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2 THE PASSIONATE GOD PRELIMS - SL
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6 The Passionate God
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8 By the same author
9 The Mystery of Sexuality
10 The Boy from the Lake
11

12 The Passionate God
13 ROSEMARY HAUGHTON
14

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- 36 .. for the linguistic and cultural breaking of the dam which occurred in eleventh-century Provence affected in the long run every culture in the world..
- 41ff-52 Through the "weak spot" in the dam it came...
- 53-66 amour courtois
- 160-67 .. but all this elaborate and - in the end - trivializing debate stemmed from the ~~great~~ tremendous discovery, by poets and story-tellers and lovers, ~~it~~ of a fundamental fact of human experience, that of the significance of the 'breakthrough' of spiritual ~~discovery~~ power and vision by the encounter of passionate love. The cultural breakthrough of Romance came about in order to allow Christendom to celebrate the fact of spiritual breakthrough between men and women whole, bodily and in love.
- 182ff .. So also we find in many other cultures beautiful 'romantic' stories, but they ~~are~~ are not articulated as a 'theology'. In Europe Romance was, very precisely, rooted in Christian theology, even though it seemed to take the form of a revolt against the rule and teaching of the Church about marriage.
- The fact that Romantic love was first elaborated in terms of an explicitly non-married devotion, one which was openly and proudly adulterous, was in a sense accidental; it was a reaction against a Christian church that connived at, and profited from, the degradation of marriage to the level of a commercial transaction for the sake of dynastic or financial profit...
- 212ff For Romance is about Spirit in the Flesh... In the ~~the~~ vision of the Romantic poets it was a love which sprang into being precisely through seeing, and responding to, the physical presence and beauty of the beloved. It remained physical throughout and expressed itself in terms of actions of worship and service of a material kind, whether the giving of a gift or a kiss, or the accomplishing of a ~~quest~~ quest or the winning of a fight ~~in~~ in honour of the lady. It is bodily experience, but an experience of the body as ~~transfigured~~ transfigured by the breakthrough of passion and seen thereby in a new dimension, literally changed, in the changed world discovered by the breakthrough into a different sphere of experience. Only Christianity, rooted in the Flesh-taking, could create the environment of thought and feeling in which such a concept could take root and flourish, and affect all of European culture from that time on, as no other cultural influence has ever done.

Only Christian doctrine teaches that the divine can be not merely immanent in or symbolized by material bodies, but actually enfleshed, and only this doctrine could make such an articulation of experience possible

233-58 The other thing about Romantic love which could only have sprung from Xtian roots.. is that the doctrine is essentially dynamic. It is about the energy that smashes through the surface of everyday awareness and makes possible an exchange of spiritual power and knowledge which not only permeates the lovers through every aspect of body mind and spirit, but reaches far beyond them to transform other relationships and the very aspect of the material world. It is clear also that it does not come from the lovers but 'enters' into them, and having done so it demands to be used, to be given and taken, to act and affect to change and be changed. It discovers its meaning in the response to it; it can only be known in being given.

The language of Romantic love is clearly, therefore, a theological language, first, on that point of Exchange, where the flow ~~ix~~ of it, encountering an obstacle, has to find a way through. This is the thrust that leads to the passionate breakthrough. But without the model of Exchange Romantic love does not make sense, for breakthrough happens when there is something trying to get somewhere and being prevented. The passionate breakthrough happens because Exchange is what life and being are, and to prevent it is to turn the universe back on its course, a concept which I shall have to examine in the context of the nature of evil. But if it is true that to block Exchange is to contradict the very nature of reality, then it is no wonder that, eventually, something has to break.

2 THE FACE OF BEATRICE

18/45 Pietro Bernadone on returning from France named his son, François, Francesco. See 40-53.

8/59-61 Dante Alighieri was the man who renewed the somewhat decadent tradition of courtly love by discovering in it the theology of his poetic insight and the poetry of his theological insight.

8/62-75 For Dante's love of Beatrice is the archetype of Romantic love, coming as it did as a kind of final crest of articulateness in the tradition of Romance before it took other forms. But D is also important for us because he brought a true Christian awareness to his experience of Romantic love and so infused into his understanding of Xtianity the light of his romantic experience. It was from the crimate of thought and feeling created by the schools of courtly love and the whole luxuriant literature of Romance that Dante drew his original images, but he was both more consciously Xtian and more humanly sensitive than many of his predecessors, as well as being a better poet and therefore a more daring theologian and a more accurate lover.

8/78-86 From one point of view one can say that his first significant ~~xx~~ encounter with Beatrice, on a May morning in the streets of Florence, was the point at which he met Love, and that the rest of his life was devoted to exploring and celebrating the meaning of this encounter. From another point of view we can say that it was only when he was capable of writing ~~xx~~ the paradiso that he was able to experience properly the

~~xx~~ the original encounter, so that, in a sense, he did not have the full experience until that moment. Both these things are true....

8/103-109 Helen Luke says in her commentary on the Divine Comedy It is a very common experience; everyone who has truly fallen in love has had it, and sex in the narrow sense is not the important thing. It is the recognition of our 'native country' through love of another. We glimpse his ~~x~~ or her eternal identity and so also our own, and we know in that moment that we have the freedom of that country forever.

8/110-115 This is the truth grasped by the devotees and students of Romance in the twelfth century. It is the 'passionate breakthrough to a new life. It is very common and yet, fully lived, very uncommon, and it is only in the fully lived experience that its essential meaning can be discovered; we shall see this much more powerfully in the life of Jesus

8/119-123 .. and he (Dante) was writing about a personal experience which moved Ch~~x~~arles Williams, the modern poet of Romantic love, to refer to the Beatrician moment, the one when a person breaks through to a wholly other sphere of experience, and the eyes of the lover are both dazzled and endowed with new vision.

8/132-43 But even in the earlier days he understood so well the nature of what was going on in himself on account of this Florentine girl ~~x~~ that timorous ~~xx~~ ecclesiastical censors altered his all-too-precise terminology. For Dante calls Beatrice his 'beatitude' and even his 'saviour.' He knows that in encountering her he has encountered that which he will, according to the teaching of the Church, enjoy forever in heaven, the very life of the noble Trinity, and since this is so she is the 'saviour', rescuing him from a half-life of everydayness and introducing him into the vision of glory-yet-to-be. She is all these things because she is also, without attenuation, Beatrice, an 'everyday' young woman of most solid earthiness.

