Matthew 26:30 when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives

We can only imagine how somber the mood and melancholy the melody of Christ's last mortal hymn. But we can surmise the message and words that were sung. According to the Passover custom, the last event was to sing Psalms 115-118 (See Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1: 744.). By tradition the psalms were more often sung than read. These sacred lyrics were indeed prophetic, for they include the phrases, 'The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?' and 'therefore shall I see *my desire* upon them that hate me' and 'The stone *which* the builders refused is become the head *stone* of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.' (Ps 118:6-7, 22-23)

"Many have recorded powerful experiences with hymns which have brought about conversion or increased testimony, or which have given comfort, courage, or strength by opening communication through the spirit. The Lord has said that 'the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me.' (D & C 25:12.) Hymn-singing, then, can be another form of communication with our Father in heaven. While we are used to thinking of singing hymns in church as another form of worship, praise, or supplication, we may not have realized that, like prayer, the communication can go in both directions: not only from us as an expression of praise, gratitude, worship, or pleading; but also to us as inspiration, guidance, comfort, or conversion. As the forces of the adversary seem to be marshalled in anticipation of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, so must we use every means available to us to fortify ourselves and our children. There is great power in the hymns of the Latter-day Saints. It is available to all, regardless of musical ability or training. Just as prayer is not limited to the articulate, neither is hymn experience limited to the musically articulate." (LaVonne VanOrden, comp., *Blessed by the Hymns*, Preface)

David B. Haight

"As deacons and teachers, we sat on the first row, prepared to pass the sacrament...Everyone was expected to sing the special sacrament hymn. Everyone did sing. Children were trained not only to be reverent but also to know some of the words of the most familiar sacrament songs...We were learning in our youth that in order to feel of the Spirit, we must experience a change in our hearts, and in order to be in harmony on this sacred occasion, we had to sing the sacrament hymn. As we sang the words, our souls were better prepared to understand this sacred ordinance. At the Last Supper the early apostles joined with the Savior in singing. Matthew records, 'And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives' ("Matt. 26:30Matthew 26:30). As we young boys would sing in sacrament meeting, the message of the words would be impressed upon our hearts. There comes to one's soul heavenly thoughts as

he joins in heavenly expressions coupled with heavenly melody." (*A Light unto the World*, 173.)

Matthew 26:33 Though all men shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended

Jeffrey R. Holland

"Peter was, in President Kimball's words, 'a diamond in the rough-a diamond that would need to be cut, trimmed, and polished by correction, chastisement, and trials-but nevertheless a diamond of real quality. The Savior knew this apostle could be trusted to receive the keys of the kingdom.' Time was short. Much had to be done in a matter of months. Jesus prepared Peter as quickly as possible for the call that was to come.

"...Peter had been certain that his strength was sufficient for such times; that if necessary he would withstand evil alone. Reassuringly he had said to Jesus, 'Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.' ("Matt. 26:33Matthew 26:33.) But in the kingdom of God, no man's strength is sufficient. This sobering, sorrowing realization-that he was not, of himself, capable of what God requires-was perhaps the final ingredient in Peter's short months of personal preparation." (*However Long and Hard the Road*, pp. 91, 95.)

Matthew 26:36 a place called Gethsemane

"Significantly, the greatest act of 'the true vine' took place at the 'mount of olives,' in a place called Gethsemane, meaning 'oil press,' though the Hebrew behind the first element of the name usually refers to a winepress (Matthew 26:36; Luke 22:39; John 18:1). There, pressed under the weight of the sins of the world, he shed blood at every pore (Luke 22:44; Mosiah 3:7; D&C 19:18), like a grape in the press." (Stephen D. Ricks and John W. Welch, eds., *The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive, the Bible, and Jacob 5*, 383.)

Matt 26:38 My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death

"For Latter-day Saints, Gethsemane was the scene of Jesus' greatest agony, even surpassing that which he suffered on the cross, an understanding supported by Mark's description of Jesus' experience (Mark 14:33-39).

"According to Luke 22:43-44, Jesus' anguish was so deep that 'his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground,' an observation that harmonizes with the view that Jesus suffered most in Gethsemane during his Atonement...About 125 B.C., a Book of Mormon king, Benjamin, recounted in an important address a prophecy of the coming messiah spoken to him by an angel during the previous night. Concerning the Messiah's mortal experience, the angel declared that 'he shall suffer temptations,

and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people' (Mosiah 3:7). The Doctrine and Covenants gives the following poignant words of the resurrected Jesus: 'Behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; ...which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit' (D&C 19:16, 18)." (*Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 1-4 vols., edited by Daniel H. Ludlow, 542.)

James E. Talmage

"Christ's agony in the garden is unfathomable by the finite mind, both as to intensity and cause. The thought that He suffered through fear of death is untenable. Death to Him was preliminary to resurrection and triumphal return to the Father from whom He had come, and to a state of glory even beyond what He had before possessed; and, moreover, it was within His power to lay down His life voluntarily.

"He struggled and groaned under a burden such as no other being who has lived on earth might even conceive as possible. It was not physical pain, nor mental anguish alone, that caused Him to suffer such torture as to produce an extrusion of blood from every pore; but a spiritual agony of soul such as only God was capable of experiencing.

