the triumph which will be his in the near future, he cries with a loud voice, "Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit." He is acquainted with the character of his Father, his justice, his mercy, and great love. In submission he drops into the hands of his Father. Amid the convulsions of nature are heard by the amazed spectators the dying words of the Man of Calvary, "It is finished."

Nature sympathized with the sufferings of its Author. The heaving earth, the rent rocks, and the terrific darkness, proclaimed that it was the Son of God that died. There was a mighty earthquake. The vail of the temple was rent in twain. Terror seized the executioners and spectators as they beheld the sun veiled in darkness, and felt the earth shake beneath them, and saw and heard the rending of the rocks. The mocking and the jeering of the chief priests and elders was hushed as Christ commended his spirit in to the hands of his Father. The astonished throng began to withdraw, and grope their way in the darkness to the city they smote upon their breasts as they went, and in terror, speak scarcely above a whisper, said among themselves, "it is an innocent person that has been murdered. What if, indeed, he is as he asserted, the Son of God?"

## EVERYTHING FOR US

Jesus did not yield up his life till he had accomplished the work which he came to do, and exclaimed with his departing breath, "It is finished!" Satan was then defeated. He knew that his kingdom was lost. Angels rejoiced as the words were uttered, "It is finished." The great plan of redemption, which was dependent on the death of Christ, had thus far been carried out. And there was joy in Heaven that the sons of Adam could, through a life of obedience, be finally exalted to the throne of God. Oh, what love! What amazing love! that brought the Son of God to earth to be made sin for us, that we might be reconciled to God, and elevated to a life with him in his mansions in glory. And oh! what is man that such a price should be paid for his redemption?

When men and women can more fully comprehend the magnitude of the great sacrifice which was made by the Majesty of Heaven in dying in man's stead, then will the plan of salvation be magnified, and reflections of Calvary will awaken sacred and living emotions in the Christian's heart. Praises to God and the Lamb will be in their hearts and upon their lips. Pride and self-worship cannot flourish in the hearts that keep fresh in memory the scenes of Calvary. This world will appear of but little value to those who appreciate the great price of man's redemption.

All the riches of the world are not of sufficient value to redeem one perishing soul. Who can measure the love Christ felt for a lost world, as he hung upon the cross, suffering for the sins of guilty men? This love was immeasurable, infinite.

Christ has shown that his love was stronger than death. Even when suffering the most fearful conflicts with the powers of darkness, his love for perishing sinners increased. He endured the hidings of his Father's countenance, until he was led to exclaim in the bitterness of his soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" His arm brought salvation. The price was paid to purchase the redemption of man, when, in the last soul-struggle, the blessed

words were uttered, which seemed to resound through creation, "It is finished."

Many who profess to be Christians become excited over worldly enterprises, and their interest is awakened for new and exciting amusements, while they are cold-hearted, and appear as if frozen in the cause of God. But here is a theme, poor formalist, which is of sufficient importance to excite you. Eternal interests are here involved. The scenes of Calvary call for the deepest emotions. Upon this subject you will be excusable if you manifest enthusiasm. That Christ, so excellent, so innocent, should suffer such a painful death, bearing the weight of the sins of the world, our thoughts and imaginations can never fully reach, so that we can comprehend the length, the breadth, the height, and the depth, of such amazing love. The contemplation of the matchless love of the Saviour, should fill and absorb the mind, touch and melt the soul, refine and elevate the affections, and completely transform the whole character. The language of the apostle is, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." And we may look toward Calvary, and also exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Considering at what an immense cost our salvation has been purchased, what will be the portion of those who neglect so great salvation? What will be the punishment of those who profess to be followers of Christ, yet fail to bow in humble obedience to the claims of their Redeemer, and who do not take the cross, as humble disciples of Christ!

Some have limited views of the atonement. They think that Christ suffered only a small portion of the penalty of the law of God, and that while the wrath of God was felt by his dear Son, they suppose that he had, through all his painful sufferings, the evidence of his Father's love and acceptance, and that the portals of the tomb before him were illuminated with bright hope. Here is a great mistake. Christ's keenest anguish was a sense of his Father's displeasure. His mental agony because of this was of such intensity that man can have but faint conception of it.