8/144 -173 When at the end of the Paradiso, Beatrice comes to lead the purged and aspiring poet to the awesome sphere of Paradise, she appears in a processional chariot, surrounded and celebrated by angels and allegorical figures, all providing a setting in which we would expect the revealing of the Eucharistic Lord. Yet when the moment comes it is Beatrice who stands there, very much his own Lady, and even though she is still veiled he responds to her presence not only with awe but with a strong stirring of human desire. 'The ancient flame', he calls it, quoting Virgil's words with Dido's passion. There is no mistaking the kind of flame he is talking~~x~~ about, which springs to life at the sight of her. She is his original and unrepeatable Beatrice, yet she is also Christ, also Eucharist, also Mary, the God-bearer, also Church -- body of Christ in its human relationship of exchange. For when Dan~~x~~te is finally allowed to look into ~~xx~~ the 'emerald' eyes of Beatrice ('whence Love let fly his former shafts at thee') he sees reflected in them the image of Christ. In the final and highest sphere of his vision, when he beholds the White Rose of the spirit centered on ultimate Love, he sees Beatrice 'in her glory crowned' and hails her as the one who freed me, a slave, to liberty'. She is indeed his saviour, the one who can break through the spheres for and with him. But then she turns her head/ever inwards, and he, guided by Bernard, most ardent adorer of the God-bearer,, perceives Mary, of whom God took flesh; but she in her turn looks towards the Centre, and his eyes, at her

to gaze/

entreaty, are empowered to behold the ultimate Bliss itself. So Dante sees Mary through Beatrice and the Trinity through Mary, in a perfect and perpetual 'courteous' exchange of love given and received, flowing inwards to the centre and outwards in the same gesture, for here, in Paradise, the spheres give way to a constant and perfect energy of exchanged love.

8/176-180 Beatrice actually is 'beatitude' and 'saviour', God-bearer' and 'Christ'. She is these things without ceasing to be her particular self, but by being them in relation to Dante, who through her was able to break through to the sphere of glory in himself, as he perceived it in her.

in the aware-
ness / 8/204-214 The second aspect of Romantic love is the fact of the essentially dynamic nature of being as it is revealed in Christ. The lover comes to self-awareness/ of the beloved; they are defined in exchange of life. The exchange can and must happen in 'two directions', each person being both lover and beloved, but in Romantic doctrine the relationship is defined in terms of Lover ~~and~~ to Lady, not the other way around.... It is always so though the one who is the way may be the man in the case.

8/233 Wisdom, in both canonical and deutero-canonical Wisdom books of the Old Testament is not merely a personification of human wisdom, or even of divine wisdom; she is herself divine. ... she is the one who creates and holds all things in being, not commandingly from without but dynamically from within, moving in them.

8/246-251 Wisdom is therefore a fairly exact theological explanation of why the Lady of Romantic love is the one in whom and through whom the sphere of glory is entered and experienced. When the lover encounters the beloved, what he sees is the feminine Wisdom, who is the radiance of the eternal God, and he sees her in the very flesh of his beloved.

8/255 All this is so not in spite of but precisely in virtue of the fleshiness of the human woman, the Lady which he shares with the Word made Flesh.

vertical
finality
missing 8/265 The language of our culture in relation to sexuality and love is so restricted in what it will allow sexual feelings to 'mean' that what might have been a transforming 'Beatrician experience' ends up as nothing but satisfied desire, hung around with unsatisfied nostalgias. But genuine Romantic love does occur in spite of the culture, because it is too basic a human occurrence to be altogether denied or expalined away. And however it may subsequently weakened or corrupted through lack of knowledge or courage, it has certain characteristics which are significant.

8/275 Characteristics listed and then clarified"

282-90 particularity

291-318 singleness

319-31 the glow

9/6-13 everything acquires a greater and more precise reality, but this clarity is set within an ambience of felt ignorance

16-28 painful

42-59 particularly open to corruption

60-83 amour voulu: a giving back, in free but completely uncompromising dedication, of that which has been freely and undeservedly received

84-96 sequence of events

97-101

9/102 The remote preparation means a probably lengthy process in which the person is inclined by circumstances and by education (conscious and unconscious) to recognize and want something at least vaguely corresponding to the Romantic experience. This is both likely and unlikely in our culture... much romantic talk but less than the authentic brand; may distort the experience when it comes..

9/129 .. the things that went on in France towards the end of the Dark Ages provided just such a restlessness, a sense of obscure need, a grabbing at trappings of luxury, or heroism, or sensuality, expressive of a desire for something or other, without any clear notion of what is desired.

9//14 In this situation occurs the immediate preparation, something which creates a weak spot. Something happens which shakes a person loose from normal expectations and settled attitudes....

9/148-55 There is no longer a vague sense of need but a definite expectancy, which may be somewhat fearful. There is something within the person something which is, as it were on the lookout for itself. It cannot come out until something opens the door, from 'outside' -- and when something does open it, there is an immediate sense of recognition. All is new -- yet this is 'home'. Is it fanciful to see eleventh-century Provence elements like this?

Experience of the crusades, the developing status and influence of women, the comings and goings of landless knights, and of poor, bold, exciting jongleurs, the influence of a persuasive and officially abhorrent heresy? Anyone of these might have been enough to challenge the new love to recognize itself.

155 The response to this recognition is passion; the thrust of the whole personality towards the strange home it perceives. It is accompanied by intense emotion, which varies in quality according to temperament from a gentle but strong and certain joy to a desperate violence which is afraid of losing that which is perceived.

160 But something very odd precedes this. I can only describe it as a gap, in which there is no feeling or movement but a timeless instant of oneness. It is an experience of recognition so complete and profound that it is impossible to say what is recognized. That is why ~~it~~ it is experienced as a 'gap', and it can be so content-less that the person recoils and takes refuge behind a hastily closed door. Passion therefore is the thrust that leaps that void; it is a leap of faith, without guarantees or even knowledge. The leap is, therefore, not primarily emotional, but ~~the~~ powerful emotion is released by it. The breakthrough of passion is this self-giving towards a wholeness intensely desired, but across a gap of 'un-knowing.' This is what makes it passionate -- it is difficult; it is, as we saw, painful.

173 When the breakthrough has occurred, all depends on something quite simple. What do we do about it? Amour voulu must have some guidelines if it is to do more than flounder.

184 So what a culture or group says concerning the breakthrough event is obviously of quite central importance. On this 'language' depends whether the experience is to be fully lived as amour voulu, or dismissed as trivial, or rejected as sinful, or wallowed in, or surrendered to without thought, or evaded, or ~~greedily~~ greedily grasped, or perverted.

9/189 'Language' is communal, it means a society. The breakthrough cannot be private since its results depend on a shared language about it. This is the origin of religious and spiritual movements [desert Fathers, Franciscans, Jesuits, Lollards, Separatists who went to New England, Shakers, Salvation Army, modern communes and religious sects]

.. examples of how the passionate breakthrough in one person's life is articulated in a language which becomes that of a group who also respond to the vision they perceive in the founder. Hence the passionate breakthrough leads, somehow or other, to community, and also, ~~if~~ if it is fully lived, it creates and re-creates the community within which it is understood, illuminating for others, as for the lovers themselves, the reality which each has encountered. (This is as true of a community of evil, such as the Hitler youth became, as well as of a community of love.)

9/207 Romantic passion is then of all 'normal' human experience the one with the capacity for the highest soaring (even to Paradise if Dante is to be trusted) and the deepest degradation.

9/210 .. X as a doctrine and cult with a real influence on the morals and behavior of a culture it has been confined to X Western culture, and that only since the high medieval period. But as an undefined (and therefore comparatively uninfluential) experience it has been an 'underground' movement in every culture of which we have record.

