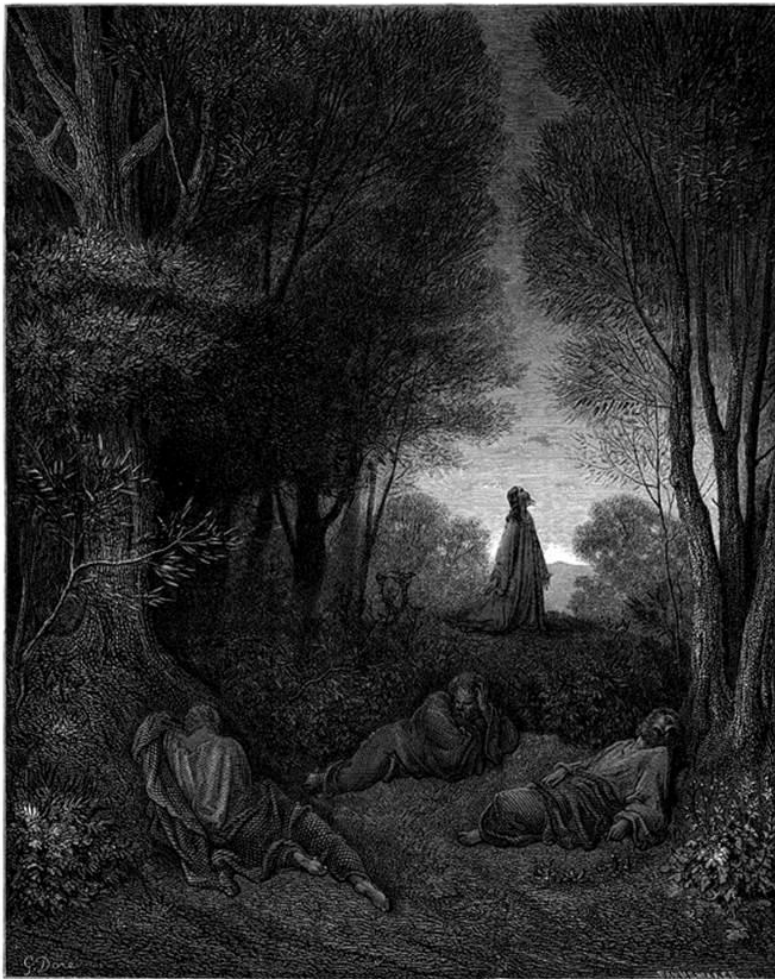


Prayer of Jesus Christ in the Garden of Gethsemani



“Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me, nevertheless, not as I will but as Thou wilt.”
(*St. Matt. xxvi. 39.*)

“Such was the prayer of Jesus Christ; a prayer short and simple, but which conveys many wise lessons for our instruction. Let us therefore, often meditate on these words: ‘*My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.*’ St. Leo the Great says: ‘Thy will be done’ is the salvation of the whole body. It is that word which has instructed all the faithful, inspired the love of all the holy confessors of the true faith, crowned all the martyrs, and fortified all the virgins of the Church. Let all the faithful, therefore, learn this sublime and truly divine prayer, so that when they are in any adversity whatsoever, they may overcome it by submission to the holy will of God.

‘Stay you here and watch with me,’ which words are thus paraphrased by Cornelius Lapidus:

Stay ye here, My disciples, and look upon your Master in His agony, and see how He has recourse to His Eternal Father. Watch Me, that you may behold the intensity of My sufferings. See into what state of extreme desolation I am cast, that you may learn how to act in your own future hours of sorrow. Finally, observe Me, and watch with Me, uniting your prayers with Mine, that you may give Me some little comfort in My extreme sufferings. But Jesus did not receive even this small relief from His disciples.

Saint Dionysius Carthusianus, commenting on these words, ‘Not as I will, but as Thou wilt,’ says: Behold how humble, how sweet and affectionate is this prayer. It is, therefore, the very prayer that we should use in our hours of trial and affliction; because at such times we should humble ourselves before God, ask the graces of which we stand in need, and submit ourselves to His holy will.”

Meditations on the Suffering of Our Lord, Rev. Perinaldo, 1886.

Imprimatur, Michael Augustine, Archbishop of New York,

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Of Judgment and the Punishment of Sins

by Thomas a Kempis

1. In all things look to thy end, and how thou shalt be able to stand before a severe Judge, to Whom nothing is hidden: who takes no bribes, nor receives excuses, but will judge that which is just.

O most wretched and foolish sinner, what answer wilt thou make to God, Who knows all thy evils? thou who sometimes art afraid of the looks of an angry man.

Why dost thou not provide for thyself against the Day of Judgment, when no man can be excused or defended by another: but every one shall have enough to do to answer for himself.

At present thy labour is profitable: thy tears are acceptable; thy sighs will be heard, and thy sorrow is satisfactory, and may purge away thy sins.

2. The patient man hath a great and wholesome purgatory, who receiving injuries is more concerned at another's malice than his own injury; who willingly prays for his adversaries, and from his heart forgives offences; who delays not to ask forgiveness of others; who is easier moved to compassion than to anger; who frequently useth violence to himself, and labours to bring the flesh wholly under subjection to the spirit.

