

The Doctrine of the *Imago Dei* in the
Soteriology of Julian of Norwich

by

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Abstract

The soteriology of the English 14th century mystic Julian of Norwich moves in the direction of a hope for universal salvation. The ground for this hope is established through Julian's appropriation of the doctrine of the soul's creation in the image of God, the *imago dei*. Previous studies have primarily focussed on Augustine's influence on Julian's use of the *imago dei* doctrine. While this has been fruitful, in order to better grasp the nuances of Julian's anthropology and soteriology, it is essential to also attend to Cistercian influences. In particular, William of St. Thierry's notion of the will that remains godly in spite of sin and Aelred of Rievaulx's writing on friendship provide important background to the development of Julian's soteriology.

Interestingly, Julian very rarely explicitly mentions the term image of God. However, in her use of the Middle English word *kynd*, Julian clearly invokes the doctrine of the *imago dei*. Further, the doctrine of the *imago dei* powerfully informs her imagination such that the trope of image may be seen behind important theological developments such as the correspondence between the human and the divine and her notions of what is potentially occurring in the process of contemplation. Close attention to the image tropes that structure Julian's contemplation and her various usages of the word *kynd* reveals the complexity of Julian's adaptation of the doctrine of the *imago dei* and elucidates the ground of her soteriology.

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The Doctrine of the *Imago Dei* in the Soteriology of Julian of Norwich

In, *Little Gidding*, the concluding poem to the *Four Quartets*, T.S. Eliot introduced Julian of Norwich to the modern secular world through the words that may be considered the core of her visions and subsequent contemplations: “Sin is behovely, but all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well”¹. In the context of *Little Gidding* Julian is invoked as one who has sought to pierce the confusion of the simultaneity of the boundless love of God and the pervasive suffering of sin. Indeed a concern to grasp sight of how it could be that all shall be well in light of the human plight may be said to be one of the driving forces of Julian's twenty year long contemplation of her sequence of 16 visions or showings.

Julian’s efforts to understand the current reality of suffering in light of her showings is profoundly influenced by the doctrine of the soul’s creation in the image of God: the *imago dei* doctrine. The impact of this doctrine may be seen everywhere in Julian’s writing from the fine points of her theology to the grammatical and rhetorical structures of her thinking and expression. In the following, I explore Julian’s appropriation of the *imago dei* doctrine and how it shapes her soteriology. I contend that Julian expresses a hope for the salvation of all and examine how this hope is founded in her contemplation of her showings through the lens of the *imago dei* doctrine.

A central component to my exploration of Julian’s appropriation of the doctrine of the *imago dei* consists in close attention to Julian’s use of metaphor and language itself. There is a playfulness in Julian’s text in which the connotations of words is as important as their specific,

¹ T.S. Eliot. *Four Quartets*. (London: Faber and Faber, 1943) lines 166-168.

contextual denotations. Such language play was of course a medieval commonplace; however, contemporary readings of medieval texts often fail to note the rich suggestiveness in medieval writers' use of language. The word *kynd* in Julian's text is particularly rich in connotations and Julian's usage of this word relates directly to the doctrine of the *imago dei*. Consequently, the majority of my study of Julian's use of language will focus on the word *kynd*.

Another very important thread in the following study is my exploration of Cistercian influences on Julian's appropriation of the *imago dei* doctrine. Specifically, I look at Julian's adaptation of notions and themes that are found in the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux, William of St. Thierry, and Aelred of Rievaulx. While the influence of Cistercian writings on Julian's theology is more or less accepted, in the current literature there is a relative absence of in-depth exploration of the particular nature of this influence.

In spite of the significance of the doctrine of the *imago dei* in Julian's soteriology, very little is written on the topic. In fact, very little is written at all on the theology of Julian of Norwich. Joan Nuth recognizes that Julian's reflections on the effects of divine love on the soul are rooted in her appropriation of the *imago dei* doctrine. Of the major scholarship on Julian, Nuth writes most extensively on the place of this doctrine in Julian's thinking, but Nuth prioritizes Augustine's influence on Julian's image theology. Nuth does take into account the influence of Bernard of Clairvaux in terms of how Julian conceives of human will via the *imago dei* doctrine; however, she fails to give adequate attention to the writing of William of St. Thierry on the same subject. The neglect of William of St. Thierry's writings constitutes a significant gap given the parallels between his writings on the enduring godly will and Julian's own reflections on the same.

Grace Jantzen is another major contributor to the literature on the theology of Julian of Norwich. The primary focus of Jantzen's work involves a conceptualization of Julian as a

precursor of the modern feminist theologian. Perhaps as a consequence, Jantzen generally alludes to Bernard of Clairvaux to demonstrate how Julian broke ways with the contemporary mystical theology. However, in a brief reference to the doctrine of the soul being made in the image of God, Jantzen does recognize a parallel between Bernard and Julian in terms of their conceptions of the dignity accorded to the soul by this doctrine. Beyond this, Jantzen does not consider Cistercian influences or the place of the *imago dei* doctrine in Julian's theology.

Kerrie Hide writes that the *imago dei* doctrine is foundational to Julian's anthropology. Hide's reflections on the *imago dei* doctrine in Julian's theology emphasize the soul's creation in the image of the trinity, the *imago trinitatis*. While I agree that Julian's image theology is consummated with her reflections on the *imago trinitatis*, I will show how further dimensions of the *imago dei* doctrine inform Julian's theology and are crucial to understand in order to grasp the very significance of the *imago trinitatis*.

Hide's contribution is significant to my own study of Julian for the way that Hide stands out from previous scholarship both in her engagement with the implications of word play in Julian's writing and in her sustained reflection on Julian's soteriology. Hide notes the significance of the multiple connotations of the word *kynd* in Julian's writing and in my own study I have expanded on Hide's observations of the meanings at play in this word. While I am generally in agreement with Hide's views on Julian's soteriology, I contend that Hide is unjustifiably strident in her claim of Julian's *belief* in universal salvation. My own thought on this matter accords more closely with Jantzen's circumspection in speaking rather of a *hope*.

Outline

A general progression of themes will be observed in this study. As it happens, in the first chapter I consider the doctrine of the *imago dei* in terms of how Julian uses it to convey an

essential unity between God, the soul and, in some sense, creation itself. In the second chapter I explore how themes of duality or doubleness emerge under the influence of metaphors of image. In the third chapter, I turn, appropriately, to the consideration of the *imago trinitatis*.

In less general terms, in the first chapter I begin a sustained reflection on the significance of Julian's use of the word *kynd* and its significance in Julian's doctrine of the *imago dei*. Initially, my exploration of the word *kynd* is in terms of its primary meaning as *nature*. My exploration of Julian's Marian theology, a largely neglected dimension of her thought, sets the stage for exploring the relationship between nature and grace and the play between God's imminence and transcendence in the work of salvation.

Subsequently, I turn more specifically to the doctrine of the *imago dei* and begin to explore the significance of Julian's preference of metaphors of God's enclosure of the soul. Such metaphors and their significance will be explored throughout this paper. Suffice it say for the time being that metaphors of enclosure convey a different sense of the security of our salvation.

To conclude the first chapter, I explore how connotations of affection and friendship are also present in Julian's use of the word *kynd*. Here it will be pertinent to briefly explore parallels between Julian's notions of friendship and those of Aelred of Rievaulx. Afterwards, it will be possible to observe how notions of friendship and nature come into conversation under the banner of the doctrine of the *imago dei*, especially in the meaning of prayer.

In the second chapter I explore a variety of notions of duality including contrariness, correspondence, inversion, and mirroring. In this context I explore Julian's notion of the bipartite nature of the soul and the phenomenon of wrath as not a divine expression, but rather a discordance between the sensual and substantial parts of the soul. I then turn to explore Julian's conception of the difference between God's vision of the soul and the soul's vision of itself and

the role of these two ways of seeing in the economy of salvation.

In my exploration of various qualities of mirroring, including correspondence and inversion, I demonstrate how thoroughly the doctrine of the *imago dei* informs Julian's imagination. More importantly, I show how each of these themes constitutes a different perspective of the doctrine of the *imago dei* developing Julian's inspired conception of the negotiation of duality and the initiation of a process of what she refers to as *oneing*.

In the final chapter, I look at Julian's understanding of the activity of the Trinity and the creation of the soul in the image of the Trinity. The activity of the Trinity relates to both the shape of time and the nature of the soul. The full Trinity is involved in the accomplishment of our salvation, as is each moment in time, past, present and future. Accordingly, we are called to participate in our salvation through the faculties in which we are made in the image of God: our memory, our reason, and our love. In the *imago trinitatis* Julian essentially is able to give the fullest picture of how duality and suffering are overcome in reconciliation.

In the conclusion of my thesis in the fourth chapter, I return to the underlying premise behind my examination of the doctrine of the *imago dei* in Julian's soteriology: her hope for the salvation of all. In this final section I explore Julian's hesitations regarding abandoning the Church's teaching about the possibility of damnation. Julian wants to be faithful to Church teaching and she also clearly sees its utility. At the same time, she knows that in her visions she is given to know that there is no wrath in God and she never catches sight of either hell or purgatory. I conclude with Julian's instruction that a sense of delighting wonder is one of the soul's debts to God. I suggest that this debt is the hope for the salvation of all: the hope that all shall be well.

Chapter 1

Nature and the *Imago Dei*

A luminous window into Julian's meditations on the relationship between God's love and human sin and suffering is offered in her use of the word *kynd* and its derivatives (*kyndely*, *kyndenesse*). The word may very well mark the most glaring example in the text of what is lost in the translation from Middle English. The meanings carried by this word range from “nature” to “type” to “innate character” to “offspring” to “being good” to “being affectionate”². In what is generally considered the most authoritative translation of Julian's showings Edmund Colledge predominantly translates *kynd* as nature, but also translates it in terms of goodness or kindness. The translations are generally appropriate and fit the context accurately; however, the play of meanings is lost as the word is parsed out into different words that don't have any apparent relationship to one another. The loss here may seem incidental were it not for the fact that Julian clearly intends a play or mingling of meanings and attention to this play suggests important nuances of Julian's thought.

Each distinct context in which *kynd* is used is rich with meaning and merits individual attention. If the word itself is a luminous window onto Julian's thinking, perhaps we may think of it as a stained glass window with many parts that come together to give an image that tells a story. Each moment or element of the image given bears meaning within itself and then, when each falls together into conversation, a more comprehensive and coherent story is told. In this chapter individual meanings associated with the word *kynd* will be explored and then we will see what stories emerge when they fall into play. Close attention will be given especially to how the meanings of the word *kynd* play out against the background of Julian's appropriation of

²*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, Vol. 1. Edited by Lesley Brown (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

the doctrine of the *imago dei*.

When Julian uses the word *kynd* she most often seems to be referring to what we would call *nature*. As noted, Colledge most frequently translates *kynd* as nature. Julian's articulation of her view on human nature makes her particularly palatable to modern tastes. The celebrated passages on the motherhood of God are one context in which Julian's estimation of human nature may be fruitfully explored.

The theme of motherhood first arises in Julian's visions concerning Mary the mother of God. Although Julian's references to Mary are relatively sparse, it is clear, as I will show, that the figure of Mary plays an important role for Julian in conceiving the activity of grace in and through nature. The essence of the visions of Mary is summarized by Julian as a showing of "kynde loue contynued by grace" (8:18:5)³. The love that Mary had for Jesus is the fullest expression of love we can now see and the intimacy of her connection to Jesus is explained both in terms of nature and grace. The love that Mary has for Jesus is natural insofar as it is natural for a mother to love her child. The beginnings of Mary's love for Jesus lie in what it is natural for her to do as a mother. At least this is what first comes mind, but Julian also describes the love of God as that which is most fundamentally natural or *kynde*. Consequently, the natural beginnings of Mary's love for Jesus are at once in her natural love for her child and in her love for God which is also described by Julian as natural. The effect of refusing to distinguish in a definitive manner between these two types of love is to suggest that the yearning of the soul for God is as natural as the love of a mother for her child.

Mary's love is natural *and* it is "contynued by grace." The natural love of Mary is

³ References to Julian of Norwich's *Showings* in the original Middle English are taken from the text edited by Edmund Colledge and James Walsh (Julian of Norwich. *A Book of Showings to the anchoress Julian of Norwich: Part Two, The Long Text, Appendix, Bibliography, Glossary, Index*. Edited by Colledge, E., and Walsh, J. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1978) (= BSAJN_). Citations will be referenced by the number of the revelation; the number of the chapter; and the line number. By example, (8: 18: 5) refers to the eighth revelation, chapter 18, line 5.

insufficient in itself and must also be lifted up or extended by the gift of grace. The two are not at odds but in concert such that the supernatural gift of grace completes the natural gift given in creation. Herein lies the reason that Mary's love surpasses that of any other: her special and natural intimacy to Jesus as his mother is completed by the special grace given her to birth the Christ-child. Julian clearly celebrates Mary's love as unique and primary; however, the very manner in which Mary stands apart in Julian's vision allows her to more strikingly signify the rootedness of every creature's love for God in nature and the completion of that love by God's grace.

Julian returns to the natural love (*kynd loue*) that exists between mother and child to touch on what may be expected of the love of God. In the sixtieth chapter Julian describes the motherliness of Jesus. Julian's reflections here are clearly rooted in the earlier discourse on Mary's motherhood. Similar language is used as Julian refers to the "*moderhed of kynd loue*" (14:60:5) and she explicitly alludes to her earlier showing of Mary. In making the connection between the two showings explicit Julian invites the reader to note a movement from the *kynd loue* of the creature to the *kynd loue* of Jesus. Julian draws out the analogy very prudently.

