

is misery and sin
 " I give you a new heart and a new spirit
 My Spirit "
 Your love within you
 burrows helplessly
 deeper and deeper
 " I have loved you
 with an everlasting love
 therefore do I draw you to Myself
 in pity "
 " The love of God
 which is poured out in our hearts "
 " God is Love."
 " Contemplating Christ our Lord before you
 on the Cross
 you ask
 how He being our Creator
 has sunk so low as to become man
 coming from eternal life
 to temporal death
 to die
 for my sins . . .
 then contemplating yourself you ask
 what am I doing
 for Christ
 what shall I do for Christ
 what must I do
 for Christ."

(To be continued.)

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE

BY

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Rest is the final pattern of all that God has made. In time, in place, each thing has its own mode: it is created thus, and here, and now. The singleness of sun and moon, of rock and flower and tiger; the separateness of men, each man a person unique and at last alone—here might seem a broken pattern, each thing good but each thing solitary. But on the seventh day of creation God rests. He blesses and sanctifies the day of his resting, and with it all that he has made: the whole creation is one in that ascription of praise to the creator of all.

The sabbath-rest of God is God's contemplation of himself as creator: in it the unity and goodness of the things he has made are revealed. They are *his*: they are one in *him*. So, in the

history of his chosen people, the seventh day came to be observed as a day of rest and gladness, a still point in the changing world for man to pause and remember. "See that thou keep my sabbath; because it is a sign between me and you in your generations: that you may know I am the Lord who sanctify you. . . . It is an everlasting covenant between me and the children of Israel, and a perpetual sign. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and in the seventh he ceased from work."

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." This is the seventh of the sayings of the Son of God in his sermon on the mount. The peace-makers are those who are going to achieve the new sabbath-rest of the reign of Christ; they are to rest on the seventh day of the new creation.

What is this word "peace" (*eirene*) which, everywhere in the New Testament, and especially in the epistles of S. Paul, means the fullness of the Christian's inheritance? The rest of God is the supreme type of it, and the Jewish observance of the sabbath (however much narrowed by rabbinical casuistry) was joy and rest, a foretaste—ever more explicitly realised—of that final rest which God had promised to his chosen people. "Seven ages has God created, and of them he has chosen for himself only the seventh age. Six there are for coming and going, and one (the seventh) is all sabbath and rest for life eternal": thus the Mishna. But the notion of "peace" as such (*shalom*) is found as a dominant theme of the Old Testament. Radically it means wholeness, soundness—thus the greeting (e.g. Gen. 29, 6) "Is he in health?" And by a natural extension of meaning there emerges the meaning of welfare, security, peace, the state in which nothing that is good is wanting. There is the wholeness of relation between man and man; a friend (Jer. 20, 10; Ob. 7) is literally "a man of my soundness," "a man of my peace." But peace in its greatest depth is the covenantal link with God, it is the fullest sharing in his own life. "For the mountains shall be moved, and the hills shall tremble: but my mercy shall not depart from thee, and the covenant of my peace shall not be moved: said the Lord that hath mercy on thee" (Is. 54, 10). "My covenant was with him of life and peace" (Mal. 2, 5). "Life and peace." The word is creational, the breath of life that God breathed into Adam "and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2, 7). Life, the true life that is infusion of God's own life, is the proper correlative of peace. God has visited his people and has given them life and the peace that is the perfection of life. For peace is not a static absence of conflict. It is, indeed, rest—but the dynamic rest of God: the contemplative repose which is the highest activity, *semper agens semper quietus*. Peace is *within* a man; thus Jeremias could urge the Israelites in the misery of their captivity "Seek the peace of the city, to which I

have caused you to be carried away captives; and pray to the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall be your peace" (Jer. 29, 7). Peace can be attained now, say the Prophets, even in the midst of captivity. For the peace of God does not depend on the well-being that is the categorized happiness of the world. The mercy of God cannot be measured.

