

THE PEACE THAT PASSES UNDERSTANDING

By JAMES WALSH

IT TAKES more than a few moments of passing reflection to weigh prayerfully what the modern exegete has to say to us about one of the most widely-known and quoted of all the Pauline Letters, 'to the Philippians', from which this article takes its title (Phil 4,7). The traditional view, taken for granted with hardly a dissentient voice across a millennium and a half, that it was written from Rome in the last days of the apostle's life, is no longer universally accepted. It could equally have been written from Ephesus, a decade earlier in his life as a missionary, when he faced death in Asia, following on his mission and letters to the Thessalonians and Galatians, and before he wrote to the communities at Corinth and in Rome. Similarly attractive is the consequent and more recent hypothesis that the Letter, in the form that the Church has always treasured it, is a conflation of three such letters to Paul's beloved congregation at Philippi — or perhaps of parts of them: the little 'bread-and-butter letter' (1,1-2;4,10-20), as one commentator calls it;¹ the prayer that God's peace may rule or keep guard over our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus — or the confident assertion that indeed it will — with the precious christological hymn; this would leave the remainder — largely a vehement (and to us uncomfortable) attack on his Jewish opponents or 'Judaizers' among the Philippian Christians (3,2 — 4,3), as belonging to an earlier time and perhaps a different place.² Such a threefold division has the advantage of explaining how Paul has won through to dwell in an environment of wondrous calm and benignity, an atmosphere of almost uninterrupted spiritual joy, along with the peace which is irrefragably linked with it. We, with him, possess such a peace. All that God asks now is that having welcomed gift and Giver we recognize it for the treasure that it is, so that we may truly be peace-makers, 'instruments of his peace'.

Such, we know, is not the case. It was not so with Paul himself. For even when he was writing to Timothy — whether personally or

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through another — that ‘the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, reached the finishing line, kept the faith’ (2 Tim 4,6-7), he still awaits the prize of blessedness — the embrace of peace and rightfulness; he still needs to be rescued from every evil, saved for the heavenly kingdom (4,18). His anger still burns at the thought of those who, like Jannes and Jambres opposing Moses, ‘oppose the truth; men of corrupt mind and counterfeit faith’ (3,8-9). It is surely ironical that the image Paul uses to denominate the ‘peace of God which transcends all (human) understanding’ is that of a member of the ‘peace-keeping’ force, the sentinel who guards the prison-house. The Lord’s coming in history is foretold by the Baptist’s father in terms of Christ the day-star — ‘the tender mercy of our God’ giving ‘light to those who are in the dungeon of darkness and the shadow of death’, and ‘guiding our feet into the way of peace’ (Lk 1,77-79); and these are not images easily recalled by Jesus’s own contemporaries. It may well be that the sentinel in Philippians has affinities with the Lord’s parabolic picture of the strong man, fully-armed, guarding his palace (again the image of the praetorian guard, so much a part of our own ‘new world’); for only thus are ‘his goods in peace’ (Lk 11,21). The antonyms of peace and ‘the fruits of the Spirit’ tumble over one another in the Letter to the Galatians: ‘enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, dissension, party-spirit, envy’ (5,20-21).

Humanly speaking, it hardly seems possible to consider peace except in terms of its contraries: Adam driven from and denied Paradise by the flaming swords of the Cherubim (Gen 3,24); Cain the murderer, God’s brand-mark on him, lest he suffer the same fate (4,3-15); the great wickedness of man, the thoughts of his heart continually turned to evil, the earth corrupt in God’s sight, filled with violence (6,5-7.11.13). The spontaneous solution of Marcion, ‘who discovered a better God’,³ *simpliste* though we acknowledge it to be, has never lost its appeal. Power and caprice, wrath and holiness are so easily confounded;⁴ whilst the ideals for the ‘godly’ knowledge and ability to discern between good and evil continually elude the grasp of the most devout and single-minded of God’s rational creatures, his truly filial sons and daughters. ‘Do not be conformed to (the spirit of) this age’, says Paul, ‘but let your minds be made over and your whole nature thus transformed. Then you will be able to discern the will of God, and to know what is good, acceptable and perfect’ (Rom 12,2).