With many the history of the humiliation and sacrifice of our divine Lord does not stir the soul and affect the life any more, nor awaken deeper interest,

than to read of the death of the martyrs of Jesus. Many have suffered death by slow tortures. Others have suffered death by crucifixion. In what does the death of God's dear Son differ from these? It is true he died upon the cross a most cruel death; yet others for his dear sake have suffered equally, as 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.

But bodily pain was only a small part of the agony of God's dear Son. The sins of the world were upon him, and also the sense of his Father's wrath as he suffered the penalty of the law. 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 Christ was in his hands, and that he was superior in strength to the Son of God, that God 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.

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?"

We should take larger, 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 worth of everlasting life everything else sinks into insignificance. But how have the counsels of this loving Saviour been despised by many. The heart's devotions have been 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.

He was eternally rich, “yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.” He was clothed with light and glory, surrounded with hosts of heavenly angels awaiting to execute his commands. Yet he put on our nature, and came to sojourn among sinful men. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” Here is love that no language can express. Our souls should be enlivened, elevated, and enraptured with the theme of the love of the Father and the Son. “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” The followers of Christ should learn here to reflect back in some degree that mysterious love, preparatory to joining all the redeemed in ascribing “Blessings, and honor, and glory, and power unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.”

## IT IS FINISHED

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.

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.

Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. The archapostate had so clothed himself with deception that even holy beings had not understood his principles. They had not clearly seen the nature of his rebellion.

It was a being of wonderful power and glory that had set himself against God. Of Lucifer the Lord says, "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty." Ezekiel 28:12. Lucifer had been the covering cherub. He had stood in the light of God's presence. He had been the highest of all created beings, and had been foremost in revealing God's purposes to the universe. After he had sinned, his power to deceive was the more deceptive, and the unveiling of his character was the more difficult, because of the exalted position he had held with the Father.

God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but He did not do this. Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. God's government is moral, and truth and love are to be the prevailing power.

It was God's purpose to place things on an eternal basis of security, and in the councils of heaven it was decided that time must be given for Satan to

develop the principles which were the foundation of his system of government. He had claimed that these were superior to God's principles. Time was given for the working of Satan's principles, that they might be seen by the heavenly universe.

Satan led men into sin, and the plan of redemption was put in operation. For four thousand years, Christ was working for man's uplifting, and Satan for his ruin and degradation. And the heavenly universe beheld it all.

When Jesus came into the world, Satan's power was turned against Him. From the time when He appeared as a babe in Bethlehem, the usurper worked to bring about His destruction. In every possible way he sought to prevent Jesus from developing a perfect childhood, a faultless manhood, a holy ministry, and an unblemished sacrifice. But he was defeated. He could not lead Jesus into sin. He could not discourage Him, or drive Him from a work He had come on earth to do. From the desert to Calvary, the storm of Satan's wrath beat upon Him, but the more mercilessly it fell, the more firmly did the Son of God cling to the hand of His Father, and press on in the bloodstained path. All the efforts of Satan to oppress and overcome Him only brought out in a purer light His spotless character.

All heaven and the unfallen worlds had been witnesses to the controversy. With what intense interest did they follow the closing scenes of the conflict. They beheld the Saviour enter the garden of Gethsemane, His soul bowed down with the horror of a great darkness. They heard His bitter cry, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." Matthew 26:39. As the Father's presence was withdrawn, they saw Him sorrowful with a bitterness of sorrow exceeding that of the last great struggle with death. The bloody sweat was forced from His pores, and fell in drops upon the ground. Thrice the prayer for deliverance was wrung from His lips. Heaven could no longer endure the sight, and a messenger of comfort was sent to the Son of God.

