

DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL

By

Saint John of the Cross

DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

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from the critical edition of

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## DARK NIGHT

*Exposition of the stanzas describing the **method** followed by the soul in its journey upon the spiritual road to the attainment of the **perfect union of love with God**, to the extent that is possible in this life.*

*Likewise, are described the properties belonging to the soul that has attained to the said perfection, according as they are contained in the same stanzas.*

*Declaración de las canciones del **modo** que tiene el alma en el camino espiritual para llegar a la perfecta unión de amor con dios, cual se puede en esta vida.*

*Dícese también las propiedades que tiene el que ha llegado a la dicha perfección, según en las canciones se contiene.*

## PROLOGUE

IN this book are first set down all the stanzas which are to be expounded; afterwards, each of the stanzas is expounded separately, being set down before its exposition; and then each line is expounded separately and in turn, the line itself also being set down before the exposition.

In the first two stanzas are expounded the effects of the two spiritual purgations [purifications]: of the sensual part of man and of the spiritual part.

## PROLOGO

En este libro se ponen primero todas las canciones que se han de declarar. Después se declara cada canción de por sí, poniendo cada una de ellas antes de su declaración, y luego se va declarando cada verso de por sí, poniéndole también al principio.

En las dos primeras canciones se declaran los efectos de las dos purgaciones espirituales: de la parte sensitiva del hombre y de la espiritual.

En las, otras seis se declaran varios y admirables efectos de la iluminación

In the other six are expounded various and wondrous effects of the spiritual illumination and union of love with God.

espiritual y unión de amor con Dios.

### STANZAS OF THE SOUL

### CANCIONES DEL ALMA

1. On a dark night,  
Kindled in love with yearnings  
--oh, happy chance!--  
I went forth without being observed,  
My house being now at rest.

1. En una noche oscura,  
con ansias, en amores inflamada,  
(oh dichosa ventura!,  
salí sin ser notada  
estando ya mi casa sosegada.

2. In darkness and secure,  
By the secret ladder, disguised  
--oh, happy chance!--  
In darkness and in concealment,  
My house being now at rest.

2. A oscuras y segura,  
por la secreta escala, disfrazada,  
(oh dichosa ventura!,  
a oscuras y en celada,  
estando ya mi casa sosegada.

3. In the happy night,  
In secret, when none saw me,  
Nor I beheld aught,  
Without light or guide,  
save that which burned in my heart.

3. En la noche dichosa,  
en secreto, que nadie me veía,  
ni yo miraba cosa,  
sin otra luz y guía  
sino la que en el corazón ardía.

4. This light guided me  
More surely than the light of noonday  
To the place where he (well I knew who!)  
was awaiting me--  
A place where none appeared.

4. Aquésta me guiaba  
más cierto que la luz de mediodía,  
adonde me esperaba  
quien yo bien me sabía,  
en parte donde nadie parecía.

5. Oh, night that guided me,  
Oh, night more lovely than the dawn,  
Oh, night that joined  
Beloved with lover,  
Lover transformed in the Beloved!

5. (Oh noche que guiaste!  
(oh noche amable más que el alborada!  
(oh noche que juntaste  
Amado con amada,  
amada en el Amado transformada!

6. Upon my flowery breast,  
Kept wholly for himself alone,  
There he stayed sleeping,  
and I caressed him,  
And the fanning of the cedars made a breeze.

7. The breeze blew from the turret  
As I parted his locks;  
With his gentle hand  
he wounded my neck  
And caused all my senses to be suspended.

8. I remained, lost in oblivion;  
My face I reclined on the Beloved.  
All ceased and I abandoned myself,  
Leaving my cares  
forgotten among the lilies.

6. En mi pecho florido,  
que entero para él solo se guardaba,  
allí quedó dormido,  
y yo le regalaba,  
y el ventalle de cedros aire daba.

7. El aire de la almena,  
cuando yo sus cabellos esparcía,  
con su mano serena  
en mi cuello hería  
y todos mis sentidos suspendía.

8. Quedéme y olvidéme,  
el rostro recliné sobre el Amado,  
cesó todo y dejéme,  
dejando mi cuidado  
entre las azucenas olvidado.

FIN

*Begins the exposition of the stanzas which treat of the way and manner which the soul follows upon the road of the union of love with God.*

Before we enter upon the exposition of these stanzas, it is well to understand here that the soul that utters them **is now in the state of perfection**, which is **the union of love with God**, having already passed through severe trials and straits, by means of spiritual exercise in **the narrow way of eternal life** whereof Our Saviour speaks in the Gospel (Mt 7:14), along which way the soul ordinarily passes in order to reach this high and happy [blessed] union with God.

Since this road (as the Lord Himself says likewise) is so strait, and since there are so few that enter by it [Mt 7:14], the soul considers it a great happiness and good chance to have passed along it to the said perfection

*Comienza la declaración de las canciones que tratan del modo y manera que tiene el alma en el camino de la unión del amor con Dios, por el padre fray Juan de la Cruz.*

Antes que entremos en la declaración de estas canciones, conviene saber aquí que el alma las dice **estando ya en la perfección**. Que es la unión de amor con Dios, habiendo ya pasado por los estrechos trabajos y aprietos, mediante el ejercicio espiritual del camino estrecho de la vida eterna que dice nuestro Salvador en el Evangelio (Mt. 7, 74), por el cual camino ordinariamente pasa para llegar a esta alta y dichosa unión con Dios.

El cual por ser tan estrecho y por ser tan pocos los que entran por él, como también dice el mismo Señor (Mt. 7, 14), tiene el alma por gran dicha y ventura haber pasado por él a la dicha perfección de amor, como ella lo cánta

of love, as it sings in this first stanza, calling this strait road with full propriety '*dark night*', as will be explained hereafter in the lines of the said stanza. The soul, then, rejoicing at having passed along this narrow road whence so many blessings have come to it, speaks after this manner.

## BOOK THE FIRST

*Which treats of the Night of Sense.*

### STANZA THE FIRST

*On a dark night,  
Kindled in love with yearnings  
--oh, happy chance!--  
I went forth without being observed,  
My house being now at rest.*

### EXPOSITION

1. IN this first stanza the soul relates the way and manner which it followed in going forth [come out, escape], **as to its affection, from itself and from all things**, and in **dying to them all and to itself**, through true mortification, in order to attain to living the sweet and delectable life of love with God; and it says that this going forth from itself and from all things was a '*dark night*', by which, as will be explained hereafter, is here understood **purgative contemplation**, which causes passively in the soul **the negation** of itself and of all things referred to above.

[purgative: purificative]

2. And this going forth [coming out, escaping, exiting] it says here that it was able to accomplish **in** the strength and ardour which love for its

en esta primera canción, llamando noche oscura con harta propiedad a este camino estrecho, como se declarará adelante en los versos de la dicha canción. Dice, pues, el alma, gozosa de haber pasado por este **angosto camino** de donde tanto bien se le siguió, en esta manera:

## LIBRO PRIMERO

*En que se trata de la noche del sentido.*

### CANCION 1

*En una noche oscura,  
con ansias, en amores inflamada,  
(oh dichosa ventura!,  
salí sin ser notada  
estando ya mi casa sosegada.*

### DECLARACION

1. Cuenta el alma en esta primera canción el modo y manera que tuvo en **salir**, según la afición, de sí y de todas las cosas, muriendo por verdadera mortificación a todas ellas y a si misma, para venir a vivir vida de amor dulce y sabrosa con Dios.

Y dice que este salir de sí y de todas las cosas fue una noche oscura, que aquí entiende por la **contemplación purgativa**, como después se dirá, la cual pasivamente causa en el alma la dicha **negación** de sí misma y de todas las cosas.

2. Y esta salida dice ella aquí que pudo hacer con la fuerza y calor que para ello le dio el amor de su Esposo en la dicha contemplación oscura.

Spouse gave to it for that purpose in the dark contemplation aforementioned.

[sequence:

This contemplation communicated to the soul the Love for the Groom.

This love gave the soul fortitude and warmth.

Love and fortitude helped the soul to come out (of herself and from creatures).]

Herein it extols the great happiness which it found in journeying to God **through this night** with such signal success that none of the three enemies, which are world, devil and flesh (who are they that ever impede this road), could hinder it;

inasmuch as the aforementioned night of purgative [purificative] contemplation lulled to sleep and mortified, in **the house of its sensuality**, all the **passions** and **desires** with respect to their mischievous desires and motions.

The line, then, says:

*On a dark night*

## CHAPTER I

*Sets down the first line and begins to treat of **the imperfections of beginners**.*

1. INTO this dark night souls begin to enter when God draws them forth from **the state of beginners** -- which is the state of **those that meditate** on the spiritual road -- and begins to set them in **the state of progressives** [proficients] -- which is that of those who **are** already **contemplatives** -- to the end that, after passing through it, they may arrive at the state of **the perfect**, which is that of **the Divine union of the soul with God**.

En lo cual encarece la buena dicha que tuvo en caminar a Dios **por esta noche** con tan próspero suceso que ninguno de los tres enemigos, que son mundo, demonio y carne, que son los que siempre contrarían este camino, se lo pudiese impedir;

por cuanto la dicha noche de contemplación purificativa: hizo adormecer y amortiguar en **la casa de su sensualidad** todas las pasiones y apetitos según sus apetitos y movimientos contrarios.

Dice, pues, el verso:

*En una noche oscura.*

## CAPITULO 1

*Pone el primer verso y comienza a tratar de las imperfecciones de los principiantes.*

1. En esta noche oscura comienzan a entrar las almas cuando Dios las va sacando de estado de principiantes, que es de **los que meditan** en el camino espiritual, y las comienza a poner en el de **los aprovechantes**, que es ya el de **los contemplativos**, para que, pasando por aquí, lleguen al estado de **los perfectos**, que es el de **la divina unión del alma con Dios**.

Por tanto, para entender y declarar mejor qué noche sea ésta por que el alma

Wherefore, to the end that we may the better understand and explain what night is this through which the soul passes, and for what cause God sets it therein, it will be well here to touch first of all upon certain characteristics of beginners (which, although we treat them with all possible brevity, will not fail to be of service likewise to the beginners themselves), in order that,

realizing the weakness of the state wherein they are, they may take courage, and may desire that God will bring them into this night,

wherein the soul is strengthened and confirmed in the virtues, and made ready for the inestimable delights of the love of God.

And, although we may tarry here for a time, it will not be for longer than is necessary, so that we may go on to speak at once of this dark night.

2. It must be known, then, that the soul, after it has been **definitely converted to the service of God**, is, as a rule [usually], spiritually nurtured and caressed by God, even as is the tender child by its loving mother, who warms it with the heat of her bosom and nurtures it with sweet milk and soft and pleasant food, and carries it and caresses it in her arms;

but, as the child grows bigger,  
the mother gradually ceases caressing it,  
and, hiding her tender love,  
puts bitter aloes upon her sweet breast,  
sets down the child from her arms  
and makes it walk upon its feet,

pasa, y por qué causa la pone Dios en ella, primero convendrá tocar aquí algunas propiedades de los principiantes. Lo cual, aunque será con la brevedad que pudiere, no dejará también de servir a los mismos principiantes, para que,

entendiendo **la flaqueza** del estado que llevan, **se animen y deseen** que los ponga Dios en esta noche,

donde **se fortalece** y **confirma** el alma en las virtudes y para los **inestimables deleites** del amor de Dios.

Y, aunque nos detengamos un poco, no será más de lo que basta para tratar luego de esta noche oscura.

2. Es, pues, de saber que el alma, después que determinadamente se convierte a servir a Dios, **ordinariamente** la va Dios criando en espíritu y regalando, al modo que la amorosa madre hace al niño tierno, al cual al calor de sus pechos le calienta, y con leche sabrosa y manjar blando y dulce le cría, y en sus brazos le trae y le regala.

Pero, a la medida que va creciendo,  
le va la madre quitando el regalo y,  
escondiendo el tierno amor,  
pone el amargo acibar en el dulce pecho,  
y, abajándole de los brazos,  
le hace andar por su pie,



so that it may lose **the habits of a child** and betake itself to more important and substantial occupations.

The loving mother of the grace of God, for, as soon as the soul is regenerated by its new warmth and fervour for the service of God [Second Conversion], she treats it in the same way;

she makes it to find spiritual milk, sweet and delectable, in all the things of God, without any labour of its own, and also great pleasure in spiritual exercises, for here God is giving to it the breast of His tender love, even as to a tender child. (1 P 2:2-3)

3. Therefore, such a soul finds its delight in spending long periods -- perchance whole nights -- in prayer; penances are its pleasures; fasts its joys; and its consolations are to make use of the sacraments and to occupy itself in Divine things. In the which things spiritual persons (though taking part in them with great efficacy and persistence and using and treating them with great care) often find themselves, spiritually speaking, very weak and imperfect.

For since they are moved to these things and to these spiritual exercises by the consolation and pleasure that they find in them, and since, too, they have not been prepared for them by the practice of earnest striving in the virtues, they have many faults and imperfections with respect to these spiritual actions of theirs;

for, after all,

any man's actions correspond to the habit of perfection attained by him.

And, as these persons have not had the opportunity of acquiring the said strong habits, they have necessarily to work (act) like feebler children, feebly.

porque, perdiendo **las propiedades de niño**, se dé a cosas más grandes y sustanciales.

La amorosa madre de la gracia de Dios, luego que por nuevo calor y hervor de servir a Dios reengendra al alma, eso mismo hace con ella;

porque la hace hallar dulce y sabrosa la leche espiritual sin algún trabajo suyo en todas las cosas de Dios, y en los ejercicios espirituales gran gusto, porque le da Dios aquí su pecho de amor tierno, bien así como a niño tierno (1 Pe. 2, 2-3).

3. Por tanto, su deleite halla pasarse grandes ratos en oración, y por ventura las noches enteras; sus gustos son las penitencias, sus contentos los ayunos, y sus consuelos usar de los sacramentos y comunicar en las cosas divinas; las cuales cosas, aunque con grande eficacia y porfía asisten a ellas y las usan y tratan con grande cuidado los espirituales, hablando espiritualmente, comúnmente se han muy flaca e imperfectamente en ellas.

Porque, como son movidos a estas cosas y ejercicios espirituales por el consuelo y gusto que allí hallan, y, como también ellos **no están habilitados por ejercicios de fuerte lucha en las virtudes**, acerca de estas sus obras espirituales tienen muchas faltas e imperfecciones;

porque, al fin,

cada uno obra conforme al hábito de perfección que tiene;

y, como éstos no han tenido lugar de **adquirir los hábitos fuertes**, de necesidad han de **obrar como flacos niños, flacamente**.



In order that this may be seen more clearly, and likewise how much these beginners in the virtues lacks with respect to the works in which they so readily engage with the pleasure aforementioned,

we shall describe it by reference to the seven capital sins, each in its turn, indicating some of the many imperfections which they have under each heading;

wherein it will be clearly seen how like to children [is the acting] of these persons in all they do.

And it will also be seen how many blessings the dark night of which we shall afterwards treat brings with it, since it cleanses the soul and purifies it from all these imperfections.

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[chapters 2-7 imperfections of the beginners]

## CHAPTER II

*Of certain spiritual imperfections which beginners have with respect to the habit of pride.*

1. AS these beginners feel themselves to be very fervent and diligent in spiritual things and devout exercises, from this prosperity (although it is true that holy things of their own nature cause humility) there often comes to them, through their imperfections, a certain kind of secret pride, whence they come to have some degree of satisfaction with their works and with themselves.

And hence there comes to them likewise a certain desire, which is somewhat vain, and at times very vain, to speak of spiritual things in the presence of others, and sometimes even to teach such things rather than to learn them.

They condemn others in their heart when they see that they have not the kind of devotion which they themselves desire;

Lo cual para que más claramente se vea, y cuán faltos van estos principiantes en las virtudes acerca de lo que con el dicho gusto con facilidad obran,

irémoslo notando por los siete vicios capitales, diciendo algunas de las muchas imperfecciones que en cada uno de ellos tienen,

en que se verá claro cuán de niños es el obrar que éstos obran;

y veráse también cuántos bienes trae consigo la noche oscura de que luego habemos de tratar, pues de todas estas imperfecciones limpia al alma y la purifica.

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## CAPITULO 2

*De algunas imperfecciones espirituales que tienen los principiantes acerca del hábito de la soberbia.*

1. Como estos principiantes se sienten tan fervorosos y diligentes en las cosas espirituales y ejercicios devotos, de esta propiedad (aunque es verdad que las cosas santas de suyo humillan) por su imperfección les nace muchas veces cierto ramo de soberbia oculta, de donde vienen a tener alguna satisfacción de sus obras y de sí mismos.

Y de aquí también les nace cierta gana algo vana, y a veces muy vana, de hablar cosas espirituales delante de otros, y aun a veces de enseñarlas más que de aprenderlas,

y condenan en su corazón a otros cuando no los ven con la manera de devoción que ellos querrían,

and sometimes they even say this in words, herein resembling the **Pharisee**, who boasted of himself, praising God for his own good works and despising the publican. [Luke 18:11-21]

2. In these persons **the devil often increases** the fervour that they have and the desire to perform these and other works more frequently, so that their pride and presumption may grow greater. For the devil knows quite well that all these works and virtues which they perform are not only **valueless** to them, but even become **vices** in them.

And such **a degree of evil** are some of these persons wont to reach that they would have none appear good save themselves;

and thus, in deed and word, whenever the opportunity occurs, they condemn them and slander them, beholding the mote in their brother's eye and not considering the beam which is in their own [Mt 7:37]; they strain at another's gnat and themselves swallow a camel. [Mt 23:24]

3. Sometimes, too, when their spiritual masters, such as **confessors and superiors**, do not approve of their spirit and behaviour (for **they are anxious that all they do shall be esteemed and praised**), they consider that **they do not understand them**, or that, because they do not approve of this and comply with that, their confessors are themselves not spiritual.

And so they immediately desire and contrive to find someone else who will fit in with their tastes; for **as a rule** they desire to **speak of spiritual matters** with those who they think **will praise and esteem what they do**, and they flee, as they would from death, from those who disabuse them in order to lead them into a safe road -- sometimes they even harbour ill-will against them.

Presuming thus, they are wont to resolve much and accomplish very little.

y aun a veces lo dicen de palabra, pareciéndose en esto al fariseo, que se jactaba alabando a Dios sobre las obras que hacía, y despreciando al publicano (Lc. 18, 11-12).

2. A estos muchas veces los acrecienta el demonio el fervor y gana de hacer más estas y otras obras porque les vaya creciendo la soberbia y presunción. Porque sabe muy bien el demonio que todas estas obras y virtudes que obran, no solamente no les valen nada, mas antes se les vuelven en vicio.

Y a tanto mal suelen llegar algunos de éstos, que no querrían que pareciese bueno otro sino ellos;

y así, con la obra y palabra, cuando se ofrece, les condenan y detraen, mirando la mota en el ojo de su hermano, y no considerando la viga que está en el suyo (Mt.7,37); cuelan el mosquito ajeno y tráganse su camello (Mt. 23, 24).

3. A veces también, cuando sus maestros espirituales, como son confesores y prebostes, no les aprueban su espíritu y modo de proceder (porque tienen gana que estimen y alaben sus cosas), juzgan que no los entienden el espíritu, o que ellos no son espirituales, pues no aprueban aquello y condescienden con ello.

Y así, luego desean y procuran tratar con otro que cuadre con su gusto; porque ordinariamente desean tratar su espíritu con aquellos que entienden que han de alabar y estimar sus cosas, y huyen, como de la muerte, de aquellos que se los deshacen para ponerlos en camino seguro, y aun a veces toman ojeriza con ellos.

Presumiendo, suelen proponer mucho y hacen muy poco.

Sometimes they are anxious that others shall **realize how spiritual and devout they are**, to which end they occasionally give outward evidence thereof in movements, sighs and other ceremonies;

and at times they are apt to fall into certain **ecstasies**, in public rather than in secret, wherein the **devil** aids them, and they are pleased that this should be noticed, and are often eager that it should be noticed more.

4. Many such persons desire to be the favourites of their confessors and to become intimate with them, as a result of which there beset them continual occasions of envy and disquiet. [Lit., 'a thousand envies and disquietudes.']

They are too much **embarrassed to confess their sins nakedly, lest their confessors should think less of them**, so they palliate them and make them appear less evil, and thus it is to excuse themselves rather than to accuse themselves that they go to confession.

And sometimes they seek another confessor to tell the wrongs that they have done, so that their own confessor shall think they have done nothing wrong at all, but only good; and thus they always take pleasure in telling him what is good, and sometimes in such terms as make it appear to be greater than it is rather than less, desiring that he may think them to be good, when it would be greater humility in them, as we shall say, to depreciate it, and to desire that neither he nor anyone else should consider them of account.

5. Some of **these beginners**, too, make little of their faults, and at other times become over-sad when they see themselves fall into them, thinking themselves to have been saints already; and thus they become **angry and impatient with themselves**, which is another imperfection.

Often they beseech God, with great yearnings, that **He will take from them their imperfections and faults**, but they do this that **they may find**

Tienen algunas veces gana de que los otros entiendan su espíritu y su devoción, y para esto a veces hacen muestras exteriores de movimientos, suspiros y otras ceremonias;

y, a veces, algunos arrobamientos, en público más que en secreto, a los cuales les ayuda el demonio, y tienen complacencia en que les entiendan aquello, y muchas veces codicia.

4. Muchos quieren preceder y privar con los confesores, y de aquí les nacen mil envidias y desquietudes.

Tienen empacho de decir sus pecados desnudos porque no los tengan sus confesores en menos, y vanlos coloreando porque no parezcan tan malos, lo cual más es irse a excusar que a acusar.

Y a veces buscan otro confesor para decir lo malo porque el otro no piense que tienen nada malo, sino bueno;

y así, siempre gustan de decirle lo bueno, y a veces por términos que parezca antes más de lo que es que menos, con gana de que le parezca bueno, como quiera que fuera más humildad, como lo diremos, deshacerlo y tener gana que ni él ni nadie lo tuviesen en algo.

5. También algunos de éstos tienen en poco sus faltas, y otras veces se entristecen demasiado de verse caer en ellas, pensando que ya habían de ser santos, y se enojan contra sí mismos con impaciencia, lo cual es otra imperfección.

Tienen muchas veces grandes ansias con Dios porque les quite sus imperfecciones y faltas, más por verse sin la molestia de ellas en paz que por

themselves at peace, and may not be troubled by them, rather than for God's sake;

not realizing that, if He should take their imperfections from them, they would probably become prouder and more presumptuous still.

They dislike praising others and love to be praised themselves;

sometimes they seek out such praise. Herein they are like the foolish virgins, who, when their lamps could not be lit, sought oil from others. [Mt 25:8 [Lit., 'who, having their lamps dead, sought oil from without.']]

6. From these imperfections some souls go on to develop [to have] many very grave ones, which do them great harm.

But some have fewer and some more, and some, **only the first motions** thereof or **little beyond these**;

and there are hardly any such **beginners** who, at the time of these signs of these fervours, fall not into some of these errors. ["into something of this']

But those who at this time **are going on to perfection** **proceed very differently** and **with quite another temper of spirit**;

for they progress by **means of humility** and are greatly edified, not only thinking naught of their own affairs, but having **very little satisfaction with themselves**;

**they consider all others as far better**, and usually have a holy envy of them, and an eagerness to serve God as they do.

For the greater is their fervour, and the more numerous are the works that they perform, and the greater is the pleasure that they take in them, as they progress in humility, the more do they realize how much God deserves of them, and **how little is all that they do for His sake**;

Dios;

no mirando que, si se las quitase, por ventura se harían más soberbios y presuntuosos.

Son enemigos de alabar a otros y amigos que los alaben, y a veces lo pretenden;

en lo cual son semejantes a las vírgenes locas, que, teniendo sus lámparas muertas, buscaban óleo por de fuera (Mt. 25, 8).