If it is God who provides spiritual armour, piece by piece, for the

fight against principalities, powers and the potentates of this dark world, to defend ourselves against the evil day and 'quench the flaming darts of the evil one', then to have our 'feet shod with the gospel of peace' hardly suits the rest of this war-like accoutrement (unless, as the New English Bible hints, the apostle is recommending the ancient equivalent of hob-nail boots or the like — Eph 6,10-16).

The fact of the matter is that our fathers in the faith seemed to be able to sit much more lightly to the confluence of semitic, greek and roman culture than can we today. Paul could boast that he was a Hebrew, an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, beaten to death and stoned by his own (2 Cor 11,22-25); and yet he saw no inconsistency in appealing to the imperial Caesar against his own people, to the famed 'justice and peace' of the occupying Roman, whose special talents, the poet Virgil tells us, were to *impose* the rule of peace, to forbear from injuring the conquered, but to subdue completely the proud enemy (*pacisque imponere morem, parcere subiectis et debellare superbos: Aeneid VI, 582-83*). In spite of the fact that piety towards the Gods could quite easily become superstition among the common folk, especially in times of crisis, it is clear that for the great historians Livy and Tacitus, as for Virgil, the divine wrath, the manifestation of Fate, was not capricious; it was logical even in its extremes of savagery. Aeneas is 'pious', his enemies impious; he is called by Fate and guided by the unambiguous will of heaven (*Aeneid XI, 232*). And one may well conclude that such writers fulfilled a providential role in the *preparatio evangelica* for the apostolic preaching in the Mediterranean world, at least on the subject of the divine wrath, and therefore for the coming of the Prince of Peace (Isai 9,6).

God's anger

How otherwise was Paul predisposed to preach, and the gentiles to receive, 'the gospel (the good news of victory) of God's Son'? (Mk 1,1). According to Luke, Paul held discussions with the epicurean and stoic philosophers (Acts, 17,18), and preached on the Areopagus at Athens (17,22-34). He was well aware, as he points out to the Corinthians (1 Cor 1-2), that his preaching does not accord with the *philosophia* of those who, like Epicurus, teach that God is passionless, incapable of suffering actively or passively. He cannot then be angry. Lactantius reminds us that the Stoics had a better feeling for the deity, since they spoke of there being 'grace in God', not anger.⁵ Further, Clement of Alexandria is concerned, in his day, to refute the popular superstitions that natural catastrophes are occasioned by

the anger of either gods or demons.⁶ In fact, with Greeks as well as Romans, the basic religious response, as the christian apologist Minucius Felix tells us (*c. A.D. 250*), is to be traced back to fear of the wrath of the Gods;⁷ whilst the 'civilized' philosophers try to soften the blow in a way that is totally unacceptable to Paul's preaching (1 Cor 1,18-31).

The tension between this 'wrath of God' and his peace is one that recurs over and again throughout the spiritual tradition of Western Christianity. If God is 'our Father', a God of peace and love, how can he ever be angry with us? Yet the fact remains:

In the biblical conception of God, and hence in that of the NT as well, wrath is an essential feature which cannot be omitted. Behind all the passages — and this applies to the whole NT — which are aware that it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb 10,31), that he is able to save life and to destroy it (Jas 4,12), and that he is feared because after he has killed he has authority to cast into hell (Lk 12,5; Mt 10,28), there lies the awareness of God's wrath.⁸

This is, of course, the opening gambit in the long and intricate game across time to eternity of that wisdom and power which is so reluctant to be in check to the foolishness and the scandal of a crucified Messiah: of him who, 'crucified in weakness, now lives to the power of God' (2 Cor 13,4). In his agonizing over the rejection of God's choice of his own people, Paul fiercely denies the idea that the Word of God given them by Moses has failed; nor can we say there is injustice on God's part:

Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for beauty and another for menial use? What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the vessels of wrath made for his destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for the vessels of mercy . . . even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but from the Gentiles? (Rom 9,6-24)

