

**THE  
ANATOMY  
OF  
JOY**

**AN ANTHOLOGY**

**Donald Stowell**

Edited by Peter Cook  
62 Greycliffe St Queenscliff NSW 2096 Australia  
and Elspeth Williams  
20c Hackthorne Rd Christchurch New Zealand

**2004**

Copyright © Peter S Cook Sydney 2004. This material with acknowledgement may be freely reproduced in whole or in part. If you do so, please notify Peter S Cook and send a copy to [pcook@midcoast.com.au](mailto:pcook@midcoast.com.au) or 62 Greycliffe St, Queenscliff, NSW, 2096, Australia

## PREFACE

Donald Frederick Stowell was a fourth child, born in London on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1901, son of a Congregational minister. At the age of 15, wishing to join up in World War I, Donald ran away from school, and after rejection as underage by the army and air force, he joined the Merchant Navy as a cadet, and saw many places, including Australia and Africa.

After the war he went to Lincoln College, Oxford, gaining a rowing blue, and an MA in English in preparation for theological college in Wells, to become an Anglican deacon in Portsmouth. He married Ruth DeSalis in 1930, and she followed and supported him in all their travels, bringing up their two children along the way. For forty years he alternated between work as a missionary in Southern Africa and as a parish priest in England.

His charismatic personality and deep belief in his calling made him welcomed and loved wherever he lived. He was always keenly interested in ideas, and enthusiastically embraced the vision in *The Phenomenon of Man* by Teilhard de Chardin. Donald rejoiced in the precious soil and people of Africa, and his outlook was cosmic in the broadest sense. He enjoyed integrating his vision of God's creation with his latest gleanings in atomic theory. (He would have loved *Nature's Destiny* by Michael Denton.) He leaves few writings except some beautiful and moving poetry.

In his later years, he gave much thought to compiling *The Anatomy of Joy*, as a reply to Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. Its theme "Joy is endemic in the universe, and is the purpose of it" - a quotation from Soren Kierkegaard - is an expression of Donald's life and thought.

Before it was finished, with his health failing in the mid 1970s, he sent a draft to me, son of his beloved sister, Enid Cook, to see if I could get it published as a small book. Not until 2004, with computer and internet technology, did I have time and means to fulfil this task. Working (in Sydney and Coffs Harbour) with my wife Lorna, my sister Elspeth Williams (in Christchurch, NZ), and Donald's children, David Stowell (in Perth) and Gillian Coe (in the UK), we have brought his vision to fruition. For us, Donald was a much loved father or uncle, who brought exuberance and fun into people's lives in a very special way. He lived in the light of the understandings and cosmic sense of Joy described in this book, and he passed them on to those around him. He died 5<sup>th</sup> November 1976, aged 75.

We made a few corrections to meet his intentions. Unfortunately he left no adequate list of references, though he often states his sources in the text. I have not found a specific reference for his main text from Kierkegaard. Can you? Any feedback or further reference details will be welcome. There are no indications of his gaining copyright consent, other than those specified in the text. If any copyright holders' rights are infringed, we apologise. Please contact one of us and we will formally seek your consent.

We are indebted to Diane and Olivier Faivre for their computer skills and to Michael Cocks for his offer to post this work on the internet at :  
<http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~thegroundoffaith/>

Peter Stowell Cook, 62 Greycliffe St Queenscliff, NSW, 2096, Australia. Tel 61-2-9905 2798,  
Or Tel 02 66534 511, Coffs Harbour, NSW. Email [pcook@midcoast.com.au](mailto:pcook@midcoast.com.au).  
22nd June 2004

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR.**

Donald Frederick Stowell (1901-1976) ran away from school at the age of 15 and travelled the world as a cadet in the Merchant Navy. He later went to Lincoln College, Oxford, followed by theological college in Wells. He alternated for the next 40 years between work as a missionary in Southern Africa and as a parish priest in England. His charismatic personality and deep belief in his calling made him welcomed and loved wherever he lived.

As an alternative to Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* he put together *The Anatomy of Joy*. It is a clear expression of his life and thought, summed up in his favourite quotation from Soren Kierkegaard, "Joy is endemic in the universe, and is the purpose of it".

Donald married Ruth DeSalis in 1930, and she followed and supported him in all their travels, bringing up their two children along the way.

*Gillian Coe*

# THE ANATOMY OF JOY

(Inspired by Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

AN ANTHOLOGY.....	1
PREFACE.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	7
CHAPTER ONE: JOY IS WIDESPREAD .....	8
CHAPTER TWO: NATURAL JOY .....	10
CHAPTER THREE : JOY AND THE UNIVERSE.....	17
CHAPTER FOUR: RELIGIOUS JOY.....	21
CHAPTER FIVE: OBSTACLES TO JOY.....	27
CHAPTER SIX: THE ENEMIES OF JOY.....	37
CHAPTER SEVEN: SORROW, DEPRESSION, MELANCHOLY.....	39
CHAPTER EIGHT: TRANSCENDENTAL COMMUNICATION .....	43
CHAPTER NINE : AN UNFINISHED SYMPHONY.....	49
CHAPTER TEN: THE TRIUMPH OF JOY.....	52

## INTRODUCTION

“Joy is endemic in the universe and the purpose of it,” This dogmatic statement is found in the *Journals* of Soren Kierkegaard. It echoes a similar statement by Confucius in *The Analects*, “Joy is in everything: it is necessary to know how to extract it”. This opinion expressed by two great intellects is so contrary to the experience of the majority of mankind and to the poets and writers of today that it would be useful to know how they came by that conclusion and if there is any justification for it.

The purpose of the following chapters is to find out how widespread is this discovery or belief, and what are the reasons or experiences which lead men to it.

This little book does not presume to be an exhaustive study of the subject but, as it were, a pilot scheme which anyone may take up and explore further for himself.

The general fear of world cataclysm, the break-up of societies, the change of moral standards, despair and disillusionment - these things have been common throughout history, It may be that never before has there been such good reason for them as now. It is true that it has never before been possible for man to destroy himself, with the rest of life on earth, at the touch of a few buttons.

But if Kierkegaard and Confucius are right then there is no need to be unduly apprehensive of the future. There is a great need for men to know that joy is there to be found by those who look for it, as gold is hidden in the earth waiting to be found. A better analogy might be that of beauty which is endemic in the world of nature - though there are many whom it fails to impress. Our question then is why do they miss “the many splendoured thing” which seers and children discover as one of the facts of life? It must not be thought that the author has not encountered sorrow. He is well aware that the tragic sense of life seems to many to be of the very nature of life itself. Drama and poetry, novels and history itself have nothing to feed on without it. But as hate can be thought of as the frustration of love, so sorrow can be seen as the temporary absence of joy. The statement that sorrow and sighing shall flee away, is, according to the experiences related in the following chapters, more likely to be true than its opposite.

## CHAPTER ONE: JOY IS WIDESPREAD

From many parts of the world and over many centuries there come to our discussion thinkers who have discovered joy as something which lies there at the heart of reality. It is objective - a thing like a musical chord or a frequency of electrical impulses. This can be either tuned into or it can come on its own initiative, quietly possessing one or as a flash of revelation. The Brahmin considers ultimate reality as Sat Chit Ananda, which may be translated as Eternal-Intelligence-Bliss. In the Awakening of Faith from the Asvagoshya it is written:-

The body has infinite form. The form infinite attributes. The attribute has infinite excellencies, and the accompanying rewards of Bodhisattvas - that is the region where they are predestined to be born by their previous Karma - also has infinite merits. Manifesting itself the Body of Bliss is infinite, boundless, limitless, unintermittent in its action, directly coming forth from the mind.

Without accepting all the above, the main contention is clear - the milieu of our existence is joy or bliss. Another from India is by Sir J.C.W. Bahadur taken from an article in *Hibbert Journal*:-

It is argued in texts of criticism that the end of aesthetic experience is the creation of joy which is called Ananda or Rasa. These terms, which are employed to describe aesthetic experience are indeed taken from the Indian Upanishads - texts which describe the ultimate reality by using the same expressions. Thus the Atria Upanishad uses the word Ananda declaring that bliss is the Ultimate Reality. The Indian standpoint on this issue may be summed up thus: that joy from the empirical artistic creations is momentary, therefore it is that Man's endeavour should be directed towards the achievement of transcendental bliss. Worldly joy thus becomes only an aid in the realization of the real joy - viz the experience of ultimate reality.

It is interesting here to compare Plato's exposition of an understanding of earthly beauty leading to the enjoyment of intellectual and spiritual beauty. Beauty is a joy-bringer. What contact there may have been between Plato and the *Upanishads* we do not know, even less likely, except through the noosphere than a connection between them and *The Book of Changes*, among the most ancient of the world's writings. Yet under the sign TUI – *The Joyous Lake* we find:

The joyous mood is infectious and therefore brings success. But joy must be based on steadfastness if it is not to degenerate into uncontrolled mirth ...a quiet, wordless, self-contained joy, desiring nothing from without, and resting content with everything, remains free from egoistic likes and dislikes. In this freedom lies good fortune because it harbours the quiet security of a heart fortified within itself.

From India and China let us go to America. Henry Miller has a passage about clowns in an

article called *The smile at the foot of the ladder*:

Joy is like a river, it flows ceaselessly. It seems to me that this is the message which the clown is trying to convey to us: that we should participate through ceaseless flow and movement, that we should not stop to reflect, compare, analyse, possess, but flow on through endlessly like music. This is the gift of surrender and the clown makes it symbolically. It is for us to make it real. At no time in the history of man has the world been so full of pain and anguish. Here and there however we meet with individuals who are untouched, unsullied by the common grief. They are not heartless individuals - far from it. They are emancipated beings. For them the world is not what it seems to us. They see with other eyes. We say of them that they have died to the world. They live in the moment fully, and the radiance which emanates from them is perpetual song of Joy.

Now let us ask an agnostic classical scholar of Oxford about her experience of joy. Eileen Harrison wrote:

... the desire to be good, or rather to be better, is a much bigger thing than the desire to be helped, and it is much more mysterious, indeed is probably understood to the end. It is very closely linked to the physical life, food supply and the rest, but it always beckons to the non-animal in us and makes the mere animal difficult to live with. It explains why thinking is no good at all, unless one feels and is excited. It lives on the psychology of ecstasy and beauty... man comes into the world with a memory of beauty otherwise unimaginable. If he keeps his soul fresh and undefiled his passionate desire issues in the creation of an image of this heavenly beauty informed by the breath of the artist's passion ... last night with misery and utter loneliness ... it was worse than anything I had ever felt, like a blank despair. I fell asleep at last and woke about six bathed in a most amazing bliss and feeling that all the world was new and in perfect peace. I can't describe it - the new birth is the best. It was what they all try to describe and it was what they mean by communion with God.

She was not looking for joy. It revealed itself to her without any effort or desire on her part. How can such an experience be explained except by saying that some wave-length of reality - a pulsation from Sat Chit Ananda penetrates consciousness during sleep.

\*

## CHAPTER TWO: NATURAL JOY

There is a vast literature which records experiences of joy not connected with religious faith or explicit experiences of God. It may be called natural joy. It is unsought delight which bubbles up and arrives, apparently without any special cause or origin. J. W. Dunne describes this in his *Intrusions*:-

I can recollect vividly my delight at what I call "IT" coming on again; the cause that time was the garden view from my bedroom window on a still and silent night. As I stared at it there came upon me an awareness that just behind the scene lay a reality too wonderful, joyous and exciting for words - a reality just on the point of breaking through - reality which I should remember then as, of course, having been there always. Then as I waited eagerly I began to sense through the growing transparency a multitude smiling at me and pleased with my delight. The feeling grew until the joy was almost unbearable. Then it faded and the scene strengthened into impenetrable solidarity, But I was left happy.