With the coming of the Messias, the prophets urge, all will be made plain and God's new covenant for his people revealed. For when "the spirit be poured upon us from on high" (Is. 32, 15) "the work of justice shall be peace, and the service of justice quietness and security for ever." Peace, the new rest of God, is the mode of the new covenant. It is not a question of degree, as though the sabbath-rest of God and the participation in it of his own people are incomplete: Rather is it the unfolding in the fullness of time of what has already been promised. A perverse and wayward people has forgotten the promise, and indeed "there is no peace for the wicked" (Is. 48, 22). But the time is coming when "A CHILD IS BORN to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace" (Is. 9, 6). This is the point of fulfilment to which the whole world looks, the rest it longs for, "and it shall come to pass in that day that the root of Jesse who standeth for an ensign of the people, him the Gentiles shall beseech, and his sepulchre (i.e. resting-place) shall be glorious" (Is. 11, 10). When the Messias is come the true sabbath is at hand: when the kingdom is finally established, then the perfect rest will be achieved. It has been there from the beginning: on the seventh day God rested, and the world he made rested in him and mirrored forth his fulness of being and goodness. But man had only partially entered into that rest as yet; the joy of sabbath was the joy of rest on the road, a symbol of that final rest when the kingdom should be fulfilled. So, in many passages of apocryphal writings, e.g. "And truth and peace shall be associated together throughout all the days of the world and throughout all generations of men" (I Enoch, 11, 2). "On the seventh day is the sign of the resurrection and the rest of the age to come" (Books of Adam & Eve, 51). "For you is opened Paradise, planted the Tree of Life; the future Age prepared, plenteousness made ready, a City builded, a Rest appointed; Good works established, wisdom preconstituted" (4 Ezra, 8, 52).

It is indeed a matter for debate as to how explicit to the Jews was this sense of the sabbath as so much more than the ritual observance of a day of rest, a thing sufficient in itself. Hedged round with a complicated barrier of precedent and convention, they might often—indeed most usually—not see beyond the text of the Law. But the sabbath was from the beginning more than

the mode of its observance: the peace of sabbath is truly expressed, in time and place, to the Jews by the ritual law. But beyond it and beneath it there is the realisation of the eternal sabbath, the final peace to which all were to look forward—*O quanta qualia sunt illa sabbata*—that ecstasy of expectation which Abelard was to express so perfectly.

Rest, sabbath, wholeness, unity, peace: these are the notes of God's covenant with his people. They are the constant theme of the Old Testament, the ground bass beneath the dissonance of war and treachery, of the last sin of idolatry even. *Shalom* means oneness too. The God of the covenant, the God of Peace, is one God. Hence the sacred Ark was one; here the Presence of Yahweh dwelt. Peace, oneness: they are the same. Schism the splitting up of the worship due to the one God, this was the reassertion of the primal chaos and conflict before God created and rested, and the things he made were at rest and at one in him. And so Jerusalem emerges as the city of Peace, the place of God's resting, the centre of unity. God is one, his people are one; the mood of *Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum* is the utterance of the unity of men forever joined in the presence of the maker and restor in whose will is their peace. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May they that love thee prosper. Peace be within thy ramparts, and prosperity within thy citadels. For the sake of my brethren and friends let me bespeak thee peace. For the sake of the House of Yahweh our God let me seek for what is to thy good" (Ps. 121, tr. T. E. Bird).

This, then, is the familiar tradition of Israel. The first covenant of Yahweh had declared it, but the imminent holiness of the Law had grown dim in the hands of the professional men, the proprietary legalists who looked to the letter but not beyond it to the final revealing of God's purpose where types and shadows have their ending. "And seeing the multitudes he went up into a mountain." Here is the new Sinai and the new lawgiver. No longer the nicely calculated less and more of external duties and ritual obligations. "Be ye perfect."

"Blessed": the word is familiar to his hearers. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsels of the ungodly" says the Psalmist. But our Lord goes beyond the mere statement of the joy of the man who walks with God and observes his law. All is to be related now to the ultimate term of all—the blessedness of the kingdom is definitely proclaimed, and with it the conditions by which it is to be achieved. These eight brief sayings called the beatitudes are the manifesto of the new reign of Christ: the poor in spirit, the meek, the mourners, those that hunger and thirst after justice, the merciful, the clean of heart, the peacemakers, those that suffer persecution for justice's sake—here are

the inheritors. It is these who are to enter into the kingdom, who are to see God and to be called and really to be the sons of God: they are *named* children because such they *are*.