9/219 But until it surfaced in European cultural consciousness in the twelfth century it was not considered an event so significant in human life that its implications might be of literally eternal importance (Dante's censors).

10/6 Yet the experience of genuine romantic passion is of quite central importance in understanding the nature of human beings as God-created, God-directed, God-centered, not only as an analogy of human-divine relationships but as an example.

10/15 But if Romance gives us a language which can open up the whole of Christian theology that is at least partly because it expresses itself as poetry and as story, sometimes one and sometimes the other, but at its best as both together and simultaneously. Poetry works by the intensity with which it evokes mood, or place, or person, and in itself is capable of creating a kind of breakthrough, so that the hearer or reader is transported for the moment into another sphere. In the light which flows from that sphere things in the sphere of everydayness are enabled to disclose their own real nature, so that we become aware that the most humdrum reality is, in fact, not everyday at all, but 'the means of grace and the hope of glory.' In that light we see, as Rilke supremely makes us see, that the redemption of things is the especial task of human passion...

10/30-43 Quote from X Rilke.

10/44 Children and saints see things that way in any case, because they do not demand of them that they be 'useful' or bestow prestige. We who lack that humility need the poet's vision to show us the face of reality.

10/52 .. ultimately, everydayness is the 'category of glory,' but only when we have learned to live in that sphere ourselves.

10/62 Romance is truly...a 'moment in and out of time', a doorway between worlds, which is why this book is a Romance, story and poetry: the story of God's love for human beings and it is the poetry of that experience in its effect on people but also in its effect on the context of people which is the whole material universe. It is also the ~~man~~ poetry, and the story, of the effect of people on God.

10/76 But unlike 'ordinary' fantasy, which has to invent non-realistic situations in order to evoke the deeper meaning of those we experience in 'real life', the Gospels about life at a point of realness which only needs to be properly seen in order to disclose its meaning and so to create a new world.

10/85 The breakthrough of the creative act of secondary imagination in story or poetry, is the work of Wisdom, and ~~Wt~~ Wisdom 'rejoices' in creation.

10/92 I shall be using.. the language of Romantic passion, based on the model of reality called Exchange. It is a language of fantasy, designed to evoke the deeper meaning which underlies 'everydayness', yet also is about everydayness, about the most ordinary earthy things, but seen in the light of the sphere to which Romantic passion gives access.

10/98 Equipped with this language, I shall be able to move towards the centre of this book, of theology, and of all things, which is the ultimate Exchange and the one essential Romantic breakthrough: the incarnation of Christ, leading to his death and resurrection.

10/105 Jesus is the passionate God supremely at that moment which turned all living and loving inside out, which was his death and resurrection.

10/133 .. the transfiguration... shows us the human Jesus apparently quite at home in a sphere which certainly does not belong to 'everydayness.'

10/164 The craving for strangeness drove the sales of Tolkien's Lord of the Rings into millions, for his kind of strangeness was the ideal blend of the earthy and recognizable with the utterly strange.

11/158 ~~(he clearly did not consider them unimportant~~
(he clearly did regard them [his healings] as proper signs of the sphere of experience he called 'the Kingdom')

11/6 ff. The transfiguration: its singularity.

11/138 This development of the life of Jesus is, like all growth, a passage FROM stage to stage, the stages initiated by some event which seems to make available, in the light of a new sphere of experience, knowledge and strength gained obscurely in earlier months or years.

11/146 What I want to suggest here is that the sequence and nature of the events in the life of Jesus, which led up to.. the transfiguration were of a kind which 'expected' some further breakthrough, and moreover this had to be one which must go beyond what could be contained within the category of everydayness....

11/153 Such changes from one sphere to another were not.. unique to this unique life. Jesus himself never claimed that the things he did were possible to him alone; in fact he said quite explicitly that his followers would do the same and 'greater' things. Also he constantly 'played down' the significance of his healings, not because he did not consider them important (11. 158-60), but because people were considering them indications of his role, whereas it was rather the person and mission of Jesus which gave them significance.

11/171 He deeply impressed the ~~ix~~ individuals he met... They recognize him as in some sense Messiah, but the content of that title as applied to their new friend and teacher is unclear... It was not a role which they chose to follow but a compelling and unique personality.

11/177 .. he visited his home town of Nazareth and, reading the appointed Scripture in the synagogue, used Isaiah's prophecy ~~xxx~~ to assert its application to himself. Here we have an indication of the dialogue nature of Jesus's self-discovery. The reading of the prophecy seems to have revealed itself to him with a fresh absoluteness as the description of his own role, and the account of his announcement of it to the assembled town, suddenly and out loud, reads much more like an irresistible impulse to share a discovery than a pre-planned manifesto.

11/190 ... once he had made this revelation of himself, he found himself inevitably launched into the next stage. He had already begun to heal and to teach... and the familiar passage from Isaiah revealed itself newly to him in their reaction as a description of the significance of what he had begun to do.

11/204 That he should teach was inevitable, once his self-discovery had reached the point exemplified in the Nazareth synagogue.

215 The healings.. seem to have taken him by surprise, and Luke suggests that it all began because, when he was teaching at the synagogue at Capernaum, a possessed man began to cry out at him, recognizing him as the 'Holy one of God.' Jesus, knowing what kind of ~~ix~~ breakthrough this represented, silenced him abruptly by dismissing the evil spirit from the man. Again, we have a sense of discovery of meaning evoked by the stress of a situation.

12/237 Doctors and nurses who work with the dying have tried to impress on others that to refuse to talk to a dying person about the approach of death is not kind but deepest cruelty, because most people do know that death is approaching and desperately need to talk about it in ~~an~~ order to cope with it.

12/248 His (Jesus's) references to the fate of former prophets show what was on his mind, as well as parables like the one about the owner of the vineyard whose servants were ill-treated and killed and who finally sent his own son to die also.

12/256 Yet such things must always be shared -- mirrored articulated through another -- if only imaginatively.

12/270 B No relief, none of the absolutely necessary sharing, was available in the category of everydayness.

12/274 The picture we get is of one more occasion on which he went off by himself to pray, because of the need that was in him, only this time he was not quite by himself because his sense of vulnerability and loneliness was such that even the presence of uncomprehending affection and loyalty was some comfort. And then it happened -- not planned ~~by~~ but of sheer necessity. The power broke through, the doors between mortality and immortality were blown open, by the force of his longing. The mortal body disclosed its proper yet still unattained being. And the doors of time, also swung loose in the gale of that explosion of power, and men separated by centuries found each other in the contempeation of an experience which was, for each, the explanation, the dénouement, the ultimate meaning of human life. So he about to die, was able to share with those who had died in expectation. His own foreknowledge became, in the process, lucid and assured, and he took hold of it with all the power of a personality in which no psychic energy was locked up in the ~~the~~ maintenance of defensive devices.

12/293 'This is my Son, the Beloved -- the one who has taken on himself the final deed of love, because his being is the exchange of uttermost love with me, in the Spirit ~~xx~~ whose very name is love. No wonder the barriers were breached, no wonder the light shone from him, no wonder the glory of the resurrection showed through before its time, since at that moment the death which was to release that glory was embraced absolutely and irrevocably.