6. De estas imperfecciones algunos llegan a tener muchas muy intensamente, y a mucho mal en ellas;

pero algunos tienen menos, algunos más, y algunos **solos primeros movimientos o poco más**;

y apenas hay algunos de estos principiantes que al tiempo de estos fervores no caigan en algo de esto.

Pero los que en este tiempo van en perfección, muy de otra manera proceden y con muy diferente temple de espíritu;

porque se aprovechan y edifican mucho con la humildad, no sólo teniendo sus propias cosas en nada, mas con muy poca satisfacción de sí;

a todos los demás tienen por muy mejores, y les suelen tener una santa envidia, con gana de servir a Dios como ellos;

porque, cuanto más fervor llevan y cuantas más obras hacen y gusto tienen en ellas, como van en humildad, tanto más conocen lo mucho que Dios merece y lo poco que es todo cuanto hacen por él;

and thus, **the more they do, the less are they satisfied.**

So much would they gladly do from charity and love for Him, that all they do seems to them naught;  
and so greatly are they importuned, occupied and absorbed by this **loving anxiety** that they never notice what others do or do not;

or if they do notice it, they always believe, as I say, that **all others are far better than they themselves.**

Wherefore, **holding themselves as of little worth**, they are anxious that others too should thus hold them, and should despise and depreciate that which they do.

And further, if men should praise and esteem them, they **can in no wise believe** what they say;  
it seems to them strange that anyone should say these good things of them.

7. Together with great tranquillity and humbleness, these souls **have a deep desire to be taught by anyone who can bring them profit;**

they are **the complete opposite** of those of whom we have spoken above, who would fain be always teaching, and who, when others seem to be teaching them, take the words from their mouths as if they knew them already.

These souls, on the other hand, being far from desiring to be the masters of any, are very ready to travel and set out on another road than that which they are actually following, if they be so commanded, because they never think that they are right in anything whatsoever.

They rejoice when others are praised; they grieve only because they serve not God like them.

y así, cuanto más hacen, tanto menos se satisfacen.

Que tanto es lo que de caridad y amor querrían hacer por él, que todo lo que hacen no les parezca nada;  
y tanto les solicita, ocupa y embebe este cuidado de amor, que nunca advierten en si los demás hacen o no hacen;

y si advierten, todo es, como digo, creyendo que todos los demás son muy mejores que ellos.

De donde, teniéndose en poco, tienen gana también que los demás los tengan en poco y que los deshagan y desestimen sus cosas.

Y tienen más: que, aunque se los quieran alabar y estimar, en ninguna manera lo pueden creer,  
y les parece cosa extraña decir de ellos aquellos bienes.

7. Estos, con mucha tranquilidad y humildad, tienen gran deseo que les enseñe cualquiera que los pueda aprovechar;

harta contraria cosa de la que tienen los que hemos dicho arriba, que lo querrían ellos enseñar todo, y aun cuando parece les enseñan algo, ellos mismos toman la palabra de la boca como que ya se lo saben.

Pero éstos, estando muy lejos de querer ser maestros de nadie, están muy prontos de caminar y echar por otro camino del que llevan, si se lo mandaren, porque nunca piensan que aciertan en nada.

De que alaben a los demás se gozan; sólo tienen pena de que no sirven a Dios como ellos.

They have no desire to speak of the things that they do, because they think so little of them that they are ashamed to speak of them even to their spiritual masters, since they seem to them to be things that merit not being spoken of.

They are more anxious to speak of **their faults and sins**, or that these should be recognized rather than their virtues;

and thus they incline to talk of their souls with those who account their actions and their spirituality of little value.

This is a characteristic of **the spirit which is simple, pure, genuine and very pleasing to God**.

For as **the wise Spirit of God dwells in these humble souls**, He moves them and inclines them to **keep His treasures secretly** within and likewise to cast out from themselves all evil. *God gives this grace to the humble*, together with the other virtues, even as *He denies it to the proud*. (Wisdom 4:6)

8. These souls will give their heart's blood to anyone that serves God, and will help others to serve Him as much as in them lies.

The imperfections into which they see themselves fall they bear with humility, meekness of spirit and a loving fear of God, hoping in Him.

But souls who in the beginning journey with this kind of perfection are, as I understand, and as has been said, a **minority**, and **very few** are those who we can be glad do not fall into the opposite errors.

For this reason, as we shall afterwards say, God leads into the *dark night* those whom He desires to **purify** from all these imperfections so that He may bring them farther onward.

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No tienen gana de decir sus cosas, porque las tienen en tan poco, que aun a sus maestros espirituales tienen vergüenza de decirlas, pareciéndoles que no son cosas que merezcan hacer lenguaje de ellas.

Más gana tienen de decir sus faltas y pecados, o que los entiendan, que no sus virtudes;

y así se inclinan más a tratar su alma con quien en menos tienen sus cosas y su espíritu,

lo cual es propiedad de espíritu sencillo, puro y verdadero, y muy agradable a Dios.

Porque, como mora en estas humildes almas el espíritu sabio de Dios, luego las mueve e inclina a guardar adentro sus tesoros en secreto y echar afuera sus males. Porque da Dios a los humildes, junto con las demás virtudes, esta gracia, así como a los soberbios la niega (Sab. 4, 6).

8. Darán éstos la sangre de su corazón a quien sirve a Dios, y ayudarán, cuanto esto es en sí, a que le sirvan.

En las imperfecciones que se ven caer, con humildad se sufren, y con blandura de espíritu y temor amoroso de Dios, esperando en él.

Pero almas que al principio caminen con esta manera de perfección, entiendo son, como queda dicho, las menos y muy pocas; que ya nos contentaríamos que no cayesen en las cosas contrarias.

Que, por eso, como después diremos, pone Dios en la noche oscura a los que quiere purificar de todas estas imperfecciones para llevarlos adelante.

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### CHAPTER III

### CAPITULO 3

*Of some imperfections which some of these souls are apt to have, with respect to the second capital sin, which is **avarice**, in the spiritual sense.*

*De algunas imperfecciones que suelen tener algunos de éstos acerca del segundo vicio capital, que es la avaricia, espiritualmente hablando.*

1. MANY of these beginners have also at times great **spiritual avarice**. They will be found to be discontented with the spirituality which God gives them; and they are very disconsolate and querulous because they find not in spiritual things **the consolation** that they would desire. Many can never have **enough** of listening to counsels and learning spiritual precepts, and of **possessing and reading many books** which treat of this matter, and they spend their time on all these things rather than on works of mortification and the perfecting of the **inward poverty of spirit** which should be theirs.

1. Tienen muchos de estos principiantes también a veces mucha avaricia espiritual, porque apenas les verán contentos en el espíritu que Dios les da; andan muy desconsolados y quejosos porque no hallan el consuelo que querrían en las cosas espirituales. Muchos no se acaban de hartar de oír consejos y aprender preceptos espirituales y tener y leer muchos libros que traten de eso, y váseles más en esto el tiempo que en obrar la mortificación y perfección de la pobreza interior de espíritu que deben.

Furthermore, they burden themselves with images and rosaries which are very curious; now they put down one, now take up another; now they change about, now change back again; now they want this kind of thing, now that, preferring one kind of cross to another, because it is more curious. And others you will see adorned with agnusdeis<sup>1</sup> and relics and tokens,<sup>2</sup> like children with trinkets. Here I condemn the **attachment of the heart**, and the affection which they have for the nature, multitude and curiosity of these things, inasmuch as it is quite contrary to **poverty of spirit** which **considers only the substance of devotion**, makes use only of what suffices for that end and grows weary of this other kind of multiplicity and curiosity. For **true devotion must issue from the heart**, and consist in the **truth and substances alone** of what is represented by spiritual things; all the rest is **affection and attachment proceeding from imperfection**; and in order that one may pass to any kind of perfection it is necessary for such desires to be killed.

Porque, a más de esto, se cargan de imágenes y rosarios bien curiosos; ahora dejan unos, ya toman otros; ahora truecan, ahora destruecan; ya los quieren de esta manera, ya de esotra, aficionándose más a esta cruz que a aquélla, por ser más curiosa. Y veréis a otros arreados de agnusdeis y reliquias y nóminas, como los niños de dijes. En lo cual yo condeno la propiedad de corazón y el asimiento que tienen al modo, multitud y curiosidad de cosas, por cuanto es muy contra la pobreza de espíritu, que sólo mira en la sustancia de la devoción, aprovechándose sólo de aquello que basta para ella, y cansándose de esotra multiplicidad y de la curiosidad de ella; pues que la verdadera devoción ha de salir del corazón, sólo en la verdad y sustancia de lo que representan las cosas espirituales, y todo lo demás es asimiento y propiedad de imperfección, que, para pasar a alguna manera de perfección, es necesario que se acabe el tal apetito.

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<sup>1</sup> The agnusdei was a wax medal with a representation of the lamb stamped upon it, often blessed by the Pope; at the time of the Saint such medals were greatly sought after, as we know from various references in St. Teresa's letters.

<sup>2</sup> The word nomina, translated 'token,' and normally meaning list, or 'roll,' refers to a relic on which were written the names of saints. In modern Spanish it can denote a medal or amulet used superstitiously.



2. **I knew a person** who for more than ten years made use of a cross roughly formed from a branch<sup>3</sup> that had been blessed, fastened with a pin twisted round it; he had never ceased using it, and he always carried it about with him **until I took it from him**; and this was a person of no small sense and understanding.

And **I saw another** who said his prayers using beads that were made of bones from the spine of a fish; his devotion was certainly no less precious on that account in the sight of God, for it is clear that these things carried no devotion in their workmanship or value.

Those, then, who start from these beginnings and **make good progress** **attach themselves** to no visible instruments, nor do they burden themselves with such, nor desire to know more than is necessary in order that they may act well; for **they set their eyes only on being right with God and on pleasing Him**, and therein consists their covetousness. And thus with great generosity they give away all that they have, and delight to know that they have it not, for God's sake and for charity to their neighbour, no matter whether these be spiritual things or temporal. For, as I say, they **set their eyes only upon the reality of interior perfection**, which is to give pleasure to God and **in naught to give pleasure to themselves**.

3. But **neither from these imperfections nor from those others can the soul be perfectly purified until God brings it into the passive purgation of that dark night** whereof we shall speak presently.

2. Yo conocí una persona que más de diez años se aprovechó de una cruz hecha toscamente de un ramo bendito, clavada con un alfiler retorcida alrededor, y nunca la había dejado, trayéndola consigo hasta que yo se la tomé; y no era persona de poca razón y entendimiento.

Y vi otra que rezaba por cuentas que eran de huesos de las espinas del pescado, cuya devoción es cierto que por eso **no era de menos quilates** delante de Dios; pues se ve claro que éstos no la tenían en la hechura y valor.

Los que van, pues, bien encaminados desde estos principios, no se asen a los instrumentos visibles, ni se cargan de ellos, ni se les da nada de saber más de lo que conviene saber para obrar; porque sólo ponen los ojos en ponerse bien con Dios y agradarle, y en esto es su codicia. Y así con gran largueza dan cuanto tienen, y su gusto es saberse quedar sin ello por Dios y por la caridad del prójimo, no me da más que sean cosas espirituales que temporales; porque, como digo, sólo ponen los ojos en las veras de la perfección interior: dar a Dios gusto, y no a sí mismo en nada.

3. Pero de estas imperfecciones tampoco, como de las demás, no se puede el alma purificar cumplidamente hasta que Dios le ponga en la pasiva purgación de aquella oscura noche que luego diremos.

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<sup>3</sup> No doubt a branch of palm, olive or rosemary, blessed in church on Palm Sunday, like the English palm crosses of to-day. 'Palm Sunday' is in Spanish Domingo de ramos: 'Branch Sunday.'

It befits the soul, however, **to contrive to labour, in so far as it can**, on its own account, to the end that it may purge and perfect itself, and thus **may merit being taken by God** into **that Divine care** wherein it becomes healed of all things that it **was unable** [to reach] of itself to cure.

Because, however greatly the soul itself labours, it cannot actively purify itself so as **to be in the least degree prepared** for **the Divine union of perfection of love**, if **God takes** not **its hand and purges it** not in that **dark fire**, in the way and manner that we have to describe.

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#### CHAPTER IV

*Of other imperfections which these beginners are apt to have with respect to the third sin, which **is luxury**.*

1. Many of these beginners have **many other** imperfections than those which I am describing with respect to each of the deadly sins, but **these I set aside**, in order to avoid prolixity, touching upon **a few of the most important**, which are, as it were, **the origin and cause** of the rest.

And thus, with respect to this sin of **luxury**

(**leaving apart** the falling of spiritual persons into this sin, since my intent is to treat of the imperfections which have to be purged by the dark night),

they have many imperfections which might be described as **spiritual luxury**, not because they are so, but because **the imperfections proceed from spiritual things**.

For it often comes to pass that, **in their very spiritual exercises**, when they are powerless to prevent it, there arise and assert themselves **in the sensual part of the soul** impure acts and motions, and sometimes this happens **even when the spirit is deep in prayer**, or **engaged in the Sacrament of Penance or in the Eucharist**.

Mas conviene al alma, en cuanto pudiere, procurar de su parte hacer por perfeccionarse, porque **merezca** que Dios le ponga en aquella divina cura, donde sana el alma de todo lo que ella **no alcanzaba** a remediarse;

porque, por más que el alma se ayude, no puede ella activamente purificarse de manera que esté dispuesta en la menor parte para la divina unión de perfección de amor, si Dios no toma la mano y la purga en aquel fuego oscuro para ella, cómo y de la manera que habemos de decir.

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#### CAPITULO 4

*De otras imperfecciones que suelen tener estos principiantes acerca del tercer vicio, que es lujuria.*

1. Otras muchas imperfecciones más de las que acerca de cada vicio voy diciendo tienen muchos de estos principiantes, que por evitar prolijidad dego, tocando algunas de las más principales, que son como origen y causa de las otras.

Y así, acerca de este vicio de lujuria

(dejado aparte lo que es caer en este pecado en los espirituales, pues mi intento es tratar de las imperfecciones que se han de purgar por la noche oscura)

tienen muchas imperfecciones muchos, que se podrían llamar lujuria espiritual, no porque así lo sea, sino porque procede de cosas espirituales.

Porque muchas veces acaece que en los mismos ejercicios espirituales, sin ser en manos de ellos, se levantan y acaecen en la sensualidad movimientos y actos torpes, y a veces aun cuando el espíritu está en mucha oración, o ejercitando los Sacramentos de la Penitencia o Eucaristía.

These things are **not**, as I say, **in their power**; they proceed from one of three causes:

2. **The first cause** from which they often proceed is the pleasure which human nature takes in spiritual things.

For when the spirit and the sense are pleased, every part of a man is moved by that pleasure [Lit. 'recreation'] to delight according to its proportion and nature.

For then **the spirit** [of the human being], which is the higher part, is moved to pleasure [Lit. 'recreation'] and delight in God;

and **the sensual nature**, which is **the lower part**, is moved to pleasure and delight of the senses, because it cannot possess [deal] and lay hold upon aught else, and it therefore lays hold upon that which comes nearest to itself, which is the impure and sensual.

Thus it comes to pass that the soul is **in deep prayer with God according to the spirit**, and, on the other hand, **according to sense** it is passively conscious, not without great displeasure, of rebellions and motions and acts of the senses,

which often happens in Communion, for when the soul receives joy and comfort in this act of love, because this Lord bestows it (since it is to that end that He gives Himself), **the sensual nature takes** that which is its own likewise, as we have said, after its manner.

Now as, after all, these **two parts are combined in one individual**, they ordinarily **both** participate in that which one of them receives, each after its manner;

for, as the Philosopher says, **everything that is received is in the recipient after the manner of the same recipient.**

And thus, in these beginnings, and even when the soul has made some progress, its sensual part, being imperfect, oftentimes **receives** the Spirit of God **with the same imperfection.**

Los cuales, sin ser, como digo, en su mano, proceden de una de tres causas:

2. **La primera**, proceden muchas veces del gusto que tiene el natural en las cosas espirituales;

porque, como gusta el espíritu y sentido, con aquella recreación se mueve cada parte del hombre a deleitarse según su porción y propiedad;

porque entonces el espíritu se mueve a recreación y gusto de Dios, que es la parte superior;

y la sensualidad, que es la porción inferior, se mueve a gusto y deleite sensual, porque no sabe ella tener y tomar otro, y toma entonces el más conjunto a sí, que es el sensual torpe.

Y así, acaece que el alma está en mucha oración con Dios según el espíritu, y, por otra parte, según el sentido siente rebeliones y movimientos y actos sensuales pasivamente, no sin harta desgana suya;

lo cual muchas veces acaece en la Comunión, que, como en este acto de amor recibe el alma alegría y regalo, porque se le hace este Señor, pues para eso se da, la sensualidad toma también el suyo, como habemos dicho, a su modo.

Que, como, en fin, estas dos partes son un supuesto, ordinariamente participan entrambas de lo que una recibe, cada una a su modo;

porque, como dice el Filósofo, cualquiera cosa que se recibe, está en el recipiente al modo del mismo recipiente.

Y así en estos principios, y aun cuando ya el alma está aprovechada, como está la sensualidad imperfecta, recibe el espíritu de Dios con la misma imperfección muchas veces.

Now when this sensual part is renewed by the purgation of the dark night which we shall describe, it no longer has these **weaknesses**; for it is no longer this part that receives aught, but rather it is itself received into the Spirit. And thus it then has everything after the manner of the Spirit.

3. **The second cause** whence these rebellions sometimes proceed is **the devil**, who, in order to disquiet and disturb the soul, at times when it is at prayer or is striving to pray, contrives to stir up these motions of impurity in its nature; and **if the soul gives heed** to any of these, they cause it great harm.

For through **fear** of these not only do persons become **lax in prayer** -- which is **the aim of the devil** when he begins to strive with them -- but some **give up prayer altogether**, because they think that these things attack them more during that exercise than apart from it, which is true, since the devil attacks them then more than at other times, so **that they may give up spiritual exercises**.

And not only so, but **he succeeds in portraying to them very vividly things** that are most foul and impure, and at times are very closely related to certain spiritual things and persons that are of profit to their souls, in order to **terrify** them and make them **fearful**;

so that those who are affected by this dare not even look at anything or meditate (*considerar*) upon anything, because they immediately encounter this temptation.

And upon those who are **inclined to melancholy** this acts with such effect that they become greatly to be pitied since they are suffering so sadly;

for this trial reaches such a point in certain persons, when they have this **evil humour**, that they believe it to be clear that the devil is ever present

Que, cuando esta parte sensitiva está reformada por la purgación de la noche oscura que diremos, ya no tiene ella estas **flaquezas**; porque no es ella la que recibe ya, mas antes está recibida ella en el espíritu; y así lo tiene todo entonces al modo del espíritu.

3. La segunda causa, de donde a veces proceden estas rebeliones, es el demonio, que, por desquietar y turbar el alma al tiempo que está en oración o la procura tener, procura levantar en el natural estos movimientos torpes, con que, **si al alma se le da algo de ellos**, le hace harito daño.

Porque no sólo por el temor de esto aflojan en la oración, que es lo que él pretende, por ponerse a luchar con ellos, mas algunos dejan la oración del todo, pareciéndoles que en aquel ejercicio les acaecen más aquellas cosas que fuera de él, como es la verdad, porque se las pone el demonio más en aquella que en otra cosa, por que dejen el ejercicio espiritual.

Y no sólo eso, sino que llega a representarles muy al vivo cosas muy feas y torpes, y a veces muy conjuntamente acerca de cualesquier cosas espirituales y personas que aprovechan sus almas, para aterrarlas y acobardarlas;

de manera, que los que de ello hacen caso, aun no se atreven a mirar nada ni poner la consideración en nada, porque luego tropiezan en aquello.

Y esto en los que son tocados de melancolía acaece con tanta eficacia y frecuencia, que es de haberlos lástima grande, porque padecen vida triste,

porque llega a tanto en algunas personas este trabajo cuando tienen este mal humor, que les parece claro que sienten tener consigo acceso el demonio, sin

with them and that they have no power to prevent this, although some of these persons can prevent his attack by dint of great effort and labour.

When these impurities attack such souls through the medium of **melancholy**, they are not as a rule freed from them until they have been cured of that kind of humour, **unless the dark night has entered the soul, and rids them of all impurities, one after another.** [‘of everything’]

4. **The third source** whence these impure motions are apt to proceed in order to make war upon the soul is often **the fear** which such persons have conceived for these impure representations and motions. Something that they see or say or think brings them to their mind, and this makes them **afraid**, so that they suffer from them through no fault of their own.

5. There are also certain souls of **so tender and frail a nature** that, when there comes to them some spiritual consolation or some grace in prayer, **the spirit of luxury is with them immediately, inebriating and delighting their sensual nature in such manner** that it is as if they were plunged into the enjoyment and pleasure of this sin; and the enjoyment remains, together with the consolation, passively, and sometimes they are able to see that certain impure and unruly acts have taken place. The reason for this is that, since these natures are, as I say, **frail and tender, their humours** are stirred up and their blood is excited at the least disturbance. And hence come these motions; and the same thing happens to such souls when they are enkindled with anger or suffer any disturbance or grief.<sup>4</sup>

ser libres para poderlo evitar, aunque algunas personas de éstas puedan evitar el tal acceso con gran fuerza y trabajo.

Cuando estas cosas torpes acaecen a los tales por medio de la melancolía, ordinariamente no se libran de ellas hasta que sanan de aquella calidad de humor, si no es que entrase en la noche oscura el alma, que la priva sucesivamente de todo.

4. El tercer origen, de donde suelen proceder y hacer guerra estos movimientos torpes, suele ser el temor que ya tienen cobrado estos tales a estos movimientos y representaciones torpes; porque el temor que les da la súbita memoria en lo que ven o tratan o piensan, les hace padecer estos actos sin culpa suya.

5. Hay también algunas almas, de naturales tan tiernos y deleznales, que, en viniéndoles cualquier gusto de espíritu o de oración, luego es con ellos el espíritu de la lujuria, que de tal manera les embriaga y regala la sensualidad, que se hallan como engolfados en aquel jugo y gusto de este vicio; y dura lo uno con lo otro pasivamente; y algunas veces echan de ver haber sucedido algunos torpes y rebeldes actos.

La causa es que, como estos naturales sean, como digo, deleznales y tiernos, con cualquier alteración se les remueven los humores y la sangre, y suceden de aquí estos movimientos; porque a éstos lo mismo les acaece cuando se encienden en ira o tienen algún alboroto o pena.

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<sup>4</sup> All writers who comment upon this delicate matter go into lengthy and learned explanations of it, though in reality there is little that needs to be added to the Saint’s clear and apt exposition. It will be remembered that St. Teresa once wrote to her brother Lorenzo, who suffered in this way: ‘As to those stirrings of sense... I am quite clear they are of no account, so the best thing is **to make no account of them**’ (LL. 168). The most effective means of calming souls tormented by these favours is to commend them to a discreet and wise director whose counsel they may safely follow. The Illuminists committed the grossest errors in dealing with this matter.

6. Sometimes, again, there arises within these spiritual persons, whether they be speaking or performing spiritual actions, a certain **vigour** and **bravado**, through their having regard to persons who are present, and before these persons they **display** a certain kind of vain gratification.

This also arises from *luxury of spirit*, after the manner [**modo**] wherein we here understand it, which is accompanied as a rule by **complacency in the will**.

7. Some of these persons make **friendships** of a spiritual kind with others, which oftentimes **arise from luxury** and not from spirituality;

[how to discern re spiritual friendships]

this may be known to be the case when the remembrance of that friendship **causes** not the remembrance and love of God to grow, but **occasions** remorse of conscience.

For, when the friendship is **purely** spiritual, **the love of God grows with it**; and the more the soul remembers it, the more it remembers the love of God, and the greater the desire it has for God; so that, as the one grows, the other grows also.

For **the spirit of God has this property**, that **it increases good by adding to it more good**, inasmuch as there is likeness and conformity between them.