*Surprised by Joy* is the title of a book by C.S Lewis and he gave me permission for this rather long quotation from it. Speaking of his early childhood he says:-

It sounds fantastic that one can be enamoured of a season, but that is something like what happened, and as before the experience was one of intense desire. And one went back to the book not to gratify desire but to reawaken it. And in this experience also there was the same surprise, the same sense of incalculable importance. It was something quite different from ordinary life, even from ordinary pleasure, something they would now say "in another dimension" - that of an unsatisfied desire which is itself more desirable than any other satisfaction. I call it joy, which is here a technical term and must be sharply distinguished from both happiness and pleasure. Joy in my sense has indeed one characteristic and one only in common with them; the fact that anyone who has experienced it will want it again. Apart from the end considered only in its quality it might equally well be called a particular kind of unhappiness or grief. But then it is the kind we want. I doubt whether anyone who has tasted it would ever, if both were in his power, exchange it all for the pleasures in the world. But then Joy is never in our power, and pleasure often is.

Joy is distinct not only from pleasure in general, but even from aesthetic pleasure. It must have the stab - the pang - the inconsolable longing.

And with that plunge back into my own past, there arose at once almost like heartbreak, the memory of joy itself, the knowledge that I had once had what I now lacked for years, that I was returning at last from exile and desert lands to my own country, and the distance of the twilight of the gods, and the distance of my own past joy, both unattainable, flowed together into a single

unendurable sense of desire and loss, which suddenly became one with the loss of the whole experience, which ... like a man recovering from unconsciousness, had already eluded me at the very moment when I could first say *it is*. And at once I knew that to have it again was the supreme and only important object of desires.

The connection between natural and supernatural Joy is found in the last two chapters of the book.

Joy itself, considered simply as an event in my own mind, turned out to be of no value at all. All the value lay in that of which Joy was the desiring, and that object was quite clearly no state of my own mind. Inexorably Joy proclaimed "You want - I myself am your want of - something other, outside, not any state of you."

Here joy is an objective reality - something to be discovered. It is delight and gives delight - one can be surprised by it.

William Temple in the following passage finds a place for joy as the basis of a rational universe.

The rationality of the universe is the primary certainty ... no doubt an act of faith, but all other certainty depends on it. Truth is a universal aspect of experience. There is nothing therefore which can claim exemption from the criticism and analysis of the scientific intellect. But truth is only one aspect of experience and must not be treated as if it were the whole. The intellect is not the only function of mind ... The adequate symbolic representation of the infinite and eternal – the "express image" of his person by contemplation of which the human mind may be wrapt into the JOY FOR WHICH THE WORLD WAS MADE.

This links up with Kierkegaard's "Joy is endemic in the universe and the purpose of it,"

Natural joy is an unselfconscious reaction to the fact of life.

I was a little stranger, which at my entrance into the world was saluted and surrounded with unnumberable joys.

Blake

This is seen in all children when they are given "security of tenure" and even only a small amount of love and enough food. Joy comes as a result of love. It comes "when a man, and simplified inwardly" (a Kempis).

Joy comes from accepting life as it is at any given moment, "courage to be", according to Tillich - to accept fate and death - not as impostors but as aspects of necessary being. Joy comes from accepting the whole gamut of human emotions and the facts of sex, even though they be stunted or perverted. These must be recognized as such with courage;

then they can be dealt with.

Higher example, change of environment, personal contacts can inspire towards the effort of will needed to improve the quality of the emotions and their satisfying and legitimate expression.

Joy comes to those who can perceive joy as an external reality, external to the whole creation as well as something which pushes up from the depths of one's own being. Joy arises also as the end product of evolution. A conscious being, a nucleus of sense impressions able to memorise and reflect, has intimations of immortality. It has taken four thousand million years or slow complexification from some primal atom or simple construction to produce this consciousness in anthropoids. Why? What is it all for? Can a rational purpose be discovered anywhere?

In the book of Job (38.7) it is written: "When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy". Here is an answer to the above question -the world is for Joy. Any other answer does not fit all the facts. It can be said - for example by Karl Marx - that it was not "made" and there is no purpose in it, but as we come to consciousness some say they find "a fortuitous concourse of atoms" and man is "an erratic object in an irrational universe". This makes science a meaningless activity, and holding such a view blinds them to the evidence of purpose, both within themselves and in the universe about them.

Joy was there before the birth of any individual specimen of the human race and he inherited it in his genes as part of the experience of mankind. It is passed down the generations from the time when memory and reflection became possible. Before this conscious joy found in man we see unselfconscious joy in the singing blackbird, the leaping lamb, the frisking foal and the purring cat. Further back we find in the construction of the living cell and its harmonious relationship to other cells which cooperate in constructing the vast range of biological species something which, to the sensitive mind gives the impression of an immature but lurking Joy. The crystallization of water into snowflakes and frost makes a pattern so intricate, delicate and beautiful as to demonstrate delight with itself as well as in the mind of the creator and beholder.

The construction of the atom, having seemingly the attributes of a planetary system in microcosm, shows an order and seamliness and mutual dependence and attraction the activity of which may better be described as an act of joy than in any other way.

The dance along the artery  
The circulation of the lymph  
Are figured in the drift of stars ...  
At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;  
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is.  
But neither arrest nor movements. And do not call it fixity  
Where past and future are gathered.  
Neither movement from nor towards,  
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,

There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.

T.S. Eliot here explains that the very basis of matter is dancing for joy; why else should it dance, why the rhythm?

The act of procreation at its best can be an utterly joyful experience. Perhaps we should alter the line in the psalm “in sin did my mother conceive me” to “in joy did my mother and father beget me”. In recent years the idea has returned to Europeans that giving birth to a child can be an experience of great joy. It must be admitted that it seems doubtful that the infant can enjoy being born, and the normal reaction is to cry on arrival. The only baby known to mythology that laughed when he was born was Zoroaster. He might have given Blake the idea to write:-

The angel that presided o'er my birth  
Said “little creature formed of joy and mirth,  
Go, love, without the aid of anything on earth.”

The average baby however, soon learns to smile and makes noises which seem to indicate - especially during and after feeding – some inward source of joy and satisfaction. Blake was a keen observer of everything, including babies.

“I have no name:  
I am but two days old.”  
What shall I call thee?  
“I happy am  
Joy is my name.”,  
Sweet joy befall thee.

Pretty Joy!  
Sweet joy but two days old  
Sweet Joy I call thee:  
Thou dost smile  
I sing the while  
Sweet joy befall thee.

Yet it is unlikely that a baby has ever become a child without some tears on the way:

Man was made for joy and woe  
And when this we rightly know  
Thro' the world we safely go.  
Joy mid woe are woven fine  
A clothing for the soul Divine.

Joy is elusive and in many lives becomes more so as the years advance. Wordsworth gives the most pathetic example of this tragic loss in the famous ode:

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
Shades of the prison house begin to close

Upon the growing boy,  
But he beholds the light and whence it flows  
He sees it in his Joy.

The youth, who daily farther from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest  
And by the Vision splendid  
Is on his way attended.  
At length the man perceives it die away  
And fade into the light of common day.

Oh Joy! that in our embers  
Is something that doth live  
That nature yet remembers  
What was so fugitive.

So Keats in like strain in *The Ode to Melancholy*:

She dwells with Beauty - Beauty that must die:  
And Joy whose hand is ever at his lips  
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,  
Turning to poison while the bee mouth sips:  
Ay, in the very temple of Delight  
Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine.  
Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue  
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;  
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might  
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

And Milton:

But headlong joy is ever on the wing  
In wintry solstice like the shortened light  
Soon swallowed up in dark and long out-living night.

And:

Cease every joy to glimmer on my mind,  
But leave ah! leave the light of hope behind!  
What though my winged hours of bliss have been  
Like angel visits few and far between.

*Pleasures of Hope.* T. Campbell

The inward nature of joy is described in many poems. To the nature poets it is Nature which evokes it for them. Thus Wordsworth in *Tintern Abbey*:-

“While with an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things ...

And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky and in the mind of man ...

Knowing that nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege  
Through all the years of this our life to lead  
From joy to joy....

And Walt Whitman in *Sea Joy*:

Joy, shipmate, joy.  
Our life is closed; our life begins  
The long long anchorage we leave;  
The ship is clear at last, she leaps!  
She swiftly courses from the shore  
Joy, shipmate, joy.

and Byron in *Child Harolde* :

And I have loved thee ocean! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Born like thy bubbles onward; from a boy  
I wantoned with thy breakers....  
And trusted to thy billows far and near  
And laid my hand upon thy mane - as I do here.

That joy is something within a person that comes out under certain experiences is explained by Coleridge in the Ode *Dejection*:

O Lady! we receive but what we give,  
And in our life alone does Nature live :  
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!  
And would we ought behold of higher worth  
Than that inanimate cold world allowed  
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,  
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth  
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud  
    Enveloping the earth -  
And from the soul itself must here be sent  
A sweet and potent voice of its own birth  
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

O pure of heart ! thou needst not ask of me  
What this strong music in the soul may be !

What, and wherein it does exist,  
This light, this glory this fair luminous mist,  
This beautiful and beauty-making power.

Joy, virtuous lady ! Joy that ne'er was given  
Save to the pure and in their purest hour  
Life and life's effluence, cloud at once and shower.

Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power  
Which, wedding Nature to us, gives in dower  
A new Earth and new Heaven  
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud -  
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud -  
We in ourselves rejoice!  
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,  
All melodies the echoes of that voice.  
All colours a suffusion from the light.

\*

### CHAPTER THREE : JOY AND THE UNIVERSE

That the creation of the universe is an act of joy remains a valid statement under either explanation of the origin of the universe.

Professor Lovell says in his Reith Lectures:

... the major issue as to whether creation is occurring now and throughout all time in the past and future, or whether the fundamental material of the Universe was created in its entirety some billions of years ago ... on the question of the creation of the primaeval material of the Universe, it seems to me unlikely that there can ever be a scientific description whether in the term of evolution or the steady state theories ... if I were pressed on this problem of creation I would say therefore that any cosmology must eventually move over into metaphysics for reasons which are inherent in modern scientific theory. The epoch of this transfer [from physics to metaphysics] may be now and at all future time or it may have been twenty thousand million years ago. In respect of this creation the most we can hope for from our future scientific observations is a precise determination of this epoch.

Metaphysics includes poetry, philosophy and religion. With the background of science each has something vital to contribute to our understanding of life and joy.

From Harmony, from heavenly Harmony  
    this universal frame began:  
When nature underneath a heap  
Of jarring atoms lay  
    and could not heave her head,  
The tuneful voice was heard from high  
    'Arise ye more than dead'.  
Then cold and hot and moist and dry  
In order to their stations leap  
    And Music's power obey.

From Harmony, from heavenly Harmony  
    This universal frame began  
From Harmony to Harmony  
    Through all the compass of the notes it ran  
The diapason closing full in Man.

John Dryden. *Song for St Cecilia's Day*

And Henry Vaughan, without the help of the 200-inch telescope on Mount Palomar could say:

I saw Eternity the other night

Like a great ring of pure and endless light,  
All calm, as it was bright:-  
And round beneath it, Time in hours, days, years,  
Driven by the spheres  
Like a vast shadow moved; in which the world  
And all her train were hurled.