13/6 Examination of the transfiguration in this way shows that the extraordinary things that happened to this ~~xx~~ man happened in the same kind of way and for the same kind of reasons, as more ordinary but crucial transitions happened to him and to others, and which happen notably in the 'model' breakthrough of Romantic passion.

13/37 If we are trying to understand the meaning of Jesus -- incarnate God... -- and also to realize the intimate and ultimate meaning of the flesh-taking for all material reality whose nature is exchange of life, we shall have to pay close attention to the method, nature, effects and significance of the 'breakthrough' events in his life, not because their strangeness proves his strangeness, but because his experience of these spheres has unique significance.

13/45 There is another and vital aspect of this incident... The witnesses were three only... Why did he take them with him?

13/53 ... he took them with him because he needed their company. Knowing that once more he must go apart to wrestle with the appalling inner necessity of understanding and accepting his own meaning, he found that this time he did not want to be entirely alone....

13/61 This was not a situation in which a leader could simply give orders and plan. The whole project was.. a shared one. And the sharing did not consist of merely training disciples in the usual sense but of empowering people to be as he was, and therefore to do what he had to do.

/71 So his need for companionship and their need for involvement came together as such things do. It was natural for him to take his closest friends and, to reverse the idea, it was natural that it should be his closest friends that he took.

13/88 Really to be a friend is to lower one's defences, to be vulnerable to the demands of love. [list of things] that dispose to that kind of openness. But they dispose to it; they do not create it. There is still the need to create the conditions of immediate preparation, and we can see in the Gospel accounts the ways in which, over and over again, Jesus set himself in his approach to people to 'loosen them', to shock or shake them into a position of ability to 'hear.'

13/100 Yet it seems that in some cases he had to do no more than just be there and invite response... .. the inner pressure towards breakthrough in these three young men was such that the presence of his love was all that was needed to set them free. 'And they left their nets and followed him', with an ease and an abruptness which are among the most moving of the evidences of the Gospel of what of person Jesus was and is.

III. THE REFUSAL OF EXCHANGE

Recall:

- 4/99ff Models / living
- 4/127 Life: all reality and its presuppositions
- 4/134-45 Exchange: love is not love if alone
- 4/239-42 Spheres: modes of apprehending reality (horizons)
- 4/261-68 Barriers: resistance to change of mode of apprehension
- 4/234-8 Breakthrough: overcoming such resistance
- 5/25-54 Passion: love in action, breakthrough, story, passionate love story, Romance

14/35 In the next chapter I shall be thinking about the meaning of incarnation and redemption, which have to do with a singular situation, but there is an old theological tradition which held that God would have taken human flesh even if there had been no such thing as sin. Why should this be so?

I think we may suggest that this idea has to do with the Christian instinct that God's love is essentially, and not merely accidentally, passionate. But how can there be passion in this sense in the exchanged life of God, in whom there can be no resistance, no obstacle to love? I think we may suggest that there must be, in the dynamic of divine love, something which has that quality of headlong givenness which we associate with passion. Indeed it seems inevitable that even by the wavering and feeble light of human imagination we should discern some such quality, if the doctrine of the Trinity is to have any meaning.

14/51 I showed this happening in the context of Romantic passion, which is not about cause and proportionate effect, but about events followed by reactions in a different category of experience. It is not about gradual complexification but about sudden transformation. It is not about a process however beautiful, but about exchange. It is not about a plan but about a love affair.

1

14/123 Afterwards (after Charles Williams paradise), through countless unrecorded centuries, there was a need, as there always is, to know what had happened and to decide what to do about it. The new earth must be described, names given, patterns of understanding established and patterns of behavior discovered. Amour voulu must succeed the breakthrough of irresistible passion, commitment to the human task must interpret the obscure glory of human consciousness. The task is the unending service of humankind to, but also as part of, creation, by understanding and promoting its interrelationships, by celebrating and loving them; but in order to carry out this task the paradise consciousness of undifferentiated oneness with God and with all creation has to be surrendered, though the memory persists in those hints of something lost long ago.

14/136 To carry out the human task in this way involves a distinction, a differentiation,, which has the same kind of painful quality.. of leaving behind forever something which is perfect in its own way in order to respond to the demand for a higher consciousness of being. There is pain, but the pain is not I think essentially connected with what we have to call sin... Here, 'before' sin, we may discern ~~an~~ something which we can perhaps think of as 'pure' grief, a joyful sacrifice of one good for the sake of a more ~~like~~ glorious and passionate gift. The beauty of the unconscious simplicity of the animal, of love expressed in un-free but perfect exchanges of life, nourishment and care, must give way to the perilous delight of the divine Romance of God with human kind. And it is precisely at this point that for the first time real tragedy becomes possible; there can be a refusal of love, a refusal which is free, willed, and absolute. The possibility of such a refusal is the price that love pays, and is willing to pay, because no price is too high to pay for a love whose very nature is limitless gift.

14/154 This is the language of Romantic passion. It is the only language that can accurately bring to our minds ~~in~~ the reality which it describes. These are descriptions of exchanges of spheres,,,

y 169 they can show us the materials of transforming passion in creation, but they cannot evoke the creative event. Only theology, in the form of poetry, can do that. It is a work for divine wisdom herself.

14/209 The natural thing... is not to change -- that is, to discover new and different ways of being. It is the pressure of external forces, changing the environment so that the old state becomes impossible to maintain, which produces differentiation.

214 But in human beings differentiation cannot at the conscious level simply happen. The circumstances may lead to separation, but for real differentiation in a free creation there has to be conscious choice. The choice is not between 'good' and 'evil', for we are speaking of a situation in which hypothetically there is no 'evil'. The choice is between a known good and a known one, and the unknown is presented simply as the choice of love, as response to love. But the known also is the work of love. The crucial point is that... reality exists and only exists in exchange, and to refuse to go to meet the unknown is, in effect, to refuse exchange.

It is refused in favour of a known 'good', but that 'good' is only good as it came into existence in the exchange of life. To refuse to leave it is, in a sense, to change its nature; it is to turn it into something else which is held to exist for itself and not in the flow of exchanged life, given and received. It ceases, therefore, to be loving. So we can see that differentiation is essential to love, and true love is what reality is; there can be no question of simply being part of a vast 'process.' For conscious beings choice has to be real and it has to be loving, and it is in such choosing that creation continues to take place. In this way consciousness actually creates.

16/75 The sense of fear we have when we are 'asked' to move from one sphere to another (to life through 'death' in leaving behind the known) is the result of the refusal to exchange, which has warped our imagination so that we cannot see the demand as simply loving. It is not the cause of our refusal to exchange, except in the sense that the world-picture we have (created by sin) makes fearful what is inherently life-giving.

16/85 Through human bodies other bodies receive and are changed by and pass on to one another the effects of their fear and enmity.

16/95 We can see any day the way in which each small refusal of exchange can and does set up a response of like refusal in another person.