She begins by noting the proximity of the similitude in the analogy through her allusions to the earlier showing of Mary's motherhood and the love that is natural to created humanity. The incompleteness of the signifier, the love of a mother, is then emphasized first by noting that the office of motherhood is such that it could only be truly fulfilled by Jesus (16:60:17). The distance between creaturely motherhood and Jesus' motherhood is then further accentuated by a series of contrasts: through our mothers we are born to pain and dying, *but* through Jesus we are born to joy and eternal life (16:60:19-20); our mothers give us milk to drink *but* Jesus feeds us with himself (14:60:31); our mothers bring us to their breasts *but* Jesus brings us *into* his breast through the wound in his side (14:60:38). Through this series of contrasts the natural is

presented as a gifted beginning which nonetheless yearns for a completion that it cannot accomplish on its own. Further, the contrast serves to preserve the transcendence of God while at the same time maintaining a kind of proximity or immanence. The creaturely and the Creator are not confused and yet an important relationship and consequent possibility for analogy is maintained.

Once Julian has established distance she returns to proximity: “For though it be so that oure bodely forthbrynggyng be but lytle, lowe and symple in regard of oure gostely forth brynggyng, yett it is he that doth it in the creaturys by whom that it is done” (14:60:49-51). The series of buts is concluded by a yet. Previously Julian drew such a gap between our current experience and what is spiritually accomplished in Christ and promised for eternity that one might be drawn to envision a lower level of reality that is completely disconnected from a higher spiritual level of reality. However, Julian draws back from such a conclusion by recognizing the presence and participatory working of God through creation in all that is “feyer and good” (14:60:57).

The conclusion that Julian arrives at through the foregoing is as follows: “Thus [Jesus] is our moder in kynde by the werkyng of grace in the lower perty, for loue of the hyer” (14:60:58-59). This passage requires some exposition. Julian's reference to higher and lower parts refers to her conception of a bipartite soul divided into substance and sensuality. The two are distinct but not separate. Indeed, Julian refers to both in terms of our *kynde* or nature. Substance is the higher part of our *kynde* which is “knytte to god in the makyng” (57:14:16-17). Substance is that part of our nature that doesn't suffer change in the fall of humanity, but remains knit to God. Kerrie Hide describes sensuality aptly when she emphasizes that it refers to our embodied experience in which we experience the painful effects of the fall, which is to

say that it is where we find ourselves lacking, incomplete and in need⁴. This is not to say that sensuality is definitively separated from God for “god is knytt to oure kynde, whych is the lower party in oure flessch takyng” (57:14:19). While substance is knit to God in its creation, God knits Godself to the soul in the incarnation of Jesus.

The higher and lower parts certainly refer to substance and sensuality; however, Julian refrains from using these latter terms and as a result higher and lower is able to imply two planes of reality as well as two elements of the human soul. Indeed the soul is implicitly given as a microcosm in which cosmic events are mirrored. The tension between substance and sensuality is also the tension between spirit and matter and between Creator and creation. In other words, the tension between the parts involves a tension in our nature and in the nature of the universe.

The larger part of Julian's exposition of the analogy between human motherhood and the motherhood of Jesus involves an effort to distinguish the two. Julian does so by emphasizing the degree to which divine love surpasses current human experiences of love. The relationship of mother and child points to divine love but is not to be confused with it. And yet, in the conclusion Julian clarifies that the signified is not altogether absent and separate from the signifier. In other words, current human experience, in this context motherhood, doesn't simply point to the divine but also already in some manner participates in the life and being of the divine. The “werkyng of grace” is the incarnation and in this accomplishment the lower part is lifted up such that Jesus becomes our “moder in kynde” which is to say our natural mother. The pairing of nature and grace is important here inasmuch as it suggests that what is now natural is accomplished through grace: grace and nature are distinct but entirely inseparable and in close concert.

When Julian writes that grace works in “the lower party for loue of the hyer” (14:60:59)

⁴Kerrie Hide. *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfillment: The Soteriology of Julian of Norwich*. (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2001) 84-86. (=GO)

she orients all things. God's enjoyment of the soul's substantial rootedness in Godself, which is the higher part, prompts God to lift up sensuality and ultimately remedy its experience of incompleteness. God's work in the lower for love of the higher orients the lower to the higher. In this context it is also important to note that it is through our sensuality that we are able to experience the riches of our substance which flow into our sensuality by virtue of the incarnation and the renewing activity of the Holy Spirit. With regard to the incarnation, Julian writes that "oure lower party the second parson hath taken, whych kynd furst to him was adyght" (14:57:21,22). *Adyght* here means assigned⁵ which suggests that our sensual nature was destined from the beginning for Jesus' incarnation. The flow of the riches of substance into sensuality is again a microcosmic event mirroring a cosmic event: in the same way that the riches of substance flow into sensuality so does the divine flow into creation. We may conclude from this that as much as the meaning of the lower is found by reference to the higher, the lower becomes an opportunity for the experience of the riches of the higher. As much as Julian emphasizes the distance between human experience and divine reality she also suggests a certain quality of mutuality in terms of each being oriented to the other in their respective manners.

In Julian's theology the movement from proximity to distance and back to proximity in the presentation of analogy as well as in the movement between grace and nature and higher and lower only fully make sense in light of the *imago dei* tradition. This doctrine, especially popular in medieval mysticism, holds an important place in Julian's thinking and emerges particularly in the context of showings regarding divine and human *kynd*.

⁵Julian of Norwich, BSAJ, 749.

Kyndenesse and the Imago Dei

The *imago dei* doctrine has its roots in both Eastern and Western Church Fathers and finds its place in the western tradition through Augustine's creative appropriation of the doctrine⁶. Julian's adoption of this notion from Augustine bears echoes of Bernard of Clairvaux and William of Saint Thierry⁷. In exploring the doctrine of *imago dei* in Julian I will refer to Bernard of Clairvaux and William of Saint Thierry insofar as their writings on this notion illuminate Julian's text. No systematic exposition of Bernard's writing on the *imago dei* will be found here. Indeed, this would in any case be quite difficult inasmuch as Bernard writes about the *imago dei* differently in different texts. Bernard himself comments on the diversity of his approaches to this doctrine in saying they are “different but not opposed, I think”⁸. Likewise, Julian's own engagement with this doctrine may also be said to be somewhat diverse, which diversity serves to convey different perspectives on God's saving work and approaches to realizing this work.

In brief, the *imago dei* doctrine is based on the account of creation in Genesis 1:26 in which it is said that humanity is formed in the image and likeness of God. In the *imago dei* tradition, as Bernard takes it up, the fall of humankind signifies a fall into unlikeness. However, as much as the image may be obscured in the loss of likeness following the fall, the image itself is never lost. With regard to the image that remains Bernard writes:

God himself has desired divine glory and nobility to remain in the soul always so that it may have within it that which may be touched by the word, and moved to stay with him, or to return to him if it has slipped away⁹.

⁶Joan M. Nuth, *Wisdom's Daughter: The Theology of Julian of Norwich*. (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1991) 105.

⁷Note that in Julian's time the writings of William of St. Thierry were widely read but under the name of his friend Bernard of Clairvaux.

⁸Bernard McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism: Vol. II of The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism*. (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1994) 168. (= *GM*)

⁹Bernard of Clairvaux. “Sermon 83,” *Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works*. Translated by Evans, G.R.. (New

The remaining image enables us to hear and respond to the beckoning of God. In commenting on William of Saint Thierry's appropriation of the doctrine of the *imago dei*, David Bell suggests that for William the remaining image signifies a latent participation in God that is always capable of being actualized¹⁰.

Julian rarely refers to the notion of the *imago dei* in explicit terms. However, Julian's entire reflection on nature or *kynde* is fundamentally rooted in this doctrine. When Julian writes that the soul is “evyr lyke to god in kynde,” (43:14:3) she is saying that the soul in its basic nature bears a quality of resemblance to God. In the same passage she writes of how at this time we are unlike God due to sin. This is clearly an articulation of the *imago dei* tradition in which likeness is lost due to sin, but the image nonetheless remains. The word *kynde* refers here, as it does frequently elsewhere, to what Bernard and William speak of as the image of God.

The use of the word *kynde*, in the sense of nature, in place of image is not without basis in William or Bernard. Bernard refers to God's image as a “a great gift in our nature”¹¹. The image of God as such is embedded in our very nature. Indeed, the doctrine of the *imago dei* is first and foremost a statement concerning anthropology. On the basis of the *imago dei* doctrine, William is able to say that “no vice is natural to man whereas virtue is”¹². The unlikeness into which we have fallen is not natural to us and from the depths of our very nature we are always being urged to return to God. As will be seen, the theme of the unnaturalness of sin to human nature plays an important role in Julian's contemplations and so perhaps her use of *kynde* in place of image is informed by an intention to access a particular aspect of the *imago dei*

York: Paulist Press, 1987) 271. (= SW)

¹⁰David N. Bell, *The Image of Likeness: The Augustinian Spirituality of William of St. Thierry*. (Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1984) 33.

¹¹Bernard of Clairvaux, *Selected Works*, 271.

¹²William of Saint Thierry. *The Golden Epistle: A Letter to the Brethren at Mont Dieu*. Translated by Berkely, T.. (Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1971) 84.

tradition.

While the use of the word *kynde* in place of image is rooted in the *imago dei* tradition itself, the manner in which Julian uses *kynde* elsewhere in her text connotes a certain alteration or variation on the tradition in her appropriation of it. Elsewhere in Julian's text the word *kynde* is closely associated with God the Father, as when she is describing our dependency on the life and activity of the Trinity:

For alle oure lyfe is in thre: in the furst (we haue) oure beyng, in the seconde we haue our encresyng, and in the thyrd we haue oure fulfylling. The furst is kynde, the seconde is mercy, the thyrd is grace (58:14:30-33).

The allusion to the Father in “the furst” is of course obvious, and Julian makes it more explicit later on in her text. The variation implicit in the association of *kynde* with the Father may be compared to Bernard and William's practice of relating the image of God to either the Trinity, as in Augustine's intellectual analogy,¹³ or to Christ who is referred to as the *imago dei genita*.

One might argue that Julian's discourse around the word *kynd* depends on the *imago dei* tradition, but is not to be confused with it. This solution surely has merit; however, it cannot be entirely satisfying due in part to how thoroughly Julian's writing on *kynd* is rooted in the *imago dei* tradition. Further, Julian's association of *kynd* with God the Father is no peripheral element of her theology, but is in fact central to her vision of the different parts each person of the Trinity play in the orchestration of salvation. More will be said on the *imago trinitatis* and the roles of the Son and the Spirit in the accomplishment of salvation.

The saving work that the Father does, as *kynde*, is to ground our salvation. When Julian refers to God as *kynde* she identifies God as the beginning and orienting principle from which we act when we are acting naturally. Julian's identification of God as *kynde* also points to our

¹³The Trinity reflected in *memoria*, *intellectus*, and *amor/voluntas*.

fundamental dependence on God and even participation in God as a condition for our very existence¹⁴. In the above quotation Julian relates being to nature in saying that “in the furst (we haue) oure beyng” and then describing this first as *kynde*. Being and nature are virtually conflated here with the result that Julian's notion of *kynde* implies both what we are and *that we are*.

The realization of our dependence on God for our ongoing existence signifies an important moment for Julian in the sequence of showings she was given. In the vision of the hazelnut (or rather of a thing the size of a hazelnut) carefully held in God's hands, it is revealed to Julian that all things that have being last and will last by virtue of God's abiding love (1:5:1-23). The hazelnut vision thus adds to our sense of what is at play in Julian's conflation of being and nature. The scope of what Julian intends in the use of the word *kynde* is so broad as to incorporate the fact of our being, the continuity of our being and the form of our being in terms of our orientation (*telos*) and how we are naturally inclined to act.

Indeed a concern for scope may very well be Julian's motivation in using the word *kynd* instead of *image*. On another occasion Julian associates nature and being when she writes that “God is kynd in his being” and she explains what she means by this when she adds “that goodnesse that is kynd, it is god” (14:62:12). Julian is referring not simply to the goodness of a human act, but goodness wherever it occurs in God's creation and the derivation of this goodness from the very being of God. In using *kynde* rather than *image* Julian is able to refer beyond the nature of the human soul to the nature of creation and God's activity therein.

In Julian's use of the term *kynde* there is a breadth and openness that is by no means incidental to her soteriology. One of the ways that Julian guards this quality of openness and breadth is by generally avoiding describing God's saving work in terms of what is *in* the soul.

¹⁴See the vision of the hazelnut (1:5:9ff.).

When Bernard of Clairvaux writes about the *imago dei* it is most often as of a glory that remains in the soul after the fall. In the tradition of Augustine, Bernard refers to the image of God in terms of the psychological structure of the mind. While Julian doesn't by any means abandon this element of the *imago dei* tradition, and in fact makes explicit reference to it, she does not draw on it extensively. Another element of the *imago dei* tradition, noted in William of St. Thierry's writing, implies a sense in which being made in the image of God involves a certain quality of participation in God that, however, remains to be realized or actualized¹⁵. In Julian's contemplations it is clearly the latter that is emphasized.

The participation of the soul in God derives from the nature of its creation. While the body is made of the earth the soul is made differently:

But to the making of man's soule he wolde take ryght nought, but made it. And thus is the kynde made ryghtfully onyd to the maker, whych is substancyall kynde vnmade, that is god. And therefore it is that ther may ne shall be ryght nought betwene god and man's soul (14:53:45-49).

When Julian writes that the soul is made from nothing she means that it is made from no created thing, but rather from the uncreated. Our created nature or *kynde* derives from uncreated nature, which is to say God. Both distinction and union are implied in this statement. The soul is made and God is unmade and thus one is not the other. At the same time, the fact that the soul is made from God signifies that there is a certain continuity between the soul and God. By the manner of its making, the soul is “rightfully onyd” to its maker. Julian introduces the above passage in writing that the soul is “made of god and in the same poynte knyte to god” (14:53:40). God is the fabric of our being and out of God we are knit. The notion of knitting nicely conveys a process of creation in which the new evolves out of an intertwining of one with

¹⁵Bell, *IR*, 115.

another. As a result of this process of creation, Julian contends that it is impossible to conceive of separation between the human soul and God. The very process of the soul's creation involves an interweaving of natures.