*The World*

And

When I survey the bright  
celestial sphere  
So rich with jewels hung, that night  
Doth like an Ethiop bride appear;

My soul her wings doth spread  
And heavenward flies  
The Almighty's Mysteries to read  
In the large volumes of the skies

For the bright firmament  
Shoots forth no flame  
So silent, but is eloquent  
In speaking the Creator's name.

*Nox Nocti Indicat Scientiam*

*David.*

Whether creation began “in time” or not, it is certain that this planet did begin and will have an end. In the meantime “beings” have evolved upon it. So we have to study the nature of “being” and this is where science and philosophy join hands and brains. Sartre contrasts Being with Nothingness but the scientist can have no patience with Nothingness - it would make his work meaningless. “Faith needs all the truth there is”, said Kierkegaard, so scientific method provides us with some slight understanding of the total universe and the nature of this planet in particular.

But of the human part of nature, science has not yet got a very clear conception. Psychology and anthropology and social science are probing this field as astronauts are probing outer space. Religion has a short cut to the answers they are seeking. The Ultimate Reality is called God and by intuition and/or revelation, a valid knowledge of numinous truth is experienced. New truth comes by revelation to Einstein, for example. It was revealed through the medium of his highly organised brain cells that space is curved and so three angles of a triangle do not make an exact right angle. It was discovered by intuition among Indian thinkers that the power in creation could be described as Eternal-Everlasting and also as Intelligence (Chit) – a rational universe and also Bliss or Joy to the nth power as one of the experiences that man can undergo from that which springs up within him and is always around him as the true condition of his environment. The word Ananda can also be translated as Love. Christians can think of God as The Eternal and Christ as Intelligence (Logos – the word of God made plain to man) and the Holy Spirit as Love. There are not three things but the three activities of One Power or three aspects of Ultimate Reality.

The Christian religion speaks of this Reality as glorious - as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Perhaps we should be saying "God without end" because we know now that this little world will have an end.

When Alpha or this Ultimate Reality said "Let there be light" it might be understood as an event which happens everlastingly as the particles of universes recede and become totally scattered, while others are generating. This light might from time to time become so propitious towards a planet that life comes into being and this could happen again and again eternally. So we could say "Worlds without end", the manufacture of conscious beings, able to comprehend what is, and so to learn to love. None of these speculations do away with religion when religion is understood as man's search for truth and meaning and his reaction to what he finds. That this search is delightful and results in delight is attested by saints and scholars who have found joy to be endemic in the universe and the purpose of it.

Joy is discovered in the delight of loving. T.S. Eliot in *The Cocktail Party* puts this quite clearly:

For what happened is remembered like a dream  
In which one is exalted by intensity of loving  
In the spirit, a vibration of delight  
Without desire, for desire is fulfilled  
In the delight of loving.

Joy can be thought of as a vibration of delight coming from both outer space and interior being. A vibration is an object - something which can be perceived, and therefore studied and analyzed. It is the vitality and the activity which is the secret of creation - vitality of organic matter and activity of inorganic matter - it seems that there is one impulse, vibration, wave length, or radiation "inside" all matter. We, the human part of the cosmos, have learnt to give names to things and the name that can be given to this phenomenon is Joy. De Chardin calls it Love.

Joy is one result of loving and being loved.

I wonder bathed in Joy complete  
How love so young could be so sweet  
With ecstasies so sweet as none can ever guess  
who walk not with the feet of love in idleness.  
Ah! Heavenly ! but who hath ever heard  
Who hath seen Joy or who shall ever find  
Joy's language - there is neither speech nor word  
Nought but itself to teach mankind.

Robert Bridges

Oh! Woman! Lovely woman! Nature made thee  
To temper man: we had been brutes without you.  
Angels are painted fair to look like you;

There is on you all that we believe of Heaven,  
Amazing brightness, purity and truth,  
Eternal joy and love.

\*

Thomas Otway. *Venice Preserved*

## CHAPTER FOUR: RELIGIOUS JOY

“The sons of God shouted for Joy.” Who were these sons of God who, four thousand five hundred million years ago, were so happy at the consolidation of the gaseous components of this planet? Were they conscious beings – prehuman, non-human - so closely associated with the mind of God and entering in to his loving purposes in creation that they saw the beginning and end of this particular event - our universe in time and space? Were they wrong in supposing that the laying of the foundation of the earth was a joyful occasion?

The answer which Christianity gives is – No, they were not mistaken. It explains more clearly than any other religion that the nature of ultimate reality is Joy. When a person has discovered that God is love, they are filled with joy, this is the immediate and inevitable result of love.

Joy is described by Alexander Cruden as:-

1 An agreeable and sweet affection of the soul arising from some present or hoped for good - there was joy in Israel at David's coronation when the neighbouring tribes “came bringing food on asses and camels and oxen and sheep, for there was joy in Israel.”

2 The delight and satisfaction of the reasonable soul in its union with God in Christ as the greatest and highest good with an actual rejoicing in what is for his honour and glory (Gal, 5.22) - the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and faithfulness.

3 That joyful and glorious state which Christ himself should attain after his sufferings and which he will communicate to all who believe in him. (Hebrews 12.2) “Who for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross.”

4 That free gracious and liberal reward which God will bestow on the righteous in the Kingdom of Heaven – (Math. 25.21) - Well done, good and faithful servant ... enter into the joy of your master.

5 The matter or cause of joy. 'For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy' (I Thessalonians, 2.20).

6 Songs of thanksgiving and praise, “I went with the throng and led them to the house of God with the voice of joy.”(Psalm 42.2).

Joy is the true condition of man's being. This is obvious at those moments when joy comes to him or grows in him – unsought and unreflectingly – unconsciously - as in a child who suddenly starts hopping instead of walking. This is primary joy - unconditional.

Secondary joy is that caused by some action in love. A child sensing the undemanding, secure and protective love of its parents at a certain moment. A youth falling in love and being accepted is filled with this and feels that he is in heaven - a perfectly natural and proper condition for him to be in.

Tertiary joy is that which is intentionally manufactured as when one says “Let's have a party”, or “We must get ready for Christmas, and put up the decorations.”

Cruden describes seven kinds of joy, thus:

1 Natural: Proverbs 23.4 “The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice and he who begets a wise child shall have joy of him.” and Eccles. 2.10 “I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil.”

2 Worldly: Job 29.13 “The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy”;

Isaiah 9.3 “Thou has multiplied the nation and increased its joy; they rejoice before thee as with joy at harvest”.

3 Ungodly: Proverbs 15.12 11 “Folly is a joy to him who has no sense.”

Hosea 9.1 “Rejoice not, O Israel, exalt not like the peoples, for you have played the harlot, forsaking your God.”

4 Mixed Worldly and Spiritual: Luke 10.17 “They returned with joy saying ‘Even the demons were subject to us in your name’ ... do not rejoice in this but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

5 Hypocritical: Matt 13.20 ... “what was sown on rocky ground - that is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy: yet he has no rest in himself ... and he falls away.”

6. Heavenly: Luke 15.7. “There will be more joy in Heaven over one sinner that repents than over ninety and nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

7 Spiritual: Romans 14.17. “The kingdom of God does not mean food and drink but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

Rom 15.13. “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope”.

Kierkegaard has put it more succinctly: “The best of philosophers and poets have known and set it forth accordingly, that joy is endemic in creation and the purpose of it.”

### **The Old Testament**

In spite of the picture in the Old Testament of an angry and jealous God continually pouring his wrath and vengeance upon his naughty chosen people, there is the outline of another God of an entirely different character:-

Nehemiah 8.9ff. “This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep ... go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to him for whom nothing is prepared ... for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

Job 8.19: “Behold this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others spring. He will fill thy mouth with laughter and thy lips with joy.”

Psalms 16.11: “Thou wilt shew me the path of life : in thy presence is fullness of joy. At thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.”

Psalms 43. 3-4. (Prayer Book Version) “O send out thy light and thy truth that they may lead me: and bring me unto thy holy hill and to thy dwelling. And that I may go unto the altar of God: even unto the God of my joy and gladness.”

Psalm 48.2	“The joy of the whole earth is mount Zion”.
Psalm 51.12	“Restore to me the joy of thy salvation”.
Psalm 65.12	“The little hills are girded with joy”.
Psalm 67.4	“Let the nations be glad and sing for joy”.
Psalm 105.43	“He brought forth his people with joy”.

Isaiah is the supreme prophet of joy in the Old Testament and the passages are too long to reproduce in full, but here is a sample:

“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing.” (35.1)

“... and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing into Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads : they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” (35.10)

The angry and the loving God seem combined in chapter 54.7. “For a brief moment I forsook you, but with great compassion I will gather you. In overflowing wrath for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you...” The wrath of God is evaporating, and in verse 9 we get: “I have sworn that I will not be angry with you and will not rebuke you. For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you...”

Joy, if considered as the end product of love, will always occur when the love which is God is perceived by man.

“And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and the children also rejoiced. And the joy of Jerusalem was heard afar off.” (Nehemiah 12.43). “And let all them that put their trust in thee rejoice : they shall ever be giving of thanks because thou defendest them, they that love thy name shall be joyful in thee.” (Ps 5.12 PB)

### **The New Testament**

This volume of old documents and letters is a Gospel, not just news, but tidings of great joy. However fantastic and poetical and unhistorical folklore these stories may be, the idea of the unborn John the Baptist jumping for joy in the womb at the news of his cousin's conception is a pointer to what was to follow in sober fact. It has often been pointed out that in the name of Jesus the most horrible things have been perpetrated by those who professed to believe in him – persecutions, torture, massacre, wars and quarrels with malice and spite, hatred and all uncharitableness.

To set against these things it has not so often been pointed out that in this name of Jesus, there has come into the world a new tenderness of human emotional experience, a new compassion for the suffering of others - from the first feeding of the poor in Jerusalem to the early mediaeval hospitals, leading to the World Health Organisation. A positive joy in life to countless millions through the experience of the forgiveness of sins, the freedom from fear

of self and the outside world, freedom from superstition, and love of truth leading to the discoveries of modern science. The classic virtues of the ancient world – Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance were found to be insufficient to bring man to his full potential. Christianity added Faith, Hope, and Love. These three, the greatest of which is love, are busy rebuilding the human race, and where love is there joy is to be found. To balance the ugly outpourings of William Burroughs, Henry Miller and the pornographic press and adding to them the hopeless nothingness of Sartre, the tragic absurdities of Camus, the bewildered lunacies and unreason of Kafka, we have the Bible as the world's best seller; universal good being encouraged by respectable monthly journals in every one of the world's major languages, universities springing up in every part of the world whose aim is to probe into and propagate Truth wherever she may be found.

The Bill of Human Rights has been adopted by every member of the United Nations (excepting South Africa) and this thing has never happened before. History does not repeat itself. Never before have so many nations decided to work together for mutual benefit or contributed towards a corporate effort to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and heal the sick. This is the work of Jesus Christ and it is a matter for great joy. We see the ancient prophecies coming true - "all nations shall do his service". There are over 2000 International Conferences concerned with every aspect of man's life, on earth and off it, from sugar production to space travel. There are 1600 international periodicals of repute and importance which are helping towards the unity of mankind. The readers do not mind which race or nation the contributors belong to, they are only interested in the truth of the matter. This has never happened before.

We can now sing with more confidence, "O be joyful in the Lord all ye lands: serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song."