And he ends the chapter citing Hosea — 'Those who were not my people I will call my people' (1,10), and the prediction of Isaiah concerning the remnant saved from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah — the very type of the divine wrath and its execution (Isai 10,22-23;1,9). It is when the existence of those bound by the

Old Covenant is menaced that they awaken to the imminence of the wrath of the God of the Covenant: the inscrutability of his everlasting holiness, the cup of wrath poured out, to be drunk to the dregs (cf Job 21,20; Isai 51,17.22; Jer 25,15-28). Whatever the motives for the denunciations of the prophets may be — and they are legion, it all adds up to one and the same: Israel, as partner in the Covenant of love, has not only forgotten his God — he has treated his love with contempt (cf Amos 2,9-11; Hos 11,1-6; Isai 17,10; Ezek 16,4-14).

'Over and again, you offered your covenant to man', says the Introduction to the fourth Eucharistic Prayer of our revised liturgy, 'and taught him to hope for salvation'. I write these words with the reading from Nehemiah still ringing in my ears — an apparent example of one such repeated proffer: the rediscovery of the Law, when 'the people understood what was read . . . and were all in tears as they listened . . . this day is sacred to our Lord. Do not be sad: the joy of the Lord is your stronghold'.⁹ It is sad to find the modern exegete dismissing it thus: 'the clergy make a rather heavy-handed effort to cheer up a mob dismayed by the severity of Ezra's Pentateuch'.¹⁰ It may help, however, to remind us that God's wrath in Israel's history always seems to have an eschatological function and goal. The *Dies Irae* is the 'day of wrath', and all the calamities happening within history are simply preludes to it. The Old Testament has already made it abundantly clear that the divine wrath is in action throughout all human life, even where myth, history, eschatology and apocalyptic may well jostle one another:

Your Maker is your husband . . .
 For a brief moment I forsook you,
 but with great compassion I will gather you.
 In overflowing wrath for a moment
 I hid my face from you,
 But with everlasting love I will take pity on you
 says the Lord, who has compassion on you . . .
 Though the mountains vanish and the hills crumble,
 My steadfast love shall never leave you;
 My covenant of peace shall abide with you (Isai 54,5ff).

Anger and jealousy

Paul will use the same image, when he tells his Corinthians: 'I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I betrothed you to Christ to present you

as a virgin-bride to her husband' (2 Cor 11,2). The themes of God's anger and jealousy are intertwined in the covenant and prophetic tradition; and Paul's reflections mirror exactly the continuing paradox. When God's love is ignored and his people turn to other gods, his jealousy fans the flames of his anger (Deut 30,20ff; cf Ps 78,58;89,5); yet equally and paradoxically, the same jealous anger exhibits ardent concern and desire. Yahweh as loving husband stands guard over his people when other nations threaten them (Isai 52,13;59,17). The salvation and peace he desires for his own can involve the destruction of the rest (Zech 1,14ff;8,2ff). It implies also the divine forbearance — the appeal through the prophets for that penitence symbolized in the repeated appeal 'Return, O Israel to the Lord your God' (Hos 14,1;11,8-11).¹¹ When we read the Epistle to the Ephesians, we are bewildered by the succession of images that flow from the abundance of the revelation he has received — 'my insight into the mystery of Christ' (3,1-6). We were separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth — the polity — of Israel, excluded as foreigners from the promised compact of steadfast love and everlasting fidelity, without hope for the future and without God in the present moment of the world in which we live and move and have our being (Acts 17,27-28). 'But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far away have been brought near in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace' (Eph 2,11-14).