Julian's assertion that the soul is made out of God belongs of course to the *imago dei* tradition. In some expressions of the tradition the image of God is referred to as a treasure hidden in the soil, obscured by earth. For Augustine the image of God is found in the structure of the soul as *memoria, intellectus, and voluntas/amor*. Julian certainly draws on these aspects of the tradition; however, in considering the remnant of proximity Julian tends not to emphasize God's image in the soul. Julian writes that the substance of our soul is “evyr kepte one in hym, hole and safe without ende” (14:45:1,2). The substance of the soul is not secure so much because God remains in it, but because the substance of the soul remains in God.

With regard to the soul's original orientation to God (central to the *imago dei* tradition) metaphors of enclosure clearly dominate. As a quick survey of metaphors favoured by Julian one might take note of the image of creation held hazelnut-like in God's hand, the image of God enclosing the soul and body like the flesh enclosing bones and the trunk enclosing the heart, the image of God as clothes covering the body and finally the image of a child enclosed in the mother's arms and even womb. Each of these images, especially the last, are natural images that convey Julian's sense of nature as more than an inner orientation to God, but an environment in which we are originally held and kept by God.

To clarify, Julian does not suggest that the soul is not made in God's image nor does she suggest that this is not of decisive significance. She writes,

For he hath no dispite of that he made, ne hath no disdeyne to serue vs at the symplest office that to oure body longyth in kynde, for loue fo the soule that he made to his awne lycknesse. Fo as the body is cladd in the cloth and the flessch in the skynne, and the bonys in the flessch, and the harte in the bowke, so ar we, soule and body cladd

and enclosydde in the goodnes of god (1:6:39-44).

God cares for the body and loves the soul inasmuch as the soul is a reflection of God's goodness. Interestingly, Julian writes of the soul's likeness to God in the context of its enclosure in the body. Julian expands this incidental image of enclosure to allegorically indicate the intimacy with which we are held or enclosed in the goodness of God, soul and body. In what is perhaps the most explicit reference to the soul's creation in the image of God, Julian quickly shifts to an emphasis on the sense in which the soul is contained in God and in doing so she demonstrates her preference for metaphors of enclosure. Julian is not including one aspect of the *imago dei* doctrine to the exclusion of the other, but choosing which aspects of the tradition to emphasize to convey the essence of her showings.

In Julian's use of the word *kynde* in terms of nature there is generally conveyed a sense of enclosure in God. The *kyndenesse* of the mother is to hold her child, either in her womb or arms. Our *kyndly* substance is always held in God. Julian identifies God in terms of *kynd* when she writes that "God is kynd in his being" (14:62:13) and adds that God is "very fader and very modyr of kyndys" (14:62:15). All *kyndys* originate from God who is *kynd* in his being. There is something of the neo-platonic influence on the doctrine of the *imago dei* evident here in terms of an allusion to an ideal *Kynd* from whom all *kyndys* emerge and of whom all *kyndys* retain a trace. However, for Julian, the distance of the origin and the sense of exile from the ideal, which characterize the neo-platonic tradition, is mitigated by the remaining of our *kyndly* substance in God even in our emergence and fall. The God who is "kynd in his being" is the origin of *kyndys* and at the same time continues to hold our *kyndly* substance within.

Often in the *imago dei* tradition the image of God in the soul is treated as a latent possibility for the return of an exiled soul. In locating the substance of the soul in God Julian significantly moderates the degree to which human beings are seen as in exile. Further, the

possibility for return does not consist in a vague memory, but in the soul's ongoing enclosure in God which implies a more profound sense of the proximity of God and perhaps even a different quality of hope in salvation. In order to more fully understand the proximity of God in Julian's soteriology, it will be pertinent to explore another sense of the word *kynd*.

The Kyndnesse of Friendship

Attendant to the *imago dei* doctrine is the notion of like desiring like: humans desire the God in whose image they are made and God desires humanity in whom God recognizes Godself¹⁶. The consummation of this desire is the *unitas spiritus*: union in willing. In the struggle to understand the nature of the union between the soul and God Bernard concludes that it is a complete agreement of the creaturely will with the will of the Creator¹⁷. Bernard and William both find clues to understanding the mutuality of attraction and the harmony of wills in the human-divine relationship in all kinds of human relationships. A third Cistercian, Aelred of Rievaulx, adds a new dimension to this understanding of mutual love in his creative transposition of Cicero's theory on friendship into the Christian context¹⁸.

A few basic themes in Aelred's own treatise *On Spiritual Friendship* will be important to consider briefly before returning to further contemplation of Julian's concept of *kynde*. First, Aelred suggests that the desire for friendship is rooted in nature and is a trace of the unity that describes God's own being¹⁹. Ultimately friendship is rooted in God and in fact Aelred goes so far as to put forth the notion that "God is friendship"²⁰. The purpose of this echo of John is to establish God's overarching intent for creation both in terms of teleology and ontology:

¹⁶ Etienne Gilson, *The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard*. (London: Sheed and Ward, 1940) 118.

¹⁷ McGinn, *GM* 214ff..

¹⁸ Bernard McGinn, *GM*, 318.

¹⁹ Aelred of Rievaulx. *Spiritual Friendship*. Translated by Laker, M.E.. (Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1977) 62.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 65-66.

friendship is a good conducive to spiritual development and an end in itself.

Two further aspects of friendship in Aelred will be fruitful to consider alongside Julian's text. First, the nature of friendship involves an attraction between two that bear a quality of likeness to one another. Friends share similarities in terms of manner of life, morals and pursuits²¹. Finally, a friend is one who endures one's defects and works to cure them²². Indeed in friendship each communicates his or her qualities to the other such that all are made equal²³.

Julian comes close to repeating Aelred's statement that "God is friendship" when she writes,

For I saw full truly that alle oure endlesse frenschypp, oure stede, our lyfe, and oure beyng is in god (14:49:23,24).

This passage is written in the context of a reflection on our constant sinning. "Oure endlesse frenschypp" reflects the sense in which God does not abandon us in our sinning. This means that God continues to love us, remaining true to a bond of friendship, but it also conveys the sense in which we are kept whole in God when we are divided against ourselves, in acting contrary to our deepest nature. The sense in which our essential unity is preserved in God reflects the manner in which the friend communicates qualities to the friend in need. Friendship is endless in God because God is never at odds with Godself and further, according to Aelred, God wishes to communicate this quality. The medicine that treats our division against ourselves is God's own inherent unity and ongoing friendship. More fundamentally, the very condition for our healing and being made whole again lies in the fact that in God's endless friendship we are, in some sense kept whole.

The statement that "oure endlesse frenschypp" is in God bears an unmistakable reference

²¹Ibid, 60.

²² Ibid, 55.

²³Ibid, 114.

to Julian's earlier reflection on our “kyndely substance, whych is evyr kepte one in hym, hole and safe, without ende” (14:45:1). The fact that “kyndely substance” is kept whole “without ende” in God describes “endlesse frenschypp” in God. The effect of God's friendship is to keep us whole in Godself. Further, friendship is associated with *kynde* by falling into its category. In the immediate context, friendship is found in God with *our stede*, which is to say our place, our life and our being. Elsewhere Julian refers to *stede* as *kyndly stede* (14:60:4) or our natural place. The connection between life and nature is obvious. The near conflation of being and nature has already been remarked upon and Julian's comment that “God is kynd in his being” may be recalled to secure the intimacy of *kynd* in the category.

The introduction of friendship into the category of *kynd* situates it in the category of things in which God communicates God's nature and keeps human beings intimate in God in some fashion. The presence of friendship in this category describes our inhering in God as a friendship with God and friendship with God as inhering in God. The fact that friendship is in the same category as *kynd* suggests that it is itself natural and that it is both an original and ongoing reality.

The likeness to God in *kynde* (14:43:2) is a condition for friendship with God, in terms of the attraction of like to like. The remaining of our *kyndly* substance in God describes how in our friendship with God we are lifted up by the communion of the higher nature of the Friend. Friendship belongs in the category of *kynd* insofar as it is possible to see it as both an element of the phenomenon of the inhering of our *kyndly* substance in God and a description of that phenomenon.

Friendship belongs in the category of *kynd* in the sense of nature, but the word *kynd* is also used in a more direct way to connote the quality of affection that exists between friends. Julian refers to a “kynde (yernyng) of the sowle by the touchyng of the holie ghost” (1:5:36).

The yearning of the soul is the affectionate yearning for the friend whose relationship is an end in itself. The relationship of affection is initiated by the touching of the Holy Spirit. Touching here conveys the quality of the intimacy and the familiarity of the relationship.

Before continuing with the allusions to friendship in the word *kynd* a detour to another word associated with friendship is of importance. The word is *lyke* and it is of interest because it is not unlike the word *kynd* in terms of its semantic richness. Indeed Julian plays with this word almost as much as she does with *kynd*. The word of course signifies affection and in this context it is poignant to recall the text in which Julian perceives Jesus' will to make all creatures share with him in his love for Mary. She writes, "He wylle make alle other creatures to loue and to lycke that creature that he lovyth so much" (11:25:33-34). The sense here is of a close friendship between Mary and Jesus which is special but not exclusive: Jesus desires to invite all creatures to participate in and enjoy this friendship.

With regard to the enjoyment of friendship it is noteworthy that the word *lyke* also connotes joy and delight. Another expression of Jesus' will that Julian notes is that "the lyking of oure saluacion be lyke to the joy that Christ hath of oure saluacion" (9:23:27-28). The *lyking* of our salvation refers to the delight that we take in our salvation. This *lyking* is to be *lyke* the joy that Jesus himself takes in our salvation. Julian's play on the double-meaning of the word *lyke* has a serious intent. The manner in which she draws attention to the multiple meanings of the word *lyke* is to suggest a significance in the play of meanings. In the likeness between the soul and Jesus, delight is to be understood. In the delighting in salvation is to be understood a participation in likeness. The *lyking* that is shared in the friendship with Jesus is a delight and a making-like.

While Aelred's reflections on friendship refer to human friendships that affect and even

cultivate a friendship with Jesus, Julian's use of the motif of friendship tends to focus on friendship with God. Nonetheless, Aelred's notions of friendship and its effects are still to be read in Julian's discourse even if they are to be more immediately transposed to the relationship with God.

The meditation on friendship in Julian's text counteracts the threat of despairing in sin. Julian encourages reflection on human wretchedness, as do all masters of the spiritual life in the Middle Ages; however, she is quick to note that these reflections can go wrong and be used by the devil to tempt people into despair. As much as we need to be aware of both our fallenness and capacity to fall, so much more important is it for us to keep in mind, "the blessydfull beholdyng of oure evyrlastyng frende" (16:76:43). The friend is of course Jesus and while we are weighed down by reflections on sin, the reflection on our friendship with Jesus lifts us up.

Like the friend in Aelred's *Spiritual Friendship*, Jesus is one who counsels us when we are in sin and Julian sees that the essence of this counsel is as follows,

that we holde vs with hym, and fasten vs homely to hym evyr more, in what state so ever we been. For whether we be foule or clene, we are evyr one in his lovyng (16:76:27,28).

The likeness of the friend, the endurance of defects, and the communion of a higher state are all implicit in this short passage on Jesus' friendship. The counsel of the Friend is to stay close to the Friend in whom one is always held as the same. There is a clear sense here in which the constancy of the friendship of Jesus recalls us in our sin to whom we most fundamentally are and in so doing effectively lifts us up and cures us of our ills.

Friendship frames the context of the divine response to human sin and to the appropriate response on the human part to the divine initiative:

and what tyme that we falle into synne and leue the mynde of hym and the keyng of oure owne soule, than beryth Cryst a loone alle the charge of vs. And thus stondyth he monyng and mornyng. Than longyth it to vs for reverence and kyndnesse to turne vs hastily to oure lorde and lett hym nott aloone (16:80:32-36).

The image of Christ and the soul here is as of two friends who have embarked on a joint venture. Indeed, embarking on a joint venture is in the very nature of friendship in the sense of the shared pursuits that Aelred mentions. When the soul falls into sin Christ is left to carry the whole burden of the venture. In Christ carrying the whole “charge” there is the sense of a friend carrying the burden of the other. The divine response following the fall into sin is not the judge's condemnation, but the friend's painful sense of abandonment. The human response that is stressed in this context is not mortification, but simply the return to the side of the friend. We owe this response to the mourning of Christ out of the bonds of friendship. It is noteworthy here that Julian refers to sin as “vnkynde” (14:63:16). An obvious play on words occurs here such that it is implied that lack of affection or courtesy is unnatural²⁴. Elsewhere Christ is referred to as our sovereign friend (16:76:25) and so reverence is another element of what is owed in the return to friendship; however, the predominant debt in this context involves that of affection. The response to the mourning of Christ over our sin is to be a response of *kyndnesse* which is to a quality of affection, consideration and even compassion in the face of the suffering of a friend.

The yearning of the soul for God and the moaning of Jesus for union are overwhelmingly erotic images which would seem to be more at home in the bridal mysticism that also finds a place in Julian's text and so it is noteworthy that Julian uses the word *kynd* either in place of love or in addition to love. Julian's use of the word *kynd* or *kyndnesse* invokes notions of friendship and a sense of the soul working together with God or in communion with God in the outworking of salvation rather than the passive sense of being ravished as is often implied in bridal

²⁴Kerrie Hide cites Hugh White's observation that in *Piers Plowman*, which is contemporaneous with Julian's *Showings* a similar play is made on the word *kynd* such that it signifies both nature and kindness.

mysticism. Reflection on friendship here offers a different perspective on sin especially with regard to the divine response to sin and the ensuing response called forth in humans. The metaphor of friendship does not supplant bridal mysticism, but adds another dimension that enriches our sense of our current state and destiny.