St Paul said "Base your happiness on your hope in Christ"; so Christian joy is more firmly based than any other. It is a solid joy because we see it actually working. We are not disappointed of our hope when we see pressure groups in the United Nations or animosities and mistakes of diplomacy or policy. We expect it because we see that civilization is just beginning. What fills us with joy is that the idea has been accepted, the vision seen and broadcast over the world by modern means of communication. The human race may now get to know itself. The light of this vision has been flickering for a long time. It came to an explicit statement in Tennyson's *Locksley Hall* :

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,  
Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonders that would be;  
Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;  
Heard the heavens filled with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;  
Far along the worldwide whisper of the south wind rushing warm,  
With the standards of the people plunging through the thunder storm;  
Till the war drum throbbed no longer, and the battle flags were furled  
In the parliament of man, the federation of the world.  
There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,

And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

This seems to be fantastic nonsense to some who have spent a part of their lives in Japanese prisoner of war camps or German or Russian concentration camps, as well as to those who, sensitive to evil and cruelty among men, have not observed the goodness and charity which is also there.

Christian Joy is a very mysterious thing to non-believers :-

“Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you and hate you and cast out your name as evil on account of the Son of Man! Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for behold your reward is great in heaven.”(Luke 6.23).

Christian joy is connected with the joy of heaven:

“Rejoice with me for I have found my sheep which was lost. Even so I tell you there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

The Lord Jesus is shown as the purveyor of joy in St John's Gospel:

“I have spoken thus to you that my joy may be in you, and your joy complete.” (John 15.11)

“Though you will be plunged into grief, your grief will be turned to joy... At the moment you are sad at heart but I shall see you again, then you will be joyful ... ask and you will receive, that your joy may be full” (John 16.20)

“While I am still in the world I speak these words, so that they may have my Joy within them in full measure” (John 17.13)

When the women found the tomb empty “They hurried away from the tomb with awe and great joy” and after the Ascension the disciples “returned to Jerusalem with great joy”. As the church began to spread we find that “the converts were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 13.52).

“Philip came down to a city in Samaria and began proclaiming the Messiah to them. The crowds, to a man, listened eagerly to him ... and there was great joy in that city” (Acts 8.8).

St Paul in the *Letter to the Romans* explains that “the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but justice, peace, and joy, inspired by the Holy Spirit” (Romans 14.17) and he prays “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace by your faith in him (Romans 15.3). To the Corinthians he wrote “We are working with you to increase your joy, and for me to be happy is for all of you to be happy”, And of the Macedonian people he writes “Their joy and the fact of their being down to the last penny themselves, produced a magnificent concern for other people” (8.2 JBP).

To the Galatians he explained how the fruits of the spirit are “Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, fidelity, tolerance and self control.” To the Thessalonians he said “The welcome you gave the message meant grave suffering for you, yet you rejoiced in the Holy

Spirit” and “What is our hope or joy or crown or boasting before our Lord Jesus? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy” and “For what thanksgiving can we render to God for you, for all the joy which we feel for your sake before God.”

One of the most pregnant statements in the New Testament is found in the Epistle to the Hebrews “... our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom faith depends from start to finish; Jesus who, for the sake of the joy that lay ahead of him, endured the cross, making light of its disgrace and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.” Thus it was possible for St James to say “My brothers, whenever you have to face trials of many kinds, count yourselves supremely happy ...” (James 12.2).

St Peter has the same idea “This is a cause for great joy, even though you smart for a little while, if need be, under trials of many kinds.” and “You have not seen him, yet you love him: and trusting in him now without seeing him, you are transported with a joy too great for words, while you reap the harvest of your faith that is salvation for your souls.” The Revised Standard Version has “rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy” and the R.V. “rejoice with joy unspeakable.”

How could this religion ever have produced Christians who were gloomy or joyless when it promises each soul to be “kept from falling and to be presented before his glory without fault and with unspeakable joy”? (Jude 2.4).

\*

## CHAPTER FIVE: OBSTACLES TO JOY

With all this evidence pointing to the fact that joy is “endemic in the universe and the purpose of it”, one may well ask why human beings find so little of it. The old theological answer is that man is “a fallen creature”. At some remote period his will got bent away from its true evolutionary aim - perhaps by some pernicious outside influence. The myth of Adam committing the original sin is still thought of as historical fact by some fundamentalists and a last century Papal Encyclical would agree with Milton who wrote :-

Of man's first disobedience and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the world and all our woe  
With loss of Eden ...

The scientific answer is now also the modern theological one as expounded by Teilhard de Chardin. This is that man - one of the metazoa-vertebrate-primates, the highest order of mammals, has taken at least over a million years (Olduvai man) to achieve the amount of consciousness of his surroundings which he possesses today. Man's recorded history is very short indeed. Looking back five thousand years one may well be disgusted with homo sapiens as he has been occupied in civil war almost unceasingly and the lives of the majority seem to have been “nasty brutish and short”. It is far more encouraging to study prehistory. There we can see an extreme simplicity of structure evolving over a period of ten thousand million years (they say) to an incredible complexity. Time and again during this process the complexifying pattern has achieved a synthesis, a convergence, a new and higher simplicity. This again has branched out in more complex structures still, while profuse nature is “pervading everything so as to try everything and trying everything so as to find everything and at last a new convergence appears when man, like a child long maturing in the womb and babyhood, is without thought, but thought is all the time coming into being”. This is how de Chardin has put it (*The Phenomenon of Man* p.112). Here is a being who is “the object of his own reflections and becomes able to raise himself into a new sphere.”

So the myth of Adam and Eve marks the point at which man became a living soul - or a self-conscious being. A discernible purpose in creation is that of producing consciousness in man, and this is that to which the long ages have been striving. We can say that the fall of man occurred with the birth of his conscience. It would appear that man achieved the ability to reflect - *non plus seulement connaitre, mais se connaitre; non plus seulement savoir, mais savoir que l'on sait*. To know that one knows anything is to know that there is something else to know. So to be conscious of one's being is to be conscious that there is more to it than we have at present achieved.

Eileen Harrison spoke of “the curious and mysterious push that not only compels a man to live but to want to live better”. Striving to do that brings joy, but the immense difficulties in achieving it are the obstacles to joy. She continues “it always beckons to the non-animal in us and makes the animal difficult to live with”. Here then is the fall of man - the recognition of the animal within us. the pull backwards, the “gravity of the enormous physical past, the refusal to advance, that, in man, is sin.”

The creator has handed over some of his power in giving consciousness to man that he may go on “making the world”. That we have evolved to the point of being “in his image” means that we now share something of creative energy. We can turn the wilderness into a fruitful land or we can reverse the process; we can remove mountains and put them into the sea (cf. the Hong Kong airport). We can change the species and character of the vegetable and animal world - there are far more types of dog in the world today than God himself ever invented. We are controlling the birth rate and the death rate and we can destroy the whole human race in a few minutes - if we like. To many of those who understand these things it is a matter for melancholy rather than joy. The animal, man, is difficult to live with. He cannot be trusted to deal gently with this fragile globe.

For I remember stopping by the way  
To watch a potter thumping his wet clay  
And with its all obliterated tongue  
It murmured - “Gently, brother, gently, pray!”

It seems no longer to be God who thumps the clay but man himself. But the simile is not a bad one. There are those who still, putting themselves under the mighty hand of God, can feel his fingers moulding a new creature.

The brain of *Homo Sapiens* is the most complicated of all discoverable units, It is in itself a unity - a single machine which can comprehend something of its own evolutionary history and a number of other things besides. But there are now three thousand five hundred million of them and they are all different, so they do not think alike. This complex arrangement of consciousness has been diverging and spreading out over the surface of the world, becoming more and more complex and divergent, devising different languages, customs and religions, Now it is less than a hundred years since this process has been going into reverse, and we see convergence going on at a very great pace. We can already see the beginnings of a world culture. All peoples are meeting each other, flying to each other's countries, reading each other's novels, scientific journals and comic papers; seeing each other on television and learning each other's music - *My Fair Lady* produced in Japanese by Japanese, Chinese pianists at Wigmore Hall, African dance rhythms in worldwide use.

Kierkegaard said that “creation is not a structure but a process” and most men of science would agree with this. If it is true, we have no reason to suppose that the process has come to an end with the present condition of the human brain. There is a very wide range in the quality of human consciousness and our method of gauging intelligence is very imperfect, and can only be applied in the culture for which it was designed, and then for a very restricted purpose. What we call intelligence for this purpose must not be confused with consciousness. A nuclear physicist with a very high IQ may be quite unconscious of goodness, beauty and truth. This would make him a very dangerous specimen of our species. It is only in some people that we find the ability to catch the “many splendoured thing” for which to live and which reveals the fact that joy is endemic in creation and is the purpose of it.

People who use the word “God” should be able to say what they mean by it. There are many

who use the word and do not mean anything by it because they have rejected the archaic meaning which they have been taught. Too often in the religions of the world it has been attempted to account for creation as the work of a greatly enlarged human being who is a spirit who is somewhere "above" and in a place called "Heaven". This we call anthropomorphism - making God like man. It is thought that this creator has laws for man which must be obeyed if things on earth are to go well and if the individual is to enjoy the delights of heaven after death. It is also taught that natural disasters from lightning, earthquake, flood and even disease are punishments which naughty man has deserved by disobeying the laws. Although in the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England God is said to be without body parts or passion, yet still they ask to be delivered from his wrath and from the everlasting damnation which his "anger" imposes. This conception of a person - as we think of a human person - being God is gradually giving way to a more realistic, rational and scientific conception of the origin and sustaining power of the universe.

Yet we can still say that God is Love - if by love we mean that energy which draws together things which otherwise would be separated. Starting with the atom we notice that its particles are drawn together by some force, energy or influence which causes it to come into existence. Then the coming together of molecules - the beautiful symmetry of the double helix - the working together of amino-acids - the formation of chromosomes. One could call the cellular formation of living matter a complex series of convergences and interdependent co-operation for further complexity or a riot and orgy of lovemaking at a very primitive level. When this lovemaking or complexification has reached the stage of producing human brains then something new has happened in the universe (as far as we know it). An independent, self-propelling, cohesive, self-regarding, memorizing, toolmaking, inventive, creative creature. He is burdened with an imagination which causes him to be restless in pursuing his enquiries into the origin, the purpose and the end of the creation and of himself. That there is a way of life and reaction to circumstance and environment which encourages survival and progress in mastering the environment is evident in the short recorded history of our species. That there is another way of life and reaction which has the opposite effect is as evident from that history. So that one may be called good and the other evil. The first can be thought of as the will of God and the other as sin or missing the mark. The question of religion is this :- how far is it possible for any rational communication to take place between the creative energy deriving from a transcendental entity we call God, and the self conscious creatures which derive from his initiative?

A scientist could say that "all our woe" - oppression, injustice, war, cruelty and selfishness are due to underdevelopment. The majority are not yet sufficiently evolved to live together in such a rational manner as to ensure their own survival. This may be true but it is not very helpful. This is where theology comes in to give science some sense. ("Science without religion is meaningless and religion without science is superstition"; this was said by both Einstein and de Chardin). Sin is a theological term which means missing the mark, so the word by itself means nothing until it is explained what mark is being missed. The mark, then, is God and God's idea of what he wants man to become. There is the push from behind - the energy which is in the very basic stuff of the universe in a state of becoming something which it is not. Then there is the pull from above, from that which we call spirit or the non-animal in us :- "existence is an interpenetration of matter by spirit so that evolution and the Fall are both true, and nature is supernaturalized by grace" as Dr Mascall has put it. The

Greeks taught that Virtue was the aim of life and they admitted that they most often missed the mark.

Moral beauty is a very striking phenomenon. He who has contemplated it but once never forgets its aspect. It is far more impressive than the beauty of nature and of science. It gives to those who possess its divine gifts a strange inexplicable power. It increases the strength of the intellect. It establishes peace among men. More than science, art and religious rites, moral beauty is the basis of civilization.