The paradox of peace and retribution

How has the Church, in her sacred study and contemplation of the word (cf *Dei Verbum*, 8), coped with these inexhaustible riches accumulated for us in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph 3,8;1,3-14)? When this Jesus, in the poignancy of his prophetic lamentation over Jerusalem, presents himself as the figure of peace, it is not as the dove, brooding with eternally tranquil calm over creation and its consequences — the *operationes ad extra* of the triune God, but as the anxious, distracted mother-hen, trying to gather her errant, wilful, rebellious brood under her protective wings (Ps 91,4), and failing because they are too ignorant — 'Father, forgive them!', too 'wet behind the ears' to know the things that belong to their peace (Lk 13,34-35;19,41-42;23,34). One such contemplative response within our own recall is the lamentation of the jesuit poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, worth repeating in its entirety, since it gathers many seemingly intractable aspects of our christian past and present:

When will you ever, Peace, wild wood dove, shy wings shut,
 Your round me roaming end, and under be my boughs?
 When, when, Peace, will you, Peace? I'll not play hypocrite
 To my own heart: I yield you do come sometimes; but
 That piecemeal peace is poor peace. What pure peace allows
 Alarms of wars, the daunting wars, the death of it?

O surely, reaving Peace, my Lord should leave in lieu
 Some good! And so he does have Patience exquisite,
 That plumes to Peace thereafter. And when Peace here does house,
 He comes with work to do, he does not come to coo,
 He comes to brood and sit.

'Love, joy, peace, patience': this is Paul's order of the fruits of the Spirit, as we have noted; but they 'brood and sit' only when we truly belong to Jesus Christ crucified (Gal 5,22.24). It is by his cross that we are crucified to the world, so that we may be a new creation, with peace and mercy upon us: unmolested at the last, because we bear in our bodies the wounds of Jesus, crucified and glorified (6, 14-17; cf 2 Cor 4,10).

If Hopkins thought the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, and the European skirmishings that preceded it, 'the death of pure peace', a piecemeal peace that is a poor substitute — the false peace, may be, of the Jeremiad (cf Jer 8,11.15); what are we to say of the professional hawks and the amateur doves of the modern world, Africa, India, Middle East, Belfast, Toxteth, the South Bronx, New York or Hartford, Connecticut? Some may well ask why, with the threat of nuclear holocaust already showing the tips of its toxic fingers reaching out across half the globe, the post-conciliar liturgical commission should choose to downgrade the prophetic awesome tones in the Liturgy for the dead of the Sequence, with its roots in the prophecy of Sophonias (Zeph 1, 14-16):

Quantus tremor est futurus quando iudex est venturus . . .
Mors stupebit et natura, cum resurget creatura, iudicanti responsura.
Liber scriptus proferetur, in quo totum continetur unde mundus iudicetur.
Quid sum miser tunc dicturus? . . . cum vix justus sit securus.
Recordare, Jesu pie, quod sum causa tuae viae . . .
Quaerens me, sedisti lassus; redemisti crucem passus . . .
Iuste iudex ultionis, donum fac remissionis ante diem rationis . . .
Qui Mariam absolvisti et latronem exaudisti, mihi quoque spem dedisti.
Preces meae non sunt dignae, sed tu bonus fac benigne . . .

*Inter oves locum praesta . . . statuens in parte dextra . . .
Lacrimosa dies illa, qua resurget ex favilla
Judicandus homo reus. Huic ergo parce, Deus,
Pie Jesu Domine!*

The day of wrath, that day when the world becomes a heap of glowing ashes. . . . How fierce the dread when the judge appears . . . till nature and death itself will stand in wondrous terror when the creature rises again to face its judge. The book containing the detailed indictment for judging the world will be opened and read. How shall I plead my wretched plight then, when even the just find themselves in peril? In your filial love, my Jesus, remember that I am the reason for your taking our human condition. . . . It was me you were seeking, that time you wearily sat by the well of Samaria; me you redeemed when you suffered on the Cross. O Judge, just in your vengeance, grant me the gift of reconciliation before the day of reckoning. In your compassion for the Magdalen and the good thief, you have given me my hope. Poor though my prayers are, show me your loving-kindness . . . set me among your sheep, on your right hand. A day of tears indeed, when the guilty one comes up from the dust for judgment! Pardon him, Lord Jesus our God!

