Conflict of the Ages #21 and 22
By Lloyd Anderson

Lloyd Anderson:

We come in our studies today to the subject of Jesus Christ being attacked by the devil in order to keep Christ from fulfilling the purpose for which he came into the world. And that is to go to the cross of Calvary for you and me. And I'm sure as we come to our study today the devil has under attack the Lord Jesus Christ and we want to strive and our study today and next study we have together to point out the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. Genesis 3:15 to show that Christ purpose in life was to do only the will of his own Heavenly Father to show that Christ gave his life voluntarily for you and me. I am sure that we must remember that in this conflict of the ages which began even before the Garden of Eden and has continued righteousness versus unrighteous. Satan as over against God and His purpose all of this has been going on. You remember the devil tried to keep Jesus from being born into the world. We see this throughout the pages of the Old Testament in the family of Adam in the family of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Joseph. All of these areas the devil attacks and tried to keep Jesus Christ from coming into the world. But my friend God's purposes would not be abrogated and set to one side and Christ did come into the world and he was born of the Virgin Mary. But after he came into the world then the devil shifted his strategy and he tried to keep Jesus from going to the cross. And you remember he tried to bring about the death of all Hebrew male children under the age of two. He tried to put Jesus Christ to death in the waves and the storm of the Sea of Galilee. He tried to get Jesus Christ to be stoned to death by the Jewish people.
And you remember when he said I am the Father are one they picked up stones to stone him to death. And Jesus simply faded away and got out of their grasp and he was gone and the devil is busy trying to get rid of the Lord Jesus Christ and to keep him from going to the cross. Now we study together the matter of the garden of Gethsemane and the judgment hall in which Jesus Christ stood before Pontius Pilot in Luke Chapter 22 is our study beginning with verse 39 nine down diverse 36 a tremendous passage and we're going to be reading that in just a moment. Luke 22 beginning with verse 39 it is said that at a great European flower show in Germany there were displayed millions of flowers an endless profusion of color and fragrance and beauty and among all of these beautiful flowers the most highly prized were the Alpine flowers that came from the mountains. These were the product of winter and storm which had been perfected in their beauty by the struggle with Stern and savage in nature the last earthly hours of the Lord Jesus Christ were very very bitter and they were cruel and unyielding. But by his submission to the good and acceptable and perfect will of God he received such enduring strength and matchless beauty that he alone received the praise and the honour and the glory.

Now in Luke Chapter 22 we find Jesus Christ is under attack and we come out to the garden of Gethsemane. You remember the garden was on the way to Bethany where Jesus was often a guest in the home of Lazarus and Mary and Martha and such a quiet shaded place provided rest for Christ and His disciples in route the gnarled olive tree is where conducive to peace and solitude. And it was a place adaptable for private and undisturbed prayer. Just off the beaten path of traffic and in Luke 22 beginning with verse 39 the scripture says as his want Jesus came to the garden of Gethsemane with all of these advantages beckoning. It is little wonder that it was the
custom of Jesus to enter linger meditate and pray in that beautiful garden. He needed a place where he could commune and converse with his heavenly father. A place for retirement and refreshment. And he told his disciples pray that ye enter not into temptation. You have that here in Luke 22 beginning with verse 39. The disciples were soon to be in the presence of the devil and therefore Jesus cautions them to pray that the trials and afflictions that they are about to see and experience will not tempt or influence them to deny Christ. Matthew account adds, sit. You here he said. Now this suggests that before he would go on to pray they were to wait for him and sit there. They were to stay close together perhaps even forming a circle in a united common bond of prayer. Now Matthew speaking about this same episode that you have here in Luke 22 of the garden of Gethsemane beginning with verse 39. Matthew also records that Peter, James and John went a little farther with Jesus before they were asked to remain behind and pray perhaps Jesus wanted them to be near enough to behold his agony and thus be able to compare it with his glory as they had seen it on the mount of transfiguration and thus be kept in a special way from the temptation to deny Christ and then the scripture says in Luke 22 39 on the verse 46 that he was withdrawn from them.