But, when this **love arises from the vice of sensuality** aforementioned, it produces the contrary effects; for **the more the one grows, the more the other decreases**, and the remembrance of it likewise.

6. Algunas veces también en estos espirituales, así en hablar como en obrar cosas espirituales, se levanta cierto brío y gallardía con memoria de las personas que tienen delante, y tratan con alguna manera de vano gusto;

lo cual nace también de lujuria espiritual, al modo que aquí la entendemos; lo cual ordinariamente viene con complacencia en la voluntad.

7. Cobran algunos de éstos aficiones con algunas personas por vía espiritual, que muchas veces nacen de lujuria, y no de espíritu;

lo cual se conoce ser así cuando, con la memoria de aquella afición, no crece más la memoria y amor de Dios, sino remordimiento en la conciencia.

Porque, cuando la afición es puramente espiritual, creciendo ella, crece la de Dios, y cuanto más se acuerda de ella, tanto más se acuerda de Dios y le da gana de Dios, y creciendo en lo uno crece en lo otro;

porque eso tiene el espíritu de Dios, que lo bueno aumenta con lo bueno, por cuanto hay semejanza y conformidad.

Pero cuando el tal amor nace del dicho vicio sensual, tiene los efectos contrarios; porque cuanto más crece lo uno, tanto más decrece lo otro y la memoria juntamente;



If that **sensual love** grows, it will at once be observed that the soul's **love of God** is becoming colder, and that it is forgetting Him as it remembers that love; there comes to it, too, a certain remorse of conscience.

And, on the other hand, if the **love of God** grows in the soul, **that other love** becomes cold and is forgotten; for, as **the two are contrary to one another**, not only does the one not aid the other, but the one which **predominates** quenches and confounds the other, and becomes strengthened in itself, **as the philosophers** say.

Wherefore Our Saviour said in the Gospel: *'That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.'* [John 3:6] That is to say, **the love which is born of sensuality ends in sensuality**, and that which is of the spirit **ends in the Spirit of God** and **causes it to grow**.

This is the difference that exists between these **two kinds of love, whereby we may know them**.

8. When the soul **enters the dark night**, it brings these kinds of love under control.

**It strengthens and purifies the one, namely that which is according to God; and the other it removes and brings to an end;**

and in the beginning it causes both to be lost sight of, as we shall say hereafter.

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## CHAPTER V

*Of the imperfections into which beginners fall with respect to the sin of **wrath**.*

1. By reason of the concupiscence which many beginners have for spiritual consolations, their experience of these consolations is very

porque, si crece aquel amor, luego verá que se va resfriando en el de Dios y olvidándose de él con aquella memoria y algún remordimiento en la conciencia;

y, por el contrario, si crece el amor de Dios en el alma, se va resfriando en el otro y olvidándole, porque, como son contrarios amores, no sólo no ayuda el uno al otro, mas antes el que predomina apaga y confunde el otro y se fortalece en sí mismo, como dicen los filósofos.

Por lo cual dijo nuestro Salvador en el Evangelio (Jn. 3, 6) que lo que nace de carne, es carne, y lo que nace de espíritu, es espíritu, esto es: el amor que nace de sensualidad, para en sensualidad, y el que de espíritu, para en espíritu de Dios y hácele crecer.

Y ésta es la diferencia que hay entre los dos amores para conocerlos.

8. Cuando el alma entrare en la noche oscura, todos estos amores pone en razón;

porque al uno fortalece y purifica, que es el que es según Dios, y al otro quita y acaba;

y, al principio a entrambos los hace perder de vista, como después se dirá.

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## CAPITULO 5

*De las imperfecciones en que caen los principiantes acerca del vicio de **la ira**.*

1. Por causa de la concupiscencia que tienen muchos principiantes en los gustos espirituales, les poseen muy de ordinario muchas imperfecciones del



commonly accompanied by many imperfections proceeding from the sin of **wrath**;

for, when their delight and pleasure in spiritual things come to an end, they naturally become **embittered**, and bear that lack of sweetness which they have to suffer **with a bad grace**, which affects all that they do; and they very easily become **irritated** over the smallest matter -- sometimes, indeed, none can tolerate them.

This frequently happens after they have been very pleasantly recollected in prayer according to sense;

when their pleasure and delight therein come to an end, their nature is naturally **vexed and disappointed**, just as is the child when they take it from the breast of which it was enjoying the sweetness.

There is no sin in this natural vexation, when it is not permitted to indulge itself, but only imperfection, which must be purged by the aridity and severity of the *dark night*.

2. There are other of these spiritual persons, again, who fall into **another kind of spiritual wrath**:

this happens when they become **irritated at the sins of others**, and keep watch on those others with a sort of **uneasy zeal**.

At times the impulse comes to them to reprove them angrily, and occasionally they go so far as to indulge it [39] and **set themselves up as masters of virtue**.

All this is contrary to **spiritual meekness**.

3. There are **others** who are **vexed with themselves** when they observe **their own imperfectness**, and display an **impatience that is not humility**;

so impatient are they about this that they would fain **be saints in a day**.

vicio de la ira;

porque, cuando se les acaba el sabor y gusto en las cosas espirituales, naturalmente se hallan desabridos y, con aquel sinsabor que traen consigo, traen mala gracia en las cosas que tratan, y se aíran muy fácilmente por cualquier cosilla, y aun a veces no hay quien los sufra.

Lo cual muchas veces acaece después que han tenido algún muy gustoso recogimiento sensible en la oración,

que, como se les acaba aquel gusto y sabor, naturalmente queda el natural desabrido y desgano; bien así como el niño cuando le apartan del pecho de que estaba gustando a su sabor.

En el cual natural, cuando no se dejan llevar de la desgana, no hay culpa, sino imperfección que se ha de purgar por la sequedad y aprieto de la noche oscura.

2. También hay otros de estos espirituales que caen en otra manera de ira espiritual,

y es que se aíran contra los vicios ajenos con cierto **celo desasosegado**, notando a otros;

y a veces les dan ímpetus de reprenderles enojosamente, y aun hacen algunas veces, haciéndose ellos dueños de la virtud.

Todo lo cual es contra **la mansedumbre espiritual**.

3. Hay otros que, cuando se ven imperfectos, con impaciencia no humilde se aíran contra sí mismos;

acerca de lo cual tienen tanta impaciencia, que querrían ser santos en un día.

Many of these persons **purpose to accomplish** a great deal and **make grand resolutions**;

yet, as they are not humble and have **no misgivings about themselves**, the more resolutions they make, the greater is their fall and the greater their annoyance, since they have not **the patience to wait** for that which God will give them when it pleases Him;

this likewise is contrary to the **spiritual meekness** aforementioned,

which **cannot be wholly remedied save by the purgation of the dark night**.

Some souls, on the other hand, are so patient as regards the progress which they desire that God would gladly see them less so.

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## CHAPTER VI

*Of imperfections with respect to spiritual **gluttony**.*

1. With respect to the fourth sin, which is **spiritual gluttony**, there is **much to be said**, for there is **scarce one of these beginners who**, however satisfactory his progress, **falls not into some of the many imperfections** which come to these beginners with respect to this sin, on account of **the sweetness which they find at first in spiritual exercises**.

For many of these, lured by the sweetness and pleasure which they find in such exercises, **strive more after spiritual sweetness than after spiritual purity and discretion**, which is that which **God regards and accepts throughout** the spiritual journey.

Therefore, besides **the imperfections** into which the seeking for sweetness of this kind makes them fall, the gluttony which they now have makes them **continually go to extremes**, so that they pass beyond the

De éstos hay muchos que proponen mucho y hacen grandes propósitos,

y como no son humildes ni desconfían de sí, cuantos más propósitos hacen, tanto más caen y tanto más se enojan, no teniendo paciencia para esperar a que se lo dé Dios cuando él fuere servido:

que también es contra la dicha mansedumbre espiritual;

que del todo no se puede remediar sino por la purgación de la noche oscura.

Aunque algunos tienen tanta paciencia en esto del querer aprovechar, que no querría Dios ver en ellos tanta.

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## CAPITULO 6

*De las imperfecciones acerca de la gula espiritual.*

1. Acerca del cuarto vicio, que es gula espiritual, hay mucho que decir, porque apenas hay uno de estos principiantes que, por bien que proceda, no caiga en algo de las muchas imperfecciones que acerca de este vicio les nacen a estos principiantes por medio del sabor que hallan a los principios en los ejercicios espirituales.

Porque muchos de éstos, engolosinados con el sabor y gusto que hallan en los tales ejercicios, procuran más el sabor del espíritu que la pureza y discreción de él, que es lo que Dios mira y acepta en **todo** el camino espiritual.

Por lo cual, demás de las imperfecciones que tienen en pretender estos sabores, la golosina que ya tienen les hace salir mucho del pie a la mano, pasando de los límites **del medio** en que consisten y se granjean las virtudes.

limits of **moderation** within which the virtues are acquired and wherein they have their being. [“in medio stat virtus”]

For some of these persons, attracted by the pleasure which they find therein, **kill themselves with penances**, and others **weaken themselves with fasts**, by performing more than their frailty can bear, without the order or advice of any, but rather endeavouring to **avoid those whom they should obey** in these matters; some, indeed, dare to do these things even though the contrary has been commanded them.

2. These persons are **most imperfect and unreasonable** [sin razón];

for they set bodily penance before **subjection and obedience**, which is **penance according to reason and discretion**, and therefore **a sacrifice more acceptable and pleasing to God than any other**.

But such one-sided penance is no more than the **penance of beasts**, to which they are attracted, **exactly like beasts**, by the desire and pleasure which they find therein.

Inasmuch as all extremes are vicious, and as in behaving these persons are working **their own will**, **they grow in vice rather than in virtue**;

for, to say the least, they are acquiring spiritual gluttony and **pride** in this way, through not **walking in obedience**.

And many of these **the devil** assails, stirring up this gluttony in them through the pleasures and desires which he increases within them, to such an extent that, since they can no longer help themselves, they either change or vary or add to that which is commanded them, as **any obedience in this respect is so bitter to them**.

To **such an evil** pass have some persons come that, simply because it is **through obedience** that they engage in these exercises, **they lose the**

Porque, atraídos del gusto que allí hallan, algunos se matan a penitencias, y otros se debilitan con ayunos, haciendo más de lo que su flaqueza sufre, sin orden y consejo; antes procuran hurtar el cuerpo a quien deben obedecer en lo tal;

y aun algunos se atreven a hacerlo aunque les han mandado lo contrario.

2. Estos son imperfectísimos, gente **sin razón**,

que posponen la sujeción y obediencia, que es penitencia de razón y discreción, y por eso es para Dios más acepto y gustoso sacrificio que todos los demás,

a la penitencia corporal, que, dejada estotra parte, no es más que **penitencia de bestias**, a que también como bestias se mueven por el apetito y gusto que allí hallan.

En lo cual, por cuanto todos los extremos son viciosos, y en esta manera de proceder éstos hacen su voluntad, antes van creciendo en vicios que en virtudes;

porque, por lo menos, ya en esta manera adquieren gula espiritual y soberbia, pues no va en obediencia (lo que hacen).

Y tanto empuja el demonio a muchos de éstos, atizándoles esta gula por gustos y apetitos que les acrecienta, que ya que más no pueden, o mudan o añaden o varían lo que les mandan, porque les es aceda toda obediencia acerca de esto.

En lo cual algunos llegan a tanto mal, que, por el mismo caso que van por obediencia los tales ejercicios, se les quita la gana y devoción de hacerlos,

**desire and devotion to perform them**, their only desire and pleasure being to do **what they themselves are inclined to do**, so that it would probably be more profitable for them not to engage in these exercises at all.

3. You will find that many of these persons are **very insistent** with their spiritual masters to be granted **that which they desire, extracting it from them almost by force**;

if they be refused it they become as peevish as children and go about in great displeasure, thinking that **they are not serving God** when they are not allowed to do that which they would.

For they go about **clinging to their own will and pleasure**, which they treat as though it came from God; [Lit., 'and treat this as their God.'] and immediately their directors take it from them ['immediately this is taken from them,'], and try to **subject them to the will of God**, they become peevish, grow faint-hearted and fall away.

These persons think that **their own satisfaction and pleasure are the satisfaction and service of God**.

4. There are others, again, who, because of this **gluttony**, know so little of their **own unworthiness and misery** and have thrust so far from them the **loving fear and reverence which they owe to the greatness of God**, that they hesitate not to insist continually that their confessors shall allow them to **communicate often**. And, what is worse, they frequently dare to communicate without the leave and consent ['an opinion'] of the minister and steward of Christ, merely acting on their own opinion, and contriving to conceal the truth from him.

And for this reason, because they desire to communicate continually, they make their confessions carelessly, ["anyhow"] being more eager to **eat** than to **eat cleanly and perfectly**, although **it would be healthier and holier** for them had they the contrary inclination and begged their

porque sola su gana y gusto es hacer lo que les mueve; todo lo cual por ventura les valiera más no hacerlo.

3. Veréis a muchos de éstos muy porfiados con sus maestros espirituales porque les concedan lo que quieren, y allá medio por fuerza lo sacan;

y si no, se entristecen como niños y andan de mala gana, y les parece que no sirven a Dios cuando no los dejan hacer lo que querrían.

Porque, como andan arrimados al gusto y voluntad propia, y esto tienen por su Dios, luego que se lo quitan y les quieren poner en voluntad de Dios, se entristecen y aflojan y faltan.

Piensan éstos que el gustar ellos y estar satisfechos, es servir a Dios y satisfacerle.

4. Hay también otros que por esta golosina tienen tan poco conocida su bajeza y propia miseria y tan echado aparte el amoroso temor y respeto que deben a la grandeza de Dios, (que) no dudan de porfiar mucho con sus confesores sobre que les dejen comulgar muchas veces. Y lo peor es que muchas veces se atreven a comulgar sin licencia y parecer del ministro y dispensero de Cristo, sólo por su parecer, y le procuran encubrir la verdad.

Y a esta causa, con ojo de ir comulgando, hacen como quiera las confesiones, teniendo más codicia en comer que en comer limpia y perfectamente; como quiera que fuera más sano y santo tener la inclinación contraria, rogando a sus confesores que no les manden llegar tan a menudo; aunque entre lo uno

confessors not to command them to approach the altar so frequently: between these two extremes, however, the better way is that of **humble resignation**. But the boldness referred to is [Lit, 'the other boldnesses are.'] a thing that does great harm, and men may fear to be punished for such temerity.

5. These persons, in communicating, **strive with every nerve** to obtain some kind of sensible sweetness and pleasure, instead of **humbly doing reverence** and giving praise within themselves to God.

And in such wise do they devote themselves to this that, **when they have received no pleasure or sweetness in the senses, they think that they have accomplished nothing at all.**

This is to judge God **very unworthily**; they have not realized that **the least of the benefits** which come from this Most Holy Sacrament is that which concerns the senses; and that the **invisible part of the grace** that it bestows **is much greater**; for, **in order that they may look at it with the eyes of faith**, God oftentimes withholds from them these other consolations and sweetnesses of sense.

And thus **they desire to feel and taste God** as though He were comprehensible by them and accessible to them, not only in this, but likewise in other spiritual practices. All this is very great imperfection and **completely opposed to the nature of God**, since it is **Impurity in faith**.

6. These persons have the same defect as regards **the practice of prayer**, for they think that **all the business of prayer consists in experiencing sensible pleasure and devotion** and they **strive to obtain this by great effort**, [as they say] wearying and fatiguing their faculties and their heads;

and when they have not found this pleasure they become **greatly discouraged, thinking that they have accomplished nothing**. Through these efforts they lose **true devotion and spirituality**, which consist in

y lo otro mejor es la **resignación humilde**, pero los demás atrevimientos cosa es para grande mal y castigo de ellos sobre tal temeridad.

5. Estos, en comulgando, todo se les va en procurar algún sentimiento y gusto más que en reverenciar y alabar en sí con humildad a Dios:

y de tal manera se apropian a esto, que, cuando no han sacado algún gusto o sentimiento sensible, piensan que no han hecho nada,

lo cual es juzgar **muy bajamente** de Dios, no entendiendo que el menor de los provechos que hace este Santísimo Sacramento es el que toca al sentido,

porque mayor es el invisible de la gracia que da; que, porque pongan en él los ojos de la fe, quita Dios muchas veces esotros gustos y sabores sensibles.

Y así, quieren sentir a Dios y gustarle como si fuese comprensible y accesible, no sólo en éste, sino también en los demás ejercicios espirituales, todo lo cual es muy grande imperfección y muy contra la condición de Dios, porque es impureza en la fe.

6. Lo mismo tienen éstos en la oración que ejercitan, que piensan que todo el negocio de ella está en hallar gusto y devoción sensible, y procuran sacarle, como dicen. a fuerza de brazos, cansando y fatigando las potencias y la cabeza;

y, cuando no han hallado el tal gusto, se desconsuelan mucho pensando que no han hecho nada. Y por esta pretensión pierden la verdadera devoción y espíritu, que consiste en perseverar allí con paciencia y humildad,



**perseverance**, together with **patience** and **humility** and **mistrust of themselves**, that they may please God alone.

For this reason, when they have once failed to find pleasure in this or some other exercise, they have great disinclination and repugnance to return to it, and at times **they abandon it**. They are, in fact, as we have said, **like children**, who are not influenced by **reason**, and who **act**, not **from rational motives**, but from inclination.

Such persons expend **all their effort** in seeking spiritual pleasure and consolation; they never tire therefore, of reading books; and they begin, now one meditation, now another, in their pursuit of this pleasure which they desire to experience in the things of God.

But God, very **justly, wisely and lovingly, denies it to them**, for otherwise this *spiritual gluttony* and **inordinate appetite** would breed in numberable evils.

**It is, therefore, very fitting that they should enter into the dark night**, whereof we shall speak, that they may be purged from this childishness.

7. These persons who are thus inclined to such pleasures have another very great imperfection, which is that they are very weak and remiss in journeying upon the **hard** [harsh, rough, rugged] **road of the Cross**;

for the soul that is given to sweetness naturally has its face set against all self-denial, which is devoid of sweetness. [‘against all the sweetness of self-denial.’]

8. These persons have many other imperfections which arise hence, of which in time the Lord heals them by means of **temptations, aridities** and **other trials**, all of which are part of the dark night.

All these I will not treat further here, lest I become too lengthy; I will only say that **spiritual temperance** and **sobriety** lead to another and a very different temper, which is that of **mortification, fear and submission in all things**.

desconfiando de sí, sólo por agradar a Dios.

A esta causa, cuando no han hallado una vez sabor en este u otro ejercicio, tienen mucha desgana y repugnancia de volver a él. y a veces lo dejan; que, en fin, son, como habemos dicho, semejantes a los niños, que **no se mueven ni obran por razón**, sino por el gusto.

Todo se les va a éstos en buscar gusto y consuelo de espíritu, y por esto nunca se hartan de leer libros, y ahora toman una meditación, ahora otra, andando a caza de este gusto con las cosas de Dios;

a los cuales les niega Dios muy justa, discreta y amorosamente, porque, si esto no fuese, crecerían por esta gula y golosina espiritual en males sin cuento.

Por lo cual conviene mucho a éstos entrar en la noche oscura que habemos de dar, para que se purguen de estas niñerías.

7. Estos que así están inclinados a estos gustos, también tienen otra imperfección muy grande, y es que son muy flojos y remisos en ir por el camino **áspero** de la cruz;

porque el alma que se da al sabor, naturalmente le da en rostro todo sinsabor de negación propia.

8. Tienen éstos otras muchas imperfecciones que de aquí les nacen, las cuales el Señor a tiempos les cura con tentaciones, sequedades y otros trabajos, que todo es parte de la noche oscura.

De las cuales, por no me alargar, no quiero tratar aquí más, sino sólo decir que la sobriedad y templanza espiritual lleva otro temple muy diferente de mortificación, temor y sujeción en todas sus cosas,

It thus becomes clear that the **perfection and worth of things consist** not in the multitude and the pleasantness of one's actions, but **in being able to deny oneself in them**;

this such persons must endeavour to compass, in so far as they may, **until God is pleased to purify them indeed, by bringing them**<sup>[52]</sup> **into the dark night**, to arrive at which I am hastening on with my account of these imperfections.

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## CHAPTER VII

*Of imperfections with respect to spiritual **envy and sloth**.*

1. WITH respect likewise to the other two vices, which are spiritual envy and sloth, these beginners fail not to have many imperfections.

For, with respect to **envy**, many of them are wont to experience movements of **displeasure at the spiritual good of others**, which cause them a certain sensible grief at being outstripped upon this road, so that they would prefer not to hear others praised;

for they become displeased at others' virtues and sometimes they cannot refrain from contradicting what is said in praise of them, depreciating it as far as they can;

and their annoyance thereat grows<sup>5</sup> because the same is not said of them, for they would fain be preferred in everything.

All this is clean contrary to charity, which, as Saint Paul says, rejoices in goodness. [1 Co 13:6]

And, if charity has any envy, it is a holy envy, comprising grief at not having the virtues of others, yet also joy because others have them, and delight when others outstrip us in the service of God, wherein we ourselves are so remiss.

echando de ver que no está la perfección y valor de las cosas en la multitud y gusto de las obras, sino en saberse negar a sí mismo en ellas;

lo cual ellos han de procurar hacer cuanto pudieren de su parte, hasta que Dios quiera purificarlos de hecho entrándolos en la noche oscura, a la cual por llegar me voy dando prisa con estas imperfecciones.

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## CAPITULO 7

*De las imperfecciones acerca de la envidia y acidia espiritual.*

1. Acerca también de los otros dos vicios, que son envidia y acidia espiritual, no dejan estos principiantes de tener hartas imperfecciones.

Porque acerca de la envidia muchos de éstos suelen tener movimientos de pesarse del bien espiritual de los otros, dándoles alguna pena sensible que les lleven ventaja en este camino, y no querrían verlos alabar;

porque se entristecen de las virtudes ajenas, y a veces no lo pueden sufrir sin decir ellos lo contrario, deshaciendo aquellas alabanzas como pueden,

y les crece, como dicen, el ojo no hacerse con ellos otro tanto, porque querrían ellos ser preferidos en todo.

Todo lo cual es muy contrario a la caridad, la cual, como dice san Pablo (1 Cor. 13, 6), se goza de la verdad;

y, si alguna envidia tiene, es envidia santa, pesándole de no tener las virtudes del otro, con gozo de que el otro las tenga, y holgándose de que todos le lleven la ventaja porque sirvan a Dios, ya que él está tan falto en ello.

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<sup>5</sup> Lit., 'and, as they say, their eye (el ojo) grows'—a colloquial phrase expressing annoyance.



2. With respect also to **spiritual sloth**, beginners are apt to be irked by the things that are most spiritual, from which **they flee** because these things are incompatible with **sensible pleasure**.

For, as they are so much accustomed to sweetness in spiritual things, they are wearied by things in which they find no sweetness.

If once they failed to find in prayer the satisfaction which their taste required (and after all it is well that God should take it from them to **prove them**), they would prefer not to return to it: sometimes they leave it; at other times they continue it unwillingly.

And thus because of this sloth they abandon **the way of perfection** (which is the way of the **negation of their will and pleasure** for God's sake) for the pleasure and sweetness of their own will, which they aim at satisfying in this way rather than the will of God.

3. And many of these would have God will that which they themselves will, and are fretful at having to will that which He wills, and find it repugnant to accommodate their will to that of God.

Hence it happens to them that oftentimes they think that that wherein they find not their own will and pleasure is not the will of God; and that, on the other hand, when they themselves find satisfaction, God is satisfied.

Thus **they measure God by themselves and not themselves by God**, acting quite contrarily to that which He Himself taught in the Gospel, saying: That he who should lose his will for His sake, the same should gain it; and he who should desire to gain it, the same should lose it.[Mt. 16:25]

4. These persons likewise find it irksome when they are commanded to do that wherein they take no pleasure.

Because they aim at **spiritual sweetness and consolation**, they are **too weak** to have the fortitude and bear the trials of perfection.