Alex Carel in *'Man the Unknown'*

Who is there who does not fail to hit the mark of this moral beauty which has somehow been revealed to man as the true object of his life? This failure has been analysed and discussed by all peoples at all times. The Christians say that it is due to seven deadly sins, namely pride, envy, lust, sloth, wrath, covetousness and gluttony, these are certainly all at enmity with joy and so obscure our perception of it.

Our question must be - how do they come and how are we to get rid of them? Their presence is to be accounted for in two ways. First it seems that they are inherited through the genes from our remote ancestors - the "Adam and Eve" people - the first fully conscious beings who could choose between acting in harmony with the tribe or against it - and chose too often to act against it. More may be found out about inheritance in the days to come, but one can be sorry that we have these genes which disfigure our personality, and call ourselves miserable sinners. We, who set up concentration camps with gas chambers and ovens, make rubber truncheons, gas shells and hydrogen bombs, allow Mammon to rule the economy of the world and worship him rather than the God of Love. We are born into a state of sin; into a sinful world in which the true mark which has been glimpsed has so far been missed.

The second way in which we account for the obstacles to joy is that we ourselves have consciously willed to indulge in those things and this is sin, which brings guilt feelings - than which nothing is more inimical to joy.

Psychiatrists have helped us in recent years to overcome exaggerated guilt feelings by explaining how they occur. Pride, for example, is often the result of insecurity. It is feared that the person is not sufficient in himself to survive happily, so he has to puff himself out, making more of the self than is really there. Envy is sometimes due to the same cause, showing itself as the wish to be someone else. Lust is due to the fear of not getting satisfaction for oneself, so the frantic desire for self-satisfaction. Sloth is sometimes underestimating oneself - it is no use competing and striving - it is not worth while getting up and doing anything, "I shall only fail". Again, wrath may be insecurity: "I cannot get what I want so I lose self-control and turn myself into a madman for the moment."

Covetousness - "I am not content with what I have - I do not feel quite secure until I have got what he has." Gluttony - "I did not get enough milk at the breast or from the bottle; therefore I must lose no opportunity of getting as much as possible - more than necessary for the moment." These explanations may seem unreal or fantastic to some people. They become more realistic when the life history of one person is examined in detail. A baby is frightened at any threat to its security. A breast or a bottle snatched away before satiety; left alone too long to cry alone - angry noises, rough treatment. It is no good saying "sweet joy

befall thee” - it may grow up as a frightened insecure person.

If a child is not appreciated, but is insulted, denigrated, shaken, beaten, punished by isolation, disgraced or unloved; if its sensuous life and emotions are denied or over-suppressed, it becomes the kind of person who, with so many others like it, make up the nations which are spoiling the world today - they feel insecure in a hostile world.

This child may grow up into a youth for whom neither his parents nor his school have provided him with a worthy object for which to live. Lack of purpose causes him to be bored with school and home. If there is no outlet for adventure or opportunities for testing talent and latent abilities, he is confused by guilt feelings in the attempt to defy the prohibitions in which he has been reared and in breaking out from the dull, confining world in which he finds himself. From then on guilt is the chief obstacle to joy. In youth especially, “original righteousness”, ideals, the pull upwards, search - too often vainly - for something to feed on. Not finding anything, the appetite will sicken and then die, leaving nothing but an angry young man, for whom joy is something to scoff at.

So we come to the adult - cynical about love, and therefore without joy. The emotional life frustrated - either by puritanical inhibitions, or the experience of being unwanted; his environment has given him false or impossible goals which cause disillusion when failing to achieve them.

Psychology has attempted to cheer up this miserable specimen by showing him how to get rid of his guilt feelings and tracing the sources of his insecurity. If, as sometimes happens, the patient is not given some worthy goal, some fine purpose in life and something to love with unselfish devotion, then the last state of such a person is worse than the first, and seven devils of despair take possession. It seems that the sub-science of psychiatry cannot stand by itself as the only doctor for sick mankind. It cannot unravel the secret of the universe which caused the shout for joy.

Ashley Montague in *The Direction of Human Development* has indicated the way in which mankind can be cured - without actually calling upon God - by describing the nature of love under fourteen points. It is a most useful exposition of the way in which God's love works among men. He concludes the characteristics of love by saying: “For the person and for the species, love is that form or behaviour having the highest survival value.” I have asked him to allow me to quote as follows:

- 1, Love implies the possession of a deep involvement in another. To love another is to communicate that feeling of involvement to them. It is active, not passive, it is demonstrative.
2. Love is unconditional. It makes no bargains. I am for you because you are you, as you are now.
3. Love is supportive. It conveys to the loved one that he can depend upon it; no questions asked; he won't be failed.

4. Love is firm, conveys a discipline and helps the loved one to respond in kind - but continues even if there is no response.
5. Love is that which is most needed by the human organism from the moment of birth.
6. Love is reciprocal in its effects and as beneficial to the giver as to the receiver. To love another means to love oneself as well as another.
7. Love is creative, actively participating in the creative development of the other - as well as contributing to the further development of the lover.
8. Love enlarges the capacities of those who are loved - they become more sensitive in all areas of their being.
9. Love elicits by encouragement the nascent capacities of the loved one.
10. Love is tender with a tenderness that abjures every form of insensitivity and every form of violence.
11. Love is joyful, and prohibitions stemming from love contribute towards love and mature character.
12. Love is fearless and produces no fear in others; it tends therefore to allay suspicions, soften harshness and produce peacefulness.
13. Love treats life as an art - continually seeking to improve and beautify.
14. Love is an attitude of mind most efficient in enabling a human being to adapt himself to his environment.

One certain piece of evidence that love as defined above is present will be signs of joy in the lover and the loved, in spite of the fact that there are moments of great anguish and distress in any profound love situation among humans on earth. This is not allowed for in the above analysis. It is allowed for by Shakespeare in his famous sonnet:

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments; love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds, ...

But bears it out even to the edge of doom.

St Paul expects there to be great difficulties and troubles with love. "There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope and its endurance."

But some will say, "How is this love arrived at? If we haven't got it - where are we going to get it?" The theologians will tell us that it comes from God through people, and thereafter straight from God himself. If a child is loved it can love. If a person is so unfortunate as to

grow up without having been loved, then only if someone comes along who will love them can they be saved and introduced to the joy which results from love.

P.D. Salinger is one of the few modern novelists who have discovered that “Man does in fact have freedom, that there is no freedom without religion and that the language of true religion is love.”

Original sin can now be seen as man's misuse of his powers and his love. This would be a terrible situation if there were not also original righteousness to be discovered. Henry Drummond in his *Ascent of Man* had the idea that

Love did not come down to us through the struggle for life ... It has a lineage all its own. Yet inexplicable though the circumstances be, the history of this force has scarcely even begun to be investigated. ... Love is not a late arrival, an afterthought with creation. It is not a novelty of romantic civilization. It is not a pious word or religion. Its roots began to grow with the first cell of life.

De Chardin takes it much further back:

Considered in its full biological reality, love - that is to say the affinity of being with being - is not peculiar to man. It is a general property of all life, and as such it embraces in its varieties and degrees all the forms successfully adopted by organized matter ... if there were no propensity to unite even at a prodigiously rudimentary level - indeed in the molecule itself - it would be physically impossible for love to appear higher up, with us in a hominised form. By rights, to be certain of its presence in ourselves we should assume its presence, at least in an inchoate form, in everything that is.

Plato felt this and immortalised it in his *Dialogues*. St Francis came to the same conclusion without the aid of either philosophy or modern science.

De Chardin continues: “Love in all its subtlety is nothing more and nothing less than the more or less direct trace marked on the heart of the element by the physical convergence of the universe upon itself.”

Sin, then, is the word we can use to describe the obstacles to joy, and sin is due to lovelessness both in the race and in the individual. “Perfect love casteth out fear” wrote John (1 John 4.18). Fear comes from insecurity, and when fear is cast out joy must come flooding in.

There must be an objective “right” and “wrong” in human behaviour if the definition of “right” is “that form of behaviour having the highest survival value” and the word “survival” is understood as meaning much more than biological preservation. It must give a picture or a picture of a mature and properly integrated human consciousness, reflecting the joy of the whole creation and in tune with the other “Sons of God having laid hold of eternal life.”

Dante paints his picture of ultimate joy this way :

Thus in the form of a white rose revealed itself to me that saintly host  
 Which Christ espoused in his own blood.  
 There with that other host - the angels - which as it soars  
 Contemplates and chants the glory of him who fills it with love...  
 And all their faces were living flame and of gold their wings  
 And for the rest they were white beyond the whiteness of snow.  
 This realm of security and joy peopled alike by folk of old time and new  
 Centred its looks upon one mark alone: O threefold light  
 Whose bright radiance shed in a single beam doth so content them,  
 Look hither down upon our storm tossed world.

The petals of a rose are like flames, every atom and every cell in each petal is at a tension of pulsating energy causing the petal – in harmonious pattern with all the petals - to gaze inward into the golden centre of the flower. Each atom represents a human soul who has consciously willed to be there and has to continue so to will in order to stay there. The seraphim are burning with knowledge as the cherubim are burning with love. Fire is the primal energy which the triune God “made”. The beauty of a rose, its scent and colour and formation was to Dante a symbol of the beatific vision.

So T.S. Eliot - leaning on Julian of Norwich :

And all shall be well and  
 All manner of things shall be well  
 When the tongues of flame are infolded  
 Into the crowned knot of fire  
 and the fire and the rose are one. *Little Gidding*

“Doth so content them” in Dante’s picture is a key phrase. Sorrow, sadness, depression; evil in all its forms occur inevitably in the human psyche before it has learned to centre its looks upon one mark alone, because only when that is done can the Threefold Light shed its bright radiance upon them. Thus and thus only can this nucleus of sense impressions and stored memories come to its fulfilment of joy. Whatever interrupts this vision is an obstacle to joy. When the mind is occupied with its own affairs, self regarding, self interested, self seeking, it is unable at the same time to grow towards its ultimate objective. As it is a dependent creature putting itself in a state of pretended independence it is certain to encounter trouble. It will set itself some goal which will fail it in the end, and disappointment will ensue. Here is no joy - “I cannot get what I want”, so “there has passed away a glory from the earth” and I am unhappy.

Baron von Hugel explained that:

God is perfect love - unmixed joy, entire delectation, not as a bundle of separate qualities ... but as a living, spiritual, personalist reality who himself is all this overflowing. All this goodness and joy he does not become, does not acquire - he simply is it. The ultimate intention as indeed the first cause of all things is not the sin or suffering or want but delectation joy, holiness.

.....

Poor souls, who think that joy is bought with pelf;  
The bait that captures joy is joy itself.  
My joy, it came mysteriously at birth  
I give it to, not take it from the earth.

W.H. Davies

Joy is the vital air of the soul, and grief is a kind of asthma complicated by atony ... to make anyone happy is to augment his store of being, to double the intensity of his life, to reveal him to himself, to ennoble him and transfigure him. Happiness does away with ugliness and even makes the beauty of beauty ... as a powerful electric current can render metals luminous and reveal their essence by the colour of their flame, so intense life and supreme joy can make the most simple mortal dazzlingly beautiful.

My God, how wretched should we be without beauty! But with it, everything is born afresh in us: the senses, the heart, imagination, reason will come together like the dead bones of the prophet and becomes one single and selfsame energy. What is happiness if it is not this plenitude of existence, this close union with the universal and divine life? I have been happy a whole half day, and I have been brooding over my joy, steeping myself in it to the very depth of my consciousness.