Now Jesus was fully aware that the time had come for the devil to return to tempt him as he had threatened to do in the wilderness. He knew that the devil would make again that combined attack on the three levels of body soul and spirit and as a man he needed the prayers of his disciples in order to withstand the adversary's attack. And so the scripture says that he kneeled down and he prayed. The other gospels report that Jesus fell on his face an interesting way of putting it. There is no contradiction. For he probably did both in the fervently of his prayer and in the depths of his sorrow kneeling he would fall forward on his face and act which denoted the
deepest anguish and grief a posture of designated the most earnest entreaty before the father. And then he cries out Father if they'll be willing remove this cup from me. This is the garden of Gethsemane experience oh the filial affection and the tenderness in that word father. And Mark in this particular episode links it with the word Abba which was the hallowed endeared form used by the Jewish people for the word father. And it shows that Jesus was expressing a great love and a great trust that existed between him and his heavenly father. Now in this prayer is seen at once the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. He offers a cry such it was never before uttered no one of the Evangelist. Matthew Mark Luke and John seem so definitely referred to by the tears that accompanied this cry that seems so definitely referred to by the apostle Paul. You remember he filled the silent night with his crying and he watered the cold earth with his tears more precious than the dew of Mount Hermon or any moisture next to his own blood that ever fell on God's Earth since the creation of the world.

His tears in the garden of Gethsemane now as a man. We must remember that Jesus naturally shrank from human suffering as a son. His one deep desire was to do the will of his heavenly father. Now there are several interpretations for the Word Cup. Some believe that when he spoke of the cup being passed from him. Some think it was the pain of his body beneath which he feared he would succumb. Others believe that it was his dread of being made the bearer of all human sin. Others feel that it came to mean his dread of being separated from God for even a very short time. And this probably seems to be the most plausible and acceptable interpretation of the three. Now the cup was a word that denoted suffering its dregs consisted of God's judgment upon man for sin and to make full atonement for sin. There had to be suffering and there had to be pain and there had to be death. This Jesus knew full well having planned that thus
with the father and while Jesus cried back his divine nature earnestly cried on for he desired from the depths of his heart to do only the will of God who had sent him into the world.

And so we read that there appeared an angel after he had prayed strengthening him. It would seem that Jesus was about to be overwhelmed mark in his record of the same episode and Gethsemane speaks of Jesus being saw amazed or stunned sorrowful unto death. It could very well be that all of the demons of hell were with one concerted movement set against Jesus Christ and that this tremendous power was enough to crush every breath from his body. Indeed this would be Satan's intention a death by suffocation a death by natural causes. Now some question that an angel could strengthen or comfort one could not have strengthened him as a God. But he also suffered as a perfect man. It was his human nature that suffered and man can be comforted if need be by the angels who minister unto man and this particular angel brought the answer to the prayer he had uttered and the cup was not to be removed from him. But he was to be given strength in order to drink it to its deepest dregs and so he was an agony Albert Barnes that great Bible Commentary.

Taylor has said at this point the word agony is taken from the anxiety and the effort and the strong emotion of the wrestler is about to engage in a mighty wrestling struggle. And the same word is used here. Here it denotes that extreme anguish of the mind of Christ. It is a conflict of human nature beginning to sink with the prospect of deep and overwhelming odds. The denseness and the nearness of demons lost their hold upon Christ in the garden of Gethsemane and he emerged from the struggle victorious and with the marks of the battle upon him there was sweat. The result of physical strain and there was blood which was the result of his mental and
emotional agony on the cross. Then in Luke Chapter 22 and in verse 63 you have this interesting word brought to your attention and the men but held Jesus mocked him and they smote him. Now you see in the garden of Gethsemane the devil was doing his best to put Jesus to death before he could ever go to the cross. The pressure upon him was so tremendous that out through his pores instead of perspiration there came blood and I want to tell you that a man is very very very very ill when he sweats blood instead of perspiration and then when you come to look 22:63 you begin to see that when Jesus stood before the judgment in the judgment Hall before Pontius Pilot and Caiaphas and all of these men before whom he stood in judgment you see the cruelty of man then you see the devil moving men to try to put Jesus prematurely to death before he could even get to the cross now in spite of great preparation.

