

at the entrance of the garden were eight in number. **Sit ye here.** Perhaps as a guard against surprise; perhaps because they were not fitted to enter into sympathy with his sorrow as the three others. **While I shall pray.** He felt the need of communion with the Father to support him in the approaching crisis. 1. If our Saviour needed the help of prayer, how much more must we!

33. He taketh with him. As a nearer guard, and to give him the sympathy of their presence and their prayers while he prayed. Luke 22. 40. "In great trials we love solitude, but to have friends near."—*Bengel*. **Peter and James and John.** The three who were recognized as leading spirits among the twelve; who had witnessed him as transfigured; and who could sympathize thoroughly with the rest sympathize with him. **Sore amazed.** The word expresses an indefinable awe and terror of soul. **Very heavy.** This word is somewhat like our expression "a crushing sorrow." We can only hint at the elements which may have entered into this agony. 1. The consciousness of the near approach of death to one in the prime of manhood, in vigorous health, and in fullness of intellectual powers. 2. The foreknowledge of all the physical tortures of the thorn, the scourge, the nails, and the cross, harder to bear than their experience. 3. The full prevision of the mental anguish, in the kiss of Judas, the denial of Peter, the desertion of all the disciples, the undeserved malice of the people, the perversion of all his good into evil, the consciousness of the purest aims misrepresented and misunderstood. 4. The fact of his own freedom to escape from the terrible fate, the feeling that by an act of the will he might avoid it, may have caused a momentary conflict between the higher will and the human nature, ended by the entire submission to the redemptive plan. 5. The temptings of Satan, (Luke 4. 13; Heb. 2. 18.) who always takes advantage of hours of weakness. 6. A mystery, which human thought cannot fathom, of the world's guilt pressing down upon his pure soul.

34. My soul is exceeding sorrowful. "The soul here is the human soul, the seat of the affections and passions, and not the higher spiritual being."—*Afford*. **Unto death.** Such an agony as would destroy life if it were not alleviated, or divine support bestowed. **Watch with me.** So that he might be conscious of their sympathy, up to the measure of their power to bestow it. 2. We may not suffer for others but we can feel for them.

35. Went forward. Deeper into the recesses of the garden, that he might pray alone. **Fell on the ground.** In the attitude of earnest prayer, with the head upon the ground. **If it were possible.** If the great ends of redemption, for which he had become incarnate, could be accomplished in any other way than that of the cross. **The hour might pass.** The trials which that hour was to usher in, the betrayal, the wrongs, the death, with its sufferings, physical, mental, and spiritual.

36. Abba Father. The two words are the same, one Chaldee, the other Greek; (though probably the prayer was uttered in Hebrew.) They mean "Father," and together were used as a term of endearment. 3. In his deepest agony our Master recognized God as his Father. **All things are possible.** God could have permitted his Son to escape the sufferings of the cross; but the question is whether in any other way could the redemption of men have been secured. 4. We should never seek our own desires apart from the best interests of the divine government. **Take away this cup.** The totality of the Saviour's sufferings is represented as a bitter cup presented to his lips by the divine will. **Not what I will, but what thou wilt.** Under all the shrinking of his human nature, there lay the will in perfect accord with the divine purpose. 5. Note in our great Exemplar's prayer: 1. Its lowliness. 2. Its directness. 3. Its earnestness. 4. Its trustfulness. 5. Its submissiveness.

37. Findeth them sleeping. Not in deep slumber, but a drowsy condition. Luke says, "sleeping for sorrow," that is, as the result of the excitement and anxiety which they had felt since he had forewarned them of his own death and their forsaking of him. "While they forget sorrow in sleep, he conquers it by prayer." **Saith unto Peter.** The leader of the apostles, and the one who had so lately vaunted his own faithfulness. **Couldst not thou watch.** He had not asked them to wrestle, but only to watch. **One hour.** Perhaps a limit, more or less definite, of the duration of the agony; or an allusion to the time, "one hour," referring to the period or event.

38. Watch ye and pray. 6. Prayer without watching is hypocrisy; and watching without prayer is presumption.—*W. Jay*. **Enter into temptation.** "Let you place yourselves under the power of the tempter by your own neglect." **The spirit... is ready.** "Is willing." [Revised Version. See also Matt. 26. 41.] **Flesh is weak.** A sentence applying both to Christ and the disciples. In both, the spirit was in accord with God's will; while the flesh or physical nature was shrinking. But Christ's will conquered the flesh; while the disciples' bodily weakness overbore their will.

39, 40. Again... prayed. Luke adds, that he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood. **Same words.** The same words, but with increased intensity, and more complete renunciation of his own human will to the divine, as may be seen in Matt. 26. 42. 7. Learn the example of persevering prayer. **Asleep again.** And losing the opportunity to help their Lord in his supreme need. **For their eyes.** As if vainly trying to keep their eyes open, while slowly yielding to the physical weariness. **Neither wist they.** "They knew not." Wist is an old English word. They had no answer, from mingled sleepiness and consciousness of error.

41, 42. The third time. After a third interval of prayer. **Sleep on now.** I believe