

BLACKFRIARS

SUPPLEMENT

THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

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MAJESTAS DIVINA

BY

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(Translated by Thomas Corbishley, S.J.)

III. SURRENDER

I

A "mystery of evil" corrodes the roots of creation
a poison drizzles in fine drops
through leaves and branches of trees in their splendour
fearful night
looms up on a sudden
against the brightness of day
a storm lowers unpredictable
in the midst of peace and joy.

"I saw Satan fall from heaven
like lightning"
and "the angels who kept not their principality
but forsook their own habitation
He hath reserved under darkness
in everlasting chains unto the judgment of the great day"
in "eternal fire
which was prepared for the devil and his angels"
"through the envy of the devil
sin
came into the world."
"Through one man came sin into the world
and through sin death
therefore hath death come upon all men
since all have sinned."
"Depart from me ye cursed
into everlasting fire
which was prepared for the devil and his angels."

The shining angels who stood
 before the throne of the Divine Majesty
 bathed utterly in the brightness of His Glory
 exulting in the praise of the Thrice Holy
 " not being willing to use their freedom
 to show reverence and obedience
 to their Creator and Lord
 fell into pride
 transformed from grace into wickedness
 thrust down from heaven
 to hell."

Men

in the morning glory of an intact human nature
 immortal in soul and body
 subject to the one law of the Spirit
 shining through soul and body
 raised to a "share in the Divine Nature"
 like Cherubim and Seraphim in the body
 to serve in reverence and love
 the Lord
 who "walked in the Garden in the cool of the evening"
 "sinned
 were driven forth from Paradise
 to a life without original justice
 a life of affliction and penance."

The Throne of the Divine Majesty
 veiled in clouds and lightning
 no billowing incense no dazzling raiment
 no peaceful
 'Holy Holy Holy' . . .
 brazen the voices from the Throne of Justice:
 "Hearing hear and understand not
 seeing see
 and know not
 make dull the heart of this people
 stop up their ears blind their eyes
 that they may not see with their eyes and hear with their ears
 and understand with their heart
 and be converted
 and I heal them . . .
 until the cities be laid waste
 with none to dwell therein
 houses without inhabitant
 the whole land left
 desolate."

I have set thee over nations and kingdoms

to root up and pull down
 to destroy and cast down
 I make thee this day a strong city
 a pillar of iron
 a wall of brass
 against the whole land
 I make thy face
 stronger than their faces
 thy brow
 harder than their brows
 for they are a stubborn house."

" I attended and hearkened
 no man speaketh what is good
 there is none that repenteth of his wickedness
 saying ' what have I done '
 even as a steed rushes into the battle
 so do all go their headlong way ;
 the kite in the air knoweth his appointed time
 the turtle-dove the swallow and the crane
 keep to the time of their coming
 but my people have not known
 the judgment of the Lord."

In the night of his sense
 reeling
 from disgust to pleasure
 from pleasure to disgust
 the sinner

" if his pride mount up even to heaven
 and his head touch the clouds
 in the end he shall be destroyed
 like a dunghill
 and they that had seen him shall say
 ' where is he '
 fleeting without trace like a dream
 passing
 like a vision of the night."

" How art thou fallen from heaven
 thou star of the morning
 who didst shine at the dayspring
 how art thou thrust down to earth
 that didst smite the nations with a mortal wound.
 In thy heart thou didst say
 ' I will rise up even to heaven
 above the stars of God I will set my throne
 I will take my seat upon the mountains of the covenant
 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds

like unto the Most High
 but thou art thrust down
 to the regions of the dead
 to the depths of the Pit
 "like an unfruitful mouldering trunk
 a rotting carcase."

"Straitened become the steps of the wicked
 his feet stumble into the net
 he walketh about within its meshes
 the snare catches his heel
 the noose entraps him
 a hidden trap awaits him
 its jaws are ready to seize him
 insatiable hunger shall prove his undoing
 calamity is set to cause his downfall
 it devours his flesh piece by piece
 the horror of leprosy consumes him slowly."

"Out of the depths have I cried to Thee O Lord
 Lord hear my voice"

"when I see how many have been damned
 for one mortal sin
 and how often I have deserved
 to be eternally damned
 for my many sins."

My sores are fetid
 because of my folly
 I am bowed and bent exceedingly
 my loins are filled with a burning heat
 there is no soundness in my body.

"Shall man be justified in comparison of God
 or shall man be pure in his Maker's sight
 for even they that serve Him are not steadfast
 and in His Angels he found wickedness."

What is man . . .
 the highest noblest richest nearest to the divine
 one thing alone his salvation
 "to go forth out of himself the sinner"
 one thing alone his life
 to enter into God who is mercy."

"A broken and humbled heart O God
 Thou wilt not despise"
 "for with Thee there is pardon and mercy"
 "His Mercy is for ever and for ever."

Your heart within you
 your spirit within you

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

ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

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