Though the Sequence was not formally introduced into the Mass for the dead in the Roman rite until 1570, this is hardly surprising: the sequence was the name given to the *jubilus* or musical prolongation of the last vowel of the *alleluia*, which was omitted from the funeral rite.¹² Its ancestry is impeccable. Apart from the original inspiration from Zephaniah (1,15), there is hardly a stanza without its appropriate biblical allusion. As with so many of the great sequences, music allows full scope for the flow of *lectio divina*: reading (hearing) in the context of liturgy of word and Eucharist, devotional meditation, and the affective contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnate Christ now glorified (Mt 24,30-31; Apoc 20,23;20,12; Mal 3,16-18; Jn 4,6; Mt 12,56; Rom 14,12; 1 Pet 4,18; Lk 23,40-43, etc.). It does, however, reflect the over-concentration of one aspect of the christian paradox of God's justice and peace; nor is its passing from the liturgical scene mourned by many. This said, it reflects in marvellously imaginative fashion the mystery of Christ incarnate appearing simultaneously as human nature redeemed, mediator, judged and judge, pardoner and pardoned. Ignatius Loyola has obviously caught the spirit of *mors stupebit et natura* in his meditative contemplation on the process of sins (Exx 60), with its concluding colloquy of mercy. No matter what chords of feeling it

might strike today — normally now in the Concert Hall — the *Dies Irae* can still provide a salutary contrast to modern man's tendency to bury his head, if not his sinful heart, in the vague sentimentalizing which so often surrounds the last rites in a post-christian western society.¹³

Wrath and peace: resolution of contraries in faith

As one might expect, it is the authentic monastic theology of the high middle ages which best succeeds in bringing all these influences and strands together in a lively and luminous faith, as it seeks a spiritual, transcendent understanding of the mystery of the incarnate Son in whom God in himself is revealed and made plain (Jn 1,18;14,8-10). 'We seek by faith the things that are not seen',¹⁴ in a theology framed by the sacred word, our labours lightened by the graces of contemplation. The medieval image of the divine attributes seen in isolation and yet mysteriously united in the vision of the psalmist¹⁵ is that of estranged daughters of a devoted father reunited by his love. It fell to an Englishwoman of the fourteenth century to experience so deeply these 'contraries' of the divine wrath and peace and so to seek and to find for us, out of her love of 'theology' — another daughter of God — and her desire for peace in the hearts of God's chosen, the 'secrets' which are revealed in the Word of the Father, the truth into which the Spirit shall lead us (Jn 14,12-17).

We might well begin with the conclusion of this monastic theologian, Dame Julian of Norwich:

For notwithstanding our naïvete and blindness, our Lord endlessly beholds us rejoicing in this work of his. And we can please him best of all by believing thus truly, and rejoicing with him and in him [Phil 4,4]. For as truly as we shall be in the bliss of God without end, him praising and thanking [Col 2,6]; so truly we have been in the foreknowledge of God, loved and known in his endless purpose from without-beginning [Eph 1,4-12]. In which unbegun love he made us, and in the same love he keeps us, and never suffers us to be harmed in any way that our bliss might be lessened.

And therefore when the doom is given
 And we are all brought up above,
 Then shall we clearly see in God
 The privities which now are hidden.

And then none of us shall be prompted to say of anything, 'Lord if it had been thus, it would have been well'; but we shall all say with one voice,

'Lord, blessed may you be, for it is thus, and it is well. Now we truly see that every thing is finished according to your ordinance before anything was made' (ch 85).

