

TIME OF CHRIST

“Satan had questioned whether Jesus was the Son of God. In his summary dismissal he had proof that he could not gainsay. Divinity flashed through suffering humanity. Satan had no power to resist the command. Writhing with humiliation and rage, he was forced to withdraw from the presence of the world's Redeemer. **Christ's victory was as complete as had been the failure of Adam.**

“So we may resist temptation, and force Satan to depart from us. Jesus gained the victory through submission and faith in God, and by the apostle He says to us, ‘Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.’ James 4:7, 8. We cannot save ourselves from the tempter's power; he has conquered humanity, and when we try to stand in our own strength, we shall become a prey to his devices; but ‘the name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.’ Proverbs 18:10. Satan trembles and flees before the weakest soul who finds refuge in that mighty name.

“After the foe had departed, Jesus fell exhausted to the earth, with the pallor of death upon His face. **The angels of heaven had watched the conflict, beholding their loved Commander as He passed through inexpressible suffering to make a way of escape for us.** He had **endured the test**, greater than we shall ever be called to endure. **The angels now ministered to the Son of God** as He lay like one dying. He was strengthened with food, comforted with the message of His Father's love and the assurance that all heaven triumphed in **His victory**. Warming to life again, His great heart goes out in sympathy for man, and He goes forth to complete the work He has begun; to rest not until the foe is vanquished, and our fallen race redeemed.” *Desire of Ages*, 130, 131.

TIME OF TROUBLE

“Yet to human sight it will appear that the people of God must soon seal their testimony with their blood as did the martyrs before them. They themselves begin to fear that the Lord has left them to fall by the hand of their enemies. It is a time of fearful agony. **Day and night they cry unto God for deliverance.** The wicked exult, and the jeering cry is heard: ‘Where now is your faith? Why does not God deliver you out of our hands if you are indeed His people?’ But the waiting ones remember Jesus dying upon Calvary's cross and the chief priests and rulers shouting in mockery: ‘He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him.’ Matthew 27:42. **Like Jacob, all are wrestling with God.** Their countenances express their internal struggle. Paleness sits upon every face. Yet they cease not their earnest intercession.

“Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ's patience. With sympathizing tenderness, angels have witnessed their distress and have heard their prayers. **They are waiting the word of their Commander to snatch them from their peril. But they must wait yet a little longer.** The people of God **must drink of the cup and be baptized with the baptism.** The very delay, so painful to them, is the best answer to their petitions. As they endeavor to wait trustingly for the Lord to work they are led to exercise faith, hope, and patience, which have been too little exercised during their religious experience. Yet for the elect's sake the time of trouble will be shortened. ‘Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him? . . . I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.’ Luke 18:7, 8. The end will come more quickly than men expect. The wheat will be gathered and bound in sheaves for the garner of God; the tares will be bound as fagots for the fires of destruction.” *The Great Controversy*, 630.

“With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, **throng**s of evil men are about to **rush upon their prey**, when, lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness.

“By the people of God a voice, clear and melodious, is heard, saying, ‘Look up,’ and lifting their eyes to the heavens, they behold the bow of promise. The black, angry clouds that covered the firmament are parted, and like Stephen they look up steadfastly into heaven and see the glory of God and the Son of man seated upon His throne. In His divine form they discern the marks of His humiliation; and from His lips they hear the request presented before His Father and the holy angels: ‘I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am.’ John 17:24. Again a voice, musical and triumphant, is heard, saying: ‘They come! they come! holy, harmless, and undefiled. They have kept the word of My patience; they shall walk among the angels;’ and the pale, quivering lips of those who have held fast their faith utter a **shout of victory**.” *The Great Controversy*, 635, 636.

“God often brings people to a crisis to show them their own weakness and to point them to the Source of strength. If they pray and watch unto prayer, fighting bravely, their weak points will become their strong points. Jacob’s experience contains many valuable lessons for us. God taught Jacob that in his own strength he could never gain the victory, that he must wrestle with God for strength from above.

“All night Jacob wrestled with the Angel. Finally the strong wrestler was weakened by a touch on his thigh. He was now disabled and suffering the keenest pain, but he would not loose his hold. All penitent and broken, he clung to the Angel, . . . pleading for a blessing. He must have the assurance that his sin was pardoned. His determination grew stronger, his faith more earnest and persevering, until the very last. The Angel tried to release Himself; He urged, ‘Let me go, for the day breaketh,’ but Jacob answered, “I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.’

“Had this been a boastful, presumptuous confidence, Jacob would have been instantly destroyed; but his was the assurance of one who confesses his own unworthiness, yet trusts to the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God. . . . Through humiliation, repentance, and self-surrender this sinful, erring mortal prevailed with the Majesty of heaven. He had fastened his trembling grasp on the promises of God, and the heart of infinite love could not turn away the sinner’s plea.

“As an evidence that Jacob had been forgiven, his name was changed from one that was a reminder of his sin to one that commemorated his victory. ‘Thy name,’ said the Angel, ‘shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.’

“Shall we obtain strength from God, and win victory after victory, or shall we try in our own strength, and at last fall back defeated, worn out by vain efforts? Let us, by unreserved surrender to God, obtain the power that everyone must have who conquers in the battle against evil.—Manuscript 2, 1903.” *Christ Triumphant*, 89.