"No other man, however great his powers of physical or mental endurance, could have suffered so; for his human organism would have succumbed, and syncope would have produced unconsciousness and welcome oblivion.

"In that hour of anguish Christ met and overcame all the horrors that Satan, 'the prince of this world' could inflict...In some manner, actual and terribly real though to man incomprehensible, the Savior took upon Himself the burden of the sins of mankind from Adam to the end of the world. Modern revelation assists us to partial understanding of the awful experience.

"In March 1830, the glorified Lord, Jesus Christ, thus spake: 'For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent, but if they would not repent, they must suffer even as I, which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit: and would that I might not drink the bitter cup and shrink-nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.' (DC 19:16-19)

"From the terrible conflict in Gethsemane, Christ emerged a victor. Though in the dark tribulation of that fearful hour He had pleaded that the bitter cup be removed from His lips, the request, however oft repeated, was always conditional; the accomplishment of

the Father's will was never lost sight of as the object of the Son's supreme desire." (*Jesus the Christ*, pp. 613-14.)

Matthew 26:39 O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me

Glenn L. Pace

"As a loving Father in Heaven viewed His Beloved Son suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Savior cried out, 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.' (Matthew 26:39.)

"Can you imagine the tears in the eyes of the Father when He had to deny His Son's request? Can you comprehend the sacred tears shed by the Father when He had to abandon the Savior on the cross and hear Him say, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' (Mark 15:34.) And yet, even as God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ wept, sinners laughed." (*Spiritual Plateaus*, 90.)

Neal A. Maxwell

"Will we, too, trust the Lord amid a perplexing trial for which we have no easy explanation? Do we understand-really comprehend-that Jesus knows and understands when we are stressed and perplexed? The complete consecration which effected the Atonement ensured Jesus' perfect empathy; He felt our very pains and afflictions before we did and knows how to succor us (see Alma 7:11-12; 2 Nephi 9:21). Since the most innocent one suffered the most, our own cries of 'Why?' cannot match His. But we can utter the same, submissive word: 'Nevertheless . . .' (Matthew 26:39)." (*If Thou Endure It Well*, 52.)

Matt 26:39 nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt

Neal A. Maxwell

"There are no Christlike prayers, however, that do not include, as did the Lord's Prayer, deep expressions of gratitude and appreciation to our Father in heaven along with a submittal to Him.

"So very much of pure prayer seems to be the process of first discovering, rather than requesting, the will of our Father in heaven and then aligning ourselves therewith. The 'Thy will be done' example in the Lord's Prayer reached its zenith in the Savior's later prayer in Gethsemane and in His still later submittal on the cross: 'Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.' ("Matt. 26:39Matthew 26:39.)

"When we do conform to His will, God will pour forth special blessings from heaven upon us." (*All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience*, 94.)

Neal A. Maxwell

"Such love of the Lord requires that we become trustingly patient as experiences come to us that God deems are for our good. We must, on this side of the veil, wait out the inexplicable things, maintaining serenity as the storms beat upon us and as the winds of derision howl. We must be willing to submit ourselves 'to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict' upon us. (Mosiah 3:19.) This is the unconditional submittal of the soul that lies at the very center of the first great commandment; there can be no holding back. Only as we thus come close to the living Lord can we honestly say, in the midst of the fiery trials of life, 'Not as I will, but as thou wilt.' (Matthew 26:39.)" (*Notwithstanding My Weakness*, 39.)

Matthew 26:40 he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep

Spencer W. Kimball

"That brings to my thought, am I asleep; are you asleep? Are you taking for granted all of the joys and blessings of this world without thinking of the eternities that are to come beyond? Are we asleep? Are we his disciples called by him to serve and to teach and to train, and are we asleep? That question always reaches into my heart. 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.'" (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, edited by Edward L. Kimball, 152.)

Matt 26:40 What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

"Loneliness can be a terrible thing.

"It can strike at the heart. It can lead us onto paths that put us in harm's way, both physically and spiritually. It can cause us anguish and pain...Think of the awful loneliness the Savior must have suffered during His final hours on earth. From the time He prophetically announced to His apostles at the Last Supper that one of them would betray Him until the time His mortal life came to a close on the cruel cross of Golgotha, He undoubtedly felt the piercing pangs of loneliness. Matthew leaves us with a brief description of how heavy His heart was as He arrived at the 'place called Gethsemane.'

'And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.' (Matt. 26:37-38.)

"But the three apostles probably were very tired from what had already transpired that evening and fell asleep. Jesus, upon finding them asleep, asked of Peter, 'What, could ye not watch with me one hour?' (Matt. 26:40.) What a sad, despairing inquiry! Even those closest to the Savior failed to give Him support in His loneliest hours." (Don't Languish in Loneliness, *LDS Church News*, 1995, 03/25/95.)

Matthew 26:42 if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done

Spencer W. Kimball

"In the first prayer he still seemed to have a glimmer of hope that something could be done about it, but in the latter it seemed to have been definitely settled in his mind that no adjustment could be made, and in order that the purposes of God might not fail he must drink the bitter cup." (*Conference Report, April 1945*, Afternoon Meeting 59.)