We receive everything, both life and happiness; but the manner in which we receive this is what is still ours. Let us then receive trustfully, without shame or anxiety, and humbly accept from God even our own nature, and treat it charitably, firmly, intelligently and never let us be afraid of innocent joy; God is good, and what he does is well done; - resign yourself to happiness; ask for the spirit of sacrifice, of detachment, of renunciation and above all for the spirit of joy and gratitude - that genuine and religious optimism which sees in God a Father, and asks no pardon for his benefits. We must dare to be happy, and dare to confess it, regarding ourselves always as repositories, not as the authors of our own joy.

Is not making others happy the best happiness? To illuminate for an instant the depth of a deep soul, to cheer those who bear by sympathy the burdens of so many sorrow-laden hearts and suffering lives is to me a blessing and a precious privilege. There is a sort of religious joy in helping to renew the strength and courage of noble minds.

Amiel.

The ways of overcoming the obstacles to joy are many. The first and most important may be to believe that joy is - in fact, and in spite of all appearances to the contrary-endemic in the universe and the purpose of it.

The second might be put in the word of Bernard Shaw in *Man and Superman* :

This is the true joy in life - the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one - the being thoroughly worn out before being thrown

on the scrap heap - the being a force instead of a feverish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

Then there is the therapy of confession for the resolving of guilt. Guilt is a great misery-maker. Auricular confession - to a priest in church - is not always successful in renewing a life by the infusion of joy in forgiveness. Psychiatry is sometimes more successful, as the therapist has much more time to get down to the root of the trouble and the confession, often long drawn out, gives to the patient a picture of himself as a being, an individual, in such and such an environment with such and such a background. If the doctor has succeeded in helping the patient to know himself and then proceeds to help him to select a goal, an aim and an unselfish objective in life, then the guilt falls away as if absolution has been pronounced, and a new quality of life has become possible.

\*

## CHAPTER SIX: THE ENEMIES OF JOY

The grim philosophers are the enemies of joy. There are many unfortunates like Kafka for whom life is meaningless, Sartre for whom Nothingness is equally important with Being, and Camus with whom everything is absurd. Paul Tillich describes them well. After describing those whose courage enables them to express existential despair he continues :-

But there is a non-creative existential attitude called Cynicism. A cynic today is not the same person as the Greeks meant by the term. For the Greeks the cynic was a critic of contemporary culture on the basis of reason and natural law; he was a revolutionary rationalist, a follower of Socrates. Modern cynics are not ready to follow anybody. They have no belief in reason, no criterion of truth, no set values, no answer to the question of meaning. They try to undermine every norm put before them. Their courage is expressed not creatively but in their form of life. They courageously reject any solution which would deprive them of their freedom of rejecting whatever they want to reject. The cynics are lonely although they need company in order to show their loneliness. They are empty both of preliminary meaning and an ultimate meaning, and therefore easy victims of neurotic anxiety. Much compulsive self-affirmation and much fanatical self-surrender are expressions of the non-creative courage to be as oneself.

Samuel Becket angrily affirms that he did not mean *Waiting for Godot* in his remarkable play *Waiting for Godot*. We accept his statement and it seems he tried to mean that we must wait in despair for someone to turn up who will give meaning to life, but in fact there is no one to turn up. The message of the play for those who, with Confucius and Kierkegaard have discovered that Joy is endemic in the universe, is that there is someone worth waiting for, but that it is not worthwhile doing anything until he does turn up.

The answer then to the hollow men still wandering about in the wasteland of cynical unbelief, of despair and anguish, i.e. angst, is this. That though anguish is part of life as we know it, yet it is there because of the occasional experience of its counterpart – joy. There would be no meaning in the word despair if there were no such thing as hope, and no such word as hope if there were nothing to hope for. One could not form the word meaningless if the word meaning was not there.

These enemies to joy have a very one-sided picture of reality. Dante saw Heaven as well as Hell, and then Purgatory as the intermediate state in which we now find ourselves. These poor wanderers know only Hell and in agony deny even that. It is better to pretend to know nothing.

The affirmation of one's essential being in spite of desires and anxieties creates joy. Lucillus is exhorted by Seneca to make it his business "to learn how to feel joy. It is not the joy of fulfilled desires to which he refers, for real joy is a severe matter; it is the happiness of a soul lifted above every circumstance".

\*

## CHAPTER SEVEN: SORROW, DEPRESSION, MELANCHOLY

We can be full of joy here and now, even in our trials and troubles. Taken in the right spirit these things will give us patience and endurance. This in turn will develop a mature character - and a character of this sort produces a steady hope - a hope that will never disappoint us. (Romans 5.3-5)

In spite of more than average physical, mental and spiritual suffering St Paul was able to say "Rejoice! Again I say rejoice!" Kierkegaard achieved the same ability - in note 984 of *The Journals* he says "And so I am nevertheless, in the midst of all my sufferings so indescribably happy and joyful. For my imagination almost sinks beneath the thought of the millions of possibilities which are in God at every moment."

Sorrow is thought to be the opposite of joy. I would like to suggest the possibility of the two happenings to be present to one's consciousness at the same time. This could be illustrated by the stroke of a violin bow across two strings at the same time. There may be a major sorrow caused by a tragedy - my little boy killed by a lorry - my wife die in childbirth. Nothing but the passage of time can heal the wounds upon life that such events inflict. But if real joy is "the happiness of a soul lifted above every circumstance" - as Seneca told Lucillus - then the healing takes place the sooner.

A grievous wound on an otherwise healthy body is as a great sorrow on an otherwise joyous life. The sorrow is passing, the joy is permanent: it is an aspect of eternal life - the humming creative note of the universes. So when sorrow is experienced by a soul made courageous by joy, it can be borne with that fortitude which is necessary before healing can take place. This is clearly expounded by Paul Tillich in *The Courage to Be*.

In his novel called *Island* Aldous Huxley causes one of his characters to say:

One third, more or less, of all the sorrow that the person I think I am must endure is unavoidable. It is the sorrow inherent in the human condition, the price we must pay for being sentient and self-conscious organisms, aspirants to liberation but subjects to the laws of nature and under orders to keep on marching, through irreversible time, through a world indifferent to our wellbeing towards decrepitude and the certainty of death. The remaining two thirds of all sorrow is home made, and so far as the universe is concerned, unnecessary.

If one can rid oneself of the unnecessary two thirds of one's unhappiness in life - what a lot of room is left for joy. This can be done by accepting the facts of life with courage. One of the facts of life is accident, another is personal failure, the last is death. Accident may be due to our own carelessness or that of someone else, or an entirely fortuitous happening - a slate falling off a roof. If one accepts the likelihood of an accident we are not unduly surprised, cast down or sorrowful when it happens - we half expected it. If we fail in some project on which our heart was set - this is not a cause for melancholy if we have accepted our human fallibility and ourselves as we really are. If one has a clear sight of death as the gate to life,

more intense and joyful than is possible in these three dimensions, then the imminence of the event is welcomed. But if one's interests and concerns are in this dim life alone, then one will cling to "this muddy vesture of decay" even if one feels oneself to be "of all earth's clotted clay the dingiest clot".

Sadness, depression and melancholy are often brought about by the under-estimation of one's own worth. This in turn may be caused by the experience of being unloved. This may have occurred in infancy, childhood, adolescence or adulthood and it would seem to be the greatest trauma, wound and tragedy that can happen to anyone. Inasmuch as true love gives birth to joy and courage to face all that life can do, so the lack of it breeds sadness and fear and cowardice in the face of tragedy, accident and death.

I quote Aldous Huxley again, this time from *Ape and Essence*:

Joy? But joy was murdered long ago. All that survives is the laughter of demons about the whipping posts, the howling of the possessed as they couple in the darkness. Joy is only for those whose life accords with the given Order of the World. For you there, the clever ones, who think you can improve upon that order, for you, the angry ones, the disobedient, joy is fast becoming a stranger. Those who are doomed to reap the consequences of your fantastic tricks will never so much as suspect its existence.

Love, joy, peace, these are the fruits of the spirit that is your essence and the essence of the world. But the fruits of the ape mind, the fruits of the monkey's presumption and hate, are unceasing restlessness and a chronic misery tempered only by frenzies more horrible than itself.

... He [Belial + evil] can never win for good. Why not? Because he can never resist the temptation of carrying evil to the limit. And whenever evil is carried to the limit it always destroys itself, after which the Order of Things comes to the surface again.

So the Order of Things is love joy peace, and the Disorder of Things is hate, sorrow and war. This way of thinking about reality has much to commend it. Witness to the truth of this philosophy is found in the writing and teaching of all the great thinkers of the past and up to the present.

Are you sad? Perhaps you have been trying to impose your will upon the Order of Things. Perhaps you have been expecting perfection in some situation, or that the world yield to your desires, or some person or persons carry out your suggestions. If this is the cause of your depression then you are the only one to blame. It is lack of philosophy or "right thinking" as the Buddhists would put it, or refusal to submit to the will of Allah, as the Muslim puts it, or omitting to say "Thy will be done", as the Christian teaches.

This should not be just passive submission to circumstance but only to be said after asking to be guided to the right decision in the matter and trying with all one's strength and will power to achieve the aim - only then should failure be accepted with a smile and a shrug "Ah well!

I know that the universe was not created for me to do what I like with it. I am disappointed but not surprised or depressed”. “Everything which is contrary to the natural order is vicious” wrote Thomas Aquinas (*Summa* 1.11.8)

...for nature has added delight to functions which are necessary to the life of man. And therefore the natural order requires that man should use as much of this delight as is necessary for the preservation of the individual and of the species, or for human security. If therefore anyone were to avoid delight so as to neglect what was natural for human preservation, he commits sin as going against the natural order and that belongs to the vice of insensibility. It cannot be good therefore for a man to abstain from all delights.

Here, then is an official Christian pronouncement showing delight or joy as inherent in the natural order.

The only survivor of a certain party at Buchenwald who was blind from the age of eight was able to say “Joy must not come from outside, for whatever happens to us is within. Life does not come to us from without; life is in us even if we have no eyes”. If whatever happens joy is within us then the word inherent and the word endemic can be applied. In his case it is not surprising that he did not receive much joy from external influences.

Yet Keats showed Endymion “distracted with the richest flow of joy that ever poured from heaven”, which is an example of the reception of joy from the outside. So then we see joy as something which is both outside man and which under certain circumstances can come into him and also something inside him - a part of his being which can burst out into full consciousness given the right stimulus.

Kierkegaard said (*Journals*, p.634) “Properly understood, every man who truthfully desires a relation to God and to live in his sight has only one task - always to be joyful”; and William Stekel (*Disguises of Love*, 1922) caps this with “Joy of life is the most beautiful form of piety”.

That joy is discovered in any true sexual union is a universal experience. Alan Watts in *Nature Man and Woman* says:

The height of sexual love coming upon us of itself is one of the most total experiences of relationship to the other of which we are capable, but prejudice and insensitivity have prevented us from seeing that in any other circumstances such delight would be called mystical ecstasy. Without - in its true sense - 'the lustiness of sex', religion is joyless and abstract; without the self-abandonment of religion, sex is mechanical masturbation.