Meaning In the Play of Meanings

In the foregoing I have tried to show how the word *kynd* takes on quite distinct meanings in different contexts. The shortcoming of this approach is that there is hardly a single use of the word *kynd* in Julian's text in which it is not fruitful to consider multiple meanings and the bearing of different meanings on one another.

Each passage which I have drawn on to elicit one or the other meaning of *kynd* in isolation of another meaning deserves revisiting so as to reinvest it with the depth and richness it derives from the actual intersection of meanings. In the following I will return to a few particularly rich and dynamic instances of linguistic play.

In the section above I demonstrated how the inherence in God of both our friendship with God and our natural or *kyndly* substance describes a particular moment or aspect of God's saving work. In this context the two are so closely related that it is possible to say that our substantial nature is fundamentally marked by friendship with God. This is such a powerful theme in Julian's text that the word *kynd* should never be understood in terms of nature without at the same time having in mind the affection of friendship and vice versa.

Indeed, Julian very rarely uses the word *kynd* such that only one sense of the word is to be understood. The manner in which she calls forth multiple meanings is such that one comments on and completes the thought of the other through the presentation of an alternative perspective. As an example, it will be fruitful to reconsider the response of *kyndnesse* to the

moaning of Jesus in the passage quoted above (16:80:32-36). As noted, the primary meaning of *kyndnesse* in this passage involves a feeling of affection and compassion. However, the term also conveys nature such that our response of turning back to Christ may be described as natural. Julian's description of our sinning as “vnkynde” (14:63:16) or unnatural is meaningful in the context of the passage under consideration insofar as Julian here suggests that sinning involves not being mindful of Jesus and not taking care of our own souls. The failure to take care of our own souls suggests that in sin we go out from ourselves and forget ourselves even as we forget Jesus. When Jesus bears our charge, which is the keeping or care of our soul, a substitution occurs such that Jesus takes our place in doing for us that which it belongs to us, by our nature, to do for ourselves. Even Jesus' mourning may be seen as the lament that should in fact be ours for falling from our natural state. Consequently, our response of return may be considered a natural response in the sense that it involves a return to our own selves and to our natural place by the side of Jesus.

The immediate meaning of friendship and the more nuanced theological and philosophical understanding of friendship and nature are both suggested in *kyndnesse*. By rights of our friendship we ought to be kind to Christ who is painfully yearning for us. We also owe this to Christ in the same way we owe it to ourselves: it belongs to who we are to respond to Christ's call to realize ever more fully our union with him.

Kynd Love

Earlier the *kynd* love of the mother was explored and elsewhere Julian refers to the *kynd* love of the soul (14:55:14). Julian frequently uses the word *kynd* to qualify love. In relation to Mary's love the word *kynd* certainly can be seen as indicating the ground of her love in her nature both as a mother and as a child of God herself. Further meanings for the word *kynd*

suggest other dimensions of the nature of love and what it accomplishes.

In all forms of mysticism that may be truly called Christian love is at the core of the ascent to God and the realization of union with God. Consequently when Julian refers to *kynd* love, the function of love in Christian mysticism is to be kept in mind. Indeed, Julian's reference to the *kynd* love of Mary is itself a description of the degree to which Mary was united to Christ in love. The love that unites us to Christ is "kynde loue contynued by grace"(8:18:5). The sense in which this love must be continued by grace will later be discussed. This love is *kynde* in every sense of the word. Primarily of course the reference is to the nature of our creation as *kynd* made from *kynd* unmade, which is to say our creation out of God. It is only logical that the love that enables us to realize the union our *kyndly* substance enjoys with God should itself be named *kynd*.

The word *kynd* also signifies class, category and type. The *imago dei* doctrine suggests that the fulfillment of our basic nature is to be conformed to Christ as the begotten image of God, the *imago dei genita*. In this sense our goal or our end is divinization which is the elevation of our nature into a divine type²⁵. Love is *kynd* in the sense that it belongs to the category of divine reality and itself lifts up the soul into this reality.

Kynd love is of course also affectionate love which is to say the love that belongs to friendship. As noted, the love of friendship is a love between two who share a certain quality of likeness in terms of values and goals. The love of friends is rooted in likeness and moves towards greater realization of likeness through constancy in difficulty and the healing and restoration of sins.

Wherever the word *kynd* arises each of these connotations is to be heard. Is love then natural, or is it affectionate, or is it that which makes us like, or is it that which lifts us into

²⁵A distance is of course maintained insofar as we become like God, not God.

another class or type? The question is of course rhetorical and serves to indicate the value of holding the word's multiple meanings in conversation, as Julian surely intended.

Kyndnesse and the Enduring Will in Prayer

The active realization of the likeness to God in *kynde* is for Julian the function of prayer. In order to fully grasp how prayer realizes the likeness in *kynde* it is essential to consider her appropriation of William of St. Thierry's notion of the will that, even in the act of sin, does not consent to sinning. William of St. Thierry argues that sin is limited in its capacity to obstruct our love of God. While William recognizes that throughout our lives we can expect to continue to succumb to sin, there is a sense in which after a certain progression in spiritual life the fall into sin becomes more accidental than intentional. In the accidental slips into sin, by fault of the flesh, the spirit does not consent to the sin, but continues to yearn for God²⁶. According to William, a great deal of work must be done before the will is so formed such that it no longer consents to sin. Julian draws on William of St. Thierry's notion of the non-consenting will, but alters it significantly when she writes that "in ech soule that shall be safe is a godly wyll that nevyr assentyd to synne ne nevyr shall" (14:53:12,13). In William the non-consenting will is related to the development of a new habit, whereas for Julian there is a sense in which the will never did consent to evil and never will, which suggests that the non-consenting will is not a matter of spiritual development, but is an ontological reality qualifying the soul from its very beginning. The formula "in ech soule that shall be safe" is repeated a paragraph later when Julian writes "in ech kynde that hevyn shal be fulfyllid with;" however, in this second instance she does not refer directly to the will but to "a substance whych myght nevyr nor shulde be partyd from hym" (14:53:20,21). The non-consenting will is implicitly situated in the substance

²⁶Bell, *IL*, 191.

of the soul. Julian thus radicalizes William's notion of the non-consenting will by associating it with the substance of the soul that is never separated from God.

As noted, for Julian the predominant manner in which we realize our union with God is through prayer. Julian writes that “with his grace [prayer] makyth vs lyke to hym selfe in condescion as we be in kynde” (14:41:40,41). The term *condescion* here alludes to that aspect of our life in which we find ourselves inconstant, forgetting our roots in God, abandoning our companionship with Christ and falling into sin and blindness. While in our *condescion* we are unlike God, in our *kynde* likeness is ongoing. As noted above, in the very manner of our creation in our *kynde* we are knit to God. The sense of *kynde* here is primarily that of nature. The word *kynde* can also signify offspring; class, type, sort; and affectionate²⁷. The sense in which each of these meanings finds expression in *kynde* contributes to our understanding of Julian's adoption of William of Saint Thierry's notion of the will that doesn't consent to sin.

Julian's ultimate concern and passion both in her contemplative life and in the reflection on the showings she was given centres on the *onying* (oneing; uniting; union) of the soul with God. Julian may be seen making various approaches to this theme by means of reflecting on what it means that we are like God in *kynde*. The ontological basis of likeness was considered in the context of speculation on the manner of the soul's creation. Clearly Julian is not content to describe likeness and *onying* solely in terms of ontology. Surely, part of the reason for her dissatisfaction with an exclusively ontological perspective on union lies in her Cistercian influences. Both Bernard and William reflected extensively on the sense in which the soul could be said to be united to God. Their conclusion is that union is a matter of a harmony of wills. When one is unable to will anything but what God wills, then the soul is at one with God. Of course another sense in which the will is at the centre of the unitive process involves the role

²⁷The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary.

of love. Love belongs to the faculty of willing, or as William prefers, it is the transformation of the will²⁸. In the form of love the will is fundamental to *onying* with God.

On the basis of her visions Julian has concluded that the soul is like God and even rooted in God in terms of its *kynde*. The connotations of offspring and of class or type are clearly at play in reference to likeness insofar as these connotations themselves are suggestive of likeness. When Julian writes that God is “fader and moder of kyndys” there is the suggestion that our *kynd* is in some sense an offspring of God. As an offspring of God our *kynd* is also in the class or category of God. Julian is getting dangerously close to pantheism here and so she must qualify the likeness that *kynd* has with God. When Julian adopts William's notion of the will that doesn't consent to sin there is a sense that she is using it as a qualification of ontological likeness. The manner in which our substance is made of God is thus described in terms of a will that is at one with God in willing what God wills. Due to the association of the will with the *kyndly* substance of the soul, which is in God from its creation, this will too must be seen as having *nevyr* consented to sin.

Finally, the connotation of the affection of friendship in the word *kynde* is worthwhile considering in this context. When Julian writes that the soul is “evyr lyke to God in kynde” she is clearly referring to likeness in the nature of the soul; however, both the words *lyke* and *kynde* also allude to friendship. The sense in which *kynde* alludes to friendship is of course in terms of affection and its connotation of kindness. Once again, *lyke* connotes delight and affection as well as likeness. Elsewhere in her play with the words *kynd* and *lyke* Julian invites the reader to keep multiple meanings in mind and when we bring this play to the passage in consideration something amusing happens. If *lyke* is considered in terms of delight and *kynde* is considered in terms of affection the assertion that the soul is “evyr lyke to god in kynde” may be read as the

²⁸William of St. Thierry, *GE*, 88.

soul is ever delightful to God in affection. The context of this passage suggests that this is not its primary meaning and the syntax of the sentence itself finally rebels against this interpretation. However, the play that Julian has set in motion and continued to encourage causes this interpretation to sing somewhere in the background of the passage's primary meaning in a manner that serves as the commentary of a chorus.

The play of the motif of friendship in the chapter in which Julian presents the notion of the will that never consents to sin provides a further context for understanding Julian's adoption of this notion. As I have shown, friendship involves a quality of likeness in terms of goals and values, which is to say a likeness in what is willed. Julian's description of our friendship with God as endless is one more way in which she suggests that a likeness in willing has existed between God and the soul from the soul's very creation.

The manner in which in the substance of the soul the will is untarnished by sin is suggested in the passage in which Jesus is mourning and moaning for the soul that has gone astray (16:80:32-36). In this passage, as it will be remembered, two friends, Jesus and the soul, have entered into a common journey with a shared goal. The soul's departure from the journey is described in terms of falling and forgetting. Neither of these actions imply intention and this suggests that the soul has not entirely chosen to abandon the way. Further, when the soul falls into sin and forgets its companion, Jesus retains the common goal and waits in mourning for the soul to return to the shared journey. The integrity of the way and the goal is not tarnished because Jesus keeps it, safeguarding the soul's original intention and waiting for the soul to reclaim it in return.

Prayer signifies the return of the soul to Jesus. Julian writes that God is the ground of the activity of beseeching in prayer (14:41:11). In this she is associating prayer with our *kynd*, which is also rooted in God, and also alluding to the notion of the will that does not consent to

sin²⁹. The sense in which prayer has its ground in God recalls William of Saint Thierry when he writes,

If you know, be sure that you are foreknown; if you choose, be sure that you are chosen; if you believe, you were created for faith; and if you love, you were formed for love³⁰.

Knowledge, will, belief, and love are described here as activities that have their beginning in God and witness to the predestination of the soul. In a similar way, Julian writes that prayer is “a wytnesse that the soule wylle as god wyll, and comforyth the conscience and ablyth man to grace” (14:43:4-6). The will that doesn't consent to evil is either hidden or forgotten and then remembered in prayer as one prays for what God wills, which is of course ultimately the *onying* of the soul to God. Prayer itself is a comfort insofar as it is an expression of the substance of our soul which is rooted in God. In prayer we remember our *kynd* and bear witness to our identity.

Julian's discussion of the love of Mary suggests a profound intertwining of nature and grace and a sense in which nature is originally oriented towards God. The manner in which Julian progresses from the motherhood of Mary to offer motherhood in general as an analogy for God's love for the soul indicates a high estimation of nature that is tempered by an emphasis on the remaining necessity of grace. The very manner in which Julian draws out the analogy of motherhood implies the *imago dei* tradition.

Julian's perception of the rootedness of our nature in God the Father by virtue of the soul's creation out of God describes an important aspect of her articulation of the *imago dei*

²⁹ Indeed Julian describes beseeching as a “lestyng wylle of the soule, onyd and fastenyd in to the wylle of oure lorde.” (14:41:31)

³⁰ William of Saint Thierry. *Exposition on the Song of Songs*. Translated by Hart, M.C.. (Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1968) 54.

doctrine. The discussion of friendship with God elaborates and qualifies the nature of union with God in terms of being at one in will. Julian presents multiple perspectives on the nature of union and likeness in her showings and each perspective is prefigured in one of the multiple meanings of the word *kynd*. The word *kynd* is thus pivotal in Julian's text and serves to mediate between conceptions of likeness and union. The polysemeity of *kynd* constantly prompts dialogue between approaches such that one comments on another providing both context and elaboration. The mediating work of the word *kynd* also involves tempering the claims of individual approaches by always alluding to others. As such, notions of ontological likeness are tempered by notions of likeness in terms of love and a common will. At the same time the notion of ontological likeness seems to prompt Julian's adaptation of William of St. Thierry's notion of the will that never consents to evil.

In the following chapter I will carry on the discussion of Julian's articulation of the *imago dei* doctrine in her notion of *kynd* by further exploring the manner in which this doctrine manifests itself in Julian's text and informs her soteriology.