16/103 The cry of Milton's Satan, Evil be thou my good, is accurate, because evil is never acknowledged as evil by those that do it. He or she may call it evil, using the available vocabulary, but it is not felt as evil as long as it is positively willed. It is only when the wrong is repented that it is recognized as evil.

16/277 Sin is 'in' human beings, in their total being, and it is in every form it takes, basically a refusal, a reflecting back into the particular being of the energy of life whose nature is to be poured out. The very energy of sin, its power and malevolence, is in its origin the power whose nature is Love, the Spirit.

Illustrated 16/246-61; 262-270; 282-302.

16/303 For death is the 'proof' of sin. It is the displaying, in physical fact, of that divorce between spheres of life which results from the refusal of exchange. Flesh and spirit, intimately bound together in the dance of divine Wisdom, are, by sin, alienated from each other. Like people living willy-nilly in the same house who say of themselves, 'We aren't speaking,' they live together but don't communicate. Finally, they can't hear each other. The body is gradually or suddenly withdrawn from the exchange of life with the spirit, an exchange already rendered limited, awkward, and painful. Death then appears not only as the final end but as a dark power reaching out into the daylight world of human life.... But it is important that humankind should not seek a solution to this by grabbing at physical immortality, because in this context that simply annexes to an already narrowed and paralysed life a larger span of that life. It is still their life, their death, and it is not a destruction of death but rather a consolidation

of the power of death by making it, as it were, a permanent wall reaching so high that nobody can look beyond it or even speculate that there is a 'beyond'.... Thus does the refusal of exchange spread fear, suspicion, isolation and their death through the cosmos, as each individual lives in exchange (BL: exchange not of life but of death).

16/329 So we see that the great Refuser could not conquer the beings of unfree exchange in any direct way, he could infiltrate them indirectly. The exchange of spheres would continue, the 'doors' between different levels of being in the upward reach of the exchanged spheres were open in the exchanges of life (feared and un-understood as they were). Energy flowed from one sphere to another. But this energy now was not an energy of love but of desire for dominion and possession. The force of perverted angelic energy reached into the spheres of unfree natural being, by means of the material being of those that were free, but confused, afraid and confined by their own refusal. That refusal drove them, as it had driven their Adversary, to seek and grab what they craved, not perceiving that it was being freely offered them in love. The exchanges became exchanges of their death, one thing only coming into being by the destruction of another.

16/344 For this is our situation: we live in a cosmos whose being is exchange of life, yet at every turn we experience this exchange as both creative and destructive. There is no escape. The spheres voluntarily closed are breached by the thrust of passionate love, and also of passionate desire to dominate, through magic or sexual manipulation for instance. Yet they are only breached, not laid open to each other. It is all quite senseless, because, what we grab is ours for the loving, if only we would accept wisdom. But that we ~~cannot~~ will not do, indeed we cannot, because we have become minds incapable of perceiving her, or wanting her. The initiative has to come from her.

17/18 Yet through all this the sheer power of the principle of exchange persists in making some kind of sense out of it all, and the opportunity of passion is always there, driven by the intense necessity of discovering the thing that is missing. Wisdom has been defined as the ability to know the relative disposition of things, and that 'disposition' is constituted by the dynamics of love as the very essence of reality. The wise person, the sage, is therefore the one who has 'a profound grasp of the obvious', yet it is only obvious to one who is willing to live in exchange. The 'obvious' reality, the true 'relative disposition of things' is completely hidden from one who refuses to love. Knowledge there is, but it is a mechanistic manipulative kind of knowledge.

17/57 It is not for nothing that 'Wisdom' is the word taken up to define the nature of the Incarnate Word. Wisdom is exchange of divine life, taken and given back.

17/75 Love seeks a return of love which, since it must be free since it is love, cannot be extorted but only desired and invited. But the energy of the refusal of love has now such inhibition in the exercise of available power. It will use any means to get what it wants, which is more and more control. It (or 'he' or 'she') fully believes that this is what is 'good', for there is not other. Love is strictly meaningless to such a will.

17/171 .. and to Satan's mind the reason for these refusals must be that he was not as powerful as he seemed.

17/181 There is nothing in the accounts to suggest that the tempter on any occasion felt a need to use guile.

He does deceive but only because he is necessarily self-deceived. He is not on this occasion pretending anything; he is asking Jesus to act on known facts: 'You can do this, it's obviously sensible, so do it.'

He can see no other ~~xxx~~ sensible way to act on the facts, because he himself can see created things only as means to reinforcement of the power that is naturally his.

17/202 His hold on the cosmos, claimed so ~~boldly~~ bodily in the Temptation account in Luke, is to be broken precisely by the one thing he could not envisage, which was unconditional love.

18/40 Evil spirits must be limited by their ignorance of that love the refusal of which makes them what they are. They have to work within the limits assigned to them by love.

18/101 The little bit we know know makes clear how the temptation was used, and I prefer the word 'used' to the word 'overcome' to describe what Jesus did with it, because if we seriously accept that he was led by the Spirit to the encounter, then he needed it and had to work with it.

18/106 All three of Jesus's answers to the tempter's very ~~personal~~ practical suggestions amount to saying, 'Yes, that's perfectly possible, but there is another element in the situation, which forbids it.' This ~~ex~~ other element, which of its and his very nature, Satan cannot recognize, is love.

18/150 Jesus' answer in the desert and every other time, is, 'You must not try to manipulate God.' You cannot use love as a means to an end. He is End and Beginning and also Exchange between beginning and end, since he is love.

18/163 It was clear to John, seeing Jesus newly returned from the wilderness, that something had happened to him which made him not just the 'chosen one of God' but one chosen in a special sense. He was the ~~chosen-one~~ Suffering Servant who would be in Isaiah's image, 'pierced through for our faults,' 'like a lamb that is led to the slaughter house.' This is the one, says John, who 'takes away the sin of the world,' and the image links up with the image of the Passover lamb, whose blood on the doorposts of Israel ensured the people's salvation in the day of punishment. The Passover lamb was the symbol ~~effred~~ of freedom, of that great rescue from the evil power of Egypt, the 'house of bondage' which is sin. 'Behold the Lamb of God' who has already taken on the role that will lead him to death. Already he knows, though perhaps only obscurely, where he is going, and he knows because ~~he~~ he entered willingly into an intimate struggle with evil in its most pure form, at ~~them~~ point at which its power is most clearly a divine power, poured out by divine Love which cannot help giving itself because that is its nature. The power of love is constantly poured out, so the rejection of love

there

,so the rejection of love continues to be possible. If it were not so, there would be no possibility of the acceptance and return of love, ~~in~~ either. So in encountering the tremendous majesty and knowledge of Satan Jesus was encountering that which was most intimately his own, the very love which was his life, his own Spirit, the Spirit of Love herself. It was necessary that in the desert he should make the choice of absolute love in the face of absolute rejection, both of them real possibilities. In his case this was infinitely more so than for any other human being, since in this man the possibility of love was literally limitless; therefore also he experienced to the uttermost the possibility of the rejection of love. What that meant to one who said that 'my food is to do the will of my Father' and told his dearest beloved that 'the Father and I are one' we cannot even ~~x~~ begin to imagine. But it shows well enough what we mean when we talk about the problem of evil, evil which is so obviously real, and powerful, and yet is not. It is not because there is no such thing as evil in itself. As Dame Julian tells us, since 'nothing'. It is the perversion of love, no more and no less than that. It was the work of Jesus to make evident in his ~~x~~ own body the ultimate unreality of evil.