There was very little commotion in the garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was betrayed and made a prisoner. Some Bible teachers think that the mixed multitude that arrested him might have numbered several hundred men although they represented all classes. They were certainly united in one common cause and that was the arrest of Jesus Christ when Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss. He number one. Desecrating a sacred privilege. Number two he abused a badge of friendship. And number three he misused a token of love. But Jesus met his enemies with friendliness and poise and courage and he exercised pity and sympathy and mercy and healing while his enemies burned with hatred toward him. Now Satan's character the character of the devil is clearly displayed in the hours that followed the arrest of Jesus Christ. The devil is a coward. He performed his dastardly work in the hours of darkness resorting to force and arms. He ignored the law which declared a prisoner inviolate until he had been charged by having Jesus bound and led away. You see he was guilty before he was proven to be guilty. Satan is
conceited. He easily managed to have Jesus stand before Annas in an unauthorized trial. The devil is not only a coward and conceited and a cheat because he arranged for the verdict to be given at the illegal trial before Caiaphas and those members of the Jewish Sanhedrin who had been notified.

Now they had convened their meeting and the priest palace instead of in the council hall where it was quickly and legally confirmed and an early morning session. Jesus Christ was placed on trial by a conniver he put Jesus on trial. Did Caiaphas before Peter shutting his eyes to the truth thus having managed to have Jesus renounced by one of his own disciples and then Satan is not only a coward and filled with conceit and cheating but he is also very very clever. You see his strategy now as he tries to do away with Jesus before Jesus can get to the cross. You see the trial that the devil plan before Pontius Pilot was unjust because it was based on false charges trumped up charges if you please. Jesus no one did not pervert the nation of Israel is the leaders of Israel said he did. Number two he did not refuse to pay his tribute to Caesar. Number three he did not seek to be made their King number four. He was not a malafactor. Number five he did not pretend he was the son of God but he declared that he was the son of God. And number six he did not say that he would destroy the temple of God but he did say that he would destroy the temple of his body. He would raise it up the third day. You see now Jesus is standing before this tribunal in an unlawful illegal trial. And the devil is doing everything he can to do away with Christ while we're going to come to that and another study. But certainly you can see the conflict of the ages the pressure upon Christ to get rid of him before he can go to his destiny and which was to go to the cross to die for you and me.
Now if Jesus Christ had not gone to the cross then everything for which he had come into the world would have been disannulled so desperate was the devil that he did everything he possibly could do to get rid of the Son of God.

Our Heavenly Father we thank thee for the privilege of serving the Lord Jesus Christ and we asked thy blessing upon thy word to our hearts in Jesus name we pray amen.

[Lloyd Anderson:]

The interesting thing about our studies together in this series beginning in September and ending now in the last part of this month of November is the fact that we have to do with a conflict of the ages how that Satan has been peculiar lately and suddenly busy to thwart the purposes of God in every possible way. You remember before Jesus Christ was born into the world of the Virgin Mary the devil did everything in his power to keep Jesus Christ from being born into this world. He tried every ruse and every possible method and way by which it could be done. And you recall he moves into the family of Adam and Abraham Jacob and Joseph. The whole Hebrew race that kingly line of Judah and he even attacks the Virgin Mary in subtle ways in order to make her doubt the fulfillment of God's promise through her life. And then you remember when Jesus Christ was finally born then Satan opens up his attack in a different direction and that is to try to disannul the purposes of the Lord and keep Jesus Christ from going to the cross. And this of course is the purport of our study as we come to it today. Now we saw together how that Jesus
Christ in our last study before the Lord was in the garden of Gethsemane and how the devil tried to do everything he could to prematurely put Jesus to death in the garden of Gethsemane before he could go to the cross. And now we finally come to the cross of Calvary itself. But before we come to that I certainly like to have you remember me in prayer and I'll remember you in prayer. I realize that week after week we're talking to many many people who have great problems.