Chapter 2

Duality and the *Imago Dei*

Julian's imagination is thoroughly taken with the doctrine of the *imago dei*, and this is especially evident in the manner in which the structure of the metaphor itself echoes through her showings. One of the implications of the metaphor of image is doubleness. The metaphor of image introduces notions of mirroring which in turn suggests doubles. In the mirror one finds a double of oneself. A double is a pairing in which one appears to be the very image of the other. The trope of the mirror, or *speculum*, is a commonplace in medieval theology and clearly a trope that informs Julian's imagination influencing the rhetorical structure of her argument as well as her conception of knowledge and the process of transformation. In the following, each of these aspects of Julian's thinking will be explored, but first it will be important to return to a unique element of Julian's theology already briefly touched upon: the double nature of the soul.

Julian writes, "[God's] forseeyng perpos in his endlesse wysdom wolde that we were doubyll" (14:56:58,59). The doubleness of human experience lies in the division of the soul into substance and sensuality. In the history of western mysticism this division is frequently lamented and often absolutized, perhaps especially in the streams of neo-platonism that run through Christianity. Julian resists turning the doubles into dualities inasmuch as she recognizes in this doubleness the purpose of God and looks toward a higher fulfillment by means of this structure of the soul.

As much as the doubleness of the soul is ultimately a gift, in the present time it is the context for an alternation of experiences of suffering and joy. To recapitulate, in the substance of our souls we are securely knitted to God while in our sensuality we suffer change and are vulnerable to temptation. Julian also refers to substance and sensuality as the higher and lower

parts and she writes that in the higher part there is a godly will that never assents to evil while in the lower part there is a beastly will that can never will good. The division of substance and sensuality thus also represents a division of the will. Insofar as Julian closely associates sin and pain (see 13:27:33), the division of the will explains at the very least an aspect of the alternation of suffering and well-being.

The reason for the current experience of a “mervelous medelur both of wele and of woo” (14:52:9,10) is not simply due to the doubleness of substance and sensuality, but also to the location of sensuality between the falling of Adam and the completion of Christ’s work of reconciliation. The ultimate sense in which we are doubly made is in our making and our “(geyn) makyng” (2:10:55) or, as she writes elsewhere our “agayne beyng” (14:42:45). We are once made in our first creation when our substance was knitted to God and then made a second time when our sensuality was lifted up through the incarnation of Jesus. Sensuality is in the process of being lifted up into its substance by virtue of Christ's dying and rising. However, the process is of course not yet fulfilled and consequently in our sensuality we still experience the “myschef of Adams fallyng” (14:52:11) which is summarized by the pain and darkness of the sin into which we repeatedly fall. At the same time, through its second making sensuality is enabled to “receyue giftes that leed vs to endlesse lyfe” (14:55:23). In this sense the beastly will that can will no good also seems to be in the process of being reformed in the re-creation of sensuality. The reception of the gifts of the Spirit is both a matter of enjoying the goodness of God and of participating in the process of being conformed to Christ.

Again there is no duality between substance and sensuality insofar as they are united in Christ and the process in which sensuality is lifted up into substance has in some sense begun. Sensuality is thus that part of the soul that is still in the process of being restored to God. The experience of division is a consequence of the fact that the process of the integration of

substance and sensuality is not yet fulfilled.

Considering the division in terms of *kynd* in the sense of nature will be helpful. As much as sensuality and substance signify two parts of the soul, so do they represent two aspects of our nature. Substance may be considered the core of our created nature and, as noted, it is knit to God. Our fundamental nature is thus to be in communion with God. However, insofar as the beastly will is at play in our sensuality we find ourselves at odds with our most fundamental nature and our choices may be said to be unnatural.

Julian often refers to the state of unnatural division in the soul or in our nature in terms of “contraryousnes” (14:48:40). To be clear, this term does not apply to the doubleness of sensuality and substance, but to the context in which the two are not in harmony. Not all doubles are contrary in Julian's showings, and in fact it might be said that her general project either involves an effort to conceive the inherent unity in which oppositions are held and harmonized or to prophecy the manner in which the oppositions between which we are currently torn are finally lifted up and resolved. Generally then Julian is more apt to conceive a fruitful tension between doubles than an irresolvable and final opposition. However, there is a relation of *contraryousnes* that she is less prone to conceive as fruitful and that is the *contraryousnes* that is wrath.

To say that the opposition implied in wrath is entirely without fruitfulness would be inaccurate, for in Julian's economy of *kynd* and grace there is nothing that cannot in some way be turned to good. Even the work of the devil is turned to the service of God (16:77:10-13). The perception of wrath is no different inasmuch as it prompts contrition and a desire for the amendment of the self (13:40:5-7). However, the perception of wrath in God is, according to Julian, nothing more than an illusion. Julian can admit a temporary quality of duality between suffering and joy and a few other doubles, but to her it is inconceivable that any quality of

opposition could exist between God and the soul or between God and anything for that matter. The reason for this is that the existence of all things is rooted in God's love and we would cease to exist in the event of an eclipse of this love by anger or wrath (14:49:1-20).

God is all love and wrath is contrary to love and so it is impossible for wrath to be in God due to God's very nature. There is no *contraryousnes* in God and yet, Julian must concede, we nonetheless experience *contraryousnes*, so where does this experience originate? Julian concludes that *contraryousnes* does indeed exist, but only in the human soul. The experience of wrath consists in a “frowerdnes and contraryousnes to pees and loue” (14:48:8). In his glossary of Middle English terms, Colledge defines *frowerdnes* as perversity³¹ which is to say that *contraryousnes* consists in a perversion of our basic nature or *kynd*. Our *kyndly* substance is rooted in the love of God and so the experience of wrath can only be unnatural. We are rooted in one who is all friendship and so the experience of enmity cannot be attributed to that one, but can only be a rebellion against our own origin and source.

A clue for the sense in which wrath is a perversion is suggested when Julian writes,

And thefor we fayle oftymes of the syght of hym, and anon we falle in to oure selfe, and than finde we felyng of ryght nowght but the contraryous that is in oure selfe (14:47:40-42).

When we lose sight of God we fall into ourselves and experience *contraryousnes*. In his book on Bernard of Clairvaux, Etienne Gilson refers to the natural shape of the soul as straight and oriented towards God, while the distorted shape of the soul involves a curvature such that soul is turned in on itself. Julian's passage implies this same curvature in the description of perversion as the shift from a gaze focused outwards to God to one that falls inward. One might also say that in turning from the sight of God we fall into ourselves where our nature is to be in God. In

³¹ Colledge and Walsh, *BSAJ*, 752.

opposing our nature, which is to live out of our rootedness in God, we are acting contrary to both ourselves and to God. Wrath is the soul turned on itself. “Vnpeas” (14:49:41) is the state of the soul turned in on itself away from the enclosing of divine love and peace, away from its rootedness in friendship.

As a result of the *contraryousnes* in the soul, the sense in which we are now caught between Adam's fall and Christ's rising, and the lack of harmony of substance and sensuality, our very experience is divided. The sense of this division is well captured in the following passage:

And thus I sawe hym and sought him, and I had hym and wanted hym; and this is and should be our comyn workyng in this life, as to my sight (2:10:18-20).

Our daily work involves the navigation of the polar experiences of proximity and distance; seeing and seeking and having and lacking. In our substance we already in some sense enjoy the closeness of God and, by virtue of the incarnation that unites substance and sensuality, this quality of closeness flows down from substance into sensuality and thus into our experience. At the same time, our re-formation or again-making is still in process and thus as much as we may, in fleeting moments, experience God's closeness, we also are still in a time of seeking and lack the one we desire.

The soul is doubly made according to God's providence. Julian knows from her showings that all will be well (13:27:13), but she also knows that in this time “we be alle in part trobelyd” (13:27:18). The part that is troubled is our changeable sensuality in which we forget our rootedness in God and turn in towards ourselves. At this time we experience *contraryousnes* in our doubleness.

The Double Vision

Just as humanity is doubly made so the vision through which the nature of our condition is to be regarded is likewise double. In this case, however, the doubleness of vision relates to the two perspectives from which our condition may be viewed: God's perspective and the human perspective. The human perspective is affected by the fact that we conceive our world through changeable sensuality. Consequently, we see some actions as good and some as evil (3:11:36), in relative terms from a shifting perspective. Our vision is also limited by space and time. Events come upon us suddenly and we are thus inclined to attribute what happens to chance (3:11:15).

God's sight is different on two related accounts. First, God sees things from the perspective of eternity. In terms of God's foresight the events that come upon us suddenly are in God without beginning. In terms of the unfolding of events in time, they are led by God to their best conclusion or goal (3:11:11,12). Thus, it ought to be said that nothing happens by chance for God both foresees all that happens and guides each event in its unfolding. Second, God recognizes all that happens in terms of being the ultimate source. Julian writes, "alle that hath beyng in kynd is of god's makyng, so is alle thyng that is done in properte of gods doyng" (3:11:38). For Julian there is a sense in which God's hand in creation is not limited to the six days of creation, but is ongoing. In setting things in motion, God remains in the movement and thus can in some sense be said to be in the doing of all that is done. As much as the being of all things is by God's making and sustenance, so the doing of all things bears the mark of God and belongs to God.

In terms of the limitations of perspective due to the human lack of foresight, the human perspective may be said to be wrong. However, there is another sense in which Julian writes about the two ways of seeing things in which she recognizes both as true in their own way: "For

in the beholding of god we falle not, and in the beholding of oure selfe we stonde nott; and boyth these be soth, as to my syght, but the beholding of oure lord god is the higher sothnes” (16:82:30-32). God sees us in terms of our rootedness in God in our *kyndly* substance and in terms of what is accomplished by Christ and fulfilled through the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, we see ourselves in terms of our experience of repeatedly failing and falling into sin and blindness. Here Julian is not so quick to dismiss the human perspective. The truth of God's perspective does not cancel out the perspective of human beings in this context. It must be noted that Julian's theology is a mystical theology and as such is both informed by the practice of a spiritual tradition and oriented to further informing that practice. Consequently, Julian is conscientious in considering the practical, pastoral implications of her showings. In this regard, Julian maintains that it is efficient and fruitful for us to hold both these perspectives at once. The awareness of our sinfulness is fruitful for the cultivation of shame, meekness and dread each of which have value in the contemplative life, as I will show further on. The awareness of the fact that God does not see us as fallen is conducive to spiritual joy and the enjoyment of God (16:82:35-37).

While both God's seeing and human seeing are held to be true, they are not equal. God's sight is the higher sight. Further, Julian advises that we hold the higher vision more closely without losing sight of the lower vision. This is of course a temporal solution for we will leave behind the lower vision when we are brought up above. In the double vision Julian offers a model for how two apparently opposing notions can be simultaneously true. The key is also here for the manner in which the differences are temporarily to be negotiated and finally resolved.

Beholding

Another implication of the metaphor of image involves the prioritization of seeing as a vehicle for return to God. Indeed for Julian metaphors of sight and blindness are fundamental to her theology, as is appropriate to one whose thought is inspired with references to the *imago dei* tradition and whose contemplations consist in an effort to understand and articulate a series of *visions*. Consequently, it will be poignant to spend time considering what is at play in Julian's notion of seeing.

Of greatest concern to Julian is that special form of seeing that is referred to as beholding. Hide cites the *Middle English Dictionary* in defining beholding as “looking, gazing, or seeing a visual appearance, applying the mind in thought, meditation, or contemplation, and being in a state of relationship or connection.”³² Medieval theory of knowledge is implicit to this definition of beholding especially in the association of relationship, connection, seeing and thinking. In commenting on the theory of knowledge that William of St. Thierry both appeals to and develops, Bell refers to a sense in which cognition involves assimilation. Knowing depends on some type of connaturality between subject and object and in the comprehension of the object the subject is in some sense conformed to the object³³. When we know something we penetrate it and assimilate it or intellectually incorporate it. The process of natural knowing in which an object is grasped and assimilated into the mind is reversed in mystical knowing. William observes that while in natural knowing the intellect grasps its object, in mystical knowing one finds oneself grasped³⁴.

In William of St. Thierry's theory of knowledge and indeed even simply in the range of meanings of *beholding* in Middle English, aspects of both loving and becoming are suggested. As I have noted, loving and friendship in the mystical tradition involve a process of becoming

³²Hide, *GO*, 23.

³³Bell, *IL*, 126.

³⁴William of Sain Thierry, *Exposition*, 66.

like. The relationship between beholding and loving in Julian's text become evident when she writes that "the more the soule seeth of god, the more she desyveryth hym by grace" (14:43:27,28). In this passage Julian uses the word *seeth* instead of beholding, but the fact that the chapter in which this passage occurs concerns prayer suggests a quality of beholding in this seeing. Julian doesn't seem to mean anything in using *seeing* at one moment and *beholding* the next. If anything is meant in the alternation of these words, perhaps it would be the suggestion of the essential naturalness and simplicity of the sight of God, which sense might be lost in the technical implications of the word *beholding*. In any case, in this passage a correspondence between an increase in sight and increase in desire may be noted. Seeing is followed by a gift of increased desire for God.

A little further on in the same section quoted above Julian continues, "And whan we of his speciall grace pleynty beholde hym, seying none other, nedys then we folowe hym, and he drawyth vs to hym by loue" (14:43:35-37). Seeing and beholding are used in this passage virtually interchangeably. While in the previous passage the gift was desire, in this passage the gift is beholding, perhaps indicating a more profound quality of seeing. Through the beholding we are drawn to God by love and in this is suggested the sense in which in mystical knowing the soul finds itself grasped by God. In the age of science seeing takes on a quality of cold, objective distance. None of this distance is implied in seeing as it occurs in Julian's text. Rather, spiritual seeing leads to a desire to get closer to the object. Seeing here is not simply an activity of the individual, but must also be a gift, which is what Julian indicates when she refers to its development as a special grace. The involvement of relationship in beholding occurs here on several levels. First, seeing leads to desiring the other. Second, a more profound level of seeing ("seyeng none other") is a gift from another. Third, the deepening of seeing creates a need to follow the one who thus draws us on by love. Beholding and being drawn by love are

not to be confused here, and yet they appear to be inextricably involved in one another.