2. También, acerca de la acidia espiritual, suelen tener tedio en las cosas que son más espirituales y huyen de ellas, como son aquellas que contradicen al gusto sensible;

porque, como ellos están tan saboreados en las cosas espirituales, en no hallando sabor en ellas las fastidian.

Porque, si una vez no hallaron en la oración la satisfacción que pedía su gusto (porque en fin conviene que se le quite Dios para probarlos), no querrían volver a ella, o a veces, la dejan o van de mala gana.

Y así, por esta acidia, posponen el camino de perfección, que es el de la negación de su voluntad y gusto por Dios, al gusto y sabor de su voluntad, a la cual en esta manera andan ellos por satisfacer más que a la de Dios.

3. Y muchos de éstos querrían que quisiese Dios lo que ellos quieren, y se entristecen de querer lo que quiere Dios, con repugnancia de acomodar su voluntad a la de Dios.

De donde les nace que, muchas veces, en lo que ellos no hallan su voluntad y gusto, piensen que no es voluntad de Dios;

y que, por el contrario, cuando ellos se satisfacen, crean que Dios se satisface,

midiendo a Dios consigo, y no a sí mismos con Dios, siendo muy al contrario lo que él mismo enseñó en el Evangelio (Mt. 16, 25), diciendo que el que perdiese su voluntad por él, ese la ganaría, el que la quisiese ganar, ése la perdería.

4. Estos también tienen tedio cuando les mandan lo que no tiene gusto para ellos.

Estos, porque **se andan al regalo y sabor del espíritu**, son muy **flojos** para la fortaleza y trabajo de perfección,

They resemble those who are softly nurtured and who run fretfully away from everything that is hard, and take offense at **the Cross, wherein consist the delights of the spirit.**

**The more spiritual a thing is, the more irksome they find it**, for, as they seek to go about spiritual matters with complete freedom and according to the inclination of their will, it causes them great sorrow and repugnance to **enter upon the narrow way, which, says Christ, is the way of life.**[Mt. 7:14]

5. Let it suffice here to have described these imperfections, among the many to be found in the lives of those that are in **this first state of beginners**, so that it may be seen **how greatly they need God to set them in the state of proficients.**

This He does by **bringing them into the dark night** whereof we now speak; wherein **He weans** them from the breasts of these **sweetnesses and pleasures**, **gives** them **pure aridities and inward darkness**, takes from them all these irrelevances and puerilities, and by very different means causes them to **win the virtues.**

For, **however assiduously** the beginner practises the mortification in himself of all these actions and passions of his, **he can never completely succeed — very far from it — until God shall work it in him passively by means of the purgation of the said night.**

Of this I would fain speak in some way that may be profitable; **may God, then, be pleased to give me His Divine light**, because **this is very needful in a night that is so dark and a matter that is so difficult to describe and to expound.**

The line, then, is:

*In a dark night.*

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[chapters 8-11,2]

hechos semejantes a los que se crían en regalo, que huyen con tristeza de toda cosa áspera, y oféndense de la cruz, en que están los deleites del espíritu;

y en las cosas más espirituales más tedio tienen, porque, como ellos pretenden andar en las cosas espirituales a sus anchuras y gusto de su voluntad, háceles gran tristeza y repugnancia entrar por el camino estrecho, que dice Cristo (Mt. 7, 14), de la vida.

5. Estas imperfecciones baste aquí haber referido de las muchas en que viven los de este primer estado de principiantes, para que se vea cuánta sea la necesidad que tienen de que Dios los ponga en estado de aprovechados,

que se hace entrándolos en la noche oscura que ahora decimos, donde, destetándolos Dios de los pechos de estos gustos y sabores en puras sequedades y tinieblas interiores, les quita todas estas impertinencias y niñerías, y hace ganar las virtudes por medios muy diferentes.

Porque, por más que el principiante en mortificar en sí se ejercite todas sus acciones y pasiones, nunca del todo, ni con mucho, puede hasta que Dios lo hace pasivamente por medio de la purgación de la dicha noche.

En la cual para hablar algo que sea en su provecho, sea Dios servido darme su divina luz, porque es bien menester en noche tan oscura y materia tan dificultosa para ser hablada y recitada.

Es, pues, el verso:

*En una noche oscura.*

## CHAPTER VIII

## CAPITULO 8

*Wherein is expounded the first line of the first stanza, and a beginning is made of the explanation of this dark night.*

*En que se declara el primer verso de la primera canción y se comienza a explicar esta noche oscura.*

1. THIS **night**, which, as we say, is **contemplation**, produces in spiritual persons two kinds of **darkness** or **purgation**, corresponding to **the two parts of man's nature** - namely, **the sensual** and **the spiritual**.

1. Esta noche, que decimos ser la contemplación, dos maneras de tinieblas causa en los espirituales o purgaciones, según las dos partes del hombre, conviene a saber, sensitiva y espiritual.

And thus the one night or purgation will be **sensual**, wherein the soul is purged **according to sense**, which is **subdued to the spirit**;

Y así, la una noche o purgación será sensitiva, con que se purga el alma según el sentido, acomodándolo al espíritu;

and the other is a night or purgation which is **spiritual**, wherein the soul is purged and stripped **according to the spirit**, and **subdued and made ready for** the union of love with God.

y la otra es noche o purgación espiritual, con que se purga y desnuda el alma según el espíritu, acomodándole y disponiéndole para la unión de amor con Dios.

The night of **sense** is **common and comes to many**: these are **the beginners**; and of this night we shall speak first.

La sensitiva es común y que acaece a muchos, y éstos son los principiantes, de la cual trataremos primero;

The night of the **spirit** is the portion **of very few**, and these are they that are already practised and **proficient**, of whom we shall treat hereafter.

la espiritual es de muy pocos, y éstos ya de los ejercitados y aprovechados, de que trataremos después.

2. **The first purgation** or night is **bitter and terrible to sense**, as we shall now show.[58]

2. La primera purgación o noche es amarga y terrible para el sentido, como ahora diremos.

The second bears **no comparison with it**, for it is **horrible** and **awful to the spirit**, as we shall show[59] presently.

La segunda no tiene comparación, porque es horrenda y espantable para el espíritu, como luego diremos.

Since the night of sense is **first in order and comes first**, we shall first of all say something about it **briefly**, since **more is written of it**, as of a thing that is more common;

Y porque en orden es primero y acaece primero la sensitiva, de ella con brevedad diremos alguna cosa primero, porque de ella, como cosa más común, se hallan más cosas escritas,

and we shall pass on to treat more fully of **the spiritual night**, since **very little has been said of this, either in speech[60] or in writing**, and **very little is known of it, even by experience**.

por pasar a tratar más de propósito de la noche espiritual, por haber de ella muy poco lenguaje, así de plática como de escritura, y aun de experiencia muy poco.

3. Since, then, the conduct of these beginners upon the way of God is ignoble, [base, bajo] [61] and has much to do with their love of self and their own inclinations, as has been explained above, **God desires to lead them farther**. He seeks to bring them out of that **ignoble kind of love** [bajo modo de amor] to **a higher degree of love for Him**, to free them from the **ignoble** [bajo] **exercises of sense and meditation** (wherewith, as we have said, they go seeking God so **unworthily** and in so many ways that are unbecoming), and to lead them to a kind of **spiritual exercise** wherein they can commune with Him **more abundantly** and are **freed more completely from imperfections**.

For they have now had practice **for some time** in **the way of virtue** and have persevered in **meditation** and prayer [oracion], whereby, **through the sweetness and pleasure that they have** found therein, they have lost their love of the things of the world and have gained some degree of spiritual strength in God;

this has enabled them **to some extent** to refrain from creature desires, so that for God's sake they are now **able to suffer** a **light burden** and a **little aridity** without turning back to a time[62] which they found more pleasant.

When they are going about these spiritual exercises with the greatest delight and pleasure, and when they believe that the sun of Divine favour is shining most brightly upon them, **God turns all this light of theirs into darkness**, and shuts against them the door and the source of the sweet spiritual water which they were tasting in God whensoever and for as long as they desired.

(For, as they were weak and tender, there was no door closed to them, as Saint John says in the Apocalypse, iii, 8).

And thus He leaves them **so completely in the dark** that **they know not whither to go with their sensible imagination and meditation**;

3. Pues, como el estilo que llevan los principiantes en el camino de Dios es **bajo** y que frisa mucho con su propio amor y gusto, como arriba queda dado a entender, **queriendo Dios llevarlos adelante**, y sacarlos de este **bajo modo de amor a más alto grado de amor de Dios** y **librarlos de bajo ejercicio del sentido y discurso**, con que tan tasadamente y con tantos inconvenientes, como hemos dicho, andan buscando a Dios, y **ponerlos en el ejercicio de espíritu**, en que más abundantemente y más libres de imperfecciones pueden comunicarse con Dios;

ya que se han ejercitado algún tiempo en el camino de la virtud, perseverando en meditación y oración, en que con el sabor y gusto que allí han hallado se han desaficionado de las cosas del mundo y cobrado algunas espirituales fuerzas en Dios,

con que tienen algo refrenados los apetitos de las criaturas, con que podrán sufrir por Dios un poco de carga y sequedad sin volver atrás, al mejor tiempo,

cuando más a sabor y gusto andan en estos ejercicios espirituales, y cuando más claro a su parecer les luce el sol de los divinos favores, oscuréceles Dios toda esta luz y ciérrales la puerta y manantial de la dulce agua espiritual que andaban gustando en Dios todas las veces y todo el tiempo que ellos querían; porque, como eran flacos y tiernos, no había puerta cerrada para éstos,

como dice san Juan en el Apocalipsis (3, 8).

Y así, los deja tan a oscuras que no saben dónde ir con el sentido de la imaginación y el discurso, porque no pueden dar un paso en meditar como

for **they cannot advance a step in meditation**, as they were wont to do afore time, **their inward senses being submerged in this night, and left with such dryness** that not only do they experience **no pleasure and consolation in the spiritual things and good exercises** wherein they were wont to find their delights and pleasures, but instead, on the contrary, **they find insipidity and bitterness in the said things**.

For, as I have said, **God now sees that they have grown a little**, and are becoming **strong enough** to lay aside their swaddling clothes and **be taken from the gentle breast**;

so **He sets them down from His arms and teaches them to walk on their own feet**; which they feel to be **very strange**, for **everything seems to be going wrong with them**.

4. To **recollected persons** this **commonly happens sooner** after their beginnings than to others, inasmuch as **they are freer from occasions of backsliding**, and **their desires turn more quickly from** the things of the world, which is necessary if they are to **begin to enter this blessed night of sense**.

**Ordinarily no great time passes** after their beginnings before they begin to enter this night of sense;

and **the great majority of them** do in fact enter it, for they will generally be seen to fall into these aridities.

5. With regard to this way of purgation of the senses, since it is **so common**, we might here adduce a great number of quotations from Divine Scripture, where many passages relating to it are continually found, particularly in the *Psalms* and the *Prophets*.

However, **I do not wish to spend time upon these**, for he who knows not how to look for them there will find the common experience of this purgation to be sufficient.

antes solían, anegado ya el sentido interior en estas noches, y déjalos tan a secas que no solo no hallan jugo y gusto en las cosas espirituales y buenos ejercicios en que solían ellos hallar sus deleites y gustos, mas, en lugar de esto, hallan por el contrario sinsabor y amargura en las dichas cosas;

porque, como he dicho, sintiéndolos ya Dios aquí algo crecidillos, para que se fortalezcan y salgan de mantillas los desarrima del dulce pecho y,

abajándolos de sus brazos, los veza a andar por sus pies; en lo cual sienten ellos gran novedad porque se les ha vuelto todo al revés.

4. Esto a **la gente recogida** comúnmente acaece más en breve, después que comienzan, que a los demás, por cuanto están más libres de ocasiones para volver atrás y reformar más presto los apetitos de las cosas del siglo, que es lo que se requiere para comenzar a entrar en esta dichosa noche del sentido.

Ordinariamente no pasa mucho tiempo, después que comienzan, en entrar en esta noche del sentido;

y todos los más entran en ella, porque comúnmente les verán caer en estas sequedades.

5. De esta manera de purgación sensitiva, por ser tan común, podríamos traer aquí grande número de autoridades de la Escritura divina, donde a cada paso, particularmente en los Salmos y en los Profetas, se hallan muchas.

Por tanto, no quiero en esto gastar tiempo, porque el que allí no las supiere mirar, bastarle ha la común experiencia que de ella se tiene.



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## CHAPTER IX

*Of the signs by which it will be known that the spiritual person is walking along the way of this night and purgation of sense.*

1. BUT since these aridities might frequently proceed, **not from the night and purgation** of the sensual desires aforementioned,

but **from sins and imperfections**,  
or **from weakness and lukewarmness**,  
or from some **bad humour or indisposition of the body**,

I shall here set down **certain signs** by which it may be known if such aridity proceeds **from the aforementioned purgation**, or if it arises from any of the aforementioned **sins**. For the making of this distinction I find that there are three principal signs.

2. **The first** is whether, when a soul finds **no pleasure or consolation in the things of God**, it also fails to find it in anything created; for, as God sets the soul in this dark night to the end that He may quench and purge its sensual desire, He allows it **not to find attraction or sweetness in anything whatsoever**.

In such a case it may be considered **very probable**[63] that this aridity and insipidity proceed not from recently committed sins or imperfections.

For, if this were so, **the soul would feel in its nature some inclination or desire to taste other things than those of God**; since, whenever the desire is allowed indulgence in any imperfection, it immediately feels inclined thereto, whether little or much, in proportion to the pleasure and the love that it has put into it.

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## CAPITULO 9

*De las señales en que se conocerá que el espiritual va por el camino de esta noche y purgación sensitiva.*

1. Pero, porque estas **sequedades** podrían proceder muchas veces no de la dicha noche y purgación del apetito sensitivo,

sino de pecados e imperfecciones  
o de flojedad y tibieza,  
o de algún mal humor o indisposición corporal,

pondré aquí algunas señales en que se conoce si es la tal dicha purgación, o si nace de alguno de los dichos vicios. Para lo cual hallo que hay tres señales principales.

2. La primera es si, así como no halla gusto ni consuelo en las cosas de Dios, tampoco le halla en alguna de las cosas criadas; porque, como pone Dios al alma en esta oscura noche a fin de enjugarle y purgarle el apetito sensitivo, en ninguna cosa le deja engolosinar ni hallar sabor.

Y en esto se conoce **muy probablemente** que esta sequedad y sinsabor no proviene ni de pecados ni de imperfecciones nuevamente cometidas;

porque, si esto fuese, sentirse hía en el natural alguna inclinación o gana de gustar de otra alguna cosa que de las de Dios; porque, cuando quiera que se relaja el apetito en alguna imperfección, luego se siente quedar inclinado a ella, poco o mucho, según el gusto y afición que allí aplicó.

Since, however, this lack of enjoyment in things above or below might proceed from some **indisposition** or **melancholy humour**, which oftentimes makes it impossible for the soul to take pleasure in anything, **it becomes necessary to apply the second** sign and condition.

3. **The second sign** whereby a man may believe himself to be experiencing the said purgation is that **the memory is ordinarily centred upon God**, with painful care and solicitude, thinking that it is not serving God, but is backsliding, because it finds itself without sweetness in the things of God.

And in such a case it is evident that this lack of sweetness and this aridity come **not from weakness and lukewarmness**; for it is the nature of lukewarmness **not to care greatly or to have any inward solicitude for the things of God**.

There is thus **a great difference** between aridity and lukewarmness, for lukewarmness consists in **great weakness and remissness in the will and in the spirit, without solicitude as to serving God**;

whereas purgative aridity is **ordinarily accompanied by solicitude**, with **care and grief** as I say, because the soul is not serving God.

And, although this may sometimes be increased by **melancholy or some other humour** (as it frequently is), it fails not for that reason to produce a purgative effect upon the desire, since **the desire** is deprived of all pleasure and **has its care centred upon God alone**.

For, when mere **humour is the cause**, it spends itself in displeasure and ruin of the physical nature, and there are none of those desires to sense God which belong to purgative aridity.

When the cause is aridity, it is true that the sensual part of the soul has **fallen low, and is weak and feeble in its actions**, by reason of the little

Pero, porque este no gustar ni de cosa de arriba ni de abajo podría provenir de alguna indisposición o humor melancólico, el cual muchas veces no deja hallar gusto en nada, es menester la segunda señal y condición.

3. La segunda señal para que se crea ser la dicha purgación es que ordinariamente trae la memoria en Dios con solicitud y cuidado penoso, pensando que no sirve a Dios, sino que vuelve atrás, como se ve en aquel sinsabor en las cosas de Dios.

Y en esto se ve que no sale de flojedad y tibieza este sinsabor y sequedad; porque de razón de la tibieza es no se le dar mucho ni tener solicitud interior por las cosas de Dios.

De donde entre la sequedad y tibieza hay mucha diferencia; porque la que es tibieza tiene mucha flojedad y remisión en la voluntad y en el ánimo, sin solicitud de servir a Dios;

la que sólo es sequedad purgativa tiene consigo ordinaria solicitud con cuidado y pena, como digo, de que no sirve a Dios.

Y ésta, aunque algunas veces sea ayudada de la melancolía u otro humor, como muchas veces lo es, no por eso deja de hacer su efecto purgativo del apetito, pues de todo gusto está privado, y sólo su cuidado trae en Dios;

porque, cuando es puro humor, sólo se va en disgusto y estrago del natural, sin estos deseos de servir a Dios que tiene la sequedad purgativa,

con la cual aunque la parte sensitiva está muy caída y floja y flaca para obrar por el poco gusto que halla, el espíritu, empero, está pronto y fuerte.



pleasure which it finds in them; but the spirit, on the other hand, is ready and strong [explained below].

4. For the cause of this aridity is that **God transfers to the spirit the good things and the strength of the sense** [sentido], which, since the soul's natural strength and sense [sentido] are incapable of using them, remain barren, dry and empty.

For **the sensual part of a man has no capacity for that which is pure spirit**, and thus, **when it is the spirit that receives the pleasure, the flesh is left without savour and is too weak to perform any action.**

But **the spirit**, which **all the time is being fed**, goes forward in strength, and with more alertness and solicitude than before, in **its anxiety not to fail God**;

and if it is **not immediately conscious of spiritual sweetness and delight**, but only of aridity and lack of sweetness, the reason for this is **the strangeness of the exchange**; for its palate has been accustomed to those other sensual pleasures upon which its eyes are **still fixed**, and, since the **spiritual palate** is not made ready or purged for such **subtle pleasure**, until it finds itself becoming prepared for it by means of **this arid and dark night**, it cannot experience spiritual pleasure and good, but only aridity and lack of sweetness, since it misses the pleasure which aforesaid it enjoyed so readily.

5. These souls whom God is beginning to lead through these solitary places of the wilderness are like to the children of Israel, to whom in the wilderness God began to give food from Heaven, containing within itself all sweetness, and, as is there said, it turned to the savour which each one of them desired.

But withal the children of Israel felt the lack of the pleasures and delights of the flesh and the onions which they had eaten aforesaid in Egypt, the more so because their palate was accustomed to these and took delight in them, rather than in the delicate sweetness of the angelic manna; and they

4. Porque la causa de esta sequedad es porque muda Dios los bienes y fuerza del sentido al espíritu, de los cuales, por no ser capaz el sentido y fuerza natural, se queda ayuno, seco y vacío.

Porque la parte sensitiva no tiene habilidad para lo que es puro espíritu, y así, gustando el espíritu se desabre la carne y se afloja para obrar;

mas el espíritu que va recibiendo el manjar, anda fuerte y más alerta y solícito que antes en el cuidado de no faltar a Dios,

el cual, si no siente luego al principio el sabor y deleite espiritual, sino la sequedad y sinsabor, es por la novedad del trueque; porque, habiendo tenido el paladar hecho a esos gustos sensibles (y todavía tiene los ojos puestos en ellos), y porque también el paladar espiritual no está acomodado ni purgado para tan sutil gusto, hasta que sucesivamente se vaya disponiendo por medio de esta seca y oscura noche no puede sentir el gusto y bien espiritual, sino la sequedad y sinsabor, a falta del gusto que antes con tanta facilidad gustaba.

5. Porque éstos que comienza Dios a llevar por estas soledades del desierto son semejantes a los hijos de Israel, que luego que en el desierto les comenzó Dios a dar el manjar del cielo, que de suyo tenía todos los sabores, y, como allí dice (Sab. 16, 20-21), se convertía al sabor que cada uno quería,

con todo, sentían más la falta de los gustos y sabores de las carnes y cebollas que comían antes en Egipto, por haber tenido el paladar hecho y engolosinado en ellas, que la dulzura delicada del maná angélico, y lloraban y gemían por las carnes entre los manjares del cielo (Núm. 11, 4-6). Que a

wept and sighed for the fleshpots even in the midst of the food of Heaven.[64] To such depths does the vileness of our desires descend that it makes us to long for our own wretched food[65] and to be nauseated by the indescribable[66] blessings of Heaven.

6. But, as I say, when these **aridities proceed from** the way of the purgation of sensual desire, although at first the spirit feels no sweetness, for the reasons that we have just given, it feels that it is **deriving strength and energy to act from the substance** which this **inward food** gives it, the which food is **the beginning of a contemplation** that is **dark** and **arid** to the **sense**;  
which contemplation is **secret** and **hidden** from the very person that experiences it;

and ordinarily, together with the aridity and emptiness which it causes in the **sense**, it gives the soul **an inclination and desire to be alone and in quietness**, without being **able to think** of any **particular** thing or having the desire to do so.

If those souls to whom this comes to pass **knew how to be quiet** at this time, and troubled not about performing any kind of action, whether inward or outward, neither had any **anxiety about doing anything**, then they would delicately experience this inward **refreshment** [nourishment / food] in that ease and freedom from care.

So delicate is this refreshment [nourishment / food] that ordinarily, if a man have desire or care to experience it, he experiences it not;  
for, as I say, it does its work when the soul is **most at ease** [ocio] and **freest from care** [descuido];  
it is like the air which, if one would close one's hand upon it, escapes.

7. In this sense we may understand that which the Spouse said to the Bride in the Songs, namely: *'Withdraw thine eyes from me, for they make me to soar aloft.'* [Ct 6:4]

tanto llega la bajeza de nuestro apetito, que nos hace llorar nuestras miserias y fastidiar el bien incomunicable del cielo.

6. Pero, como digo, cuando estas sequedades provienen de la vida purgativa del apetito sensible, aunque el espíritu no siente al principio el sabor por las causas que acabamos de decir, siente la fortaleza y brío para obrar en la sustancia que le da el manjar interior, el cual manjar es principio de oscura y seca contemplación para el **sentido**;

la cual contemplación, que es oculta y secreta para el mismo que la tiene,

ordinariamente, junto con la sequedad y vacío que hace al **sentido**, da al alma inclinación y gana de estarse a solas y en quietud, sin poder pensar en cosa particular ni tener gana de pensarla.

Y entonces, si a los que esto acaece se supiesen quietar, descuidando de cualquier obra interior y exterior, sin solicitud de hacer allí nada, luego en aquel descuido y ocio sentirán delicadamente aquella **refección** interior;

la cual es tan delicada que, ordinariamente, si tiene gana o cuidado en sentirla, no la siente;  
porque, como digo, ella obra en el mayor ocio y descuido del alma;

que es como el aire, que, en queriendo cerrar el puño, se sale.

7. Y a este propósito podemos entender lo que a la Esposa dijo el Esposo en los Cantares (6, 4): *Aparta tus ojos de mí, porque ellos me hacen volar*;

For in such a way does God bring the soul into this state, and by so different a path does He lead it that, if it desires to work with its faculties, it hinders the work which God is doing in it rather than aids it;

whereas aforetime it was quite the contrary.