IV. RESURRECTION

19/17 The 'passionate' character of all reality was shown to us in the mysteriously familiar example of Romantic passion, yet it is not Romance which ~~is~~ gives meaning to the flesh-taking but, the other way round,, the 'way of Exchange' is the nature of all being, but just how it is spiritual and eternal as well as cultural and ecological we could only know by seeing it in the person and work of Jesus.

19/26 Why is there evil, and what does it mean? The question is posed completely and fully in the life of Jesus, who is our redemption, but in order to talk about redemption there has to be some language about sin available. Therefore that chapter had to come before this one but linked to it by its use of the experience of the temptation as the 'way in' to an understanding of sin and evil.

19/212 Anybody could have been the God-bearer. Somebody, some particular body, had to be and was. She is the perfect image of exchange, the gate/through which sphere after sphere of concentric glory is opened, and excluded human kind may once more come to its own proper source and end and self in the giving and receiving of love in the Trinity.

19/234 For Mary alone, as all are alone, yet she only becomes her most personal self as she comes to the point of knowing in the acceptance of giving and being received. In the willed exchange of love the divine amour voulu is laid on her and expressed in her, and so she is never alone, for she is the door between the worlds.

19/256 The poetry of Wisdom can often illuminate the breakthrough of the flesh-taking by the way it describes the role of Mary, to whom the human body of Jesus owed its existence and its actual physical characteristics. The fact that both Mary and Jesus can be evoked by the same image seems only appropriate.

of heaven'/

her/

20/23 But these words also express the theological reality of Mary, in whom Wisdom found a place, the woman from whom he took human life; neither will he be confused with, or distracted by the other, but rather each illuminates the other.

20/88 'He made peace by his death on the cross.' This is his passionate breakthrough, by which his body (the Church) comes into existence. This body is a conscious, known and knowing organism of exchanged life, so that the Church is nothing other than the amour voulu of Jesus at work in individual, concrete, men and women, evoking in them a response to the love which 'made peace by his death on the cross.'

20/165 When Jesus said, 'the Kingdom of heaven is among you' or 'within you', and when he told stories about that kingdom, he was evidently referring to something very precise and quite ascertainable, something with 'edges'. There is a border to be crossed, a reality to be released, a new sphere of being to be experienced. Whether you enter it, mix it in the dough, eat it, dig it up, release it, plant it -- whatever way you treat it, 'it' is not vague nor remote but a here-and-now power experienced in the very nature of things, and it is immediately recognizable. It changes each person, but this change is experienced as between people. They immediately see each other differently. What they see is, he tells them, God's reality. So of course they must act according to this new and accurate vision of life. They must behave as lovers do; they must serve one another with complete fidelity and humility, and also with a kind of joyful unreason. They must forgive to an exaggerated extent, give beyond the demands of common sense, cultivate an attitude to property and career which most people will regard as thoroughly irresponsible. This is how lovers are, and theirs is the Kingdom of Love, in which they are to rule. But to rule here means to put on an apron and wash people's dirty feet. It also means to die for them.

/187 There is one other effect of the breakthrough of Romantic passion which is very obvious throughout the Gospel accounts of the career of Jesus. It is the element of obscurity -- a kind of dazzlement. The concrete and observable events, the healings, the changed lives, the challenges, the encounters, are lived in a context of mystery, not because they are at all hard to perceive but because their unmistakably concrete nature seems always to be what it is in virtue of something else, unstated, unseen, yet with a frustrating sense that it ought to be seen and stated -- whatever 'it' is. The nostalgia without reason, the sense of 'something lost' and unattained within even the most satisfying love, is familiar in the poetry of Romantic love. The same thing is evident in the Gospel accounts. The disciples' love for Jesus was immediate, devoted, and sufficiently unreasonable to satisfy all the canons of Romance, but clearly it was often a baffled and hurt love. Just when they thought they were getting to understand, they found themselves dropped into helpless bewilderment.

20/204 Why could they not cure the epileptic boy? (to 229)

20/230 Those closest to Jesus evidently suffered most.. (to 244)

20/245 We may understand this better if.. (to 254)

20/245 .. But behind all these is the reason for the essential pain of Romantic love, which indeed is closely allied to the nameless nostalgia, itself painful. For Romantic love creates a situation for itself which is, in itself, artificial. It deliberately excludes certain elements of the wholeness of the natural experience of human love. For a time at least the complete satisfactions sought in consummated physical love is excluded. The intensity of Romantic passion which creates the breakthrough of the spirit into a new kingdom comes about, it seems, because of a deliberate refusal to do what is natural and proper about the perceived good in another human being. This concentration of the full energy of exchanged life in a narrow channel forces a way through yet more barriers between the spheres of reality, instead of immediately allowing it to spread sweetly throughout the realities of a satisfied everydayness. Romantic love is here, as I noticed at first, both everyday and strange. It includes all kinds of delightfully and poignantly everyday things such as the discovery of shared tastes or having a meal together as well as the experience of physical desire, but in the Romantic experience all this is caught up and in a sense dissolved in a deeper and more painful desire and a more intense delight which takes the whole thing beyond the sphere of everydayness. The cost is high, and the complaint of the ill-used physical and emotional nature is intense, and in a sense proper and right. Such a restriction is, as critics of Romance have pointed out, an outrage on nature, which she has not deserved. ~~Only the conviction that this is, somehow, worth while to suffer~~ Only the conviction that this is, somehow, the way to the innermost kingdom of love justifies such a perverse treatment of good gifts. Yet the notion that it is worth while to suffer this, if not permanently than at least through postponed satisfaction, is at the heart of the Romantic doctrine. And even when there is physical union, whether in marriage or not, it never fulfils all that it seems to promise. There is still pain, still a sense that something essential is missing, or lost.

the/

20/284 We may come, by this way of considering the marks of passion, to the heart of the mystery of the flesh-taking, by which flesh taken was destroyed and transformed and became something new, and yet the same person; but a person in whom not merely some but all the barriers to exchange between the spheres of experience had been destroyed. We come to that part, or aspect, or meaning, of the life of Jesus which is commonly called by the word that describes his whole mission.

If we can say that the passion of Jesus shows us most clearly the pain of the kind of love which can break barriers, then, we can also understand why such love is painful, whenever and in whomever it occurs, not accidentally but essentially, and this because of that reversal of the flow of the flow of exchange which is the nature of evil. If the way I have approached other events in his life has validity then we should expect to find in the final acts of Jesus the kind of necessity and urgency which created, for instance, the experience we call the transfiguration. We do find precisely this.