The involvement of loving and becoming in beholding is suggested when Julian writes, “And the soule that thus beholdyth, it makyth it lyke to him that is beholde, and ony(th) it in rest and in pease by his grace” (16:68:48,49). Beholding here entails a sense of again making in which the one beholding becomes remade and conformed to the one beheld. Being made like the one beheld of course consists in *onying* in God. The sense in which beholding involves being drawn by God in love is here surpassed as beholding is consummated in *onying* with God, which is of course to be understood as a *onying* in love.

Beholding involves making the soul like God. This beholding would seem to be both a gift and an activity of receiving. The fact that Julian writes that beholding makes the soul like God suggests that in beholding the soul participates in some sense in its own re-creation. At the same time, the *onying* that occurs in beholding is by the grace of God.

In another context Julian writes that in prayer one gives witness in the context of the experience of unlikeness to the soul's enduring likeness to God by virtue of a nature that is rooted in God and a will that is at one with God's will (14:43:1-6). Julian writes that this witness is both a comfort to the soul and a type of preparation for the reception of grace. Witnessing and beholding involve both passive and active elements. Witnessing is somehow involved in the restoration of the condition of unlikeness to likeness and beholding in some sense involves making the soul like to God. Witnessing and beholding are of course different descriptions of the same thing. In referring to beholding in terms of witnessing, Julian suggests the nature of the soul's activity in beholding. The soul is active in realizing what God has done, is doing, and will do. While realizing may appear to be passive, there is nonetheless a sense in which realizing involves a cooperation in the work of God. This will perhaps become more apparent as we turn to look at the opposite of beholding: blindness.

Blindness and Sin

Julian's showing of the parable of the Servant and the Lord (chapter 51) acts as the hub of her struggle to understand the nature of sin. The glimpses she has of the nature of sin and its place in the divine economy are visually and narratively represented in this parable. The anxious questions that led up to this showing cease following her reception of the showing, though it must be said that she doesn't so much receive an answer as a different quality of hope in that which is left unknown.

In the vision of the servant and the lord Julian sees the servant standing faithfully by the side of his lord waiting to do his bidding. The lord sends the servant out on an errand and the servant not only cheerfully goes but breaks into a run in his great enthusiasm. As a result of his haste the servant falls into a dell and is greatly injured and stuck. Julian tells the parable more than once and offers double interpretations of it that correspond to her double vision. In her first interpretation, which is the only one that I will consider at this time, Julian identifies the servant as Adam and hence the fall into the dell as the fall of humankind. It is noteworthy that the fall is the result not of a willful rebellion, but of a over-hasty zeal and it is significant that the lord at no time attaches blame to the servant for his fall. Of greatest interest for the present purpose is the experience of the servant immediately after the fall. The servant is hurt, bruised, alone, and most of all he has lost sight of his lord and is twisted such that he cannot turn and see him.

The servant's loss of sight is, not surprisingly, described as double by Julian. First, the servant can no longer behold his lord. Julian here insists that even in being turned from beholding his lord he nevertheless retains his good will. Of course, Julian is alluding to her notion of the will that never consents to evil. The second blindness lies in the fact that in spite of retaining his good will, the servant is blinded from knowing it. In the time of the servant's

fall and ensuing blindness he never falls from the sight of God. When the servant's will was lost from his own sight and knowing it was "kepte in gods syght" (14:51:107). This keeping relates to the sense in which Jesus bears the "charge" of the soul who falls away from him and forgets him (16:80:32-36). In the keeping of the servant's good will in the sight of the lord there is both a sense in which this good will remains at the heart of the servant's being and nature and a sense in which this good will is kept and safeguarded in the sight of the lord. In losing sight of the lord's face the servant also loses sight of the way he is seen and this signifies a double blindness in which the servant cannot see the lord and simultaneously loses sight of who he most fundamentally is.

When Julian writes of a higher and lower vision,³⁵ one in which we never fall and one in which we never stand, she is alluding to the parable of the Servant and the Lord and further commenting on it. The perspective of the fallen servant is necessary because in this we experience our great need for God and our need for reform. The importance of keeping the higher vision closest relates to the sense in which beholding involves becoming. In beholding God we are able to see ourselves in God's sight and we are thus reminded of who we most essentially are in terms of our deepest and most profound will in which we are at one with God.

One of the shortcomings of Julian's reliance on metaphors of seeing, beholding and witnessing is that the role that the individual takes in working out his or her salvation can come to seem rather limited and even passive. Indeed, there should be no mistake that Julian sees the accomplishment of our salvation largely in terms of God's activity. Even here the metaphor of seeing predominates. We are repeatedly losing sight of God, but God holds us and keeps us in God's sight. The sense in which God's sight keeps us echoes the metaphors of enclosure and there is a sense in which we are able to see again by virtue of being continually held in God's

³⁵ Recall the earlier discussion of 16:82:30-32.

sight. Nonetheless, the sense in which the soul does actively participate in its recreation is not to be underestimated. In this context I will limit myself to demonstrating how seeing itself is not to be understood in isolation from other actions. Julian writes that “as long as we be meddlyd with any part of synne we shall nevyr see cleerly the blessyd chere of God. And the horyblyer and the grevowser that oure synnes be, the depper are we fro that tyme fro this blessyd syghte” (16:72:10-13). The fact that we are unable to see either God or our own deepest will is a consequence of the choices we make and the consequent obscuring of our godly will by our beastly will. In the same regard seeing is also not to be understood in isolation from a life whose re-formation consists in a withdrawal from the things and choices that lead us away from our natural likeness.

The direction of causality in the relationship between blindness and sin is in fact not entirely clear in Julian's text. In the passage above it would appear that sin causes blindness. In another passage, Julian lists the causes for the frequency of falling and concludes with blindness as a cause arguing that “yf he saw god contynually, he shulde haue no myschevous felyng ne no maner steryng, no sorowyng that servyth to synne” (14:47:19-21). Blindness is a cause for sin insofar as in beholding we are in a process of being made like God and even our feelings are uplifted such that the impulse to sin is absent. The direction of causality is ultimately difficult to discern because the relationship between blindness and sin is circular. In the same way, seeing and becoming through re-forming of life cannot be separated and in fact rotate on one another. The mystical vision makes an impression on the intellect and will such that one becomes more like God. Becoming like God, or being worked into God, as Julian puts it, is a work in which human participation is integral. Becoming like God is, as I have noted, also a condition for seeing God. When we behold God, we are made more like God and the more we are made like, the more we behold. When we sin we lose our sight and when we lose our sight we sin. Julian

thus does not confuse realization or blindness with action and choice, but nor does she allow for one to be conceived without the other.

A final consideration in looking at the close relationship between sin and blindness involves the seeing of sin. In terms of seeing sin itself, an important theme in Julian's showings lies in her assertion that she did not see sin in her showings. When Julian is given a showing of the passion, presumably the consummation of the expression of human sinfulness, she does not see sin. Julian concludes that sin cannot be seen because it doesn't have any substance of its own and no real participation in being (13:27:27). Sin cannot be seen, the affect of sinful choices may be seen, which affect consists in pain (13:27:28).

While Julian asserts that sin itself cannot be seen, she nonetheless refers to the importance of seeing our sin. When Julian refers to seeing our sin she is not talking about seeing sin itself, but of seeing ourselves in terms of our sinning. Significantly even this seeing or beholding is a matter of grace: "he of his curtesy mesuryth the syght to us; for it is so foule and so horryble that we shulde not endure to se it as it is" (16:78:21-22). We do not see our sin on our own, but are given glimpses of our sinfulness to the degree that it is conducive to our amendment and healing. Our sin is not shown to us as it is and when we are shown our sin, to a degree, it is in the light of God's mercy (16:78:4-5).

To summarize, sin and blindness are intimately related in a kind of circle of causation. The sin that is hedged by blindness cannot in itself be seen and even the horrible affects of sin on us cannot be seen by us except to the extent that God deigns it to be profitable to us.

The Mirror

Doubles and images are unthinkable without allusion to mirrors. Indeed, mirroring is another trope that organizes Julian's thought appearing everywhere from the conception of

correspondence between God and creature to the very structure of sentences in some cases.

One sense in which the trope of mirroring appears is in a theme that has already been alluded to in the discussion of the parable of the Servant and the Lord: the relationship between knowledge of God and knowledge of the self. As noted in the discussion of the parable, the deepest aspects of the soul's nature, which are forgotten in the fall, are always held in God's sight. In the expression on God's face and the nature of his gaze much is shown. The sight or gaze of God acts as a type of mirror in which the soul is able to see itself, especially that most fundamental aspect of itself it has forgotten.

God's sight functions as a mirror for the soul, but before this gaze may be met something else is necessary: the mirror of faith. Julian writes that "oure passyng lyvyng that we haue here in oure sensualyte knowyth nott what oure selfe is but in feyth" (14:46:1-2). *Oure passyng lyvyng* refers to the constant experience of flux and change that the soul is subject to due to its sensuality. In the state of flux, the soul is unable to retain sight of the eternal. In the absence of this direct vision, faith offers a mirror to the soul of its eternal nature. Julian in a sense inverts the more common notion that faith pertains only to God, when she offers the notion that in faith we first come to know ourselves and then pass on to knowing God. It is noteworthy that in this context Julian says that full knowledge of the self is not possible in this life. The soul that is created in the image of God can only fully know itself in the time of its full restoration to God in eternity when faith is transformed into the direct knowing of God.

The trope of mirroring can imply a division of real and unreal and an irremediable distance between the two. To some degree, Julian overcomes this implication through introducing notions of mutuality. As with Bernard of Clairvaux,³⁶ Julian frequently suggests that the progression of knowledge involves a movement from the world into the soul and from

³⁶See Bernard of Clairvaux's treatise *On Love* in Bernard of Clairvaux, *SW*.

the soul into God. In the soul the image of God is found and the soul is able to study the image in itself so as to find its way to its source. Julian's preference for envisioning the soul in God rather than God in the soul provides impetus for her to also offer an inversion of the process of development in knowing:

For oure soule is so depe growndyd in god and so endlesly tresoryd that we may nott come to the knowyng ther of tulle we haue furst knowyng of god, whych is the maker to whome it is onyd (14:56:2-6).

While Julian has elsewhere suggested that the journey begins with knowledge of the soul, she suggests that before knowledge of the soul is sought, there must come knowledge of God. The logic of the route to God via God's image in the soul is that one begins with what is closest. In agreement with this general logic, Julian nonetheless effects a reversal by saying that beginning the journey with what is closest means beginning with God for “god is more nerer to vs than oure soule” (14:56:11). In one moment Julian advises that the soul can only be sought in God and the next she argues that God can only be sought in the soul. She sees in the soul a sign pointing to God and when she looks into the face of the Lord she finds something fundamental revealed about the soul. Images reverberate back and forth like echoes such that one is always seen in the other. In the shuffling of beginnings and endings in the journey a circularity and even a certain mutuality is suggested that puts the distance between image and source into question.

Julian is well aware that her reader is likely to be vexed by the fact that she has given two seemingly opposite accounts for the progression of knowledge and so she writes, “And thus by the gracious ledyng of the holy gost we shall know hym both in oone; whether we be steryd to know god or oure soule, it is both good and trew” (14:56:9-11). *Both in oone* is a very strange expression and while it may not open itself to a clear and definitive exposition, one may

read in it an expression of the sense in which God and soul are both to be found in God and soul and God are both to be found in the soul. Therefore, whether one is moved to begin with the soul or with God may not be of great consequence. Julian here offers an example of how two seemingly opposite statements may simultaneously be true in terms of describing different aspects or outlooks on one complexly interwoven reality.

Correspondence

In mirroring, movement in one place corresponds with movement in another. A sense of some type of correspondence between the created and the Creator is at the heart of the *imago dei* tradition, though this correspondence is understood in different ways and to different degrees by those who have articulated the doctrine. I will turn now to exploring how Julian conceives this correspondence or mirroring.

Natural goodness is at the core of the correspondence of God and soul. In referring to the manner in which grace and mercy flows out of the natural (*kynde*) goodness of God for the restoration of the fallenness of our sensual nature Julian writes,

And thus this kynde goodnesse makyth that mercy and grace werkyth invs and the kynde goodnesse that we haue of hym ablyth vs to receyve the werkyng of mercy and grace (14:57:11-13).

Instead of using the term *image* Julian refers to a “kynde goodnesse” in God and a “kynde goodnesse” in the soul that comes from God and thus invokes the notion of image. In the doctrine of the *imago dei* the correspondence between Creator and created in the remaining image of God in the fallen soul is as a gift of grace for the purpose of the reception of further grace. This is exactly what is at play in this passage insofar as the *kynde* goodness that the soul has from God enables the soul to receive mercy and grace that will restore the soul. The

correspondence of natural goodness between God and the soul enables the reception of mercy and grace. A further level of profundity in this correspondence lies in the fact that that in which the soul is able to receive corresponds with that in God from which he gives.

In the same chapter in which Julian refers to the correspondence of *kynde* goodness in the soul with the *kynde* goodness in God she refers to another type of correspondence which also pivots on the *kyndes* of God and humanity. Earlier I noted the sense in which faith acts a mirror in which the soul is able to see itself. As it turns out, the very process by which faith is engendered in the soul involves a quality of mirroring correspondence:

[Faith] comyth of the hie rychesse of oure kynde substance into oure sensuall soule, and it is groundyd in vs and we in that throw the kynde goodnes of god by the werkyng of mercy and grace (14:57:27-30).

One important piece of background for understanding this passage is that Julian in other contexts associates *kynde* with the Father, and mercy with the Son, and grace with the Holy Spirit (for an example see the chapter in Julian following the one just quoted: 14:58:32-33). The movement of salvation from a divine perspective involves a flowing out from the nature of the Father down into the world in the incarnation of mercy and in the ongoing grace-giving presence of the Holy Spirit. When Julian writes that we are grounded in faith through *kynde* goodness, mercy and grace she is referring to the sense in which faith comes to us by virtue of the respective contributions of each person of the Trinity in the outworking of our salvation. The very possibility for flow in the soul from substance into sensuality is by virtue of the fact that these two are knitted together through the incarnation of Jesus (14:57:19-23). Thus the flow of faith from substance into the sensual soul may be said to be both dependent on the incarnation of Jesus and correspondent with the flow from the Godhead into creation.