The reason is that, in this **state of contemplation, which the soul enters** when it forsakes *meditation* [*sale del discurso*] for the state of the *proficient*, **it is God Who is now working** in the soul; He binds [ata] its interior faculties, and allows it not to cling [*arrimo*] to the **mind**, nor to have delight in the **will**, nor to reason [*discurso*] with the **memory**.

For **anything that the soul can do of its own accord** at this time serves only, as we have said, to hinder **inward peace** and **the work which God is accomplishing in the spirit** by means of [in] that **aridity of sense**.

And this peace, being spiritual and delicate, performs a work which is **quiet and delicate, solitary, productive of peace and satisfaction** [68] and **far removed from** all those earlier pleasures [gustos], which were very palpable and sensual.

This is the peace which, says David, **God speaks in the soul** to the end that He may make it spiritual. [Ps 84:9]

And this leads us to the third point.

8. **The third sign** whereby this purgation of sense may be recognized is that the soul **can no longer meditate or reflect in the imaginative sphere of sense** as it was wont, however much it may of itself endeavour to do so.

For God now **begins to communicate Himself to it**, no longer **through sense**, as He did aforetime, by means of reflections [del discurso] which

porque de tal manera pone Dios al alma en este estado y en tan diferente camino la lleva, que, si ella quiere obrar con sus potencias, antes estorba la obra que Dios en ella va haciendo, que ayuda;

lo cual antes era muy al revés.

La causa es porque ya en este estado de contemplación, que es cuando **sale del discurso** y entra en el estado de aprovechados, ya Dios es el que obra en el ánima, porque por eso la **ata** las potencias interiores, no dejándole **arrimo** en el entendimiento, ni **jugo** en la voluntad, ni **discurso** en la memoria.

Porque, en este tiempo, **lo que de suyo puede obrar** el alma no sirve sino, como hemos dicho, de estorbar la paz interior y **la obra** que en aquella sequedad del sentido hace Dios en el espíritu.

La cual, como espiritual y delicada, hace obra quieta, delicada, solitaria, satisfactoria y pacífica, muy ajena de todos esos gustos primeros, que eran muy palpables y sensibles;

porque es la paz ésta que dice David (Sal. 84, 9) que habla Dios en el alma para hacerla espiritual.

Y de aquí es la tercera.

8. **La tercera señal** que hay para que se conozca esta purgación del sentido es el no poder ya meditar ni discurrir en el sentido de la imaginación, como solía, aunque más haga de su parte.

Porque, como aquí comienza Dios a comunicarse, no ya por el sentido, como antes hacía **por medio del discurso** que componía y dividía las noticias, sino por el espíritu puro, en que no cae discurso sucesivamente,

joined [componia] and sundered [dividia] its knowledge [noticias], but **by pure spirit**, into which **consecutive reflections** enter not;

but **He communicates Himself to it by an act of simple contemplation**, to which **neither** the exterior nor the interior senses of **the lower part** of the soul **can attain**.

From this time forward, therefore, imagination and fancy [fantasia] can find no support in any meditation [consideracion], and can gain no foothold by means thereof.

9. With regard to **this third sign**, it is to be understood that this **embarrassment and dissatisfaction** of the faculties proceed not from indisposition [algún mal humor], for, when this is the case, and the indisposition, which never lasts for long,[70] **comes to an end**, the soul is **able once again**, by taking some trouble about the matter, to do what it did before, and the faculties find their wonted support.

But in the purgation of the desire [apetito: will] this is not so: when once the soul begins to enter therein, its inability to reflect with the faculties **grows** ever greater.

For, although it is true that at first, and with some persons, the process is **not as continuous** as this, so that **occasionally** they fail to abandon their pleasures and reflections of sense (for perchance by reason of **their weakness** it was not fitting to **wean them from these immediately**), yet this inability grows within them more and more and **brings the workings of sense to an end**, if indeed they are to **make progress**, for those who walk not in the way of contemplation **act very differently** [they are following another way].

For this **night** of **aridities** is not usually **continuous** in their sense. At times they have these aridities; at others they have them not.

At times they cannot meditate; at others they can.

comunicándosele con acto de sencilla contemplación, la cual no alcanza los sentidos de la parte inferior, exteriores ni interiores,

de aquí es que la imaginativa y fantasía no pueden hacer arrimo en alguna consideración ni hallar en ella pie ya de ahí adelante.

9. En esta **tercera señal** se ha de tener que este empacho de las potencias y del gusto de ellas no proviene de algún mal humor; porque, cuando de aquí nace, en acabando aquel humor (porque nunca permanece en un ser), luego con algún cuidado que ponga el alma vuelve a poder lo que antes, y hallan sus arrimos las potencias,

lo cual en la purgación del apetito no es así, porque, en comenzando a entrar en ella, siempre va delante el no poder discurrir con las potencias.

Que, aunque es verdad que, a los principios, en algunos, a veces no entra con tanta continuación que algunas veces dejen de llevar sus gustos y discursos sensibles,

porque, por ventura, por su flaqueza no convendría destetarlos de un golpe,

con todo van **siempre entrando más en ella y acabando con la obra sensitiva**, si es que han de ir adelante.

Porque los que no van por camino de contemplación muy diferente modo llevan,

porque esta noche de sequedades no suele ser en ellos continua en el sentido, porque, aunque algunas veces las tienen, otras veces no;

y aunque algunas no pueden discurrir, otras pueden;

For God **sets them** in this night only **to prove them** and **to humble them**, and **to reform their desires** [apetito], so that they go not nurturing in themselves a **sinful gluttony** in spiritual things.

He sets them not there in order to lead them in the way of the spirit, which is **this contemplation**; for not all those who walk of set purpose in the way of the spirit are brought by God to **contemplation, nor even the half of them** — why, He best knows.

And this is why **He never completely weans the senses** of such persons from the breasts of **meditations and reflections**, but only for short periods and at certain seasons, as we have said.

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## CHAPTER X

*Of the way [modo] in which these souls are to **conduct themselves** in this dark night.*

1. DURING the time, then, of the aridities of this night of sense

(wherein **God effects the change** of which we have spoken above, drawing forth the soul from **the life of sense** into **that of the spirit** — that is, from **meditation** to **contemplation** — wherein it no longer has any power to work or to reason with its faculties concerning the things of God, as has been said),

**spiritual persons** suffer **great trials**, by reason not so much of the aridities which they suffer, as of **the fear** which they **have of being lost on the road, thinking that all spiritual blessing is over for them and that God has abandoned them since they find no help or pleasure in good things**.

Then they grow weary, and endeavour,

porque, como sólo les mete Dios en esta noche a éstos para **ejercitarlos y humillarlos y reformarles el apetito** porque no vayan criando golosina **viciosa** en las cosas espirituales,

y no para llevarlos a la vida del espíritu, que es **la contemplación** (porque no todos los que se ejercitan de propósito en el camino del espíritu lleva Dios a contemplación, ni aún la mitad: el por qué, él se lo sabe),

de aquí es que a éstos nunca les acaba de hecho de desarrimar el sentido de los pechos de las consideraciones y discursos, sino algunos ratos a temporadas, como habemos dicho.

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## CAPITULO 10

*Del modo que se han de haber éstos en esta noche oscura.*

1. En el tiempo, pues, de las sequedades de esta noche sensitiva

(en la cual hace Dios el trueque que habemos dicho arriba, sacando el alma de la vida del sentido a la del espíritu que es de la meditación a contemplación, donde ya no hay poder obrar ni discurrir en las cosas de Dios el alma con sus potencias, como queda dicho)

padecen los espirituales grandes penas, no tanto por las sequedades que padecen, como por el recelo que tienen de que van perdidos en el camino, pensando que se les ha acabo el bien espiritual y que los ha dejado Dios, pues no hallan arrimo ni gusto en cosa buena.

Entonces se fatigan y procuran,

as they have been accustomed to do,

to concentrate their faculties with some degree of pleasure upon some object of meditation [discurso], **thinking** that, when they are not doing this and yet are conscious of making an effort, **they are doing nothing**.

This effort they make not without **great inward repugnance and unwillingness** on the part of their soul, which was **taking pleasure in being in that quietness and ease [idleness]**, instead of working with its faculties.

So they have abandoned the one pursuit [ Lit., ‘spoiling themselves in the one.’], yet draw no profit from the other;

for, by **seeking** what is prompted by their own spirit,[ Lit., ‘because they seek their spirit.’] **they lose the spirit of tranquillity and peace** which they had before.

And thus they are like to one who abandons what he has done in order to do it over again, or to one who leaves a city only to re-enter it, or to one who is hunting and lets his prey go in order to hunt it once more.

This is **useless** here, for the soul **will gain nothing** further by conducting itself in this way, as has been said.

2. These souls **turn back** at such a time if there is **none who understands them**;

they abandon the road or lose courage; or, at the least, they are hindered from going farther by the great trouble which they take in advancing along **the road of meditation and reasoning**.

Thus they fatigue and overwork their nature, imagining that **they are failing** through negligence or sin.

como lo han habido de costumbre,

arrimar con algún gusto las potencias a algún objeto de discurso, pensando ellos que, cuando no hacen esto y se sienten obrar, no se hace nada;

lo cual hacen no sin harta desgana y repugnancia interior del alma, que gustaba de estarse en aquella quietud y ocio, sin obrar con las potencias.

En lo cual, estragándose en lo uno, no aprovechan en lo otro;

porque, por buscar espíritu, pierden el espíritu que tenían de tranquilidad y paz.

Y así son semejantes al que deja lo hecho para volverlo a hacer, o al que se sale de la ciudad para volver a entrar en ella, o al que deja la caza que tiene para volver a andar a caza.

Y esto en esta parte es excusado, porque no hallará nada ya por aquel primer estilo de proceder, como queda dicho.

2. Estos, en este tiempo, si no hay quien los entienda, vuelven atrás,

dejando el camino, aflojando, o, a lo menos, se estorban de ir adelante, por las muchas diligencias que ponen de ir por el camino de meditación y discurso,

fatigando y trabajando demasadamente el natural, imaginando que queda por su negligencia o pecados.



But this trouble that they are taking is quite useless, for **God is now leading them by another road**, which is that **of contemplation**, and is very different from the first;

for the one is of meditation and reasoning, and the other belongs **neither to imagination nor yet to reasoning**.

3. It is well for those who find themselves in this condition to **take comfort, to persevere in patience and to be in no wise afflicted**.

**Let them trust in God**, Who abandons not those that seek Him with a **simple and right heart**, and **will not fail** to give them what is needful for the road, until **He bring them into the clear and pure light of love**.

This last He will give them by **means** of that other **dark night, that of the spirit, if they merit His bringing them thereto**.

4. The **way** in which they are **to conduct themselves** in this **night of sense** is to devote themselves **not at all to reasoning and meditation**, since this is not the time for it, but to allow the soul to **remain in peace and quietness**,

although **it may seem clear to them that they are doing nothing and are wasting their time**,

and although it may appear to them that it is because of their weakness that they have **no desire** in that state to think of anything.

The truth is that they will be doing quite sufficient if they **have patience and persevere in prayer without making any effort**. [ Lit., 'without doing anything themselves.']

What they must do is merely to leave the soul **free and disencumbered and at rest** from all knowledge and thought, troubling not themselves, in that state, about what they shall think or meditate upon, but **contenting themselves with merely a peaceful and loving attentiveness toward God**,

Lo cual les es escusado, porque **los lleva ya Dios por otro camino**, que es de contemplación, diferentísimo del primero;

porque el uno es de meditación y discurso, y el otro no cae en imaginación ni discurso.

3. Los que de esta manera se vieren, conviéneles que se consuelen perseverando en paciencia, no teniendo pena;

confíen en Dios, que no deja a los que con sencillo y recto corazón le buscan, ni los dejará de dar lo necesario para el camino, hasta llevarlos a la clara y pura luz de amor,

que les dará por medio de la noche oscura del espíritu, si merecieren que Dios los ponga en ella.

4. El estilo que han de tener en ésta del sentido es que no se den nada por el discurso y meditación, pues ya no es tiempo de eso, sino que dejen estar el alma en sosiego y quietud,

aunque les parezca claro que no hacen nada y que pierden tiempo,

y aunque les parezca que por su flojedad **no tienen gana** de pensar allí nada;

que harto harán en tener paciencia en perseverar en la oración **sin hacer ellos nada**.

Sólo lo que aquí han de hacer es dejar el alma **libre y desembarazada y descansada** de todas las noticias y pensamientos, no teniendo cuidado allí de qué pensarán y meditarán, **contentándose sólo con una advertencia amorosa y sosegada en Dios**, y estar **sin cuidado y sin eficacia y sin gana de gustarle o de sentirle**;

and in **being without anxiety**, without the ability and without desired to have experience of Him or to perceive Him.

For all these yearnings disquiet and distract the soul from **the peaceful quiet and sweet ease [idleness] of contemplation** which is here granted to it.

5. And although further **scruples** may come to them — that they are wasting their time, and that it would be well for them to do something else, because they can neither do nor think anything in prayer —

let them suffer [these scruples] and remain in peace, as [if they were] there is no question save of their being at **ease and having freedom of spirit**.  
[should be rephrased]

For if such a soul should desire to make any effort of its own with its interior faculties,  
this means that it will hinder and lose the **blessings** [goods] which, by means of that peace and **ease** [idleness] of the soul, God is instilling into it and impressing upon it.

It is just as if some painter were painting or dyeing a face; if the sitter were to move because he desired to do something, he would prevent the painter from accomplishing anything and would disturb him in what he was doing.

And thus, when the soul desires to remain in inward [interior] ease [idleness] and peace,

any operation and affection or attentions wherein it may then seek to indulge [Lit., ‘which it may then wish to have.’] will distract it and disquiet it and make it conscious of aridity and emptiness of sense.

porque todas estas pretensiones desquietan y distraen el alma de la sosegada quietud y ocio suave de contemplación que aquí se da.

5. Y aunque más escrúpulos se vengan de que pierde tiempo y que sería bueno hacer otra cosa,

pues en la oración no puede hacer ni pensar nada,

súfrase y estése sosegado, como que no va allí más que a estarse a su placer y anchura de espíritu;

porque, si de suyo quiere algo obrar con las potencias interiores,

será estorbar y perder los bienes que Dios por medio de aquella paz y **ocio** del alma está asentando e imprimiendo en ella;

bien así como si algún pintor estuviera pintando o alcoholando un rostro, que si el rostro se menease en querer hacer algo, no dejaría hacer nada al pintor, y deturbaría lo que estaba haciendo.

Y así, cuando el alma se quiere estar en paz y **ocio** interior,

cualquiera operación o afición o advertencia que ella quiera entonces tener, la distraerá y desquietará y hará sentir la sequedad y vacío del sentido,

For **the more a soul endeavours** to find support in affection and knowledge, **the more will it feel** the lack of these, which cannot now be supplied to it upon that road.

6. Wherefore it behoves such a soul to pay no heed if the operations of its faculties **become lost to it**; it is rather to desire that this should happen quickly.

For, by not hindering **the operation of infused contemplation** that God is bestowing upon it, **it can receive this with more peaceful abundance**, and cause **its spirit to be enkindled and to burn** with the love which this **dark and secret contemplation** brings with it and sets firmly in the soul.

For **contemplation is** naught else than a **secret, peaceful and loving infusion from God**, which, if it be permitted, **enkindles the soul with the spirit of love**, according as the soul declares in the next lines, namely:

*Kindled in love with yearnings.*

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## CHAPTER XI

*Wherein are expounded the three lines of the stanza.*

1. THIS enkindling of love **is not as a rule felt at the first**,

**because** it has not begun to take hold upon the soul, by reason of the impurity of human nature, or **because** the soul has **not understood its own state**, as we have said, and has therefore given it no peaceful abiding-place within itself.

porque, cuanto más pretendiere tener algún arrimo de afecto y noticia, tanto más sentirá la falta, de la cual no puede ya ser suplida por aquella vía.

6. De donde a esta tal alma le conviene no hacer aquí caso que se le pierdan las operaciones de las potencias, antes ha de gustar que se le pierdan presto,

porque, no estorbando la operación de la contemplación infusa que va Dios dando, con más abundancia pacífica la reciba, y dé lugar a que arda y se **encienda en el espíritu el amor** que esta oscura y secreta contemplación trae consigo y pega al alma.

Porque contemplación no es otra cosa que **infusión secreta, pacífica y amorosa de Dios**, que, si la dan lugar, inflama al alma en espíritu de amor, según ella da a entender en el verso siguiente, es a saber.

*Con ansias en amores inflamada.*

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## CAPITULO 11

*Decláranse los tres versos de la canción.*

1. La cual inflamación de amor, aunque comúnmente a los principios no se siente, por no haber uviado o comenzado a emprenderse por la impureza del natural, o por no le dar lugar pacífico en sí el alma por **no entenderse**, como habemos dicho

Yet sometimes, nevertheless, there **soon begins to make itself felt a certain yearning toward God;**

and the more this increases, the more is the soul affectioned and enkindled in love toward God,

**without knowing or understanding how and whence this love and affection come to it,**

but from time to time seeing this flame and this enkindling grow so greatly within it that it desires God with yearning of love; even as David, when he was in **this** [dark] **night**, said of himself in these words [Psalm 72:21-22], namely: ‘Because my heart was enkindled (that is to say, in love of contemplation), my reins also were changed’:

that is, were changed, namely from **the way of sense to the way of the spirit**, which is the aridity and cessation from all these things whereof we are speaking.

And I, he says, was dissolved in nothing and annihilated, and I knew not; for, as we have said, **without knowing** the way whereby it goes, the soul finds itself annihilated with respect to all things above and below which were accustomed to please it; and it finds itself enamoured, **without knowing how**.

And because at times **the enkindling of love in the spirit** grows greater, the **yearnings** for God become **so great** in the soul that the very bones seem to be dried up by this **thirst**, and the natural powers to be fading away, and their warmth and strength to be perishing through the intensity[Lit., ‘livingness’: cf. the quotation below.] of the **thirst of love**, for the soul feels that this thirst of love is a **living thirst**.

This thirst David had and felt, when he said: ‘*My soul thirsted for the living God.*’ [Ps 41:3] Which is as much as to say: A living thirst was that of my soul. Of this thirst, since it is living, we may say that it kills [of thirst]. But it is to be noted that the vehemence of this thirst is **not**

(aunque, a veces, sin eso y con eso comienza luego a sentirse alguna ansia de Dios),

cuanto más va, más se va viendo el alma **aficionada e inflamada en amor de Dios,**

**sin saber ni entender cómo y de dónde le nace el tal amor y afición,**

sino que ve crecer tanto en sí a veces esta llama e inflamación, que con ansias de amor desea a Dios, según David estando en esta noche, lo dice de sí por estas palabras (Sal. 72, 21-22), es a saber: Porque se inflamó mi corazón, es a saber en amor de contemplación, también mis renes se mudaron,

esto es, mis apetitos de afecciones sensitivas se mudaron, es a saber, de la vida sensitiva a la espiritual, que es la sequedad y cesación en todos ellos que vamos diciendo;

y yo, dice, fui resuelto en nada y aniquilado, y no supe;

porque, como habemos dicho, **sin saber el alma** por dónde va, se ve aniquilada acerca de todas las cosas de arriba y de abajo que solía gustar, y sólo se ve enamorada sin saber cómo y por qué.

Y, porque a veces crece mucho **la inflamación de amor en el espíritu**, son las ansias por Dios tan grandes en el alma, que parece se le secan los huesos en esta sed, y se marchita el natural, y se estraga su calor y fuerza por la viveza de la sed de amor, porque siente el alma que es viva esta sed de amor.

La cual también David (Sal. 41, 3) tenía y sentía, cuando dijo: Mi alma tuvo sed a Dios vivo; que es tanto como decir: Viva fue la sed que tuvo mi alma. La cual sed, por ser viva, podemos decir que mata de sed. Pero es de notar que la vehemencia de esta sed no es continua, sino algunas veces, aunque de

**continuous**, but **occasional** although as a rule the soul is accustomed to feel it to a certain degree.

2. But it must be noted that, as I began to say just now, **this love is not as a rule felt at first**, but only the dryness and emptiness are felt whereof we are speaking.

Then in place of this love which afterwards becomes gradually enkindled, what the soul experiences in the midst of these aridities and emptinesses of the faculties is an **habitual care and solicitude with respect to God**, together with **grief and fear** that it is not serving Him.

But it is a sacrifice which is **not a little pleasing to God** that the soul should go about afflicted and solicitous for His love.

This solicitude and care leads the soul into that **secret contemplation**, until, **the senses** (that is, the sensual part) having in course of time been in some degree purged of the natural affections and powers by means of the aridities which it causes within them, this Divine love begins to be enkindled **in the spirit**.

Meanwhile, however, like one who has begun a cure, **the soul knows only suffering** in this dark and arid purgation **of the desire** [apetito];

by this means it becomes healed of many imperfections, and exercises itself in many virtues in order to **make itself meet** [hacerse capaz] for the said love, as we shall now say with respect to the line following:

[Chapters 11-13]

*Oh, happy chance!*

3. When God leads [pone] the soul into this **night of sense** in order to **purge the sense** of its lower part and to **subdue it, unite it and bring it into conformity with the spirit**, by setting it in darkness and causing it **to cease**

ordinario suele sentir alguna sed.

2. Pero hase de advertir que, como aquí comencé a decir, que **a los principios comúnmente no se siente este amor**, sino la sequedad y vacío que vamos diciendo;

y entonces, en lugar de este amor que después se va encendiendo, lo que trae el alma en medio de aquellas sequedades y vacíos de las potencias es un ordinario cuidado y solicitud de Dios, con pena y recelo de que no le sirve;

que no es para Dios poco agradable sacrificio ver andar el espíritu contribulado y solícito por su amor (Sal. 50, 19).

Esta solicitud y cuidado pone en el alma aquella secreta contemplación hasta que, por tiempo habiendo purgado algo el sentido, esto es, la parte sensitiva, de las fuerzas y aficiones naturales por medio de las sequedades que en ella pone, va ya encendiendo en el espíritu este amor divino.

Pero entretanto, en fin, como el que está puesto en cura, todo es padecer en esta oscura y seca purgación del apetito,

curándose de muchas imperfecciones e imponiéndose en muchas virtudes para hacerse capaz del dicho amor, como ahora se dirá sobre el verso siguiente:

*Oh dichosa ventura!*

3. Que por cuanto pone Dios el alma en esta noche sensitiva a fin de purgar el sentido de la parte inferior y acomodarle y sujetarle y unirle con el espíritu, oscureciéndole y haciéndole cesar acerca de los discursos, como también

**from meditation** (as He afterwards does in order to purify the spirit to unite it with God, as we shall afterwards say),

He brings it into **the night of the spirit**, and (although it appears not so to it) the soul gains **so many benefits** that it holds it to be a *happy chance* to have escaped from the bonds and restrictions of the sense of or its lower self, by means of this night aforesaid; and utters the present line, namely:

*Oh, happy chance!*

With respect to this, it behoves us here to note the benefits which the soul finds in this night, and because of which it considers it a happy chance to have passed through it; all of which benefits the soul includes in the next line, namely:

*I went forth without being observed.*

4. This going forth is understood of **the subjection to its sensual part** which the soul suffered when it sought God through operations **so weak, so limited and so defective** as are those of this **lower part**;

for at every step it stumbled into **numerous imperfections and ignorances**, as we have noted above in writing of the seven capital vices.

From all these it is freed when this night quenches within it all pleasures, whether **from above** or **from below**, and makes all **meditation** darkness to it, and grants it other innumerable blessings [goods] in the acquirement of the virtues, as we shall now show.