The point that Julian makes is that it is only in response to the God who not merely calls us to prayer, but makes us want to pray in faith and for faith, that these apparent contraries, of God's peace and wrath in respect of all his chosen children, can be seen — and sometimes even felt — to be resolved. Her definition of petitionary prayer should hardly surprise us: 'Beseeching is a true and grace-giving, lasting will of the soul which is oned and fastened to the will of our Lord, by the sweet and secret working of the Holy Ghost' (ch 41). So Julian speaks of two dooms (judgments) which are intrinsic to the relationship between God and the self, who is at once creature, child and subject in respect of Father — Creator — Husband, Lover — Teacher — Brother (Mediator), Sovereign, Lord, Supporter (Advocate). We experience our nothingness, and we reach out for 'his substance in which we are all enclosed'. Though we are already called out of our nothingness (our first creation in Christ) and rescued from the alienation following on our overweening desire of self-sufficiency, for we already belong to the end-time of our 'again-making' in the redeeming Christ, we see this only intermittently, 'by the lightings and touchings' of the Holy Spirit who enables us to turn to our Father, in the power and wisdom of the Incarnate Word. So she asserts that 'Our good Lord the Holy Ghost, who is endless life dwelling in our soul, keeps us full truly and works therein a peace, and brings it to ease by grace, and makes it pliant and reconciles it to God. And this is the mercy and the way along which our good Lord continually leads us, as long as we are in this life, which is changeable'. It is in fact this changeability, this lack of 'steadfast love', which is at the heart of the successive covenants — 'the many and various ways in which God spoke in past times to our fathers by the prophets. But in these last days he has spoken to us by the Son . . . through whom he created the world. He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature' (Heb 1,1-3). Julian says that she saw no wrath except on man's part; and her conclusion of her previous reflection on the divine judgment which is immutable — the decree of creation in Christ, of redemption by Christ, and of the continuance of this working of mercy and grace in the soul by the loving wisdom of our God poured out in our hearts by the Spirit who is given to us (Rom 5,5) — follows from the

fact that she saw no wrath except in humankind destined to be saved; and even this he forgives in us:

For wrath is nothing else but a frowardness and a contrariness to peace and love, which comes from a failing of power or of wisdom or of goodness; and this failure is not in God, but in ourselves. For we, by sin and wretchedness, have in us a wrath and a continual contrariness to peace and to love.

On the other hand, however, 'the ordinary teaching of Holy Church' — the Scriptures, the Fathers, the theologians — seems to declare consistently that we must see and know that we are sinners: that we do many evil things that we should avoid, and leave many good deeds undone which it is our task to carry out. And in consequence we are deserving of blame and wrath:

Yet notwithstanding all this, I saw that our Lord was never wroth, nor shall he ever be. For he is God; he is Good; he is Truth; he is Love; he is Peace. His Might, his Wisdom, his Charity and his Unity never permit him to be wroth. For I saw truly that it is against the property of his Might to be wroth, and against the property of his Wisdom, and against the property of his Goodness.

For twenty years and more, she read, reflected, pleaded, prayed with all her might, seeking God for help: 'O Lord, Jesus, King of bliss, how shall I find ease? Who shall tell me and teach me what I need to know!' Eventually her 'Jesus prayer' was answered. She tells us at length how it was for her, and whither her quest led her. Julian's way to the contemplation of Jesus our peace in the transcendence of the merely human understanding, is hidden for each one of us in the heart of Christ crucified and glorified. It is only by praying always and not losing heart (Lk 18,1) that we make our own pilgrimage, following our own call with 'all lowliness and meekness, with patience forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace' (Eph 4,1-3). It is in this sense that Julian could say that 'seeking is as good as finding, whilst we are here'.¹⁶

Conclusion

And still the paradoxes remain with us. They belong ineluctably to the dynamism of all Christ's community, the Father's family, past, present and to come: butchers, bakers, candlestick-makers, political leaders, high-powered businessmen and even *ex professo*

contemplatives. As we ponder daily the frustrations, the dissensions and human weaknesses in small things as well as great, we find it hard to convince ourselves of Yves Congar's insistence that peace is not simply the absence of violent war nor the situation defined by treaties, *ententes* or defence-pacts, because it does not belong to the realm of 'things' but to interpersonal relations:

It means that peace does not merely depend on juridical structures, no matter how necessary and convenient they may be. Peace requires men of peace, whose hearts and spirits are open to others, and who try to establish with them personal relations of the most friendly type.