Heaven beheld the Victim betrayed into the hands of the murderous mob, and with mockery and violence hurried from one tribunal to another. It heard the sneers of His persecutors because of His lowly birth. It heard the denial with cursing and swearing by one of His best-loved disciples. It saw the frenzied work of Satan, and his power over the hearts of men. Oh, fearful scene! the Saviour seized at midnight in Gethsemane, dragged to and fro

from palace to judgment hall, arraigned twice before the priests, twice before the Sanhedrin, twice before Pilate, and once before Herod, mocked, scourged, condemned, and led out to be crucified, bearing the heavy burden of the cross, amid the wailing of the daughters of Jerusalem and the jeering of the rabble.

Heaven viewed with grief and amazement Christ hanging upon the cross, blood flowing from His wounded temples, and sweat tinged with blood standing upon His brow. From His hands and feet the blood fell, drop by drop, upon the rock drilled for the foot of the cross. The wounds made by the nails gaped as the weight of His body dragged upon His hands. His labored breath grew quick and deep, as His soul panted under the burden of the sins of the world. All heaven was filled with wonder when the prayer of Christ was offered in the midst of His terrible suffering,—“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Luke 23:34. Yet there stood men, formed in the image of God, joining to crush out the life of His only-begotten Son. What a sight for the heavenly universe!

The principalities and powers of darkness were assembled around the cross, casting the hellish shadow of unbelief into the hearts of men. When the Lord created these beings to stand before His throne, they were beautiful and glorious. Their loveliness and holiness were in accordance with their exalted station. They were enriched with the wisdom of God, and girded with the panoply of heaven. They were Jehovah’s ministers. But who could recognize in the fallen angels the glorious seraphim that once ministered in the heavenly courts?

Satanic agencies confederated with evil men in leading the people to believe Christ the chief of sinners, and to make Him the object of detestation. Those who mocked Christ as He hung upon the cross were imbued with the spirit of the first great rebel. He filled them with vile and loathsome speeches. He inspired their taunts. But by all this he gained nothing.

Could one sin have been found in Christ, had He in one particular yielded to Satan to escape the terrible torture, the enemy of God and man would have triumphed. Christ bowed His head and died, but He held fast His faith and His submission to God. “And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His



Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” Revelation 12:10.

Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe. He had revealed himself as a murderer. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted. Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them accuse Christ’s brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin. The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken.

Yet Satan was not then destroyed. The angels did not even then understand all that was involved in the great controversy. The principles at stake were to be more fully revealed. And for the sake of man, Satan’s existence must be continued. Man as well as angels must see the contrast between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness. He must choose whom he will serve.

In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan; and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice. When men broke the law of God, and defied His will, Satan exulted. It was proved, he declared, that the law could not be obeyed; man could not be forgiven. Because he, after his rebellion, had been banished from heaven, Satan claimed that the human race must be forever shut out from God’s favor. God could not be just, he urged, and yet show mercy to the sinner.

But even as a sinner, man was in a different position from that of Satan. Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God’s glory. To him as to no other created being was given a revelation of God’s love. Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him. But man was deceived; his mind was darkened by Satan’s sophistry. The height and depth of the love of God he did not know.

For him there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God.

Through Jesus, God's mercy was manifested to men; but mercy does not set aside justice. The law reveals the attributes of God's character, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. God did not change His law, but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for man's redemption. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19.

The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Romans 3:26.

God's love has been expressed in His justice no less than in His mercy. Justice is the foundation of His throne, and the fruit of His love. It had been Satan's purpose to divorce mercy from truth and justice. He sought to prove that the righteousness of God's law is an enemy to peace. But Christ shows that in God's plan they are indissolubly joined together; the one cannot exist without the other. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Psalm 85:10.

By His life and His death, Christ proved that God's justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed. Satan's charges were refuted. God had given man unmistakable evidence of His love.

Another deception was now to be brought forward. Satan declared that mercy destroyed justice, that the death of Christ abrogated the Father's law. Had it been possible for the law to be changed or abrogated, then Christ need not have died. But to abrogate the law would be to immortalize transgression, and place the world under Satan's control. It was because the

law was changeless, because man could be saved only through obedience to its precepts, that Jesus was lifted up on the cross. Yet the very means by which Christ established the law Satan represented as destroying it. Here will come the last conflict of the great controversy between Christ and Satan.