Some of you are in hospitals some of you are sick and you're in bed or you're convalescing. Some of you have marital difficulties emotional problems or whatever it may be. Certainly we want to remember you in prayer that the Lord Jesus Christ may be all and in all to you and to your life then we certainly would like to also have you remember Biola how we thank God for that tremendous institution that across the years has stood Foursquare for the things of the Word of God and for the things of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now I'm not only their Bible teacher and on the board of directors but I am a pastor and as a pastor I would like to say that Biola has meant a tremendous amount to me and to those to whom I Minister we thank God for a school that has never deviated from the truth in its seminary in its College in all areas of the school. We thank God for its faculty and for its leadership. And you pray with us. And when you sit down to write why not include a gift to the school because your gift is desperately needed. And I know God will bless you. I speak to you now as the pastor of a church then before we come to John chapter 19 for just a moment beginning with verse sixteen and I would turn with you I'm turning in my own Bible and I hope you are in yours to John chapter 19 and in the 19th chapter of the Gospel According to St John in verses 16 to 18 you will have the interesting presentation of the agony of Jesus Christ upon the cross.
Now I think we must remember that the agony of the Cross began on the way to Golgotha the place of a skull Jesus Christ bearing his cross went forth and Satan began here to show how truly cruel he can be for at least eight hours. Jesus had suffered cruelty in one form or another without rest or refreshment and his body was wracked with weakness and absolute exhaustion because it was the custom for the victim to carry his own cross. This added cruel weight was laid upon his shoulders. Tradition says that Jesus staggered and finally fell and it was at this point that Simon was drafted to help Jesus carry the cross. Now the account in the Gospel of Luke about Jesus and on his way to the Cross gives the implication that Simon took hold of the lower end of the Cross lifting it so that it no longer needed to be dragged along by Jesus Christ as he carried it. Now Simon was a Jew from North Africa who had no doubt come to Jerusalem for the Passover and when he arose that morning how little did he dream that the events of that day would preserve his name and human history. But in John nineteen verses 16 to 18 we read this interesting word then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified and they took Jesus and led him away. John nineteen and verse sixteen and he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha where they crucified him and two other with him on either side one and Jesus in the midst and pilot world a title and put it on the cross and the writing was Jesus of Nazareth the king of the Jews.

Now this is a tremendous passage. You see the cruelty of his pain. He was taken to the place of a skull the place of crucifixion is called by three different names but all of them mean the skull Calvary is Latin Cranium skull is Greek and Golgotha is Hebrew the exact site is not known though the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is said by many to be the place marked where Jesus died and rose again. There are many others who believe that Gordon's Calvary was the place
where Jesus Christ died up on the brow of the hill was laid to rest on the Sepulchre in the garden. And you have as you stand overlooking from the garden overlooking the new bus depot you see the cliff side that bears the features of a skull. Now you'll see that if you go to the Holy Land it's a tremendous experience. The scriptures do not call it a mount but a place it would appear that the rise was bare and treeless and perhaps bawled like a skull. They crucified him. The Scripture says this was a Roman form of capital punishment the victim's hands and feet were either tied by cords to the cross or they were fastened by nails driven through the flesh into the wood. The latter was the most cruel of course and that probably was the way Jesus was fastened as we read it in the Bible. Now Roman crosses were not permanently fixed on the ground while the cross lay flat on the ground. The individual was fastened to it and then the cross with its victim was lifted up and dropped with a cruel wrenching jolt into the place that was prepared for it. Now the scripture says that Jesus was in the midst he was the central figure on the central cross. If the place of the crucifixion is uncertain the position of Jesus on the cross is not. He was in the midst of transgressors. The other gospels record the actions of these two other men. One rejected Jesus Christ with his dying breath.