Rest, peace, wholeness—the idea had never been wholly lost. But it had hardened into the canonisation of the *status quo*, the tragedy of those who have ceased to expect mystery, the surprises of God. It is not the peaceable merely, the conformers who give no trouble, who are called the children of God. That would be acceptable enough to the Pharisees, resting gently in a round of exact duties, with rewards and penalties plainly assigned. It is the *peace-makers* who are the new inheritors, says our Lord. “The work of *justice* shall be peace” (Is. 32, 17). Already Isaias had indicated the profound depth and strength of this final peace. Peace is unity, reconciliation, the establishment of the rest of God among men—or, as S. Augustine was to say, it is the tranquility of order.

It is in the association of peace and unity, in the tranquility of order, the sublimation of diversity in oneness, that the clue to the whole matter is to be found. This is a strange reconciliation, at the human level, that can at the same time say “I came not to send peace but the sword”; the condition of its possession is loss; “he that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that shall lose his life for me shall find it” (Matt. 10, 38-9); the condition of its triumph is dereliction, even “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” The peace of God, then, is not a neutral uniformity; it has in it the sure promise of beatitude, of the eternal sabbath when the children of the kingdom will dwell in God’s presence forever. But the peacemakers are already the sons of God, even though as yet they have not entered finally into the rest that is their reward. They have, as the world judges, much to suffer, humiliations to undergo, but the reward is already theirs if they have surrendered themselves in the obedience that was Christ’s to the will of the Father. The mystery of the kingdom is that it is within us, is already achieved, for that was the work of the redemption. It is within us; we are already the fruit of the perfect atonement of the Son. And yet the unity and rest that is the peacemakers’ is, here and now, achieved at a level of tension and hostility; in a world that cares for none of the gifts of beatitude which our Lord has declared to be the mark of his children. And here is the mystery, the scandal once again. It is a peace that surpasseth all understanding, for it is the peace of God; unity and reconciliation realised most fully within a man and among those who are joined together in that bond of peace which is the fellowship of the Church. The possession is already complete, for already “behold I have overcome the world.” “These things I have spoken to you that in me you may have peace. In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I

have overcome the world."

"This became the work of the Only Begotten, to unite the divided and to reconcile the alienated": thus St. John Chrysostom (*in Matt.* 5, 9). Or again, St. Jerome: "The peacemakers are called blessed because first in their own hearts and then among their divided brethren they make peace" (*in loco*).

On the seventh day God rested from the works that he had made; the seventh of the beatitudes of the Son of God establishes the new rest, the inheritance of the peacemakers who participate in the Son's work of love and reconciliation. *Septimo loco beatitudo haec ponitur, quia in sabbato verae requiei dabitur pax, sex aetatibus transactis.* Thus a Gloss of the twelfth century. The fascination of number has indeed maddened many who have written of God, as hundreds of commentaries on the Apocalypse bear witness. Yet there is a perfection which we call number, the ordering of things in a proper harmony, which becomes the author of all harmony. Speaking of the number seven in the Apocalypse, Père Allo has remarked: "The agents of the new economy established by the Incarnation are always seven, the number of fulness, of the new and perfect creation" sc. the 7 Spirits of God, the 7 Angels, the 7 Churches. We may, then, without danger of seeming fanciful, see in the seventh beatitude the declaring of the perfection and unity of the new creation, just as the seventh day rest of the Creator declares the perfection and unity of the first creation. "This shall be the record of the love of God and the love of our neighbour," says S. Leo, "that we shall suffer no calamities, be in fear of no offence, but all the strife of trial ended, rest in God's most perfect peace."

A TREATISE ON THE INEFFABLE MYSTERY OF OUR REDEMPTION

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CHAPTER III.

THE UNIVERSAL MISERY AND FALL OF THE HUMAN RACE

When beginning to speak in detail of this ineffable Mystery of our Redemption, we must presuppose that it was the remedy and medicine for the universal fall and misery of mankind, and especially of the original sin through which mankind remained perverted and crippled. Since we cannot estimate the efficacy of a medicine unless we realise how serious is the malady, we must consider this first. For this we must understand first principles.

In order to understand this doctrine, we must take as its