For it will be a matter of great pleasure and great consolation, to one that journeys on this road, to see how that which seems to the soul **so severe and adverse**, and **so contrary to spiritual pleasure**, works in it so many blessings [goods].

después, al fin de purificar el espíritu para unirle con Dios, como después se dirá,

le pone en la noche espiritual, gana el alma, aunque a ella no se lo parece, tantos provechos, que tiene por dichosa ventura haber salido del lazo y apertura del sentido de la parte inferior por esta dicha noche. Dice el presente verso, es a saber;

*¡oh dichosa ventura!*

Acerca de la cual nos conviene aquí notar los provechos que halla en esta noche el alma, por causa de los cuales tiene por buena ventura pasar por ella. Todos los cuales provechos encierra el alma en el siguiente verso, es a saber;

*Salí sin ser notada.*

4. La cual salida se entiende de la sujeción que tenía el alma a la parte sensitiva en buscar a Dios por operaciones tan flacas, tan limitadas y tan ocasionadas como las de esta parte inferior son;

pues que a cada paso tropezaba con mil imperfecciones e ignorancias, como hemos notado arriba en los siete vicios capitales,

de todos los cuales se libra, apagándole esta noche todos los gustos de arriba y de abajo, y oscureciéndole todos los discursos, y haciéndole otros innumerales bienes en la ganancia de las virtudes, como ahora diremos.

Que será cosa gustosa y de gran consuelo para el que por aquí camina, ver cómo cosa que tan áspera y adversa parece al alma y tan contraria al gusto espiritual, obra tantos bienes en ella.



These, as we say, are gained when the soul goes forth [salir], as regards **its affection and operation**, by means of this night, from all created things, and when it journeys to eternal things, which is great happiness and good fortune: [ Lit., ‘and chance’: the same word as in the verse-line above.]

first, because of the great blessing which is in the quenching of the desire and affection with respect to all things;

secondly, because they are **very few** that **endure and persevere** in entering by this **strait gate** and by the **narrow way** which leads to life, as says Our Saviour. [Mt 7:14]

The strait gate is this **night of sense** [see Ascent II,7], and the soul detaches itself from sense and strips itself thereof that it may enter by this gate, and establishes itself **in faith**, which is a stranger to all sense, so that afterwards it may journey by the **narrow way**, which is the other night — that **of the spirit** — and this the soul afterwards enters in order in journey to God **in pure faith**, which is the means whereby the soul is united to God.

By this road, since it is so **narrow, dark and terrible** (though there is no comparison between this **night of sense** and that other, in its darkness and trials, as we shall say later), **they are far fewer** that journey, but its benefits are **far greater without comparison** than those of this present night.

Of these benefits we shall now begin to say something, with such brevity as is possible, in order that we may pass to the other night.

Los cuales, como decimos, se consigue en salir el alma según la afección y operación, por medio de esta noche, de todas las cosas criadas, y caminar a las eternas, que es grande dicha y ventura:

lo uno, por el grande bien que es apagar el apetito y afección acerca de todas las cosas;

lo otro, por ser muy pocos los que sufren y perseveran en entrar por este puerta angosta, y por el camino estrecho que guía a la vida, como dice nuestro Salvador (Mt. 7, 14).

Porque la angosta puerta es esta noche del sentido, del cual se despoja y desnuda el alma para entrar en ella, juntándose en fe, que es ajena de todo sentido, para caminar después por el camino estrecho, que es la otra noche de espíritu, en que después entra el alma para caminar a Dios en pura fe, que es el medio por donde el alma se une con Dios.

Por el cual camino, por ser tan estrecho, oscuro y terrible (que no hay comparación de esta noche de sentido a la oscuridad y trabajos de aquella, como diremos allí), son muchos menos los que caminan por él, pero son sus provechos sin comparación mucho mayores que los de ésta.

De los cuales comenzaremos ahora a decir algo, con la brevedad que se pudiere, por pasar a la otra noche.

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## CHAPTER XII

*Of the benefits which this night causes in the soul.*

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## CAPITULO 12

*De los provechos que causa en el alma esta noche.*

1. THIS **night** and **purgation** of the desire, a happy one for the soul, works in it so many blessings and benefits (although to the soul, as we have said, it rather **seems that blessings are being taken away from it**) that, even as Abraham made a great feast when he weaned his son Isaac [Gn 21:8],

even so is there joy in Heaven because **God is now taking** this soul from its swaddling clothes, setting it down from His arms, making it to **walk upon its feet**, and likewise taking from it the milk of the breast and the soft and sweet food proper to children, and making it to eat bread with crust, and to begin to enjoy [*gustar*] the food [*manjar*] of robust persons. **This food**, in these aridities and this darkness of sense, is now **given to the spirit**, which is dry and emptied of all the sweetness [*jugos*] of sense. And **this food** is the **infused contemplation** whereof we have spoken.

2. This is the **first and principal benefit** caused by this arid and dark night of contemplation: **the knowledge of oneself and of one's misery**.

For, besides the fact that all the favours which God grants to the soul are habitually granted to them **enwrapped in this knowledge**, these aridities and this emptiness of the faculties, compared with the abundance which the soul experienced aforesaid and **the difficulty which it finds in good works**, make it **recognize its own lowliness and misery**, which in the time of its prosperity it was unable to see.

Of this there is a good illustration in the Book of Exodus (33:5), where God, wishing to humble the children of Israel and desiring that they should **know themselves**, commanded them to take away and strip off the festal garments and adornments wherewith they were accustomed to adorn themselves in the Wilderness, saying: *'Now from henceforth strip yourselves of festal ornaments and put on everyday working dress, that ye may know what treatment ye deserve.'* [Ex 33:5]

This is as though He had said: Inasmuch as the attire that ye wear, being proper to festival and rejoicing, causes you to feel less humble concerning

1. Esta noche y purgación del apetito, dichosa para el alma, tantos bienes y provechos hace en ella (aunque a ella antes le parece, como habemos dicho, que se los quita), que así como Abraham hizo gran fiesta cuando quitó la leche a su hijo Isaac (Gn.21,8),

se gozan en el cielo de que ya saque Dios a esta alma de pañales, de que la baje de los brazos, de que la haga andar por su pie, de que también, quitándola el pecho de la leche y blando y dulce manjar de niños, la haga comer pan con corteza, y que comience a gustar el manjar de robustos, que en estas sequedades y tinieblas del sentido se comienza a dar al espíritu vacío y seco de los jugos del sentido, que es la contemplación infusa que habemos dicho.

2. Y éste es el primero y principal provecho que causa esta seca y oscura noche de contemplación: el conocimiento de sí y de su miseria.

Porque, demás de que todas las mercedes que Dios hace al alma ordinariamente las hace envueltas en este conocimiento, estas sequedades y vacío de la potencia acerca de la abundancia que antes sentía y la dificultad que halla el alma en las cosas buenas, la hacen conocer de sí la bajeza y miseria que en el tiempo de su prosperidad no echaba de ver.

De esto hay buena figura en el Exodo (33, 5), donde, queriendo Dios humillar a los hijos de Israel y que se conociesen les mandó quitar y desnudar el traje y atavío festival con que ordinariamente andaban compuestos en el desierto, diciendo: *Ahora ya de aquí adelante despojaos el ornato festival y poneos vestidos comunes y de trabajo, para que sepáis el tratamiento que merecís;*

lo cual es como si dijera: Por cuanto el traje que traéis, por ser de fiesta y alegría, os ocasionáis a no sentir de vosotros tan bajamente como vosotros

yourselves than ye should, put off from you this attire, in order that henceforth, seeing yourselves clothed with vileness, ye may know that ye merit no more, and may know who ye are.

Wherefore the soul knows **the truth** that it **knew not** at first, **concerning its own misery**;

for, at the time when it was clad as for a festival and found in God much pleasure, consolation and support, it was somewhat **more satisfied and contented**, since **it thought itself to some extent to be serving God**.

It is true that such souls may not have this idea explicitly in their minds; but some suggestion of it at least is implanted in them by the satisfaction which they find in their pleasant experiences.

But, now that the soul has put on its other and working attire - that of aridity and abandonment - and now that **its first lights have turned into darkness**, it possesses these lights more truly in **this virtue of self-knowledge, which is so excellent and so necessary, considering itself now as nothing** and experiencing **no satisfaction in itself**;

for it sees that it does nothing of [by] itself neither can do anything.

And the smallness of this self-satisfaction, together with the soul's **affliction at not serving God**, is **considered and esteemed by God as greater than all the consolations which the soul formerly experienced and the works which it wrought**, however great they were, inasmuch as they were the **occasion of many imperfections and ignorances**.

And from this **attire of aridity** **proceed, as from their fount and source of self-knowledge**, not only the things which we have described already, but also **the benefits which we shall now describe** and many more which will have to be omitted.

sois, quitaos ya ese traje, para que de aquí adelante, viéndoos vestidos de vilezas, conozcáis que no merecéis más y quién sois vosotros.

De donde la verdad, que el alma antes no conocía, de su miseria:

porque en el tiempo que andaba como de fiesta, hallando en Dios mucho gusto y consuelo y arrimo, andaba más satisfecha y contenta, pareciéndole que en algo servía a Dios;

porque esto, aunque entonces expresamente no lo tenga en sí, a lo menos, en la satisfacción que halla en el gusto, se le asienta algo de ello

y ya puesta en estotro traje de trabajo, de sequedad y desamparo, oscurecidas sus primeras luces, **tiene más de veras éstas en esta tan excelente y necesaria virtud del conocimiento propio**, no se teniendo ya en nada ni teniendo satisfacción ninguna de sí;

porque ve que de suyo no hace nada ni puede nada.

Y esta poca satisfacción de sí y desconsuelo que tiene de que no sirve a Dios, tiene y estima Dios en más que todas las obras y gustos primeros que tenía el alma y hacía, por más que ellos fuesen, por cuanto en ellos se ocasionaba para muchas imperfecciones e ignorancias;

y de este traje de sequedad, no sólo lo que habemos dicho, sino también los provechos que ahora diremos y muchos más, que se quedarán por decir, nacen, que como de su fuente y origen, del conocimiento propio proceden.

3. In **the first place**, the soul learns to commune with God with **more respect and more courtesy**, such as a soul must ever observe in converse with the Most High.

These it knew not in its prosperous times of comfort and consolation,

for that comforting favour which it experienced made its craving for God somewhat **bolder than** was fitting, and **discourteous and ill-considered**.

Even so did it happen to Moses [Ex 3:2-6], when he perceived that God was speaking to him;

blinded by that pleasure and desire, without further consideration, he would have made bold to go to Him if God had not commanded him to stay and put off his shoes.

By this incident we are shown the **respect and discretion in detachment** [*desnudez*] **of desire** wherewith a man is to commune with God.

When Moses had obeyed in this matter, he became **so discreet and so attentive** that the Scripture says that not only did he not make bold to draw near to God, but that **he dared not even look at Him**.

For, having taken off the shoes of his desires and pleasures, **he became very conscious of his wretchedness in the sight of God**, as **befitted one about to hear the word of God**.

Even so likewise the preparation which God granted to Job in order that he might speak with Him consisted not in those delights and glories which Job himself reports that he was wont to have in his God, but in leaving him naked upon a dung-hill, [Job 1:1-8] abandoned and even persecuted by his friends, filled with anguish and bitterness, and the earth covered with worms [vv. 29-30].

And then the Most High God, He that lifts up the poor man from the dunghill [Psalm 112:7], was pleased to come down and speak with him there face to face, revealing to him the depths and heights [Job 38-42] of His wisdom, in a way that He had never done in the time of his prosperity.

3. Cuanto a lo primero, nácele al alma tratar con Dios con más comedimiento y más cortesía, que es lo que siempre ha de tener el trato con el Altísimo,

lo cual en la prosperidad de su gusto y consuelo no hacía;

porque aquel sabor gustoso que sentía, hacía ser al apetito acerca de Dios algo más atrevido de lo que bastaba y descortés y mal mirado.

Como acaeció a Moisés (Ex. 3, 2-6): cuando sintió que Dios le hablaba,

cegado de aquel gusto y apetito, sin más consideración, se atrevía a llegar, si no le mandara Dios que se detuviera y descalzara.

Por lo cual se denota el respeto y discreción en desnudez de apetito con que se ha de tratar con Dios;

de donde, cuando obedeció en esto Moisés, quedó tan puesto en razón y tan advertido, que dice la Escritura que no sólo no se atrevió a llegar, más que ni aun osaba considerar;

porque, quitados los zapatos de los apetitos y gustos, conocía su miseria grandemente delante de Dios, porque así le convenía para oír la palabra de Dios.

Como también la disposición que dio Dios a Job para hablar con él, no fueron aquellos deleites y glorias que el mismo Job allí refiere que solía tener en su Dios (Jb.1,1-8), sino tenerle desnudo en el muladar, desamparado y aun perseguido de sus amigos, lleno de angustia y amargura, y sembrado de gusanos el suelo (29-30);

y entonces de esta manera se preció el que levanta al pobre del estiércol (Sal. 112, 7), el Altísimo Dios, de descender y hablar allí cara a cara con él, descubriéndole las altezas profundas, grandes, de su sabiduría, cual nunca antes había hecho en el tiempo de la prosperidad (Jb. 38-42).

4. And here we must note **another excellent benefit** which there is in this night and aridity of the desire of sense, since we have had occasion to speak of it.

It is that, in this dark night of the desire (to the end that the words of the Prophet may be fulfilled, namely: *'Thy light shall shine in the darkness'* (Is. 58:10)), God will enlighten the soul, giving it knowledge, not only of its lowliness and wretchedness, as we have said, but likewise **of the greatness and excellence of God.**

For, as well as **quenching** [switching off] the desires and pleasures and attachments of sense, He cleanses and frees the understanding [mind] that it may understand the truth;

for pleasure of sense and desire, even though it be for **spiritual things**, **darkens and obstructs the spirit,**

and furthermore that straitness and aridity of sense enlightens and **quickens the understanding** [mind], as says Isaias. [28:19]

Vexation makes us to understand how the soul that is empty and disencumbered, as is necessary for His Divine influence, is **instructed supernaturally by God** in His Divine wisdom, through this dark and arid night of contemplation, as we have said; and this **instruction** God gave not in those first sweetnesses and joys.

5. This is very well explained by the same prophet Isaias, where he says: *'Whom shall God teach His knowledge, and whom shall He make to understand the hearing?'* To those, He says, *that are weaned from the milk and drawn away from the breasts.* [Isaiah 28:9]

Here it is shown that **the first milk of spiritual sweetness is no preparation for this Divine influence**, neither is there preparation in attachment to the breast of delectable meditations [reflections], belonging to the faculties of sense, which gave the soul pleasure;

4. Y así nos conviene notar otro excelente provecho que hay en esta noche y sequedad del sensitivo apetito, pues hemos venido a dar en él,

y es: que en esta noche oscura del apetito (porque se verifique lo que dice el profeta (Is. 58, 10), es a saber: Lucirá tu luz en las tinieblas), alumbrará Dios al alma, no sólo dándole conocimiento de su bajeza y miseria, como hemos dicho, sino también de la grandeza y excelencia de Dios.

Porque, demás de que, **apagados** los apetitos y gustos y arrimos sensibles, queda limpio y libre el entendimiento para entender la verdad

(porque el gusto sensible y apetito, aunque sea de cosas espirituales, ofusca y embaraza el espíritu),

y, demás también que aquel aprieto y sequedad del sentido ilustra y aviva el entendimiento, como dice Isaías (28, 19),

que (con) la vejación hace entender **Dios cómo** [como Dios (PP Silverio y Gerardo)] en el alma vacía y desembarazada, que es lo que se requiere para su divina influencia, sobrenaturalmente por medio de esta noche oscura y seca de contemplación la va, como hemos dicho, instruyendo en su divina sabiduría, lo cual por los jugos y gustos primeros no hacía.

5. Esto da muy bien a entender el mismo profeta Isaías (28, 9), diciendo: ¿A quién enseñará Dios su ciencia y a quién hará oír su audición? A los destetados, dice, de la leche, a los desarrimados de los pechos;

en lo cual se da a entender que para esta divina influencia no es la disposición la leche primera. de la suavidad espiritual, ni el arrimo del pecho de los sabrosos discursos de las potencias sensitivas que gustaba el alma,



**such preparation consists rather in the lack of the one and withdrawal from the other.**

Inasmuch as, **in order to listen to God**, the soul needs to stand upright and to be detached, with regard to affection and sense, even as the Prophet says concerning himself, in these words:

*I will stand upon my watch* (this is that detachment of desire) *and I will make firm my step* (that is, I will not meditate with sense), *in order to contemplate* (that is, in order to understand that which may come to me from God). [Hab. 2:1]

So we have now arrived at this, that from this arid night there first of all comes **self-knowledge**, whence, as **from a foundation**, rises this other **knowledge of God**.

For which cause Saint Augustine said to God: ‘Let me know myself, Lord, and I shall know Thee.’ [89] For, as the philosophers say, one extreme can be well known by another.

6. And in order to prove more completely **how efficacious is this night** of sense, with its aridity and its desolation, in bringing the soul **that light** which, as we say, it receives there from God, we shall quote that passage of David, wherein he clearly describes **the great power** which is in this night for bringing the soul this **lofty knowledge of God**. He says, then, thus:

*‘In the desert land, waterless, dry and pathless, I appeared before Thee, that I might see Thy virtue and Thy glory.’* [Psalm 62:3]

It is a wondrous thing that David should say here that the means and **the preparation** for his knowledge of the glory of God were not the spiritual delights and the many pleasures which he had experienced, but **the aridities and detachments of his sensual nature**, which is here to be understood by the dry and desert land.

sino el carecer de lo uno y desarrimo de lo otro,

por cuanto para oír a Dios le conviene al alma estar muy en pie y desarrimada, según el afecto y sentido, como de sí lo dice el profeta (Hab. 2, 1), diciendo:

Estaré en pie sobre mi custodia, esto es, desarrimado el apetito, y afirmaré el paso, esto es, no discurriré con el sentido, para contemplar, esto es, para entender lo que de parte de Dios se me alegare.

De manera que ya tenemos que de esta noche seca sale conocimiento de sí primeramente, de donde, como de fundamento, sale esotro conocimiento de Dios.

Que por eso decía san Agustín a Dios: Conózcame yo, Señor, a mí, y conocerte he a ti. Porque, como dicen los filósofos, un extremo se conoce bien por otro.

6. Y para probar más claramente la eficacia que tiene esta noche sensitiva en su sequedad y desabrigo para ocasionar la luz que de Dios decimos recibir aquí el alma, alegaremos aquella autoridad de David (Sal. 62, 3) en que da bien a entender la virtud grande que tiene esta noche para este alto conocimiento de Dios. Dice, pues, así:

En la tierra desierta, sin agua, seca y sin camino parecí delante de ti para poder ver tu virtud y tu gloria.

Lo cual es cosa admirable; que no da aquí a entender David que los deleites espirituales y gustos muchos que él había tenido le fuesen disposición y medio para conocer la gloria de Dios, sino las sequedades y desarrimos de la parte sensitiva, que se entiende aquí por la tierra seca y desierta;



No less wondrous is it that he should describe as **the road** to his perception and vision of the virtue of God, not the Divine meditations and conceptions of which he had often made use, but his **being unable to form any conception of God or to walk by meditation produced by imaginary consideration**, which is here to be understood by the **pathless land**.

So that **the means** to a knowledge of God and of oneself **is this dark night** with its aridities and voids, although it leads not to a knowledge of Him of the same plenitude and abundance that comes from the other night of the spirit, since this is only, as it were, **the beginning of that other**.

7. Likewise, from the aridities and voids of this night of the desire [*apetito*], the soul draws **spiritual humility**, which is the contrary virtue to the first capital sin, which, as we said, is **spiritual pride**.

**Through this humility**, which is acquired by the said knowledge of self, the soul is **purged from** all those imperfections whereinto it fell with respect to that sin of pride, in the time of its prosperity.

For it sees itself so dry and miserable that **the idea never even occurs to it** [*ni aun por primer movimiento le parece*] **that it is making better progress than others**, or outstripping them, as it believed itself to be doing before.

On the contrary, it recognizes that others are making better progress than itself.

8. And hence **arises the love of its neighbours**, for it esteems them, and judges them not as it was wont to do aforetime, when it saw that itself had great fervour and others not so.

It is aware only of its own wretchedness, which it keeps before its eyes to such an extent that it never forgets it, nor takes occasion to set its eyes on anyone else.

y que no diga también que los conceptos y discursos divinos, de que él había usado mucho, fuesen camino para sentir y ver la virtud de Dios, sino el no poder fijar el concepto en Dios, ni caminar con el discurso de la consideración imaginaria, que se entiende aquí por la tierra sin camino.

De manera que, para conocer a Dios y a sí mismo, esta noche oscura es el medio con sus sequedades y vacíos, aunque no con la plenitud y abundancia que en la otra del espíritu, porque este conocimiento es como **principio de la otra**.

7. Saca también el alma en las sequedades y vacíos de esta noche del apetito **humildad espiritual**, que es la virtud contraria al primer vicio capital que dijimos ser soberbia espiritual;

Por la cual humildad, que adquiere por el dicho conocimiento propio, se purga de todas aquellas imperfecciones en que caía acerca de aquel vicio de soberbia en el tiempo de su prosperidad.

Porque, como se ve tan seca y miserable, ni aun por primer movimiento le parece que va mejor que los otros, ni que los lleva ventaja, como antes hacía;

antes, por el contrario, conoce que los otros van mejor.

8. Y de aquí nace el amor del prójimo, porque los estima y no los juzga como antes solía cuando se veía a sí con mucho fervor y a los otros no.

Sólo conoce su miseria y la tiene delante de los ojos: tanto, que no la deja ni da lugar para poner los ojos en nadie,

This was described wonderfully by David, when he was in this night, in these words:

*'I was dumb and was humbled and kept silence from good things and my sorrow was renewed.'* [Psalm 38:3]

This he says because it seemed to him that the good that was in his soul had so completely departed that not only did he neither speak nor find any language concerning it, but with respect to the good of others he was likewise dumb because of his grief at the knowledge of **his misery**.

9. In this condition, again, souls become **submissive and obedient** upon the spiritual road, for, when **they see** their own misery, not only do they hear what is taught them, but they even desire that **anyone soever may set them on the way and tell them what they ought to do**.

The **affective presumption** which they sometimes had in their prosperity is taken from them;

and finally, there are swept away from them on this road all the other imperfections which we noted above with respect to this first sin, which is **spiritual pride**.

## CHAPTER XIII

*Of other benefits which this night of sense causes in the soul.*

1. WITH respect to the soul's imperfections of **spiritual avarice**, because of which it coveted this and that spiritual thing and found no satisfaction in this and that exercise by reason of its covetousness for the desire and pleasure which it found therein, **this arid and dark night has now greatly reformed it**.

For, as it finds not the pleasure and sweetness which it was wont to find, but rather finds **affliction and lack of sweetness**, it has such moderate recourse to them that it might possibly now lose, through defective use, what aforesaid it lost through excess;

lo cual admirablemente David, estando en esta noche, manifiesta, diciendo:

Enmudecí y fui humillado y tuve silencio en los bienes y renovóse mi dolor (Sal. 38, 3).

Esto dice, porque le parecía que los bienes de su alma estaban tan acabados, que no solamente no había ni hallaba lenguaje de ellos, mas acerca de los ajenos también enmudeció con el dolor del conocimiento de su miseria.

9. Aquí también se hacen sujetos y obedientes en el camino espiritual, que, como se ven tan miserables, no sólo oyen lo que los enseñan, mas aun desean que cualquiera los encamine y diga lo que deben hacer;

quítaseles la presunción afectiva que en la prosperidad a veces tenían.

Y, finalmente, de camino se les barren todas las demás imperfecciones que notamos allí: acerca de este vicio primero que es soberbia espiritual.

## CAPITULO 13

*De otros provechos que causa en el alma esta noche del sentido.*

1. Acerca de las imperfecciones que en **la avaricia espiritual** tenía, en que codiciaba unas y otras cosas espirituales y nunca se veía satisfecha el alma de unos ejercicios y otros, con la codicia del apetito y gusto que hallaba en ellos, ahora en esta noche seca y oscura anda bien reformada;

porque, como no halla el gusto y sabor que solía, antes halla en ellas sinsabor y trabajo, con tanta templanza usa de ellas, que por ventura podría perder ya por punto de corto como antes perdía por largo.

although as a rule God gives to those whom He leads into this night **humility and readiness**, albeit with lack of sweetness, so that what is commanded them they may do **for God's sake alone**; and thus they **no longer seek profit** in many things because they find no pleasure in them.