That the law which was spoken by God's own voice is faulty, that some specification has been set aside, is the claim which Satan now puts forward. It is the last great deception that he will bring upon the world. He needs not to assail the whole law; if he can lead men to disregard one precept, his purpose is gained. For "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10. By consenting to break one precept, men are brought under Satan's power. By substituting human law for God's law, Satan will seek to control the world. This work is foretold in prophecy. Of the great apostate power which is the representative of Satan, it is declared, "He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand." Daniel 7:25.

Men will surely set up their laws to counterwork the laws of God. They will seek to compel the consciences of others, and in their zeal to enforce these laws they will oppress their fellow men.

The warfare against God's law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time. Every man will be tested. Obedience or disobedience is the question to be decided by the whole world. All will be called to choose between the law of God and the laws of men. Here the dividing line will be drawn. There will be but two classes. Every character will be fully developed; and all will show whether they have chosen the side of loyalty or that of rebellion.

Then the end will come. God will vindicate His law and deliver His people. Satan and all who have joined him in rebellion will be cut off. Sin and sinners will perish, root and branch, (Malachi 4:1),—Satan the root, and his followers the branches. The word will be fulfilled to the prince of evil, "Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; ... I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.... Thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more." Then "the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt

diligently consider his place, and it shall not be;" "they shall be as though they had not been." Ezekiel 28:6-19; Psalm 37:10; Obadiah 1:16.

This is not an act of arbitrary power on the part of God. The rejecters of His mercy reap that which they have sown. God is the fountain of life; and when one chooses the service of sin, he separates from God, and thus cuts himself off from life. He is "alienated from the life of God." Christ says, "All they that hate Me love death." Ephesians 4:18; Proverbs 8:36. God gives them existence for a time that they may develop their character and reveal their principles. This accomplished, they receive the results of their own choice. By a life of rebellion, Satan and all who unite with him place themselves so out of harmony with God that His very presence is to them a consuming fire. The glory of Him who is love will destroy them.

At the beginning of the great controversy, the angels did not understand this. Had Satan and his host then been left to reap the full result of their sin, they would have perished; but it would not have been apparent to heavenly beings that this was the inevitable result of sin. A doubt of God's goodness would have remained in their minds as evil seed, to produce its deadly fruit of sin and woe.

But not so when the great controversy shall be ended. Then, the plan of redemption having been completed, the character of God is revealed to all created intelligences. The precepts of His law are seen to be perfect and immutable. Then sin has made manifest its nature, Satan his character. Then the extermination of sin will vindicate God's love and establish His honor before a universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law.

Well, then, might the angels rejoice as they looked upon the Saviour's cross; for though they did not then understand all, they knew that the destruction of sin and Satan was forever made certain, that the redemption of man was assured, and that the universe was made eternally secure. Christ Himself fully comprehended the results of the sacrifice made upon Calvary. To all these He looked forward when upon the cross He cried out, "It is finished."

## THE CONTROVERSY ENDED

At the close of the thousand years, Christ again returns to the earth. He is accompanied by the host of the redeemed and attended by a retinue of angels. As He descends in terrific majesty He bids the wicked dead arise to receive their doom. They come forth, a mighty host, numberless as the sands of the sea. What a contrast to those who were raised at the first resurrection! The righteous were clothed with immortal youth and beauty. The wicked bear the traces of disease and death.

Every eye in that vast multitude is turned to behold the glory of the Son of God. With one voice the wicked hosts exclaim: "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" It is not love to Jesus that inspires this utterance. The force of truth urges the words from unwilling lips. As the wicked went into their graves, so they come forth with the same enmity to Christ and the same spirit of rebellion. They are to have no new probation in which to remedy the defects of their past lives. Nothing would be gained by this. A lifetime of transgression has not softened their hearts. A second probation, were it given them, would be occupied as was the first in evading the requirements of God and exciting rebellion against Him.