And again, “There is really no other reason for creation than pure joy”. De Chardin would not agree with the above quotation because his religion was as filled with joy as that of any who had experienced physical ecstasy. It would seem therefore that both are right and joy can be discovered either physically or mentally. Also Alan Watts goes on to say:

If there were everlasting life beyond death after all, if there were eternal union with those we have loved; if, for ever and ever there were the vision of the

union of hearts with a God whose beatitude exceeds immeasurably the most intense joy we have known - somehow including all the variety of form and colour, uniqueness and individuality that we value so much upon earth? Christianity alone, it would be argued, has the audacity to affirm this basic hope which the wisdom of the world represses, and so is the only fundamentally joyous religion. For it gambles recklessly upon the scheme of things turning out to be the best that we hope for, challenging man to put the whole might of his faith in the idea that his nature at its most human is made in the image of the ultimate reality – God.

\*

## CHAPTER EIGHT: TRANSCENDENTAL COMMUNICATION

Now from the *Journals* of Kierkegaard - note 207, May 19, half past ten in the morning. "There is an indescribable joy which enkindles us as inexplicably as the apostle's outburst : 'Rejoice I say unto you, and again I say unto you rejoice!' Not a joy over this or that, but the soul's mighty song with tongue and mouth, from the bottom of the heart: I rejoice through my joy, in, at, with, over, by and with my joy – a heavenly refrain, as it were, suddenly breaks off our other song; a joy which cools and refreshes us like a breath of wind, a wave of air from the trade wind which blows from the plains of Mamre to the everlasting habitations."

A case can certainly be made out that Christianity "is the only fundamentally joyous religion" while admitting that there have been and still are sects which among some Calvinists and Catholics emphasise the miserable and "damnation" aspects. This teaching induces sorrow, depression and grim melancholy, is the enemy of joy and so is not true Christianity.

Colin Wilson wrote: "Man should possess an infinite appetite for life. It should be evident to him all the time that life is superb, glorious, endlessly rich, infinitely desirable."

The important words here which help us to a deeper understanding of the conception of God are "endlessly" and "infinitely". An act of faith is necessary at some point or other and I would suggest to those who find difficulty in accepting the traditional concept of God that they could examine the words "endless and infinite", and when knowledge and imagination become exhausted in thinking about time and what there was before time began, they bow down and worship in silence before the great mystery of that which was always there. So with the word "infinite". The greatest mathematician cannot write on the blackboard that which preceded all the numbers he can think; even though he may put a symbol for the idea of infinity, he will not claim he can understand it. When his mind boggles as he tries to put meaning into the word he should bow down and worship the great mystery which is the cause of number. Thus he could become a Theist.

The next point for religion and science is the question asked in chapter 5, namely: "How far is it possible for any rational communication to take place between the creative energy deriving from a transcendental entity we call God and the self conscious creatures for which it is responsible. To put it another way, "Can finite temporal creatures have any relationship with an eternal infinite Being?"

First, we shall examine evidence of communication which it is claimed comes from the transcendental entity. This description must be used towards those who have rejected belief in God because for them the word 'God' is loaded with anthropomorphic superstitions. All down the ages of recorded history and literature there are those who have experienced what appears to be inspiration – a "breathing into" from some extra-mundane source; the brain has been, as it were, invaded as if by some direct radiation, wavelength or revelation.

From the seventh century B.C. to the seventh A.D. there was a welter of ideas concerning the

mystery of creation and the meaning of life and death. These ideas came as if being received from an otherworldly source. It was as though messages were coming in and being received by primitive and sometime quite inefficient receptors. Yet these events showed to the recipients at least that there was something *there*.

Whatever it was, and still is, trying to contact mankind, the message must obviously be in code. We cannot expect the ineffable Creator to use human speech that would seem to us to need tongue and lips. So the code must be broken if the message is to be understood.

The thinkers, prophets and priests did their best according to their mental and spiritual equipment, but none of it was complete and much of it was bungled. For example, it was thought that God wanted human sacrifice, and later on that he would enjoy animal burnt offerings and would enjoy the smell of roast meat. By others it was thought that the message would come through more clearly if a medium spoke in a trance. Certainly in some instances of divine communication the idea of joy came through if dancing, singing and feasting were done to please, and to feel united to, the deity. But fuzzy reception led others to suppose that some foods were allowed and others taboo. There were tribes who thought that God had told them to practise circumcision or other mutilation of the body.

Some of the messages have a ring of credibility such as the Indian statement that there is Intelligence Everlasting Bliss as the ultimate reality. The prophet Hosea surely cracked the code when he put into human words these thoughts of God: "I desire steadfast love, not sacrifice; knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings". Micah received the agenda for the United Nations, though they have hardly begun to tackle it yet. "They shall beat their swords into mattocks and their spears into pruning knives. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor ever again be trained for war. And each man shall dwell under his own vine and under his own fig tree undisturbed, for the Lord has spoken." That sounds like a genuine message – it is a law of life, whereas the alternative is a law of death.

In these days it is obvious that unless attention is paid to such "words" of God, survival of the human race is unlikely, and joy will be denied further expression in humanity. Goethe said that "man is the first conversation that Nature holds with God". And it may also be the last.

There are many more such seemingly inspired messages in the Old Testament and elsewhere - in the literature of other faiths - in spite of a great deal which, to us, is obviously not from God. But by what standards are we to judge them? How can we distinguish between thoughts which man, uninspired, can achieve by his reasoning faculty and common sense, and those which would seem to have come from some outside influence, a communication to man?

Sir Winston Churchill, in a speech during the war, said: "I sometimes have a sense of interference. I want to stress that I have a feeling sometimes that a guiding hand has interfered with decisions made round a table, and the best brains and experience of the leaders on land, sea and air have been overruled. I have a feeling that we have a guardian because we serve a great cause and that we shall have that guardian so long as we serve that cause faithfully." Which reminds us of what Confucius said: "While Heaven does not wish

the cause to perish, what can the people of Kwang do to me?"

The Christians have a very clear idea of the answer to our question as to how does God speak to Man. They say that Jesus Christ is the Word of God, the idea of complete man in the mind of God, the pattern to which, by grace and evolution, mankind shall one day conform. The reason for Christian joy is that they have personal proof that God expressed himself in Jesus Christ. This proof comes after faith - not before it. For Christians Jesus Christ is the means, the influence which effects a change in man's nature, making for a higher type of creature. A true Christian can have no doubt about communication with the Eternal-Intelligence-Bliss of the Being responsible for creation because the message and happening which occurs after faith causes indescribable joy.

These are the reasons for it :-

1. He has experienced forgiveness of sins - so is rid of guilt, the great obstacle to joy;
2. He becomes aware of eternal life with the Vision of God as the goal of life;
3. He has understood the purpose of life as an adventure into Love which causes him to find ways of furthering the work of Christ on earth to mitigate the mighty miseries which man inflicts upon man, and help his fellow men to perceive the Kingdom of God.

The experience which so many have had of something coming into their minds from outside themselves, and which has changed the quality of their behaviour and emotions, is called conversion. This occurrence is illustrated by countless biographies from St Paul through St Francis to Professor Joad and T.S.Eliot as far as Malcolm Muggeridge and Cliff Richards. Some of these names may soon sink into obscurity but others will surely take their place among those who influenced their generation.

Whether such events are due to God's search for man or man's search for God or a combination of both (which is more likely) can never be fully established. This does not matter very much, but it is interesting to note the different ways in which these changes occur. T.S.Eliot seems to have had a purely intellectual conversion caused by reading one of the sermons of Lancelot Andrews. Professor Joad was shocked into a change of direction by being prosecuted for cheating the Railways, though his mind had been working on the problem of faith before that. Cliff Richards was helped by the evangelistic campaigns of Billy Graham to a calm and happy following of Christ. Sir John Lawrence in *Russians Observed* quite unemotionally states "Not long after the war I had become convinced, to my considerable surprise, that the Christian religion was true. And if true, it was important." This intellectual type of conversion could be classed with those who feel after God and find him. Francis Thompson, on the other hand tries his very best to escape :-

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;  
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;  
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways  
Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears  
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.  
Up vistaed hopes I sped,  
And shot, precipitated,

Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,  
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.

*The Hound of Heaven*

In the end of the long pursuit, that “strange and piteous futile thing” gives in, and allows himself to be clasped in the everlasting arms. This is certainly one of the secrets of joy. The renunciation of one's aloneness. There is nothing permanent or absolutely reliable in the physical universe. Neither man nor nature can be trusted to satisfy all the desires of the human spirit. So until one discovers something which is exterior to the physical universe which is loving with an everlasting steadfast love there bound to be a sense of frustration, depression, melancholy, loneliness.

“Joy is a transcendent emotion: it is something which goes beyond pleasure, even beyond delight”, writes John Hadham in *A Book of Joy*. The word “transcendent” is a key word in the understanding of joy. It is something which, though it come to us as an emotion, is “existing apart from, not subject to, the limitations of the material universe”. To those for whom this is true, there is no need for further proof of the existence of God. For them He is the Bliss which has come from the Everlasting Intelligence.

Hadham continues in his introduction to say: “Joy is something that is not talked about nowadays, and alas for the anthologist, not generally written about by English poets. Despair, disgust, disillusion, or merely oblique hints of enjoyment, these are the moods of much modern writing. Ecstasy is out of currency except perhaps in terms of Jazz”.

Perhaps this lack of perception and receptivity of the phenomenon of joy as endemic in the universe, and on the part of the writers and thinkers of this century can be explained by the monstrous regression in human behaviour made obvious by the turmoil of the world wars and troubled time through which we have lived. To this must be added the revolution in the beliefs of peoples caused by the advent of modern science. Old faiths have given way to new uncertainties as to the purpose of living. The mind of modern man has been so preoccupied with knowledge, and the philosophers with theories of knowledge, that wisdom has not had much attention.

Some of us turn to the earlier thinkers with relief. This, for example, is Spinoza: “He who distinctly understands himself and his emotions loves God, and so much the more as he understands himself and his emotions”. This proposition introduces us to the intellectual love of God in which wisdom consists. The intellectual love of God is a union of thought and emotion: it consists in true thought combined with joy in the apprehension of truth. All joy in true thought is part of the intellectual love of God, for it contains nothing negative; God, therefore, is truly part of the whole. When all objects are referred to God, the idea of God will fully occupy the mind.

The works of Teilhard de Chardin are becoming increasingly popular because of his rational enthusiasm for the future. This is based on a long look at prehistory - which is the only way in which one understands the human situation today. His exposition of “the within” and “the without” of created matter makes it easy for us to accept Spinoza's point in which all objects are referred to God, and the idea of God is not excluded from every idea concerning our

world and life in it.

The intellectual love of God sets up a condition of joy. One of the facets of this experience comes about through the recognition of a relationship of a human being to Eternity. Here is Milton on *Time* :-

...Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss  
With an individual kiss;  
And joy shall overtake us as a flood,  
When everything that is sincerely good  
And perfectly divine,  
With truth and peace and love shall ever shine  
About the supreme Throne  
Of Him, to whose happy-making sight alone,  
When once our heavenly guided soul shall climb  
Then all this earthly grossness  
Attired with stars we shall forever sit  
Triumphing over depth and chance and thee, O Time.

Nietzsche makes Zarathusa say: "All joys want eternity: deep profound eternity". Yet there are those who are frightened at the prospect of eternity even if it is sheer joy. Clemenceau could not contemplate an eternity of joy. Nabakov said: "In order to enjoy life one should enjoy it too much". In **Tannhäuser** we find the line "nicht Lust allein liegt mir am Herzen, aus Freuden sehn' ich mich nach Schmerzen" - "In joy I turn longingly to sorrow." In the autobiography of Stephen Spender he tells of his wife's childhood: "She told me that at school what she had feared most was the sermons on eternity. After having thought deeply about the prospect of living forever, she decided that to her, an everlasting existence even in heaven would be hell. She went to the Mother Superior and begged, as a special favour, that she might be let off having to live for eternity".