20/301 A sense of urgency is increasingly clear from an early stage in the public career of Jesus. It is an urgency which certainly includes the feeling that time is short, because the mounting hostility of authorities of various kinds

makes it clear that they are not going to continue for long to allow him to challenge and disrupt their carefully constructed political, psychological, and spiritual enclosures; but there is another kind of urgency which the lover feels in seeking a return of love. He may be prepared to take a lifetime for the job, but every moment of that lifetime 'contains' the full force of his longing desire.

21/6 The evidence of all this is not hard to find. The training of the Twelve, for instance, is pushed ahead in a way which seems, from a commonsense point of view, to be asking too much too soon. (dispute about precedence: example of small child given them; outsider healing in the name of Jesus; do not forbid)

21/24 Jesus was demanding of the Twelve, and indeed of the crowds, a degree of understanding and faith which we may well feel to be unrealistic. He was doing what people in love so often do, which is to have much faith in the vision of essential beauty and life in the beloved that peripheral qualities are ignored, yet it is these peripheral qualities which may well determine the response, limiting it or suppressing it altogether...

21/37 The amount of sheer warning in what the evangelists record of the words of Jesus -- against failure to watch, against unfaithfulness, against complacency, or worldly preoccupation -- or even family relationships -- is often overlooked, for we prefer to remember the lessons on the mercy of God and his fatherly care... 'I came to cast fire on earth and how am I constrained...' The very word, constrained, gives the sense of pressure, of frustration and pain at the intolerable restriction of love, and the passage which follows is a promise of stress and division for those who would catch fire and so suffer the same constraint of not-yet-consummated love. But the constraint is part of the movement of passion itself, pressing through the narrows towards freedom and joy.

21/54 The accent in all the references of Jesus to his coming suffering is on the necessity of it all. 'The son of man must suffer...' ... the only way to be a disciple is to 'carry his cross' after him. It is scarcely surprising that the Twelve did not understand. The inner logic of Romantic passion does not appeal to minds whose familiar images are those of conquest and rule.

21/67 The necessity of the passion, the 'must' of the lover, is self-evident to him, baffling to others. The Twelve continued to the end to refuse to believe that the failure and degradation of which he continually warned them could really occur, and when it came they were demoralized/utterly.

[after listing various classes] Step by step he had alienated them all.

.. FINally he was alone with the driving sense of necessity, an urgency narrowed down to his own single-minded dedication to the thing the Father was asking of him, by which alone love could have its way.

21/91 There is a quality about the behaviour of Jesus during his passion which sets it apart from any other kind of heroism. In a sense, it is not heroism at all, because a hero is intent on being a hero, on making clear to everyone his moral superiority and his indifference to the worst that his enemies can do. Jesus did not behave in a heroic way. His attention was at every point on which we are informed not on himself but on others, ready to respond to whatever was needed. There is a detailed attentiveness, an extremity of compassionate awareness of the nature of others' reactions and needs, which we easily overlook because we have heard it all so often. From his concern in Gethsemane for the wounded servant and for the fate of his own followers, to his plea for the men who nailed him to the cross and the assurance of salvation to his fellow sufferer, the impulse of his whole being is a love poured out in detailed, personal care as it was poured out in the gift of his body to destruction. He did not merely surrender to death, he gave himself away, body and mind and human heart, all one gift.

21/216 He felt the minor hurts of human life, but he knew them for what they were -- the images of the frustration of that deepest and ultimate hunger, the longing for God.... We know a little of what that meant because those human beings, who have even for a moment broken through to spheres of experience in which he lived, have suffered a longing for God so painful that it seemed at times that human nature could not support it.

21/230 There is no pain so great as the pain of the soul's longing for God. In it all other pains are included and drawn to a point at which it is impossible to distinguish between pain and love. This is the urgency with which Jesus moved towards death, in the full impulse of passionate dedication.

21/241 It is because it is simply love that the self-gift of Jesus is redemptive. Since love is the one thing that evil cannot compass, either imaginately or really, it evades the grab of evil.

21/238 But simple love and longing for God is something which evil cannot touch because it cannot 'see' it.

21/258 .. by dying he destroyed our death...

/262 In dying, Jesus, as it were, released the grip of death's power to be an evil

21/258 .. by dying he 'destroyed death.' This is literally true, because the power of death is sin, and sin is that defendedness of human nature which keeps love confined. Where there is no sin, death finds nothing to grip. Love is exchange of life, and sin, which blocks that exchange, is the place where death can hold on. In dying, Jesus, as it were, released the grip of death's power to be an evil.

22/5 We may sum up the event thus far: the nature of God is love, and the origin of love, the Father, from whom is life, pours himself out in total giving to the beloved, who, in his human nature, receives the outpouring of love, and receives it as human, that is, as coinherent in all human life and in all creation. Therefore (since sin is the condition in which created life is) he receives it in a condition which 'blocks' the flow of love in return. It is the work of incarnate Wisdom to make that longed-for return possible.

/13 The cry of Jesus on the cross at the very end was, therefore the cry of awareness that all was indeed accomplished, brought to its consummation. He knew that he could at last give back to the One he loved the unshackled fullness of love, and in so doing carry with him on the surge of that passion the love that is the essential being of all creation. This is, in a sense, the moment of resurrection, or rather it is the moment at which the process begins, for the resurrection is not a single event but ~~xx~~ the ever-extending 'outflow' of the energy previously damned up by the power of sin and death.

22/36 As always the personal experience of Jesus is constitutive of all that we mean by Christianity. Incarnation is first of all an experience, only subsequently and inadequately a doctrine.

The extraordinary change wrought by the passion was at work, but not all at once. It was, it must be emphasized, a material change, and material changes take place in time. What exactly these changes were we cannot tell though the strange evidence (still incomplete but very suggestive)...

[shroud of Turin; grave clothes found in place as though wrapped round a body but the body gone; guards knocked to the ground by mysterious force]

22/55 This was ~~not~~ the end of the process of change, for another barrier of another kind was passed at a later time. The one we call the ascension is even harder to discern since its chief characteristic, to the outside view, is that Jesus became invisible to his followers, yet he assured them that he would be with them in a definite but indescribable way, by the power of his Spirit. The third stage in the process of resurrection, which occurred some ten days after the ascension, produced definite physical and emotional effects, and these were observable not merely to those ~~whom~~ to whom it happened directly but to others who saw and heard them under the impact of this strange experience. The mighty wind and tongues of fire of this Pentecost stage of resurrection are yet another indication that something very fundamental was happening to material reality.

/69 What I am suggesting is that if we take seriously the claim that God became human then the consequences must be expected to be observable in material fact, but not in matter as isolated from the 'spiritual', because the whole point of the doctrine of exchange is that material creation reflects and is constituted by the exchange of life in the Blessed Trinity. To become spiritual in the Christian sense is not to become less material, but rather to become, as Jesus did by his passionate self-giving, more material. In the resurrection

matter it becomes fully possessed of that perfection which it only otherwise experience at odd moments, such as the 'Beatrician' moment. But since it is occurring in the total material universe this process takes place according to the conditions of that universe. It works by exchange, but like all exchange it occurs in time and through space, and its occurrence in time and space is modified by the effect of conscious living decisions -- as all occurrences are since humankind appeared on the earthly scene.