Christ descends upon the Mount of Olives, whence, after His resurrection, He ascended, and where angels repeated the promise of His return. Says the prophet: "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee." "And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof, . . . and there shall be a very great valley." "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one." Zechariah 14:5, 4, 9. As the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendor, comes down out of heaven, it rests upon the place purified and made ready to receive it, and Christ, with His people and the angels, enters the Holy City.

Now Satan prepares for a last mighty struggle for the supremacy. While deprived of his power and cut off from his work of deception, the prince of evil was miserable and dejected; but as the wicked dead are raised and he sees the vast multitudes upon his side, his hopes revive, and he determines not to yield the great controversy. He will marshal all the armies of the lost under his banner and through them endeavor to execute his plans. The

wicked are Satan's captives. In rejecting Christ they have accepted the rule of the rebel leader. They are ready to receive his suggestions and to do his bidding. Yet, true to his early cunning, he does not acknowledge himself to be Satan. He claims to be the prince who is the rightful owner of the world and whose inheritance has been unlawfully wrested from him. He represents himself to his deluded subjects as a redeemer, assuring them that his power has brought them forth from their graves and that he is about to rescue them from the most cruel tyranny. The presence of Christ having been removed, Satan works wonders to support his claims. He makes the weak strong and inspires all with his own spirit and energy. He proposes to lead them against the camp of the saints and to take possession of the City of God. With fiendish exultation he points to the unnumbered millions who have been raised from the dead and declares that as their leader he is well able to overthrow the city and regain his throne and his kingdom.

In that vast throng are multitudes of the long-lived race that existed before the Flood; men of lofty stature and giant intellect, who, yielding to the control of fallen angels, devoted all their skill and knowledge to the exaltation of themselves; men whose wonderful works of art led the world to idolize their genius, but whose cruelty and evil inventions, defiling the earth and defacing the image of God, caused Him to blot them from the face of His creation. There are kings and generals who conquered nations, valiant men who never lost a battle, proud, ambitious warriors whose approach made kingdoms tremble. In death these experienced no change. As they come up from the grave, they resume the current of their thoughts just where it ceased. They are actuated by the same desire to conquer that ruled them when they fell.

Satan consults with his angels, and then with these kings and conquerors and mighty men. They look upon the strength and numbers on their side, and declare that the army within the city is small in comparison with theirs, and that it can be overcome. They lay their plans to take possession of the riches and glory of the New Jerusalem. All immediately begin to prepare for battle. Skillful artisans construct implements of war. Military leaders, famed for their success, marshal the throngs of warlike men into companies and divisions.

At last the order to advance is given, and the countless host moves on--an army such as was never summoned by earthly conquerors, such as the

combined forces of all ages since war began on earth could never equal. Satan, the mightiest of warriors, leads the van, and his angels unite their forces for this final struggle. Kings and warriors are in his train, and the multitudes follow in vast companies, each under its appointed leader. With military precision the serried ranks advance over the earth's broken and uneven surface to the City of God. By command of Jesus, the gates of the New Jerusalem are closed, and the armies of Satan surround the city and make ready for the onset.

Now Christ again appears to the view of His enemies. Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this throne sits the Son of God, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. The power and majesty of Christ no language can describe, no pen portray. The glory of the Eternal Father is enshrouding His Son. The brightness of His presence fills the City of God, and flows out beyond the gates, flooding the whole earth with its radiance.

Nearest the throne are those who were once zealous in the cause of Satan, but who, plucked as brands from the burning, have followed their Saviour with deep, intense devotion. Next are those who perfected Christian characters in the midst of falsehood and infidelity, those who honored the law of God when the Christian world declared it void, and the millions, of all ages, who were martyred for their faith. And beyond is the "great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, . . . before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Revelation 7:9. Their warfare is ended, their victory won. They have run the race and reached the prize. The palm branch in their hands is a symbol of their triumph, the white robe an emblem of the spotless righteousness of Christ which now is theirs.