It is better now to purge away our sins, and cut off our vices, than to reserve them to be purged hereafter. Truly we deceive ourselves through the inordinate love we bear to our flesh.

3. What other things shall that fire feed on but thy sins? The more thou sparest thyself now, and followest the flesh, the more grievously shalt thou suffer hereafter, and the more fuel dost thou lay up for that fire.

In what things a man has more sinned, in those shall he be more heavily punished. There the slothful shall be pricked forward with burning goad, and the glutton will be tormented with extreme hunger and thirst. There the luxurious and the lovers of pleasures will be covered all over with burning pitch and stinking brimstone, and the envious, like mad dogs, will howl for grief.

4. There is no vice which will not have its proper torment. There the proud will be filled with all confusion; and the covetous be straitened with most miserable want. There one hour of suffering will be more sharp, than a hundred years here spent in the most rigid penance.

There is no rest, no comfort for the damned: but here there is sometimes intermission of labour, and we receive comfort from our friends.

Be careful at present, and sorrowful for thy sins: that in the day of judgment thou mayest be secure with the blessed. For then the just shall stand with great constancy against those that afflicted and oppressed them.

Then will he stand to judge: who now humbly submits himself to the judgment of men. Then the poor and humble will have great confidence: and the proud will fear on every side.

5. Then will it appear that he was wise in this world, who learned for Christ's sake to be a fool and despised. Then all tribulation suffered with patience will be pleasing, and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.

Then every devout person will rejoice, and the irreligious will be sad. Then the flesh that has been mortified shall triumph more than if it had always been pampered in delights.

Then shall the mean habit shine, and fine clothing appear contemptible. Then shall the poor cottage be more commended than the gilded palace. Then constant patience shall more avail than all the power of the world. Then simple obedience shall be more prized than all worldly craftiness.

6. Then a pure and good conscience shall be a greater subject of joy, than learned philosophy. Then the contempt of riches shall outweigh all the treasures of worldlings. Then wilt thou be more comforted that thou hast prayed devoutly, than that thou hast fared daintily.

Then wilt thou rejoice more that thou hast kept silence, than that thou hast made long discourses, or talked much. Then will holy works be of greater value, than many fair words. Then will a strict life and hard penance, be more pleasing, than all the delights of the earth.

Learn at present to suffer in little things, that then thou mayest be delivered from more grievous sufferings. Try first here what thou canst suffer hereafter. If thou canst now endure so little, how wilt thou be able to bear everlasting torments?

If a little suffering now makes thee so impatient, what will hell fire do hereafter? Surely thou canst not have thy pleasure in this world, and afterwards reign with Christ.

7. If to this day thou hadst always lived in honours and pleasures: what would it avail thee, if thou wert now in a moment to die? All then is vanity, but to love God, and to serve Him alone.

For he that loves God with his whole heart, neither fears death, nor punishment, nor judgment, nor hell: because perfect love gives secure access to God. But he that is yet delighted with sin, no wonder if he be afraid of death and judgment.

It is good, however, that if love, as yet, reclaim thee not from evil, at least the fear of hell restrain thee. But he that lays aside the fear of God, will not be able to continue long in good, but will quickly fall into the snares of the devil.



Practical Reflections:

How powerfully do the fear of God's judgments, and the dread of a miserable eternity, act as a restraint upon our passions, arrest the sallies of temper and oblige us to withdraw from the allurements and pleasures of sin! To what end (let us say to ourselves in time of temptation) is the criminal pleasure of this sin of revenge, impurity, anger, injustice, or lying?--to afford myself a momentary gratification. And should I die immediately after having yielded, without repentance, without the sacraments, (which may happen, and which does happen to thousands) where will terminate this sinful enjoyment?--in a miserable eternity. A momentary pleasure, an eternity of pain! No, I will not expose myself to the danger of being miserable for ever, for the sake of a moment of pleasure. How true it is, according to the wise man, that to avoid sin, at least habitual sin, we must remember our last end. Did we frequently and seriously reflect that we must one day give an exact account of our consciences, of the conduct of our whole lives, of all our sins, to a Judge Who knoweth and remembereth all things; Who would not be terrified at the apprehension of judgment, and of the terrible account we are then to give, and would not watch over himself, and endeavour to correct all his faults? Let us be convinced that the sure way to avoid condemnation in the next life, is to condemn and punish ourselves in this.

Prayer:

O Sovereign Judge of the living, and of the dead, Who, at the moment of our death, wilt decide our eternal doom, remember that thou art our Saviour as well as our Judge, and that as much as our sins have provoked Thee to wrath, Thy sacred wounds have inclined Thee to mercy. Look therefore on those wounds inflicted on Thee, for our sins, and on the blood which Thou hast shed for their expiation, and by those precious pledges of salvation, we conjure Thee to pardon our manifold transgressions. Amen.

†††JMJ†††

Thank you for visiting <http://www.JMJsite.com> and please tell others about this website. I pray that you will live in such a way that the Good God will always constantly Bless you while He keeps you from all sin. May Jesus, Mary, and Saint Joseph obtain for you every grace you need to live and die in the True Church in the state to sanctifying grace – having obtained that degree of holiness it is God's most holy will that you obtain.