If she had been taught that heaven was sitting on a cloud with a harp and singing to an old man with a white beard on a golden throne, one can understand the fear of boredom - especially if she was not musical. If she had been shown that Heaven is the state of being loved and loving in security forever she would probably have felt differently about it.

There have always been those who were sorry to have been born, and it is not surprising that they would be averse to any extension of life after death. Aristotle said: "It would have been better not to have been born - so dying is the next best event." Job is a classic example of those who, while suffering an outrageous fortune, wish they had never been born:

Perish the day when I was born, and the night that said "A man is conceived".  
May that day turn to darkness; may God above not look for it, nor light of dawn shine on it. May blackness sully it, and murk and gloom, cloud smother that day, swift darkness eclipse its sun.  
Blind darkness swallow up that night, count it not among the days of the year, reckon it not among the cycle of the months. That night may it be barren for ever, no cry of joy be heard in it. ...Why was I not stillborn? Why did I not die when I came out of the womb? Why was I ever laid on my mother's knees or put to suck at her breasts?"

There is only one answer to the desperate misery of Job which is the lot of so many in each generation: “Who is this whose ignorant words cloud my design in darkness? Brace yourself and stand up like a man: ...”

We can only enter into the fullness of joy if we stand up like a man - and face the worst possible fate that can occur. If we can imagine it happening to us then we can be filled with compassion when it happens to someone else. Accepting and facing with courage the continuous possibility of accident, disease, financial ruin and death we can not only share their sorrows with those who suffer and attempt to alleviate them but communicate something of the joy which underlies the whole creation. We could help them to say with Job:

I know that my redeemer\* lives  
and that he will rise last to speak in court,  
and I shall discern my witness standing at my side  
and see my defending counsel, even if God himself,  
Whom I shall see with my own eyes, I myself and no other.

(\**Vindicator* in New  
English Bible)

Thus to take arms against a sea of troubles may not, by opposing, end them but it will give the excitement and honour and glory of a fight. Miguel le Unamono finishes his book on *The Tragic Sense of Life* with these words : “God deny you peace but give you glory.”

\*

## CHAPTER NINE : AN UNFINISHED SYMPHONY

Man is an unfinished creature in an unfinished universe. Believing this to be true will help to solve the problem of evil. This problem has bothered mankind since the dawn of consciousness and most religions have something to say about it. We have mentioned some of the events that cause sorrow and melancholy among men - disease, accident and death, and noticed the fact that there are people who not wish to die, but hope that there is no afterlife. How can we believe that joy is endemic in a human situation in which men perpetrate such ghastly inhumanities to other men as would lead one to suppose that cruelty is endemic in us ?

To describe in detail the different forms of violence which governments allow the police and other agents to inflict on their victims is not necessary in these days of universal communications. We know what happens in these dark cellars and gloomy prisons and there are few countries that are blameless in this matter. Cruelty is the same thing, whether perpetrated by the Spanish Inquisition or the British Slaver. Torture is not a practice confined to any one nation - all those with power over others are liable to use it viciously when their power is threatened. The shelling of civilians by the British in the opium wars caused as much pain to each mutilated body as the Chinese inflicted by their ingenious tortures on each other. The African, burning alive in an ant heap a law- breaker or enemy, is acting towards a fellow human being in the same way as a magistrate in England in Carolinian times who ordered ear lopping, tongue-slitting or hanging, drawing and quartering. The American Indians were proud of the scalps they managed to wrest from their enemies - it was not a kindly action and not a little painful. There is a lack of consideration for other people's feelings in all this infliction of pain.

It would seem that there are different levels of maturation among human beings and if it can be shown that cruelty is diminishing among us, we can look forward to communities arising in which physical torture is no longer practised by governments and the law enforcement authorities, and the common people feel secure enough to live in harmony with each other.

If already there are some types who would on no account inflict grievous bodily harm on another, whose lives are devoted to the relief of suffering rather than causing it, why should not the number of them increase? The fact that flogging in the army and navy is now abolished, and that mutilation and hanging has been voted out by a number of modern governments seems to point to the fact that compassion and respect for the human body is increasing.

Whereas torture of criminals and enemies was taken for granted in previous centuries, today there is an outcry in the world's press whenever it is known to occur. In earlier times, much of the cruel punishments took place in public - whipping while being dragged behind a cart through the streets or at the whipping post, the stocks and hanging and burning at the stake were all public entertainments. Now the official infliction of pain has to go on behind carefully guarded torture chambers or prison cells. As what happens there so often leaks out, authorities are finding it more and more difficult to justify their actions. This surely shows some signs of improvement in human behaviour.

If we have noticed that in human beings, we can also notice that there is a process going on which points to an ideal already in the mind of a being who can live in harmony with all our being and create a symphony within his total environment. This working towards a symphony seems to be only the rational result of the evolutionary process as we know it.

But how is one to know the country to which one is travelling if one has never been there? It can only be known by faith. This in turn can only be experienced if there is something to stir and inspire the imagination. The imagination gives a picture to the mind of some idea for which to strive, and it seems so attractive that one has faith in it. A painter knows the picture he wants to paint, and tries hard to get it on the canvas - he won't even try if he has no faith in his abilities or inspiration. A composer hears music in his head and he writes it down and tries it on the piano. Tchaikovsky wrote towards the end of his life: "I shall go to my grave without having produced anything really perfect in form".

Whence came this idea of perfection in form for which it was a compulsion to strive? It can be understood if man is an unfinished creature. Surgeons and physicians reach out to increase their knowledge and techniques, yet there are surely none who claim to have achieved perfection and come to the end of the road on which they are travelling. Psychiatrists are only beginning to find out how the mind works and why men act as they do. They have not yet started on exploring the realm of what he might become, but they would admit that they themselves are unfinished creatures, judging by the unachieved potentialities they discover within themselves.

Theologians are in no doubt that the goal of human striving is for some kind of perfection of which they only have hints which are followed by guesses, and the rest is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action. The hint half-guessed, the gift half-understood, is Incarnation.

Jesus said: "I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now; and when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will lead you into all truth".

He did not tell us how long, how many aeons it would take to lead us into all truth. The fact that we can half understand, would indicate that there will come a time or condition under which we shall three-quarters understand, and then finally fully understand. That man is unfinished creature would seem be a rational explanation of the inadequate relationship (to put it as mildly as possible) with his fellow man.

That ours is an unfinished universe may be more difficult to establish. This is partly because it is so inconceivably huge. If we were able to travel at the speed of light we would pass the moon in 1.3 seconds, and in five hours we could leave the solar system. It would be four years later that we would reach the nearest star and after that we might pass a star on average once every five years as long as we kept up the speed of 11 million miles a minute. They say that there are a hundred thousand stars in our galaxy of the Milky Way, and it would take 80,000 years to cross from one end to the other. The next door group of stars called Andromeda is only two million light years away. Even then, they say, we are not yet out in the open country of space. Oh yes, we can describe some parts of our universe, but we

cannot imagine it. Congealing gas clouds ten billion miles across might make a star. To be aware of the process is one thing, but to find the purpose of it is quite another.

So we come back to the human brain, which can work out the process and measure the distances; but is there a scientific method by which the purpose of it could be discovered? Can we believe it to be meaningless?

Perhaps before long theology will come back on to her throne as queen of the sciences. She certainly has an answer which satisfies many of the questing minds of men. The astronomers say that stars are being made and burnt out all the time. We do not yet know the true nature of quasars or neutron stars – pulsars. These are recently discovered items in the universe and there is excitement among the astronomers as their instruments improve and they find out more and more about more and more of our dwelling place - this cosmos. Yet we do not know enough to claim that our universe is either finished or unfinished, whether it has achieved a perfection, a balance, a harmony of its respective parts - but certainly something is going on in it.

All we know of created matter on this planet is that it appears to be working towards some conclusion. It will therefore be an act of faith, not of proof, to say that the conclusion will be satisfactory, harmonious, joyful. In accepting this as an hypothesis, we have an answer to many questions about the nature of man. Why goodness, beauty and truth? Why faith, hope and love? Why are people good to each other, and why does there seem to be delight in nature. Reject that hypothesis and what have you? No answers to those questions, no explanation as to the purpose of life. But when the gift of faith has been accepted, then is revealed a beneficent mind creating universes for joy in which other minds shall come into being to enjoy the joy of Being.

Sometimes, admittedly, the process is agonising. This has to be faced by those who are coming into being, and they must brace themselves and stand up like a man, along with Job and countless others who have had the courage to be.

Wanting to prove that God exists is as absurd as to assert that he does not; our assertions and our proofs will not create him, nor will they suppress him. Andre Gide said “I prefer to say that the moment something exists, it is God. The explanation is no use to me - He himself explains himself through the whole of nature, that is His way of existing”.

\*

## CHAPTER TEN: THE TRIUMPH OF JOY

Using the myth of Prometheus Unbound, Shelley gives us a presentation of the enormous depths of sorrow among humans, and shows how it is to be overcome in the end by the spread of love, releasing the boundless glories of eternal joy.

Ah me! alas, pain ever, for ever!....  
The crawling glaciers pierce me with spears  
Of their moon-freezing crystals, the bright chains  
Eat with their burning cold into my bones.  
Heaven's winged hound polluting from thy lips  
His poison not his own tears up  
My heart; and shapeless sights come wandering by,  
The ghastly people of the realm of dream,  
Mocking me: and the earthquake fiends are charged  
To wrench the rivets from my quivering wounds  
When the rocks split and close again behind:  
While from their loud abysses howling throng  
The genie of the storm urging the rage  
Of whirlwind and afflict me with keen hail.

Prometheus is able to bear “three thousand years of sleep-unsheltered hours” in unspeakable agonies, because he knows that Jupiter – representing the world's evil - will fall. He is temporal whereas the love that sustains Prometheus is eternal. He can afford to wait and even pity his tormentor.

What ruin  
Will hunt thee undefended through wide heaven!  
How will thy soul, cloven to its depth with terror  
Gape like a hell within! I seek in grief,  
Not exultation, for I hate no more,  
As then ere misery made me wise. The curse  
Once breathed on thee I would recall.

When the Hour arrives and Love is set free, the whole universe is renewed. The Earth, the Moon, and the Chorus spirits sing in ecstasy

Then weave the web of the mystic measure  
From the depths of the sky and the ends of the earth  
Come swift spirit of might and of pleasure,  
Fill the dance and the music of mirth,  
As the waves of a thousand streams rush by  
To an ocean of splendour and harmony.

Earth: The joy, the triumph, the delight, the madness!  
The boundless, overflowing, bursting gladness,  
The vaporous exultation not to be confined!  
Ha! Ha! The animation of delight  
Which wraps me like an atmosphere of light  
And bears me, as a cloud is borne by its own wind.

Moon : Brother mine, calm wanderer,  
Happy globe of land and air,  
Some spirit is darted like a beam from thee  
Which penetrates my frozen frame  
And passes with the warmth of flame,  
With love, and odour and deep melody,  
Through me, through me!

Anyone wishing to glimpse the triumph of joy and see how it is endemic in the universe and the purpose of it should read the last act of this versa drama, which, in my humble opinion, contains some of the world's finest poetry. Well known though it may be, how can I forbear to quote the last nine lines:

To suffer woes which hope thinks infinite;  
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;  
To defy power which seems omnipotent;  
To love and bear; to hope till hope creates  
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;  
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;  
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be  
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;  
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire and Victory.

THE END