2. With respect to **spiritual luxury**, it is likewise clearly seen that, through this aridity and lack of sensible sweetness which the soul finds in spiritual things, it is **freed from** those impurities which we there noted;

for we said that, as a rule, they proceeded from **the pleasure which overflowed from spirit into sense**.

3. But with regard to the imperfections from which the soul frees itself in this dark night with respect to the fourth sin, which is **spiritual gluttony**, they may be found above, though they have not all been described there, because they are innumerable;

and thus I will not detail them here, for I would fain make an end of this night **in order to pass to the next**, concerning which we shall have to pronounce **grave words and instructions** [doctrine].

Let it suffice for the understanding of the **innumerable benefits** which, over and above those mentioned, the soul gains in this night with respect to this sin of **spiritual gluttony**, to say that it frees itself from **all those imperfections** which have there been described, and from **many other and greater evils**, and **vile abominations** which are not written above, into which fell many of whom we have had experience, because they had not reformed their desire as concerning this **spiritual gluttony**.

For in this arid and dark night wherein He sets the soul, God has **restrained its concupiscence** and **curbed its desire** [apetito] so that the soul cannot feed upon any pleasure or sweetness of sense, whether from above or from below;

Aunque a los que Dios pone en esta noche comúnmente les da humildad y prontitud, aunque con sinsabor, para que **sólo por Dios** hagan aquello que se les manda; y desaprovéchanse de muchas cosas porque **no hallan gusto en ellas**.

2. Acerca de la lujuria espiritual también se ve claro que, por esta sequedad y sinsabor de sentido que halla el alma en las cosas espirituales, se librá de aquellas impurezas que allí notamos;

pues, comúnmente, dijimos que procedían del gusto que del espíritu **redundaba** en el sentido.

3. Pero de las imperfecciones que se libra el alma en esta noche oscura acerca del cuarto vicio, que es la gula espiritual, puédense ver allí, aunque no están allí dichas todas, porque son innumerables;

y así yo aquí no las referiré, porque querría ya concluir con esta noche para pasar a la otra, de la cual tenemos **grave palabra y doctrina**.

Baste, para entender los innumerables provechos que demás de los dichos gana el alma en esta noche acerca de este vicio de la gula espiritual, decir que de todas aquellas imperfecciones que allí quedan dichas se libra, y de otros muchos y mayores males y feas abominaciones que, como digo, allí no estan escritas, en que vinieron a dar muchos de que habemos tenido experiencia, por no tener ellos reformado el apetito en esta golosina espiritual.

Porque, como Dios en esta seca y oscura noche, en que pone al alma, tiene refrenada la concupiscencia y enfrenado el apetito de manera que no se puede cebar de ningún gusto ni sabor sensible de cosa de arriba ni de abajo,

and this He continues to do after such manner that the soul is **subjected, reformed and repressed** with respect to **concupiscence and desire** [apetito].

It loses the strength of its passions and concupiscence and it becomes sterile, because it no longer consults its likings.

Just as, when none is accustomed to take milk from the breast, the courses of the milk are dried up, so **the desires of the soul are dried up**.

And besides these things there follow **admirable benefits** from this **spiritual sobriety**, for, when desire and concupiscence are quenched [switched of], the soul lives in **spiritual tranquillity and peace**;

for, where desire and concupiscence reign not, there is no disturbance, but peace and consolation of God.

4. From this there arises **another and a second benefit**, which is that the soul **habitually has remembrance of God**, with fear and dread of backsliding upon the spiritual road, as has been said.

**This is a great benefit**, and **not one of the least** that results from this aridity and purgation of the desire, for the soul is **purified and cleansed** of the imperfections that were clinging to it because of the desires and affections, which of their own accord deaden and darken the soul.

5. There is **another very great benefit** for the soul in this night, which is that it practices **several virtues together**, as, for example, **patience and longsuffering**, which are often called upon in these times of emptiness and aridity, when the soul **endures and perseveres in its spiritual exercises without consolation and without pleasure**.

It practises the **charity** of God, since it is **not** now **moved by the pleasure of attraction and sweetness** which it finds in its work, but **only by God**.

y esto lo va continuando de tal manera que queda impuesta el alma, reformada y empresada según la concupiscencia y apetito,

pierde la fuerza de las pasiones y concupiscencia y se hace estéril, no usándose el gusto,

bien así como no acostumbrando a sacar leche de la ubre se secan los cursos de la leche. Y, **enjugados** así los apetitos del alma,

síguense, demás de los dichos, por medio de esta sobriedad espiritual **admirables provechos** en ella; porque, apagados los apetitos y concupiscencias, vive el alma en paz y tranquilidad espiritual;

porque donde no reina apetito y concupiscencia no hay perturbación, sino paz y consuelo de Dios.

4. Sale de aquí otro segundo provecho, y es que trae ordinaria memoria de Dios, con temor y recelo de volver atrás, como queda dicho, en el camino espiritual;

el cual es grande provecho y es no de los menores en esta sequedad y purgación del apetito, porque se purifica el alma y limpia de las imperfecciones que se le pegaban por medio de los apetitos y afecciones, que de suyo **embotan y ofuscan** el ánima.

5. Hay otro provecho muy grande en esta noche para el alma, y es que se ejercita en las virtudes de por junto, como en la paciencia y longanimidad, que se ejercita bien en estos vacíos y sequedades, sufriendo el perseverar en los espirituales ejercicios sin consuelo y sin gusto.

Ejercítase la caridad de Dios, pues ya no por el gusto atraído y saboreado que halla en la obra es movido, sino sólo por Dios.

It likewise practises here the virtue of **fortitude**, because, in these difficulties and insipidities which it finds in its work, **it brings strength out of weakness and thus becomes strong**.

**All the virtues**, in short — the **theological** and also the **cardinal** and **moral** - both in body and in spirit, **are practised** by the soul in these times of aridity.

6. And that in this night the soul obtains these **four benefits which we have here described** namely:

- [a] delight of peace,
- [b] habitual remembrance and thought of God,
- [c] cleanness and purity of soul and
- [d] the practice of the virtues which we have just described,

David tells us, having experienced it himself when he was in this night, in these words: *'My soul refused consolations, I had remembrance of God, I found consolation and was exercised and my spirit failed.'* [Psalm 76:4] And he then says: *'And I meditated by night with my heart and was exercised, and I swept and purified my spirit'* - that is to say, from all the affections. [v.7]

7. With respect to the imperfections of the other **three spiritual sins** which we have described above, which are **wrath**, **envy** and **sloth**, the soul is purged hereof likewise in this aridity of the desire and acquires **the virtues opposed to them**;

for, **softened and humbled** by these aridities and hardships and other temptations and trials wherein God exercises it during this night, it becomes **meek with respect to God, and to itself, and likewise with respect to its neighbour**.

Ejercita aquí también la virtud de la fortaleza, porque en estas dificultades y sinsabores que halla en el obrar saca fuerzas de flaquezas, y así se hace fuerte.

Y, finalmente, en todas las virtudes, así teologales como cardinales y morales, corporal y espiritualmente se ejercita el alma en estas sequedades.

6. Y que en esta noche consiga el alma estos cuatro provechos que habemos dicho, conviene a saber:

- delectación de paz,
- ordinaria memoria y solicitud de Dios,
- limpieza y pureza del alma y
- el ejercicio de virtudes que acabamos de decir,

dícelo David (Sal. 76, 4), como lo experimentó él mismo estando en esta noche, por estas palabras: Mi alma desechó las consolaciones, tuve memoria de Dios y hallé consuelo y ejercítame, y desfalleció mi espíritu. Y luego dice (v. 7): Y medité de noche con mi corazón, y ejercitábame, y barría y purificaba mi espíritu, conviene a saber, de todas las afecciones.

7. Acerca de las imperfecciones de los otros tres vicios espirituales que allí dijimos que son ira, envidia y acidia, también en esta sequedad del apetito se purga el alma y adquiere las virtudes a ellas contrarias;

porque, ablandada y humillada por estas sequedades y dificultades y otras tentaciones y trabajos en que a vueltas de esta noche Dios la ejercita, se hace mansa para con Dios y para consigo y también para con el prójimo;



So that it is no longer disturbed and **angry with itself** because of its own faults, **nor with its neighbour** because of his, **neither is it displeased with God**, nor does it utter unseemly complaints because He does not quickly make it holy.

8. Then, as to **envy**, the soul has **charity toward others** in this respect also; for, if it has any envy, this is no longer a vice as it was before, when it was grieved because others were preferred to it and given greater advantage.

Its grief now comes from **seeing how great is its own misery**, and its envy (if it has any) is **a virtuous envy**, since it **desires to imitate others**, which is great virtue.

9. Neither are the **sloth** and the **irksomeness** which it now experiences concerning spiritual things vicious as they were before. For in the past these sins proceeded from the spiritual pleasures which the soul sometimes experienced and **sought after** when it found them not.

But this new weariness proceeds not from this insufficiency [weakness] of pleasure [gusto], because God has taken from the soul pleasure in all things in this purgation of the desire.

10. Besides these benefits which have been mentioned, the soul attains **innumerable others** by means of this **arid contemplation**.

For often, in the midst of these times of aridity and hardship, **God communicates to the soul**, when it is least expecting it, the purest spiritual sweetness and love, together with a spiritual knowledge which is sometimes very delicate, each manifestation of which is of greater benefit and worth than those which the soul enjoyed aforesaid;

de manera que ya no se enoja con alteración sobre las faltas propias contra sí, ni sobre las ajenas contra el prójimo, ni acerca de Dios trae disgusto y querellas descomedidas porque no le hace presto bueno.

8. Pues acerca de la envidia, también aquí tiene caridad con los demás; porque, si alguna envidia tiene, no es viciosa como antes solía cuando le daba pena que otros fuesen a él preferidos y que le llevasen la ventaja, porque ya aquí se la tiene dada, viéndose tan miserable como se ve;

y la envidia que tiene, si la tiene, es virtuosa, deseando imitarlos, lo cual es mucha virtud.

9. Las **acidias** y **tedios** que aquí tiene de las cosas espirituales tampoco son viciosas como antes; porque aquéllos procedían de los gustos espirituales que a veces tenía y pretendía tener cuando no los hallaba;

pero estos tedios no proceden de esta **flaqueza** del gusto, porque se le tiene Dios quitado acerca de todas las cosas en esta purgación del apetito.

10. Demás de estos provechos que están dichos, otros innumerables consigue por medio de esta seca contemplación;

porque en medio de estas sequedades y aprietos, muchas veces, cuando menos piensa, comunica Dios al alma suavidad espiritual y amor muy puro y noticias espirituales, a veces muy delicadas, cada una de mayor provecho y precio que cuanto antes gustaba;



although in its beginnings the soul thinks that this is not so, for the spiritual influence now granted to it is very delicate and **cannot be perceived by sense**.

11. Finally, inasmuch as the soul is now **purged from the affections and desires of sense**, it obtains **liberty of spirit**, whereby in ever greater degree it gains **the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit**. Here, too, it is wondrously delivered from the hands of its three enemies - devil, world and flesh; for, its pleasure and delight of sense being **quenched** with respect to all things, neither the devil nor the world nor sensuality has any arms or any strength wherewith to make war upon the spirit.

12. These times of aridity, then, cause the soul **to journey in all purity in the love of God**, since it is no longer **influenced in its actions** by the pleasure and sweetness of the actions themselves, as perchance it was when it experienced sweetness, but **only by a desire to please God**.

It becomes neither presumptuous nor self-satisfied, as perchance it was wont to become in the time of its prosperity, but **fearful and timid** with regard to itself, finding in itself no satisfaction whatsoever;

and herein consists that **holy fear** which preserves and increases the virtues.

This aridity, too, **quenches natural energy and concupiscence**, as has also been said.

Save for the pleasure, indeed, which at certain times God Himself infuses into it, it is a wonder if it **finds pleasure and consolation of sense**, through its own diligence, in any spiritual exercise or action, as has already been said.

13. There grows within souls that experience this arid night concern for God and yearnings to serve Him, for in proportion as **the breasts of sensuality**, wherewith it sustained and nourished the desires that it

aunque el alma en los principios no piensa así, porque es muy delicada la influencia espiritual que aquí se da, y no la percibe el sentido.

11. Finalmente, por cuanto aquí el alma se purga de las afecciones y apetitos sensitivos, consigue libertad de espíritu, en que se van granjeando los doce frutos del Espíritu Santo. También aquí admirablemente se libra de las manos de los tres enemigos, mundo, demonio y carne; porque, **apagándose** el sabor y gusto sensitivo acerca de las cosas, no tiene el demonio, ni el mundo, ni la sensualidad armas ni fuerzas contra el espíritu.

12. Estas sequedades hacen, pues, al alma andar con pureza en el amor de Dios, pues que ya no se mueve a obrar por el gusto y sabor de la obra, como por ventura lo hacía cuando gustaba, sino sólo por **dar gusto a Dios**.

Hácese no presumida ni satisfecha, como por ventura en el tiempo de la prosperidad solía, sino recelosa y temerosa de sí, no teniendo en sí satisfacción ninguna,

en lo cual está el santo temor que conserva y aumenta las virtudes.

Apaga también esta sequedad las concupiscencias y bríos naturales, como también queda dicho;

porque aquí, si no es el gusto que de suyo Dios le infunde algunas veces, por maravilla halla gusto y consuelo sensible por su diligencia en alguna obra y ejercicio espiritual, como ya queda dicho.

13. Crécele en esta noche seca el cuidado de Dios y las ansias por servirle, porque, como se le van enjugando los pechos de la sensualidad, con que sustentaba y criaba los apetitos tras que iba, sólo queda en seco y en desnudo

pursued, are drying up, there remains nothing in that aridity and detachment save **the yearning to serve God**, which is a thing very **pleasing to God**. For, as David says, *an afflicted spirit is a sacrifice to God*. [Psalm 50:19]

14. When the soul, then, knows that, in this arid purgation through which it has passed, it has derived and attained so many and such precious benefits as those which have here been described, it carries not in **crying**, as in the stanza of which we are expounding the lines,

*'Oh, happy chance [blessed fate]!  
- I went forth without being observed.'*

That is, '*I went forth*' from the **bonds and subjection** of the desires of sense and the affections, '*without being observed*' - that is to say, without the three enemies aforementioned being able to keep me from it.

These enemies, as we have said, bind the soul as with bonds, in its desires and pleasures, and prevent it from going forth from itself to **the liberty of the love of God**; and without these desires and pleasures they cannot give battle to the soul, as has been said.

15. **When**, therefore, the four passions of the soul - which are joy, grief, hope and fear - are calmed through **continual mortification**;

**when** the natural desires have been lulled to sleep, in the sensual nature of the soul, by means of habitual **times of aridity**;

and when the harmony of the senses and the interior faculties causes a suspension of labour and a cessation from **the work of meditation**, as we have said (which is the dwelling and the household of the lower part of the soul),

these enemies cannot obstruct this **spiritual liberty**, and the house remains at rest and quiet, as says the following line:

el ansia de servir a Dios, que es cosa para Dios muy agradable, pues, como dice David (Sal. 50, 19), el espíritu atribulado es sacrificio para Dios.

14. Como el alma, pues, conoce que en esta purgación seca por donde pasó, sacó y consiguió tantos y tan preciosos provechos como aquí se han referido, no hace mucho en decir, en la canción que vamos declarando, el dicho verso, es a saber:

*¡oh dichosa ventura!  
- salí sin ser notada;*

esto es: salí de los lazos y sujeción de mis apetitos sensitivos y afecciones, sin ser notada, es a saber, sin que los dichos tres enemigos me lo pudiesen impedir.

Los cuales, como hemos dicho, con los apetitos y gustos, así como con lazos, enlazan al alma y la detienen que no salga de sí a la libertad de amor de Dios; sin los cuales ellos no pueden combatir al alma, como queda dicho.

15. De donde, en sosegándose por continua mortificación las cuatro pasiones del alma, que son: gozo, dolor, esperanza y temor,

y en durmiéndose en la sensualidad por ordinarias sequedades los apetitos naturales,

y en **alzando de obra** la armonía de los sentidos y potencias interiores, cesando sus operaciones discursivas, como hemos dicho, lo cual es toda la gente y morada de la parte inferior del alma, que es lo que aquí llama su casa, diciendo:

*My house being now at rest.*

#### CHAPTER XIV

*Expounds this last line of the first stanza.*

*Estando ya mi casa sosegada.*

#### CAPITULO 14

*En que se declara el último verso de la primera canción.*

1. WHEN this house of sensuality was now at rest - that is, was mortified - its passions being quenched and its desires put to rest and lulled to sleep by means of this blessed night of the purgation of sense, the soul *went forth*, to **set out upon the road and way of the spirit**, which is that of progressives and proficients, and which, by another name, is called the way of **illumination** or of **infused contemplation**, wherein God **Himself** feeds and refreshes the soul, without meditation [discurso], or the soul's active help.

Such, as we have said, is the night and purgation of sense in the soul.

In those who have afterwards to enter the other and more formidable [mas grave] night of the spirit, in order to pass to the Divine union of love of God

(for not all pass habitually thereto, but only the smallest number),

it is **wont to be accompanied by formidable trials and temptations of sense**, which last for a long time, albeit longer in some than in others.

[a] For to some the angel of Satan (2 Cor. 12:7) presents himself - namely, **the spirit of fornication** - that he may buffet their senses with abominable and violent temptations, and trouble their spirits with vile considerations

1. Estando ya esta casa de la sensualidad sosegada, esto es, mortificada, sus pasiones apagadas y apetitos sosegados y dormidos por medio de esta dichosa noche de la purgación sensitiva, **salió el alma a comenzar el camino y vía del espíritu**, que es de los **aprovechantes** y aprovechados, que, por otro nombre, llaman vía **iluminativa** o de **contemplación infusa**, con que Dios **de suyo** anda apacentando y reficionando al alma, **sin** discurso ni ayuda **activa** de la misma alma.

Tal es, como habemos dicho, la noche y purgación del sentido en el alma;

la cual, en los que después han de entrar en la otra más grave del espíritu, para pasar a la divina unión de amor

porque no todos, sino los menos, pasan ordinariamente),

**suele ir acompañada con graves trabajos y tentaciones sensitivas**, que duran mucho tiempo, aunque en unos más que en otros.

[a] Porque a algunos se les da el ángel de Satanás (2 Cor. 12, 7), que es **el espíritu de fornicación**, para que les azote los sentidos con abominables y fuertes tentaciones, y les atribule el espíritu con feas advertencias y representaciones más visibles en la imaginación, que a veces les es mayor

and representations which are most visible to the imagination, which things at times are a greater affliction to them than death.

**[b]** 2. At other times in this night there is added to these things **the spirit of blasphemy**, which roams abroad, setting in the path of all the conceptions and thoughts of the soul intolerable blasphemies. These it sometimes suggests to the imagination with such violence that the soul almost utters them, which is a grave torment to it.

**[c]** 3. At other times another abominable spirit, which Isaias calls *Spiritus vertiginis*, [Is 19:14] is allowed to molest them, not in order that they may fall, but that it may try [ejercite] them.

This spirit darkens their senses in such a way that it fills them with **numerous scruples and perplexities**, so confusing that, as they judge, they can **never**, by **any means**, be satisfied concerning them, neither can they find any help for their judgment in counsel or thought.

This is one of the severest goads and horrors of this night, **very closely akin to that which passes in the night of the spirit**.

4. As a rule these storms and trials are sent by God in this night and purgation of sense **to those** whom afterwards He purposes to lead into the other night (though not all reach it), to the end that,

when they have been chastened and buffeted, they may in this way continually **exercise** and prepare themselves, and continually accustom their senses and faculties to the union of **wisdom** which is to be bestowed upon them in that other night.

For, if the soul be not tempted, exercised and proved with trials and temptations, it cannot **quicken its sense of Wisdom**.

pena que el morir.

2. **[b]** Otras veces se les añade en esta noche **el espíritu de blasfemia**, el cual en todos sus conceptos y pensamientos se anda atravesando con intolerables blasfemias, y a veces con tanta fuerza sugeridas en la imaginación, que casi se las hace pronunciar, que les es grave tormento.

3. **[c]** Otras veces se les da otro abominable espíritu, que llama Isaías (19, 14) **spiritus vertiginis**, no porque caigan, sino porque los ejercite;

el cual de tal manera les oscurece el sentido, que los llena de **mil escrúpulos y perplejidades** tan intrincadas al juicio de ellos, que **nunca** pueden satisfacerse con **nada**, ni arrimar el juicio a consejo ni concepto;

el cual es uno de los más graves estímulos y horrores de esta noche, **muy vecino a lo que pasa en la noche espiritual**.

4. Estas tempestades y trabajos ordinariamente envía Dios en esta noche y purgación sensitiva **a los** que, como digo, ha de poner después en la otra, aunque no todos pasan a ella,

para que castigados y abofeteados de esta manera se vayan ejercitando y disponiendo y curtiendo los sentidos y potencias para la unión de **la Sabiduría** que allí les han de dar.

Porque si el alma no es tentada, ejercitada y probada con trabajos y tentaciones, no puede **avivar su sentido para la sabiduría**.

For this reason it is said in Ecclesiasticus [34:9-10]: *'He that has not been tempted, what does he know? And he that has not been proved, what are the things that he recognizes?'*

To this truth Jeremias [Jer 31:18] bears good witness, saying: *'Thou didst chastise me, Lord, and I was instructed.'*

And the most proper form of this chastisement, for one who will **enter into Wisdom**, is that of the **interior** trials which we are here describing, inasmuch as it is these which **most effectively purge** sense of all favours and consolations to which it was affected, with **natural weakness**, and by which the soul is truly humiliated in preparation for the exaltation which it is to experience.

5. For **how long a time** the soul will be held in this fasting and penance of sense, cannot be said with any certainty;

for all do not experience it after one manner, neither do all encounter the same temptations.

For this is meted out by the will of God, in conformity with the greater or the smaller degree of **imperfection** which each soul has to purge away.

In conformity, likewise, with the **degree of love** of union to which God is pleased to raise it, He will humble it with greater or less intensity or in greater or less time.

Those who have **the disposition and greater strength to suffer**, He purges with **greater intensity and more quickly**.

But those who are very weak are kept for a long time in this night, and these He purges very gently and with slight temptations.

Que por eso dijo el Eclesiástico (34, 9-10): *El que no es tentado, qué sabe? Y el que no es probado, cuáles son las cosas que reconoce?*

De la cual verdad da Jeremías (31, 18) buen testimonio, diciendo: *Castigáste me, Señor, y fui enseñado.*

Y la más propia manera de este castigo para **entrar en sabiduría** son los trabajos **interiores** que aquí decimos, por cuanto son de **los que más eficazmente purgan** el sentido de todos los gustos y consuelos a que con **flaqueza natural** estaba afectado, y donde es humillada el alma de veras para el ensalzamiento que ha de tener.

5. Pero **el tiempo** que al alma tengan en este ayuno y penitencia del sentido, cuánto sea, no es cosa cierta decirlo,

porque no pasa en todos de una manera ni unas mismas tentaciones;

porque esto va medido por la voluntad de Dios **conforme a** lo más o menos que cada uno tiene de **imperfección** que purgar;

y también, conforme al **grado de amor de unión** a que Dios la quiere levantar, la humillará más o menos intensamente, o más o menos tiempo.

Los que tienen sujeto y más fuerza para sufrir con más **intensión**, los purga más **presto**.

Porque a los muy **flacos** con mucha remisión y flacas tentaciones mucho **tiempo** les lleva por esta noche,

Habitually, too, He gives them refreshments of sense so that they may not fall away, and only after a long time do they attain to purity of perfection in this life, some of them never attaining to it at all.