/84 In this process -- the process of exchanging the new life of resurrection outwards from Christ the first born -- a great deal must depend on actual human communication of the event itself and its implications, by word and by physical actions. The latter takes place as part of a communication which is not purely conscious and operates at a level of unfree natural exchange also, but under a kind of pressure which produces changes analogous to the changes which originally took place in the physical body of Jesus. (This is the same kind of pressure which, as I described earlier, pushes the everyday experience connected with falling in love into a different sphere, thereby in a sense leaving out the everyday quality itself, but only so that the beauty which is exemplified by everydayness may be rediscovered in its own fulness 'on the other side'.)

22/98 'In Adam' all died, for once the process of sin had been initiated it could not help including all creation, since all is coinherent. But since evil is inherently self-contradictory its ~~peer~~ power depends on the deflection of an energy whose 'proper' tide is towards exchange. In that case there must be a progressive build-up of frustrated exchange. The pressure is ~~is~~ not a fixed weight, it must increase with time and with the human responses and choices involved. If we remember that the energy of exchange is the very being of God -- that is, of love -- and that this love of its very nature cannot ~~mk~~ help pressing towards all possible gift, then we can see that the pressure and ~~the~~ resistance must both increase, in human minds and in the rest of creation, until they reach a point where one or the other has to give way.

22/111 To put it naively, either God had to 'give up' or the deflected current of evil had to be reversed and the energy released. But God cannot 'give up' without ceasing to be God, so no dualist interpretation of the struggle is possible. Only there had to be a way to get out of this impasse of locked tensions, and it came at the only point at which it could come -- that is, by a will within the situation of sin, a will locked into that tension, yet not conditioned by it.

22/122 The process of resurrection has to work in time and space but the pace of this can ~~x~~ be altered by the conscious decision of humankind being who offer themselves to the process and become, therefore, very powerful 'points of exchange' of resurrection. But they too are bodily, limited in space and time, and cannot reach out to give the message directly to all human beings, nor does the process proceed far enough in a normal lifetime for any of them to have a very great impact, as points of exchange, in the non-human creation.

22/141 The tension broke at the point of greatest tension, which was when the faith of Israel reached its own peak in Jesus. But if it reached a peak there and then it does not follow that all of creation had reached a comparable degree of tension: in fact, we would expect the opposite, for the tension in Israel had been deliberately heightened by the passionate nature of divine love... and the story of this heightening is thole history of the chosen people... If this deliberate heightening took place at a certain point then all the rest of creation was, by contrast, still comparatively -- and variably -- in a state of much less comfortable tension.... We would expect then that the premsence of evil as a felt and operative thing in human society would become gradually more and more obvious as time went on. We do seem to be witnessing such a process, and it is, as we would expect, exponential in its growth.

22/273 Blake's "I went to the Garden of Love....

23/46 This is first of all the personal experience of the man called Jesus. It is because it is his own personal experience that it is all the other things. We must avoid the tendency to dissolve the experience of Jesus into a generalized experience resurrection. There is no such thing as generalized action by God, rather the particular experience of each is exchanged with every other through time and space, and thus becomes shared and common, but never general, always particular.

/54 I want to end this chapter by considering the Gospel accounts of the resurrection appearances, which need to be read side by side with the theological reflections on the same event of Paul and of the writer to the Hebrews and of John. They are poetry striving to evoke accurately the nature of what actually happened, to Jesus himself and to those first witnesses. This is the foundation for understanding what happens to others who are brought into contact with the experience, and so become points of exchange of resurrection. If they are to do this with real dedication, and with comprehension of the paradoxical nature of the undertaking as I have explored it, the fullest appropriation of this experience is essential.

/66 One of the first things that is noticeable in the four accounts... is that the man who appears to his friends after death is recognizably the same person as the one they knew before... But not only do they recognize him... but the style of conversation is recognizable too. The odd mixture of ordinariness and authoritative wisdom is there. / 'Have you anything to eat?'.. 'Was it not ordained that Christ should suffer?'... 'You foolish men!'... 'What is that to you?'... 'Mary'... 'Do you love me?'... Be not faithless but believing'..

23/92 Even the final episode of the ascension seems to be designed to emphasiz the physical reality of a body which can be seen, and then suddenly can be hidden alother. This is so natural that it seems impossible to invent. It has all the ~~empeetness~~ concreteness and immediacy of real poetry, which makes experience available in which we can make sense of it.

/99 Another aspect of the resurrection stories which is significant is the time-sequence.... What is being evoked for us in the accounts of the resurrection is not a single event but the beginning of that process in time whose

further implications are made clear by quoting the words of Jesus himself when he sends his followers out to 'preach the Gospel' and also from the reflections of Paul on the incorporation of all humankind and all creation in the process. But it begins with the death of Jesus and from this moment the great undoing of the power of evil began, affecting first of all the person of Jesus himself.

23/142 But in any case to think of it in terms of spiritual experience is to miss the whole implication of the flesh-taking, and all of the thrust of Paul's theology of redemption. Jesus was the eruption of God into creation, not just as immanent but as explicit human fact. It could and did have effects both backward and forward in time, but it could not retire from time. To 'return to the Father' did not mean that Jesus, having finished his work, simply went home like some tired commuter. A human body, a human person, is in creation -- enmeshed with it totally -- and Jesus was in creation in that sense from the π moment of his conception. By being in it, he altered its composition radically and permanently, and the moment at which the effect of that alteration became operative was the moment of his death.

23/174 The final and greatest time-span suggested is that between the coming of the Spirit and the final coming of the Lord, and it is hardly surprising that the earliest Christians expected that it would be short. The whole thing up till then had been at high speed, and also they had no way (as we have) of realizing the complexity of the processes of exchange in nature and in its human dimensions, which must slow down the process of resurrection.

23/200 Both of these tendencies are attempts to simplify the process of resurrection and make it more understandable. But a process begun and continued according to the dynamics of exchange can only work by the way in which exchange actually does work, that is, by passionate breakthrough at as many levels and countless occasions, in individuals and in groups and in whole cultures. St Paul's theology is relevant even when his time-scale is not.

2 Pet 3.12: makes explicit that the timing of the End depends on the activity of the church, especially in prayer. 'What sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the Day of God?'

23/308 There is no coercion, but only patient waiting for the moment at which the passionate breakthrough becomes possible because desired. This is not some cosmic process at work, but very personal love.

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24/42 So it is that Jesus, the man who was God, sums up/himself the kind of love which Hosea (ch. 11) expressed. It is the cry of a π person in love, desiring love, and Paul's great poem (Ro, 8) of human kind overwhelmed with love knows it all as the deeply personal love Jesus who is Christ.

24/82 This is the genuine Christian insight, which brings human beings to π union with their God not by dissolving them in him, or him in them, but by bringing them to the glory of distinctness through exchange of love with the one adored Substitution.