The sense in which it may both be said that faith is grounded in us and that we are

grounded in faith corresponds to the sense in which, in the previous chapter, the soul is said to be in God and God in the soul. Two perspectives on one event are given and each is the inverted image of the other. Faith is grounded in the soul due to the natural rootedness of substance in God and the natural flow of this substance downwards into sensuality. At the same time, what is natural to the soul is by virtue of its second making in Christ whose incarnation derives from the natural goodness of God. The fact that faith is ground in us signifies that it is not an addition to our nature, something external, but rather natural to us due to our origins. Faith belongs to us by virtue of what we are naturally equipped with so that we may be receptive to the divine initiative and participate in the outworking of our salvation. We are grounded in faith in a way that corresponds to the sense in which our substance is grounded in God who is active in working out our salvation through mercy and grace.

Another aspect of correspondence that is related to the goodness of God is found in the experience of longing. In her showings Julian comes to understand that the longing and thirst of Christ on the cross has a spiritual aspect which is a longing derived from separation. Julian writes that this longing will last until, “the last soule that shalle be savyd is come vppe to hys blysse” (13:31:40). There is some ambiguity here, possibly intentional, as to whether Jesus is longing for reunion or longing for his creatures to enjoy their promised bliss: in the end the two are the same.

The longing that Jesus feels on the cross comes from his “endlesse goodnes” (13:31:46). Goodness here is not *kynd*, likely because Julian generally reserves the term *kynd* to the Father and to our original creation. By virtue of what Julian calls our first making we have a natural likeness to God. In our again making Jesus becomes our “moder in mercy in oure sensualyte takyng” (14:58:44). In our first making, our likeness to God lies in our substance. Our second making also conveys a quality of likeness, but in this case sensuality too partakes in likeness in

some sense. The likeness that the sensual soul enjoys must pertain to its own nature and this is where longing comes in.

The emotion of longing pertains to the experience of incompleteness which, as earlier noted, summarizes the current condition of our sensual nature. The longing that Jesus feels in his chosen kinship with humanity and in his longing for the restoration of humanity is in its clearest expression in the longing and thirsting of Christ on the cross. Julian writes that “of the vertu of this longyng in Crist we haue to long agene to hym, without whych no soule comyth to hevyn” (13:31:42-43). Jesus' longing for us is given here as the basis of our longing for him. Our sensual nature participates in Christ by longing with Christ for final reunion. The longing that is natural to the sensual soul is given a new basis in our again-making. The ordinary longing of the soul for this and that can thus become a longing for the eternal that originates in the longing of the eternal. Our longing for God is not simply our own without reference, but is by virtue of correspondence between the soul and its lord such that the longing of the soul is in some sense an image of the longing of Christ.

The nature of the correspondence between the longing in Christ and the longing in the soul is such that the two are related but not confused. There is a great deal that is said in this regard in the words “we haue to long agene” (13:31:43). The longing is something that we have which suggests that it is ours. The fact that the longing is *agene* suggests the sense in which the longing is a repetition of the longing in Christ: the longing is again in us which was first in Christ. In one sense the belonging is entirely ours by nature and is thus not an alien, borrowed, super-added state. Indeed, the longing must entirely belong to us otherwise it would be artificial and we would ultimately not be involved in working out our own salvation nor would we be in a relationship. In another sense, the longing that is ours comes to us from Christ as an image or echo of Christ's longing. Christ's longing initiates longing in us. Part of what is at play here

may be the contagiousness of love. The faithful longing of Christ enables the changeable soul to experience a new quality of longing that will ultimately play an integral role in the soul's salvation.

The correspondence between the divine and the human is most radically suggested in the parable of the Servant and the Lord. The parable is told twice and interpreted twice. In one interpretation the servant is Adam, who himself represents all humanity, and in the other the servant is Jesus. Julian's intent in making one figure represent two is to express poetically the degree of correspondence between the two. As Julian later explains, "When Adam felle godes sonne fell: for the ryght onyng whych was made in hevyn, goddys sonne myght nott be separath from Adam" (14:51:218-220). The correspondence between humanity and Christ derives from a fundamental quality of *onyng*. The fact that the *onyng* is accomplished in heaven, initially suggests the creation of the substance of the soul which, as noted earlier, is knitted to God by virtue of its making. The *onyng* in heaven is bound to imply first the soul's substance, but clearly the sensuality of the soul is also intended here for Julian also writes that our sensuality was "furst to hym adyght" (14:57:22). Colledge defines *adyght* as *assigned* in his glossary of Middle English terms³⁷. That sensuality was *furst* assigned to Christ suggests that even before the sensual soul was created it was destined for the incarnation.

Ultimately Jesus' *onyng* with our nature is in terms of the comprehensive picture of our beginning and end. Julian writes, "And by the endlesse entent and assent and the full acorde of all the trynyte, the myd person wolde be grounde and hed of this feyer kynd" (14:53:30-33). The *endless entent* refers to what was foreseen from the beginning in terms of the nature of the entire Trinity's involvement in our salvation and in particular that of Christ. The reference to Jesus as the *myd person* significantly refers to both Jesus' position as second in three in the

³⁷Julian of Norwich, BSAJ, 749.

Trinity and also to Jesus as the mediating person between God and humanity³⁸. Jesus' union with our nature is as a reconciler between God and humanity and in the same moment between our substance and sensuality. The *endlesse entent* encompasses our beginning, middle, and end which is to say our substantial making, the union of substance and sensuality in a state of division on earth, and the reunion of substance and sensuality in a state of fulfilled reconciliation in heaven. Jesus is thus our ground and head in terms of the union of substance and sensuality and the cohesion of our beginning and end.

The union between Jesus and our nature in terms of both substance and sensuality is expressed in a correspondence between divine and human happenings. This correspondence goes in both directions. When Julian writes that when Adam fell, Jesus fell, the correspondence is expressed as a correspondence of divine events to human events. There is a sense in which the fall of Christ into Mary's womb is simultaneous in correspondence with the fall of Adam and *almost* takes on the nature of a necessity.

Due to the *onyng* between Jesus and the soul, the fall of Adam results in the corresponding fall of Jesus. The direction of correspondence is reversed in the work that is begun in the passion of Jesus. The fulfillment of the soul is in the lifting up of its sensuality into its substance. This is accomplished by the power of Jesus' passion (see (14:56:35-36) though it is not to be fulfilled until the end of time. Jesus lifts up our sensual nature into his in the incarnation and by the power of his passion our sensuality is lifted up into the substance of the soul. Julian appeals to the *onyng* of the soul with Christ and the consequent correspondence between the two to make sense of the history of salvation. The context in which the incarnation occurs is understood in terms of correspondence and so is the effectiveness of the incarnation and finally the passion. By virtue of correspondence through *onyng*, Christ falls with the soul

³⁸See Julian of Norwich, *BSAJ*, , note 26 on p. 557

and the soul is uplifted with Christ.

The picture of correspondence that has emerged suggests the existence of two levels of reality which are intertwined and yet distinct. Correspondence respects differences in nature. The fall of Adam and Christ are correspondent but the nature of the two falls are essentially different. Likewise, in the correspondence between the divine and the sensual soul, the nature of the sensual soul is respected. Indeed, that which is most natural to the soul, longing, becomes the pivotal point of correspondence between Jesus and the soul. Correspondence doesn't imply necessity insofar as it expresses a phenomenon of love and love's *onyng*. An appearance of necessity may be observed in correspondence and yet there isn't any more necessity in correspondence than there is in the harmonization of movements between dance partners.

Mirror Inversion

Julian frequently conceives the correspondence between divine and human action in terms of inversion. I have already made reference to the sense in which the alternating perspectives of “God in the soul/soul in God” and “faith grounded in the soul/soul grounded in faith” are inverted images of one another. Correspondence in terms of inversion occurs in more direct forms and to explore this I will turn again to the incarnation.

In the *imago dei* tradition the discovery in the soul of a mirror image of God is the beginning of the ascent to God. The process of ascending or returning consists of mirroring the image which is in fact Christ. Julian draws another aspect of the tradition which is in a sense an inversion of the one just noted, when she writes that “the fair, bright blessed lord bore the lyknes of our fowle blacke dede” (13:37:10). There is an immediate inversion in the text from fairness to foulness and brightness to darkness. The sense in which this text represents an inversion of the aforementioned aspect of the *imago dei* tradition lies in the notion that the condition of our

mirroring of Christ is Jesus' willingness to take on our likeness. We are able to become like God because God has become like us. It would be problematic to describe Jesus' bearing of our likeness as mirroring because this would be to suggest that Jesus only came to *resemble* humanity rather than fully entering humanity. And yet the bearing of likeness may be seen as analogous to mirroring especially in Julian's theology in which the distance between image and source is displaced or at least thrown into question.

The relationship between our making and our again making, which begins in the incarnation, may itself be seen in terms of inversion. In our first making the soul is knit to God, while in our second making God is knit to the soul (14:57:17-19). In the first making we are made out of God while the second making begins with God being made into us. The second making is a mirror inversion of the first making. The inversion in the process of creation in the again making itself effects an inversion in the order of things. In God's knitting Godself to the soul in the incarnation, the high is brought low so that the low may be brought high.

The overturning of the order of the world began for Julian in the incarnation when the highest was brought low and sensuality was lifted up in the second person of the Trinity. However, the inversion of the order of things is ultimately an eschatological event. Julian looks toward this event in her reflections on the inversions between the order of things on earth and the order of things in heaven. The greatest surprise for Julian in terms of inversions in the heavenly order is with regard to sin and the suffering it causes:

And God shewed that synne shalle be no shame, but wurshype to man, for right as to every synne is answering a payne by truth, right so for every synne to the same soule is gevyn a blysse by loue (13:38:1-3).

Julian doesn't demonize the order of things on earth for she recognizes here an order of truth which seems to follow the law of cause and effect. It is evident to her that the suffering of

humans is the effect of sin. Part of the reason that she continues to ask how it is that all shall be well, as she is shown, is that she expects that the order of truth to continue in the next life in terms of the just punishment of human sin.

The inversion that Julian is surprised with is that not only will we not find in our past sin a source of shame, but a source of *wurshyp*, or of honour as Colledge translates it.³⁹ In the same way that every sin on earth corresponds with a particular pain so in heaven will every sin correspond with a particular *blysse*. The order that prevails in heaven is the order of love. Recall here both that in love the soul is *onyd* to God and that God doesn't ultimately impute blame to the soul for its sin because God always sees the will that never assents to sin in the substance of the soul. In the sensuality of the soul humans choose sin and suffer the consequences on earth. At the same there is a sense in which the sin that was chosen in our sensual nature was not consented to in our substance and we nonetheless consequently suffer. In the divided state of the soul suffering is inevitable. When the sensuality of human nature is lifted up into the substance of human nature the division is overcome and it is God's pleasure to reward the soul both with the enjoyment of the final victory over sin and with bliss that correspond to each sin it did not consent to in its substance.

A delightful expression of inverse correspondence is found in Julian's insistence that God works "contrary wyse" in his response to human *contraryousnes* (14:48:40-41). On an eschatological level this means that the pain, blame, and sorrow that our *contraryousnes* causes will, by grace, be transformed into solace, honour, and bliss (14:48:43). While the contrary manner in which God responds to human *contraryousnes* is only experienced in its fullness in heaven, there is nonetheless an earthly experience of God's contrary working. Julian discovers the contrary working of God in our current experience in the way that God already meets the

³⁹ See Julian of Norwich. *Showings*. Translated by Colledge, E. and Walsh, J.. (New York: Paulist Press, 1978) 263. (= C&W, *Showings*)

wrath of our inner division and refusal of love:

For that same endlesse goodnesse that kepyth vs whan we synne that we peryssch nott, that same endlesse goodnesse continually trefyeth in vs a pees against oure wrath (14:49:24-27).

The goodness of God works contrarily to our *contraryousnes* by holding us in life when we choose that which is contrary to our life and treating our *vnpees* with *pees*. God responds in a way that overturns our expectations, we who are more acquainted with the order of cause and effect than the order of love. God's opposition is true opposition insofar as God meets the qualities of our actions with their opposite qualities so that in our sickness we might encounter health, and in our inner division we might encounter wholeness.

Another expression of the inversely related differences in the ways that the two aspects of the soul are united to God is found where Julian writes, "For I saw full suerly that oure substance is in god, and also I saw that in oure sensualyte god is" (14:55:23-25). In this we find two ways in which God accomplishes our salvation. The foundation of the work is in the way that we are grounded in God in our first making. The outgrowth of the work is accomplished through the indwelling of God.

Earlier, I noted that Julian tends to prefer the metaphor of the soul's enclosure in God over the metaphor of God's dwelling in the soul. Here we see that Julian sees the presence of God in the soul and the soul's presence in God as two expressions of grace accomplishing our salvation from two different ends. And yet there is still a sense in which enclosure in God holds a special place in Julian's imagination. Julian describes Jesus' presence in the sensual soul in the following:

That wurshypfull cytte that oure lorde Jhesu syttyth in, it is oure sensualyte, in whych he is enclosyd; and oure substance is belclosyd in Jhesu with the blessyd soule of Crist syttyng in rest in the godhead (14:56:23-25).

The word *enclosure* is generally used by Julian to refer to our being in God and so Julian's use of this word to describe Jesus' presence in us recalls the sense in which the soul is enclosed in God. Indeed, she refuses to talk about the enclosure of Jesus in the soul without also referring to the sense in which the substance of the soul is enclosed in Jesus: Jesus is at rest in the sensuality of the soul while the substance of the soul is at rest in Jesus. There is a quality of correspondence in the mutuality of enclosure and resting. The resting of the substance of the soul in Jesus connotes the security and safety of the soul in the Godhead. The resting of Jesus in the soul suggests that he is at home and thus the ultimate security and salvation of the soul is safeguarded. Further, the resting of Jesus in the soul, in whom substance rests, promises the fulfillment of the reconciliation of substance and sensuality.

