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CHRIST'S AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

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The garden of Gethsemane is perhaps the spot on the whole earth round which the most solemn, and the most sacred, associations gather. Calvary is hardly so awful. With the cross we are apt to associate nothing but death, suffering, ignominious dying. We see merely the body racked with pain, the external signs of torture, the symbols of justice, or at least of authority; the stages, or progress, of dissolution, and at last the solemn ensigns of death itself—We do not see beyond these, except, when the heavens being darkened, and the rocks rending, and the graves opened, the cry was heard: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—If we analyse, or study, the import of that cry, we shall reach the same conclusions that the garden of Gethsemane points to. But it appears to us there is something still more awful, something still more significant, in the garden, in what is called Christ's passion there, in the degree of agony endured in Gethsemane, or in the prolonged extent, at least, of that agony, than in all the sufferings upon the accursed tree. Undoubtedly, the climax of Christ's sufferings was when he cried: "Eli, Eli, lamasa-tachthani?" That was, perhaps, the most excruciating moment of Christ's sufferings—while, undoubtedly, the death of Christ was the expiatory part of his work. The shedding his blood was the direct means of remission. It was the symbolical representation of the sinner's desert, of the sinner's punishment, the penalty due to sin. It was the death of

Christ instead of the death of the sinner. But Christ's *agony of soul* was the real offering for sin: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin:" or, as it is in the margin: "When his soul shall make an offering for sin." Christ's soul could be an offering for sin only by his enduring the wrath of God. And it was in the garden particularly that we see that wrath endured. It was suffered upon the cross. It was it which prompted or elicited the cry: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But we see the struggle more in Gethsemane. We see the contest more there under the wrath of God. There are more external indications of it—more expressive marks of it—the cries and tears and prayers; so much so, that we do not speak of Christ's passion upon the cross, although there was his passion there, but in the garden. One may well be afraid to tread within the garden—to disturb its awful precincts—to intrude upon the mysterious sufferer—to listen to those bursts of agony, and attempt to catch their meaning—to give a language to that sweat that breaks from every pore, and in great drops of blood falls down to the ground. But here a lesson is to be learned if any where: here there was a meaning if ever there was a meaning in any thing that was transacted on this earth: this was not an empty meaningless event: no voice was heard but God's here: this was the event for which all previous events were transacted—for which the world was suffered to exist—the key-stone of time: this was the spot on which centuries waited: it was God's great scene of action: this was the time and the scene of occurrences on which the world's history was suspended, and