Christianity wants peace, and is the principle of peace. But . . . unless we go beyond declarations, intentions and feelings, no one will take matters seriously.¹⁷

Abraham Herschel has emphasized again, in quite startling fashion, the nature of the paradox in the relationship between the God of the Covenant and the orthodox Jew. He tells us that the Baal Shem Tov, the father of Hassidism, represented his own experience of 'peace, joy and beauty', whilst Reb Menahem Mendl of Kotzk, the 'anxiety, restless search and austere denial of self'. In being guided by both these religious leaders, he tells us, he had allowed two forces to carry on a struggle within him. He asked himself whether it was good to live with the heart torn between the joy of the one and the anxiety of the other.

The one reminded me that there could be a Heaven on earth, the other shocked me into discovering Hell in the allegedly heavenly places in our world. . . . The Baal Shem dwelled in my life like a lamp, while the Kotzker struck like lightning. To be sure, lightning is more authentic. Yet one can trust a lamp, put confidence in it; one can live in peace with a lamp. The Baal gave me wings, the Kotzker encircled me with change. . . . I owe intoxication to the Baal Shem, to the Kotzker the blessing of humiliation.¹⁸

We are writing here about the foundations of christian peace, which took shape in the first apostolic preaching through the contemplative knowledge of Jesus and the mystique of his service: that is to say, in his relationship with his Father, his disciples and with the very limited number of his fellow Jews, with the peace-keeping forces of an occupying power, and also 'foreigners' — the Greeks whom curiosity or the search for God brought to Jerusalem for great

festivals (Jn 12,20-21). Finally, it is left to us to pray with Paul that 'the God of hope will fill our hearts with all joy and peace in our believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may abound in hope' (Rom 15,13). We pray to walk delicately, 'in fear and trembling' (Phil 2,12), but also 'in love, as befits God's chosen children' (Eph 5,1-2).¹⁹

NOTES

¹ H. J. Richards, *St Paul and his Epistles* (London, 1979), p 79, note 1.

² J. A. Fitzmyer S.J., 'The Letter to the Philippians', in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* (JBC), vol II, p 248; 'A Life of Paul, Mission III', pp 220-21.

³ *Deus melior inventus est, qui nec offenditur, nec irascitur, nec ulciscitur*, Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, 1,27.

⁴ Cf Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, tr J. W. Harvey (London, 1923).

⁵ Lactantius, *Divina Instituta* V, 1.

⁶ *Stromata VI*, III, 31,1.

⁷ *Octavius VII*, 2, cf the edition of A. D. Simpson (New York, 1938).

⁸ 'Wrath', in *Bible Key Words*, from Kittel's *Theologisches worterbuch Zum Neuen Testament* (London, 1964), pp 83-84.

⁹ First reading for the twenty-sixth week of the year — Thursday, Year I (Neh 8,1-12).

¹⁰ Cf R. North, 'Nehemiah', in JBC II, p 437.

¹¹ 'Wrath' *loc cit.*, pp 40-41, 43.

¹² Cf J. Connelly, *Hymns of the Roman Liturgy* (London, 1957), pp 96, and 252ff.

¹³ Cf Evelyn Waugh's novel, *The Loved One*.

¹⁴ Cf H. De Lubac, *The mystery of the supernatural*, tr Rosemary Sheed (London, 1967), 'The paradox unknown to the Gentiles', esp. pp 171-75.

¹⁵ Cf 'Psalm 85 and the meaning of peace', *supra* pp 3ff.

¹⁶ Editions of the Revelations or 'Showings' of Julian of Norwich abound. The critical edition — indispensable for serious students of Pre-reformation English spirituality is *A book of showings to the anchoress Julian of Norwich*, 2 vols, edited and introduced by Edmund Colledge, O.S.A. and James Walsh S.J. (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, 1978). The other editions consulted in this article are *Julian of Norwich: Showings*, edited, introduced and modernized by the same authors (New York/Ramsay, N. J./Toronto/London, 1979); and *The Revelations of Divine Love: Julian of Norwich*, edited, introduced and modernized by James Walsh S.J., 3rd ed (London, 1980).

¹⁷ Y. Congar O.P., *The Church that I love* (Denville, N.J., 1969), pp 76-77.

¹⁸ A. J. Heschel, *A Passion for Truth* (New York, 1973), pp xiv-xv.

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