The redeemed raise a song of praise that echoes and re-echoes through the vaults of heaven: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Verse 10. And angel and seraph unite their voices in adoration. As the redeemed have beheld the power and malignity of Satan, they have seen, as never before, that no power but that of Christ could have made them conquerors. In all that shining throng there are none to ascribe salvation to themselves, as if they had prevailed by their own power and goodness. Nothing is said of what they have done or suffered; but the burden

of every song, the keynote of every anthem, is: Salvation to our God and unto the Lamb.

In the presence of the assembled inhabitants of earth and heaven the final coronation of the Son of God takes place. And now, invested with supreme majesty and power, the King of kings pronounces sentence upon the rebels against His government and executes justice upon those who have transgressed His law and oppressed His people. Says the prophet of God: "I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Revelation 20:11, 12.

As soon as the books of record are opened, and the eye of Jesus looks upon the wicked, they are conscious of every sin which they have ever committed. They see just where their feet diverged from the path of purity and holiness, just how far pride and rebellion have carried them in the violation of the law of God. The seductive temptations which they encouraged by indulgence in sin, the blessings perverted, the messengers of God despised, the warnings rejected, the waves of mercy beaten back by the stubborn, unrepentant heart--all appear as if written in letters of fire.

Above the throne is revealed the cross; and like a panoramic view appear the scenes of Adam's temptation and fall, and the successive steps in the great plan of redemption. The Saviour's lowly birth; His early life of simplicity and obedience; His baptism in Jordan; the fast and temptation in the wilderness; His public ministry, unfolding to men heaven's most precious blessings; the days crowded with deeds of love and mercy, the nights of prayer and watching in the solitude of the mountains; the plottings of envy, hate, and malice which repaid His benefits; the awful, mysterious agony in Gethsemane beneath the crushing weight of the sins of the whole world; His betrayal into the hands of the murderous mob; the fearful events of that night of horror--the unresisting prisoner, forsaken by His best-loved disciples, rudely hurried through the streets of Jerusalem; the Son of God exultingly displayed before Annas, arraigned in the high priest's palace, in the judgment hall of Pilate,



before the cowardly and cruel Herod, mocked, insulted, tortured, and condemned to die--all are vividly portrayed.

And now before the swaying multitude are revealed the final scenes--the patient Sufferer treading the path to Calvary; the Prince of heaven hanging upon the cross; the haughty priests and the jeering rabble deriding His expiring agony; the supernatural darkness; the heaving earth, the rent rocks, the open graves, marking the moment when the world's Redeemer yielded up His life.

The awful spectacle appears just as it was. Satan, his angels, and his subjects have no power to turn from the picture of their own work. Each actor recalls the part which he performed. Herod, who slew the innocent children of Bethlehem that he might destroy the King of Israel; the base Herodias, upon whose guilty soul rests the blood of John the Baptist; the weak, timeserving Pilate; the mocking soldiers; the priests and rulers and the maddened throng who cried, "His blood be on us, and on our children!"--all behold the enormity of their guilt. They vainly seek to hide from the divine majesty of His countenance, outshining the glory of the sun, while the redeemed cast their crowns at the Saviour's feet, exclaiming: "He died for me!"

Amid the ransomed throng are the apostles of Christ, the heroic Paul, the ardent Peter, the loved and loving John, and their truehearted brethren, and with them the vast host of martyrs; while outside the walls, with every vile and abominable thing, are those by whom they were persecuted, imprisoned, and slain. There is Nero, that monster of cruelty and vice, beholding the joy and exaltation of those whom he once tortured, and in whose extremest anguish he found satanic delight. His mother is there to witness the result of her own work; to see how the evil stamp of character transmitted to her son, the passions encouraged and developed by her influence and example, have borne fruit in crimes that caused the world to shudder.

There are papist priests and prelates, who claimed to be Christ's ambassadors, yet employed the rack, the dungeon, and the stake to control the consciences of His people. There are the proud pontiffs who exalted themselves above God and presumed to change the law of the Most High. Those pretended fathers of the church have an account to render to God

from which they would fain be excused. Too late they are made to see that the Omniscient One is jealous of His law and that He will in no wise clear the guilty. They learn now that Christ identifies His interest with that of His suffering people; and they feel the force of His own words: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Matthew 25:40.

The whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God on the charge of high treason against the government of heaven. They have none to plead their cause; they are without excuse; and the sentence of eternal death is pronounced against them.

It is now evident to all that the wages of sin is not noble independence and eternal life, but slavery, ruin, and death. The wicked see what they have forfeited by their life of rebellion. The far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory was despised when offered them; but how desirable it now appears. "All this," cries the lost soul, "I might have had; but I chose to put these things far from me. Oh, strange infatuation! I have exchanged peace, happiness, and honor for wretchedness, infamy, and despair." All see that their exclusion from heaven is just. By their lives they have declared: "We will not have this Man [Jesus] to reign over us."

As if entranced, the wicked have looked upon the coronation of the Son of God. They see in His hands the tables of the divine law, the statutes which they have despised and transgressed. They witness the outburst of wonder, rapture, and adoration from the saved; and as the wave of melody sweeps over the multitudes without the city, all with one voice exclaim, "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints" (Revelation 15:3); and, falling prostrate, they worship the Prince of life.

Satan seems paralyzed as he beholds the glory and majesty of Christ. He who was once a covering cherub remembers whence he has fallen. A shining seraph, "son of the morning;" how changed, how degraded! From the council where once he was honored, he is forever excluded. He sees another now standing near to the Father, veiling His glory. He has seen the crown placed upon the head of Christ by an angel of lofty stature and majestic presence, and he knows that the exalted position of this angel might have been his.

Memory recalls the home of his innocence and purity, the peace and content that were his until he indulged in murmuring against God, and envy of Christ. His accusations, his rebellion, his deceptions to gain the sympathy and support of the angels, his stubborn persistence in making no effort for self-recovery when God would have granted him forgiveness --all come vividly before him. He reviews his work among men and its results--the enmity of man toward his fellow man, the terrible destruction of life, the rise and fall of kingdoms, the overturning of thrones, the long succession of tumults, conflicts, and revolutions. He recalls his constant efforts to oppose the work of Christ and to sink man lower and lower. He sees that his hellish plots have been powerless to destroy those who have put their trust in Jesus. As Satan looks upon his kingdom, the fruit of his toil, he sees only failure and ruin. He has led the multitudes to believe that the City of God would be an easy prey; but he knows that this is false. Again and again, in the progress of the great controversy, he has been defeated and compelled to yield. He knows too well the power and majesty of the Eternal.

The aim of the great rebel has ever been to justify himself and to prove the divine government responsible for the rebellion. To this end he has bent all the power of his giant intellect. He has worked deliberately and systematically, and with marvelous success, leading vast multitudes to accept his version of the great controversy which has been so long in progress. For thousands of years this chief of conspiracy has palmed off falsehood for truth. But the time has now come when the rebellion is to be finally defeated and the history and character of Satan disclosed. In his last great effort to dethrone Christ, destroy His people, and take possession of the City of God, the archdeceiver has been fully unmasked. Those who have united with him see the total failure of his cause. Christ's followers and the loyal angels behold the full extent of his machinations against the government of God. He is the object of universal abhorrence.

Satan sees that his voluntary rebellion has unfitted him for heaven. He has trained his powers to war against God; the purity, peace, and harmony of heaven would be to him supreme torture. His accusations against the mercy and justice of God are now silenced. The reproach which he has endeavored to cast upon Jehovah rests wholly upon himself. And now Satan bows down and confesses the justice of his sentence.

"Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest." Verse 4. Every question of truth and error in the long-standing controversy has now been made plain. The results of rebellion, the fruits of setting aside the divine statutes, have been laid open to the view of all created intelligences. The working out of Satan's rule in contrast with the government of God has been presented to the whole universe. Satan's own works have condemned him. God's wisdom, His justice, and His goodness stand fully vindicated. It is seen that all His dealings in the great controversy have been conducted with respect to the eternal good of His people and the good of all the worlds that He has created. "All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord; and Thy saints shall bless Thee." Psalm 145:10. The history of sin will stand to all eternity as a witness that with the existence of God's law is bound up the happiness of all the beings He has created. With all the facts of the great controversy in view, the whole universe, both loyal and rebellious, with one accord declare: "Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints."