He was so close to salvation that he could literally see the cleansing blood of Christ as a dripped to the ground. But he refused to believe and he was lost. He wanted to be saved but he wanted to be saved apart from Jesus Christ. The other man the other thief recognized his own helplessness and he recognized his deep seated need everything but his heart and mouth was nailed to the cross. And with these two he confessed his sin and he literally asked for mercy. He was so close to everlasting punishment that he trusted in the suffering saviour and he was saved. Then beginning with verse 28 of John Chapter 19 you have his triumphant death. He cried out I thirst
and oh what a tremendous expression. This really is after this Jesus knowing that all things were
now accomplished that the Scripture might be fulfilled saith I thirst. Now that was set a vessel
full of vinegar and they filled a sponge with vinegar and put it upon hyssop and put it to his
mouth when Jesus therefore had received the vinegar. He said it is finished and he bowed his
head and gave up the ghost. Now Jesus said I thirst of the seven statements of Christ from the
cross.

Only two of them speak of the physical agony of Christ. Now this one I thirst speaks of the
agony of pain. And it was uttered for a definite purpose and yet he did not drink though he had
been without drink for 12 or 14 hours and only his lips and his mouth were moistened. Why then
did he cry out I thirst unless he had made known his thirst my friend no one would have known
that the prophecy in Psalm 69:21 was now fulfilled. He knowing the Scriptures was compelled to
cry out as he did the other cry of anguish was my God why have style forsaken me. It was a cry
of torment from a soul that was separated from God. It was a belated cry from a sinner still
blaming the Lord. It was the cry of a lost man who saw hell opening menacingly before him. Yes
Jesus dismissed his spirit with a loud cry. His legs did not need to be broken so that the body
would drop with an agonizing lurch sufficient to still the human heart the piercing of his side
prove that he had already dismissed his spirit and that he was already dead. The blood was
already decomposed the solid matter or the corpuscles had been separated from the colorless
lymph and blood mixed with water came out of his side when they put a spear into his side.

Now this would ordinarily not take place until 48 hours after death but Jesus Christ my friend
died when he wanted to die. He dismissed his spirit. He died for the sins of the whole world and
that includes you and me and my friend unless we believe in Christ under personal redemption. We do not have everlasting life. Yes the Lord Jesus Christ was slain in the mind of God before the foundation of the world. He must either be crowned or crucified by men. Even today the mind of God is to be seen everywhere but the heart of God was only revealed at the cross. When God turns his face away from men. Darkness is always the inevitable result yes. Jesus Christ suffered. Oh how he suffered at the cross. And my friend the devil was causing him to be ground through the millstones of anguish and agony for you and me. But oh how triumphant was his death and how glorious was his death. And you and I can readily believe that Jesus Christ won the victory over Satan once and for all when he died at the cross of Calvary. You see the conflict of the ages between the devil and Christ was now over as far as the cross was concerned because Christ now had gone to the cross and fulfilled his definite purpose for coming into the world. I'm sure the devil thinking that Jesus was now on the cross. Thought he had won a victory but actually he hadn't won a victory at all because this had always been the reason for which Jesus Christ came into the world to die for you and me. And so let's be thankful to God for all that he means to us through the death of Jesus on Calvary's cross. You and I have life only because we trust and believe by faith in him and we accept him as our own personal savior from sin.

Our Father we rejoice today for the privilege of knowing Jesus Christ. We thank Thee that he loves us and he gave himself for us. And we do earnestly beseech thee that I would undertake that Christ may be all in all and all of our lives. For we ask it in Jesus name and for his sake amen.
Isaac and Jacob were all buried there in the area of Hebron. Now whether this is the significance of the name or not Kergeth Arba. Hebron was rich in history. It had been the dwelling place of the friends of God in the past. Abraham Isaac and Jacob had lived there and in one of its caves called Machpelah all the patriarchs and their wives with the exception of Rachel were buried. Can't you imagine how Caleb treasured the promise of the Lord that he would receive Hebron one day while Israel wandered around in the wilderness for 40 years after that tragic refusal to trust God and Kadish Barnea. He kept the prize of his inheritance before him. And isn't it wonderful how Caleb lived past the age of 85 and yet he was strong in the things of God. Right down to the end of his life.