Such are neither properly in the night nor properly out of it;

for, although they make no progress, yet, **in order that they may continue in humility and self-knowledge**, God exercises them for certain periods and at certain times[98] in those temptations and aridities;

and at other times and seasons He assists them with consolations, lest they should grow faint and **return** to seek the consolations of the world.

Other souls, which are weaker, God Himself accompanies, now appearing to them, now moving farther away, that He may exercise them in His love; for without such turnings away they would not learn to reach God.

6. But the souls which are to pass on to that happy and high estate, the union of love, are wont as a rule to remain for a long time in these aridities and temptations, however quickly God may lead them, as has been seen by **experience**.

It is time, then, to begin to treat of the second night.

dándoles ordinarias refecciones al sentido porque no vuelvan atrás, y tarde llegan a la pureza de perfección en esta vida, y algunos de éstos nunca;

que ni bien están en la noche, ni bien fuera de ella:

porque, aunque no pasan adelante, **para que se conserven en humildad y conocimiento propio**, los ejercita Dios algunos ratos y días en aquellas tentaciones y sequedades;

y les acude con el consuelo otras veces y temporadas, para que desmayando **no se vuelvan** a buscar el del mundo.

A otras almas más flacas anda Dios con ellas como pareciendo y trasponiendo, para ejercitarlas en su amor, porque sin desvíos no aprendieran a llegarse a Dios.

6. Pero las almas que han de pasar a tan dichoso y alto estado como es la unión de amor, por muy apriesa que Dios las lleve, **harto tiempo** suelen durar en estas sequedades y tentaciones ordinariamente, como está visto por experiencia.

Tiempo es, pues, de comenzar a tratar de la segunda noche.

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## NOTES

[1] Ascent, Bk. I, chap. I, Sect. 2.

[2] Op, cit., Sect. 3.



- [3] Dark Night, Bk. 1, chap. Iii, Sect. 3.  
[4] Op. cit., Bk. I, chap. I, Sect. 1.  
[5] Dark Night, Bk. 1, chap. Viii, Sect. 1.  
[6] Op. cit., Bk. I, chap. Viii, Sect. 2.  
[7] Ibid.  
[8] Dark Night, Bk. I, chap. X, Sect. 4.  
[9] Op. cit., Bk. II, chap. Iii, Sect. 1.  
[10] Op. cit., Bk. II, chap. I, Sect. 1.  
[11] Dark Night, Bk. II, chap. Xi, Sect. 1.  
[12] Dark Night, Bk. II, chap. Xvi, Sect. 2.  
[13] [On this, see Sobrino, pp. 159-66.]  
[14] Cf. pp. lviii-lxiii, Ascent of Mount Carmel (Image Books edition).  
[15] [It contains a series of paradoxical statements, after the style of those in Ascent, Bk. I, chap. Xiii, and is of no great literary merit. P. Silverio reproduces it in Spanish on p. 302 (note) of his first volume.]  
[16] The 'first friar' would be P. Antonio de Jesus, who was senior to St. John of the Cross in the Carmelite Order, though not in the Reform.  
[17] The longest of these are one of ten lines in Bk. I, chap. Iv, [in the original] and those of Bk. II, chaps. Vii, viii, xii, xiii, which vary from eleven to twenty-three lines. Bk. II, chap. Xxiii, has also considerable modifications.  
[18] The chief interpolation is in Bk. I, chap. X

- [21] St. Luke xviii, 11-12.  
[22] St. Matthew vii, 3.  
[23] St. Matthew xxiii, 24.

- [36] [Lit., 'of everything.']  
[37]  
[38] St. John iii, 6.  
[39] [Lit. 'they even do it.']

- [40] [Lit., 'spiritual road.']
- [41] [Lit., 'these persons.']
- [42] [Lit., 'and treat this as their God.']
- [43] [The Spanish is impersonal: 'immediately this is taken from them,' etc.]
- [44] [Lit., 'and opinion.']
- [45] [Lit., 'anyhow.']
- [46] [Lit., 'the other boldnesses are.']
- [47] [Lit., 'they strive to obtain this, as they say, by the strength of their arms.' The phrase is, of course, understood in the Spanish to be metaphorical, as the words 'as they say' clearly indicate.]
- [48] [Lit., 'who are not influenced, neither act by reason, but from pleasure.']
- [49] [Lit., 'which we shall give.']
- [50] [Aspero: harsh, rough, rugged.]
- [51] [Lit., 'against all the sweetnessness of self-denial.']
- [52] [Lit., 'causing them to enter.']
- [53] [Lit., 'and, as they say, their eye (el ojo) grows'—a colloquial phrase expressing annoyance.]
- [54] 1 Corinthians xiii, 6. The Saint here cites the sense, not the letter, of the epistle.
- [55] St. Matthew xvi, 25.
- [56] [Lit., 'they are very weak for the fortitude and trial of perfection.']
- [57] St. Matthew vii, 14.
- [58] [Lit., 'say.']
- [59] [Lit., 'say.']
- [60] [plAtica: the word is frequently used in Spanish to denote an informal sermon or address.]
- [61] [Lit., 'low'; the same word recurs below and is similarly translated .]
- [62] [Lit., 'to the better time.']
- [63] [Lit., 'And in this it is known very probably.']
- [64] Numbers xi, 5-6.

- [65] [Lit., ‘makes us to desire our miseries.’]
- [66] [Lit., ‘incommunicable.’]
- [67] Canticles vi, 4 [A.V., vi, 5].
- [68] [Lit., ‘satisfactory and pacific.’]
- [69] Psalm lxxxiv, 9 [A.V., lxxxv, 8].
- [70] [The stress here is evidently on the transience of the distempers whether they be moral or physical.]
- [71] [Lit., ‘spoiling themselves in the one.’]
- [72] [Lit., ‘because they seek their spirit.’]
- [73] [Lit., ‘without doing anything themselves.’]
- [74] [Lit., ‘which it may then wish to have.’]
- [75] Psalm lxxii, 21 [A.V., lxxiii, 21-2].
- [76] [Lit., ‘livingness’: cf. the quotation below.]
- [77] Psalm xli, 3 [A.V., xlii, 2].
- [78] [Lit., ‘and chance’: the same word as in the verse-line above.]
- [79] St. Matthew vii, 14.
- [80] Genesis xxi, 8.
- [81] Exodus xxxiii, 5.
- [82] [Job ii, 7-8].
- [83] [Lit., ‘the deep heights.’]
- [84] Isaias lviii, 10.
- [85] Isaias xxviii, 19. [The author omits the actual text.]
- [86] To translate this passage at all, we must read the *Dios como* of P. Silverio (p. 403, 1. 20), which is also found in P. Gerardo and elsewhere, as *como Dios*.
- [87] Isaias xxviii, 9.
- [88] Habacuc ii, 1.
- [89] St. Augustine: Soliloq., Cap. Ii.
- [90] Psalm lxii, 3 [A.V., lxiii, 1-2].
- [91] Psalm xxxviii, 3 [A.V., xxxix, 2].
- [92] Psalm lxxvi, 4 [A.V., lxxvii, 3-4].
- [93] Psalm lxxvi, 7 [A.V., lxxvii, 6].
- [94] Psalm l, 19 [A.V., li, 17]
- [95] [The ‘spirit of giddiness’ of D.V., and ‘perverse spirit’ of

- A.V., Isaias xix, 14.]  
[96] Ecclesiasticus xxxiv, 9-10.  
[97] Jeremias xxxi, 18.  
[98] [Lit., 'for certain days.']  
[99] [Lit., 'from a narrow prison.']  
[100] [i.e., between sense and spirit.]  
[101] Psalm cxlvii, 17 [D.V. and A.V.].  
[102] Wisdom ix, 15.  
[103] [Lit., 'Continues with other imperfections.']  
[104] [i.e., 'deadening of the mind.']  
[105] Osee ii, 20.  
[106] 1 Corinthians xiii, 11.  
[107] [Ephesians iv, 24.]  
[108] Psalm xcvi, 2 [A.V., xcvi, 2].  
[109] [Lit., 'not attaining.']  
[110] Psalm xvii, 13 [A.V., xviii, 12].  
[111] Job vii, 20.  
[112] Psalm xxxviii, 12 [A.V., xxxix, 11].  
[113] Job xxiii, 6.  
[114] Job xix, 21.  
[115] [There is a reference here to Job vii, 20: cf. Sect. 5, above.]  
[116] Jonas ii, 1.  
[117] Psalm xvii, 5-7 [A.V., xviii, 4-5].  
[118] Psalm lxxxvii, 6-8 [A.V., lxxxviii, 5-7].  
[119] Psalm lxxxvii, 9 [A.V., lxxxviii, 8].  
[120] Jonas ii, 4-7 [A.V., ii, 3-6].  
[121] Ezechiel xxiv, 10.  
[122] Ezechiel xxiv, 11.  
[123] Wisdom iii, 6.  
[124] Psalm lxviii, 2-4 [A.V., lxix, 1-3].  
[125] [i.e., purgatory.]  
[126] Job xvi, 13-17 [A.V., xvi, 12-16].  
[127] Lamentations iii, 1-20.  
[128] Job xii, 22.

[129] Psalm cxxxviii, 12 [A.V., cxxxix, 12].

[130] [Lit., 'like to the dead of the world (or of the age).']

[131] Psalm cxlii, 3 [A.V., cxliii, 3-4].

[132] Psalm xxix, 7 [A.V., xxx, 6].

[133] [Lit., 'and play his tricks upon it.']

[134] B. Bz., C, H. Mtr. All have this long passage on the suffering of the soul in Purgatory. It would be rash, therefore, to deny that St. John of the Cross is its author, [or to suppose, as P. Gerardo did, that he deleted it during a revision of his works]. An admirably constructed synthesis of these questions will be found in B. Belarmino, *De Purgatorio*, Bk. II, chaps. Iv, v. He asks if souls in Purgatory are sure of their salvation. This was denied by Luther, and by a number of Catholic writers, who held that, among the afflictions of these souls, the greatest is this very uncertainty, some maintain that, though they have in fact such certainty, they are unaware of it. Belarmino quotes among other authorities Denis the Carthusian *De quattuor novissimis*, Gerson (*Lect. I De Vita Spirituali*) and John of Rochester (against Luther's 32<sup>nd</sup> article); these writers claim that, as sin which is venial is only so through the Divine mercy, it may with perfect justice be rewarded by eternal punishment, and thus souls that have committed venial sin cannot be confident of their salvation. He also shows, however, that the common opinion of theologians is that the souls in Purgatory are sure of their salvation, and considers various degrees of certainty, adding very truly that, while these souls experience no fear, they experience hope, since they have not yet the Beatific vision.

Uncertainty as to their salvation, it is said, might arise from ignorance of the sentence passed upon them by the Judge or from the deadening of their faculties by the torments which they are suffering. Belarmino refutes these and other suppositions with great force and effect. St. John of the Cross seems to be referring to the last named when he writes of the realization of their afflictions and their deprivation of God not allowing them to enjoy the blessings of the theological virtues. It is not

surprising if the Saint, not having examined very closely this question, of which he would have read treatments in various authors, thought of it principally as an apt illustration of the purifying and refining effects of passive purgation; and an apt illustration it certainly is.

[135] Lamentations iii, 44.

[136] [Lamentations iii, 9.]

[137] Lamentations iii, 9.

[138] Lamentations iii, 28.

[139] [Lit., 'at the Divine things.']

[140] Psalm lxxii, 22 [A.V., lxxiii, 22].

[141] 1 Corinthians ii, 10. [Lit., 'penetrates all things.']

[142] Wisdom vii, 24.

[143] 2 Corinthians vi, 10.

[144] [Lit., 'with a certain eminence of excellence.']

[145] [Lit., '. . . sweetness, with great eminence.']

[146] Exodus xvi, 3.

[147] Wisdom xvi, 21.

[148] [Lit., 'from every kind.' But see Tobias viii, 2. The 'deprived' of e.p. gives the best reading of this phrase, but the general sense is clear from the Scriptural reference.]

[149] Tobias viii, 2.

[150] Isaias lxiv, 4 [1 Corinthians ii, 9].

[151] [Lit., 'be made thin.']

[152] Isaias xxvi, 17-18.

[153] [Philippians iv, 7.]

[154] [We have here split up a parenthesis of about seventy words.]

[155] [Lit., 'and wept.']

[156] Lamentations iii, 17.

[157] Psalm xxxvii, 9 [A.V., xxxviii, 8].

[158] [Lit., '. . . sees itself, it arises and is surrounded with pain and affliction the affections of the soul, that I know not how it could be described.' A confused, ungrammatical sentence, of which, however, the general meaning is not doubtful.]



- [159] Job iii, 24.
- [160] Job xxx, 17.
- [161] Job xxx, 16.
- [162] Lamentations iii, 17.
- [163] Wisdom vii, 11.
- [164] Ecclesiasticus li, 28-9 [A.V., li, 19-21].
- [165] [Lit., 'more delicate.']
- [166] [Lit., 'fury.']
- [167] [The sudden change of metaphor is the author's. The 'assault' is, of course, the renewed growth of the 'root.']
- [168] [Lit., '. . . from the soul, with regard to that which has already been purified.']
- [169] [Lit., 'not enlightened': the word is the same as that used just above.]
- [170] [The word translated 'over' is rendered 'gone' just above.]
- [171] [Lit., 'in loves'; and so throughout the exposition of this line.]
- [172] [Lit., 'cling,' 'adhere.']
- [173] [Lit., 'shut up.']
- [174] [Here, and below, the original has recogidos, the word normally translated 'recollected']
- [175] Psalm lviii, 10 [A V., lix, 9].
- [176] Deuteronomy vi, 5.
- [177] Psalm lviii, 15-16 [A.V., lix, 14-15].
- [178] Psalm lxii, 2 [A.V., lxiii, 1].
- [179] [Lit., as in the verses, 'in loves.']
- [180] [For cievro, hart, read siervo, servant, and we have the correct quotation from Scripture. The change, however, was evidently made by the Saint knowingly. In P. Gerardo's edition, the Latin text, with cervus, precedes the Spanish translation, with ciervo.]
- [181] Job vii, 2-4.
- [182] [No cabe: Lit., 'it cannot be contained,' 'there is no room for it.']
- [183] Isaias xxvi, 9.

[184] Psalm l, 12 [A.V., li, 10].

[185] [Lit., 'enamoured.']

[186] Lamentations I, 13.

[187] Psalm xi, 7 [A.V., xii, 6].

[188] The Schoolmen frequently assert that the lower angels are purged and illumined by the higher. Cf. St. Thomas, Summa, I, q. 106, a. 1, ad. 1.

[189] [Lit., 'and softens.']

[190] [More literally, 'is sick.']

[191] Psalm xxxviii, 4 [A.V., xxxix, 3].

[192] [Lit., 'the beginnings.']

[193] The Saint here treats a question often debated by philosophers and mystics—that of love and knowledge. Cf. also Spiritual Canticle, Stanza XVII, and Living Flame, Stanza III. Philosophers generally maintain that it is impossible to love without knowledge, and equally so to love more of an object than what is known of it. Mystics have, however, their own solutions of the philosophers' difficulty and the speculative Spanish mystics have much to say on the matter. (Cf., for example, the *Medula Mistica*, Trat. V, Chap. Iv, and the *Escuela de Oracion*, Trat. XII, Duda v.)

[194] St. John I, 5.

[195] [Lit., 'the yearning to think of it.']

[196] [The word translated 'estimation' might also be rendered 'reverent love.' The 'love of estimation,' which has its seat in the understanding, is contrasted with the 'enkindling' or the 'love of desire,' which has its seat in the will. So elsewhere in this paragraph.]

[197] St. John xx, 1 [St. Matthew xxvii, 62-6].

[198] St. John xx, 15.

[199] [Lit., 'outskirts,' 'suburbs.']

[200] Canticles v, 8.

[201] Genesis xxx, 1.

[202] Ephesians iv, 4.

[203] Canticles viii, 1.

[204] St. Matthew x, 36.

[205] [Lit., 'The line, then, continues, and says thus.' In fact, however, the author is returning to the first line of the stanza.]

[206] [Lit., 'taste.']

[207] Some have considered this description exaggerated, but it must be borne in mind that all souls are not tested alike and the Saint is writing of those whom God has willed to raise to such sanctity that they drain the cup of bitterness to the dregs. We have already seen (Bk. I, chap. Xiv, Sect. 5) that 'all do not experience (this) after one manner . . . for (it) is meted out by the will of God, in conformity with the greater or the smaller degree of imperfection which each soul has to purge away, (and) in conformity, likewise, with the degree of love of union to which God is pleased to raise it' (Bk. I, chap xiv, above).

[208] Osee xiii, 9.

[209] Psalm xvii, 12 [A.V., xviii, 11].

[210] Psalm xvii, 13 [A.V., xviii, 12].

[211] Isaias v, 30.

[212] Psalm xxx, 21 [A.V., xxxi, 20].

[213] 'Propter hoc Gregorius (Hom. 14 in Ezech.) constituit vitam contemplativam in charitate Dei.' Cf. Summa Theologica, 2a, 2ae, q. 45, a. 2.

[214] Jeremias I, 6.

[215] Exodus iv, 10 [cf. iii, 2].

[216] Acts vii, 32.

[217] [Or: 'and they know not how to say it nor are able to do so.']

[218] [Lit., 'to him that rules them.']

[219] [Lit., 'that is set most far away and most remote from every creatures.']

[220] Baruch iii, 31.

[221] Psalm lxxvi, 19-20 [A.V., lxxvii, 18-19].

[222] [Lit., 'of the roundness of the earth.']

[223] Job xxxvii, 16.

[224] [Lit., 'rises to scale, know and possess.']

- [225] Psalm lxxxiii, 6 [A.V., lxxxiv, 7].
- [226] St. Luke xiv, 11.
- [227] Proverbs xviii, 12.
- [228] Genesis xxviii, 12.
- [229] [Lit., 'and annihilating oneself.']
- [230] 'Ut dicit Bernardus, Magna res est amor, sed sunt in eo gradus. Loquendo ergo aliquantulum magis moraliter quam realiter, decem amoris gradus distinguere possumus' (D. Thom., De dilectione Dei et proximi, cap. Xxvii. Cf. Opusc. LXI of the edition of Venice, 1595).
- [231] [The word translated 'step' may also (and often more elegantly) be rendered 'degree.' The same word is kept, however, throughout the translation of this chapter except where noted below.]
- [232] Canticles v, 8.
- [233] Psalm cxlii, 7 [A.V., cxliii, 7].
- [234] Psalm lxvii, 10 [A.V., lxviii, 9].
- [235] [Lit., 'to enter (upon).']
- [236] Canticles iii, 2.
- [237] Psalm civ, 4 [A.V., cv, 4].
- [238] St. John xx.
- [239] [The word in the Spanish is that elsewhere translated 'step.']
- [240] Psalm cxi, 1 [A.V., cxii, 1].
- [241] [Lit., 'makes in him this labour of eagerness.']
- [242] Genesis xxix, 20.
- [243] [Lit., 'how much God merits.']
- [244] Canticles viii, 5.
- [245] Jeremias ii, 2.
- [246] Psalm lxxxiii, 2 [A.V., lxxxiv, 2].
- [247] Genesis xxx, 1.
- [248] [Lit., 'On this hungering step.']
- [249] Isaias xl, 31.
- [250] Psalm xli, 2 [A.V., xlii, 1].
- [251] Psalm lviii, 5 [A.V., lix, 4].

[252] Psalm cxviii, 32 [A.V., cxix, 32].  
[253] 1 Corinthians xiii, 7.  
[254] Exodus xxxii, 31-2.  
[255] Psalm xxxvi, 4 [A.V., xxxvii, 4].  
[256] Canticles I, 1.  
[257] Canticles iii, 4.  
[258] [Lit., 'attain to setting their foot.']  
[259] Daniel x, 11.  
[260] 'Dum Deum in ignis visione suscipiunt, per amorem suaviter arserunt' (Hom. XXX in Evang.).  
[261] [i.e., direct, not mediate.]  
[262] St. Matthew v, 8.  
[263] St. John iii, 2.  
[264] St. John xvi, 23.  
[265] [Lit., 'that it dislocates the sight of all understanding.']  
[266] St. Peter v, 9.  
[267] [Lit., 'a better undershirt and tunic.']  
[268] [Lit., 'this whiteness.']  
[269] Osee, ii, 20.  
[270] Psalm xvi, 4 [A.V., xvii, 4].  
[271] 1 Thessalonians v, 8.  
[272] Psalm xxiv, 15 [A.V., xxv, 15].  
[273] Psalm cxxii, 2 [A.V., cxxiii, 2].  
[274] Canticles iv, 9.  
[275] Lamentations iii, 29.  
[276] Ibid. [For the quotation, see Bk. II, chap. Viii, Sect. 1, above.]  
[277] Canticles I, 3. [A.V., I, 4.] [For 'chambers' the Spanish has 'bed.']  
[278] Canticles iii, 10.  
[279] [Or 'health.']  
[280] Romans viii, 24.  
[281] i.e., in the original Spanish and in our verse rendering of the poem in *The Complete Works of St. John of the Cross*, Ed. By E. Allison Peers, Vol. II (The Newman Press, Westminster, Md.).

[282] i.e., in the original Spanish and in our verse rendering of the poem in *The Complete Works of St. John of the Cross*, Ed. By E. Allison Peers, Vol. II (The Newman Press, Westminster, Md.).

[283] [The Spanish also admits of the rendering: ‘remain shut off from it by darkness.’]

[284] Matthew vi, 3.

[285] Canticles iii, 7-8.

[286] Canticles vi, 10 [A.V., vi, 11-12].

[287] Job I, 1-11.

[288] Such is the unanimous opinion of theologians. Some, with St. Thomas (Pt. III, q. 57, a. 6), suppose that the appearance which converted St. Paul near Damascus was that of Our Lord Jesus Christ in person.

[289] Exodus vii, 11-22; viii, 7.

[290] Job xli, 25.

[291] [Lit., ‘step.’ Cf. Bk. II, chap. Xix, first note, above.]

[292] Canticles I, 1.

[293] Canticles viii, 1.

[294] The word translated ‘at rest’ is a past participle: more literally, ‘stilled.’

[295] [Lit., ‘twice repeats’—a loosely used phrase.]

[296] H omits this last phrase, which is found in all the other Codices, and in e.p. The latter adds: ‘notwithstanding that the soul is not wholly free from the temptations of the lower part.’ The addition is made so that the teaching of the Saint may not be confused with that of the Illuminists, who supposed the contemplative in union to be impeccable, do what he might. The Saint’s meaning is that for the mystical union of the soul with God such purity and tranquillity of senses and faculties are needful that his condition resembles that state of innocence in which Adam was created, but without the attribute of impeccability, which does not necessarily accompany union, nor can be attained by any, save by a most special privilege of God. Cf. St. Teresa’s *Interior Castle*, VII, ii. St. Teresa will be found occasionally to explain points of mystical doctrine which St. John



of the Cross takes as being understood.

[297] [Lit., 'twice repeated.']

[298] Wisdom xviii, 14.

[299] Canticles v, 7.

[300] Canticles iii, 1.

[301] Thus end the majority of the MSS. Cf. pp. lxviii-lxiii, Ascent of Mount Carmel (Image Books edition), 26-27, on the incomplete state of this treatise. The MSS. Say nothing of this, except that in the Alba de Tormes MS. We read: 'Thus far wrote the holy Fray John of the Cross concerning the purgative way, wherein he treats of the active and the passive [aspect] of it as is seen in the treatise of the Ascent of the Mount and in this of the Dark Night, and, as he died, he wrote no more. And hereafter follows the illuminative way, and then the unitive.' Elsewhere we have said that the lack of any commentary on the last five stanzas is not due to the Saint's death, since he lived for many years after writing the commentary on the earlier stanzas.