Before the universe has been clearly presented the great sacrifice made by the Father and the Son in man's behalf. The hour has come when Christ occupies His rightful position and is glorified above principalities and powers and every name that is named. It was for the joy that was set before Him--that He might bring many sons unto glory--that He endured the cross and despised the shame. And inconceivably great as was the sorrow and the shame, yet greater is the joy and the glory. He looks upon the redeemed, renewed in His own image, every heart bearing the perfect impress of the divine, every face reflecting the likeness of their King. He beholds in them the result of the travail of His soul, and He is satisfied. Then, in a voice that reaches the assembled multitudes of the righteous and the wicked, He declares: "Behold the purchase of My blood! For these I suffered, for these I died, that they might dwell in My presence throughout eternal ages." And the song of praise ascends from the white-robed ones about the throne: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Revelation 5:12.

Notwithstanding that Satan has been constrained to acknowledge God's justice and to bow to the supremacy of Christ, his character remains unchanged. The spirit of rebellion, like a mighty torrent, again bursts forth. Filled with frenzy, he determines not to yield the great controversy. The time

has come for a last desperate struggle against the King of heaven. He rushes into the midst of his subjects and endeavors to inspire them with his own fury and arouse them to instant battle. But of all the countless millions whom he has allured into rebellion, there are none now to acknowledge his supremacy. His power is at an end. The wicked are filled with the same hatred of God that inspires Satan; but they see that their case is hopeless, that they cannot prevail against Jehovah. Their rage is kindled against Satan and those who have been his agents in deception, and with the fury of demons they turn upon them.

Saith the Lord: "Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. They shall bring thee down to the pit." "I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. . . . I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. . . . I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. . . . Thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more." Ezekiel 28:6-8, 16-19.

"Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." "The indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and His fury upon all their armies: He hath utterly destroyed them, He hath delivered them to the slaughter." "Upon the wicked He shall rain quick burning coals, fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." Isaiah 9:5; 34:2; Psalm 11:6, margin. Fire comes down from God out of heaven. The earth is broken up. The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth. Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven. The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. Malachi 4:1; 2 Peter 3:10. The earth's surface seems one molten mass--a vast, seething lake of fire. It is the time of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men--"the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion." Isaiah 34:8.

The wicked receive their recompense in the earth. Proverbs 11:31. They "shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord

of hosts." Malachi 4:1. Some are destroyed as in a moment, while others suffer many days. All are punished "according to their deeds." The sins of the righteous having been transferred to Satan, he is made to suffer not only for his own rebellion, but for all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit. His punishment is to be far greater than that of those whom he has deceived. After all have perished who fell by his deceptions, he is still to live and suffer on. In the cleansing flames the wicked are at last destroyed, root and branch--Satan the root, his followers the branches. The full penalty of the law has been visited; the demands of justice have been met; and heaven and earth, beholding, declare the righteousness of Jehovah.

Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. For six thousand years he has wrought his will, filling the earth with woe and causing grief throughout the universe. The whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain. Now God's creatures are forever delivered from his presence and temptations. "The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they [the righteous] break forth into singing." Isaiah 14:7. And a shout of praise and triumph ascends from the whole loyal universe. "The voice of a great multitude," "as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings," is heard, saying: "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Revelation 19:6.



# **The Sufferings of Christ**

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the sin of the world.

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consider that each action He has taken is to  
bring to an awareness of His great love  
which in turn will help you to see your great  
need. It is only in the revelation of such  
deep love as manifested in the cross of  
Christ that can create an awareness in man  
of his natural selfishness that will lead him  
to destruction. May you look upon the  
Saviour and find in Him one altogether  
lovely and that has given everything  
possible to save your soul.