The manner in which Jesus accomplishes our salvation on earth through our sensual soul is an inversion of the manner in which God accomplishes our salvation in heaven. And yet the inversion appears in some sense to be in the process of being inverted! When Julian refers to the presence of Jesus in the soul she writes that it is the pleasure of Christ to “sytt(e) in oure soule restfully, and to dwell in oure soule endlesly, vs all werkyng in to hym” (14:57:55,56). The very activity of Christ in the soul involves a process of incorporating the soul into him. On another occasion, Julian writes that the substance of the soul is completely present in each person of the Trinity, while the sensual soul is only in Jesus (14:58:62-63). Incidentally, this passage clarifies some of the confusion concerning how it is that Julian refers on one occasion to substance being in the Father and on another in Jesus. Of more immediate interest is the fact that Julian here has referred to the sensual as being *in* Jesus. Through the incarnation into the sensual nature of the soul, the sensual nature of the soul is lifted up into Christ even as much as he may be said to be in the sensual soul. Perhaps Julian does not want us to rest in one image or the other, but to be drawn into the dynamic mutuality of relationship itself.

The Passion

In her introduction Julian presents her showings as God's response to her prayer for bodily sickness and intimate and experiential recollection of the passion of Jesus. Julian's visions of the passion lie at the center of her showings and her ensuing reflections radiate from these visions. Indeed the visions of the passion are the vivid and bodily perceived sources of the theological abstractions that comprise Julian's reflections.⁴⁰ In turning now to the visions of the passion I would like to briefly take note of how they represent the foregoing and then explore the implications that emerge from these visions in relation to the themes of mirroring and inversion.

The double vision is especially vividly represented in the visions of the passion and with a quality of immediacy and simultaneity that is only possible in the visual. This doubleness is expressed in a vision in which Jesus' head is copiously bleeding:

the bledyng continued tylle many thnges were sene and vnderstondyd. Nevertheles the feyerhede and lyuelyhede continued in the same bewty and lyuelynes (1:7:19-21).

The simultaneity of an impression of liveliness and beauty with a perception of the dying and bleeding of Christ is especially striking in this passage. Julian's more abstract and prosaic reflections constantly refer to doubleness, but often, due to the very nature of narrative, the simultaneity is lost and a sense of chronology, what is now and what will be then, prevails. However, in the evocation of the vision, the sense in which two may exist simultaneously is more powerfully preserved.

⁴⁰ I want to be cautious of making too fine of a distinction between the visual showings and the more abstract reflections. Julian refers to the former as bodily and the latter as *gostely* or spiritual but both may be referred to as showings.

In some sense the visions of the passion are given as a mirror in which we are able to see ourselves and our experience in greater relief than is generally afforded in our narrow and constrained fallen state. Insofar as Jesus enters our sensual nature and lifts it up into his nature for our salvation, we may both see in the passion something of who we now are and something of what we are in the process of becoming. When Julian further comments on the vision of Jesus' bleeding head she writes,

Thys shewyng was quyk and lyuely and hidows and dredfulle and swete and louely; and of all the syght that I saw this was most comfort to me, that oure good lorde, that is so reverent and dredefulle, is so homely and so curteyse, and this most fulfyllid me with lykyng and sykernes in soule (1:7:30-34).

The hideousness in the vision is due to Jesus' suffering of our sensual nature. The passion consists in the entry into the extremities of the human condition: in Julian's vision where we feel pain, Jesus experiences pain beyond endurance. The sweetness lies in Jesus' awareness that the salvation of humanity is being accomplished through his suffering. The simultaneity of *hidows and dredfulle* with *swete and louely* also reflects the current division of sensuality and substance and the consequent duality of human experience. The perception of this experience in Jesus links it to the manner in which Jesus is at the same time reconciling sensuality and substance. Our current experience is thus linked to our fulfillment and it is possible to begin to see our pain in light of its blossoming transformation in the bliss of reconciliation.

The other aspect of this vision lies in the double vision of Jesus as the one whom we reverently fear and yet also as one who is entirely familiar⁴¹ and courteous with us. In this the double sense of our relationship to God is reflected. God is infinitely distant and other and at the same time God is altogether close and intimate. The transcendence of God is here held

⁴¹ Colledge translated homely as familiar. See his translation Julian of Norwich, *Showings*, 188.

together with God's immanence.

In some sense the hideousness of the vision and the dreadfulness of God are to be held together inasmuch as the dreadfulness of God relates to the experience of his immensity in immutability and eternity from the perspective of our littleness in mutability and mortality due to our sensual nature. The sweetness of the vision relates to God's familiarity by virtue of the reconciliation in which we experience the closeness and even kinship of God. Jesus becomes close and familiar to Julian in his suffering and this proximity is thus a matter of joy and pain. Julian's resulting feeling of security and delight is a foretaste in time of the eternal perspective and experience in which all is well. Julian's experience now of a sense of delight and security surely relates to the quality of simultaneity in the vision. The fulfillment of reconciliation between substance and sensuality and God and soul is certainly yet to come; however, the simultaneity of the vision suggests a sense in which the fulfillment in eternity is concurrent with the temporal experience of the pain of division.

Meekness and Noughting

A number of minor visions occur as satellites to the major visions of the passion. Julian refers to these minor visions as occurring at the same time as the visions of the passion and she indicates that they serve as commentaries on the passion visions, clarifying some aspect or other. The vision of Mary and the hazelnut vision are two important satellite visions and each further flesh out a learning that is evidently not to be lost on the reader. The first concerns meekness and the second concerns what Julian refers to as *noughting*.

In the vision of Mary, Julian is given a model for how contemplation of God is to affect the contemplative. When Mary beholds God in God's greatness she is filled with reverent fear. In light of this vision she sees her own smallness and is thus filled with meekness. Out of the

ground of Mary's meekness she is filled with such grace that she surpasses all creatures (1:7:1-11). The obvious inversion here is that as Mary recognizes her smallness she is made great.

The sense in which the vision of Mary's meekness is related to the vision of the passion lies in Julian's identification of the picture of the highest becoming lowest as the most important aspect of the passion to be contemplated (8:20:10-12). This picture indicates the depths of God's love for humanity, but it also serves as a type of image to be imitated. In Julian's vision of how the failure of sin is by God's grace turned to profit, the becoming low that is meekness plays a central role. In language that echoes scenes of the passion Julian writes,

Synne is the sharpest scorge that ony chosyn soule may be smyttyn with, whych scorge all to betyth man or woman, and alle to brekyth hym, and purgyth hym in hys own syght (13:39:1-3).

In the painful awareness of sin illusions about who we are are purged and we are broken down. The consummation of this purging involves deeply learning how small or low we are, which learning Julian identifies as meekness. Later Julian writes that through meekness “we shall be reysyd in hevyn, to whych rysyng we myght nevyr haue comyn without that meekness” (14:61:30,31). Here we see why it is that the *chosyn soule* is whipped by sin. The fall into sin serves as an opportunity to realize our lowness in meekness. The intimacy with our lowness, which is itself a gift of mercy, is given as the condition or ground of being raised into heights of heaven that we would not have known if we had not fallen.

The manner in which meekness is the foundation for rising high is of course another example of the inversions that Julian is so fond of. God's enclosure is also at play here for both the falling and the rising are held in the mercy of God. By God's mercy we are able to see our fallenness and learn meekness, and by God's mercy we are raised to new heights. The correspondence of falling low to rising high is by virtue of God's mercy.

Another aspect of correspondence that may be found in the inversion of low into high is discovered in recalling that the lesson of meekness is given in relation to the passion. Julian gives three ways of contemplating the passion. In the first the pain that Christ suffers recalls the consequences of our sin. In the second we see in the suffering of Jesus the heights of his love. In the third way we are given bliss as we behold and share God's delight in our salvation. The contemplation of the passion thus involves a movement from beholding the correspondence of the pain of our sinning, both in ourselves and in Jesus' passion, to beholding the extent of God's love, to enjoying God's bliss. The contemplation of the passion itself correspondingly follows the arc of meekness from the depths into the heights. Depths and heights thus are not opposites but related and corresponding moments or events in the outworking of mercy.

While meekness involves the recognition of the littleness of ourselves, *noughting* follows the recognition of the littleness of all things made relative to their Creator. The vision of the little thing the size of a hazelnut in Julian's hand is another satellite vision that occurs at the same time as the first revelation and is a further commentary on God's familiar loving. In this vision the appearance of the smallness of creation inspires Julian concerning the cause of our restlessness. She writes,

Of this nedyth vs to haue knowledge, that vs lyketh nought all thing that is made, for to loue and haue god that is vnmade. For this is the cause why we be not all in ease of hart and of sowle, for we seeke heer rest in this thing that is so little, wher no reste is in, and we know not our god, that is almightie, all wise and all good, for he is verie reste (1:5:24-29).

Julian perceives that creation is too small for us to find our rest in and that we must turn to the Creator to find our rest. When she writes that we should *lyketh* not all things made, the first sense is that we should not delight in things made. *Lyking*, as noted, is another word whose

polysemeity Julian tends to exploit. *Lyketh* here signifies *enjoy* or *delight* but also brings to mind the themes of *becoming like* in friendship and love. Liking in this sense relates to the theme that proliferates in the *imago dei* tradition that one becomes like what one likes. The withdrawal of attachment to things made relates to a concern to become like God who is *vmade* rather than things that are made.

The turning to the Creator consists in what Julian later describes as becoming “noughted of all things that is made” (1:5:31). Julian plays with the word *nought* in this passage to express that *noughting* involves liking *nought* creation, which is on the verge of falling into *nought*, so that we may be *noughted* of all things. The purpose of being *noughted* is “to haue him that is all” (1:5:32). Terms of negation reverberate through the passage prefacing the wonder of having him that is all. The paradox is thus stressed that in order to have the one who is all, we must let go of all.

The movement towards “him that is all” is elsewhere expressed as a movement from the world into the soul and from the soul into God (16:68:30). This movement expresses the process of being *noughted*. The inversion at play is obvious. As one moves inward away from created things one moves towards the one in whom all created things are held, as the “hazelnut” vision shows. It must be noted that Julian is not here promulgating a negative estimation of creation, for she has already stated that all creation is held in God's love and she ultimately sees nothing bad in what is created. The very nature of the inversion at play displaces direction such that moving away is also moving towards. However, if a direction is to be insisted upon, it is towards loving all things in God and detaching from things in themselves.

Kerrie Hide writes that for Julian beholding the passion reveals how Christ draws us into union with him.⁴² The two satellite visions that introduce the themes of meekness and being

⁴²Hide, *GO*, 114.

noughted indicate not only how we are drawn, but the active role that we are to take in participating in the process of *onyng* that is at play in Jesus' passion. It is highly fitting that meekness and being *noughted* are elucidated at the same time as visions of the passion inasmuch as each involves a type of participation in the passion. The road to meekness involves being scourged by sin, humbly submitting to suffering, and being brought low. Being *noughted* in a sense continues this process insofar as its negation involves a type of dying. Finally, both meekness and being *noughted* indicate the descent that precedes the ultimate ascent.

Chapter 3

The *Imago Trinitatis* and the Enclosed Progression of the Soul

Julian's soteriology is fundamentally trinitarian. Consequently, any discussion of the role of the doctrine of the *imago dei* in Julian's economy of salvation would be incomplete without reference to the *imago trinitatis* and the way that the entire Trinity is thus active in the outworking of salvation. The distinction between the *imago trinitatis* and the nature in which the Trinity itself is at work in the life of the soul is very fine indeed. The reason the distinction can be difficult at times to make involves my early observations on Julian's use of metaphors of enclosure. The soul is enclosed in the Trinity and the Trinity is enclosed in the soul. Kerrie Hide comments that this "mutual enclosure elucidates the indissolubility of the unity between human beings and the Trinity." The soul participates in the life and work of the Trinity, the Trinity is the ground of all that the soul does in realizing its destiny, and the soul bears the image of the Trinity. This knot is difficult to entangle and indeed this is to the good of our salvation.

Julian appeals to church teaching to make the point that we are made in the likeness of the Trinity. She incorporates this teaching into the contemplation of her own showings when she specifies that it is in our first making, the making of our substance, that we are made in the image of the Trinity (2:10:53,54). Later she writes that in the substance of our soul we are wholly in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (14:58:62). As noble as this beginning may be, it is not sufficient for we are made double. Again making is necessary for the fulfillment of the soul in its entirety. With regard to this again making Julian writes:

And right as we were made lyke to trynyte in oure first making, our maker would that we should be lyke to Jhesu Cryst oure sauour in hevyn without ende by the vertu of oure (geyn) makyng (2:10:53-56).

This passage begins to qualify the meaning of being made in the image of the Trinity. In our substance we are made in the image of the Trinity, as our beginning and ground. Our making in the Trinity is in the past tense, *we were made*. By contrast, the words *would that we should* are oriented to the future. *Would* signifies that it is God's will and *should* implies command, responsibility and even a quality of necessity in what is yet to be fulfilled.⁴³ Becoming like Christ *should* happen inasmuch as it is our destiny by God's unfailing will, and we should become like and begin to pattern our lives after Christ insofar as this is how God has ordained us to live. To summarize, we are made in the image of the Trinity in our substance, and we are in the process of being conformed to the likeness of Christ in the restoration of our sensual nature to our substance. The *imago trinitatis* may thus be seen as the ground and beginning of our salvation and the *imago dei genita*, or Christ, the end.

The language here can give the sense that the *imago trinitatis* has been superseded, but of course that is not at all the case. When Julian writes that while our substance is in the three persons and sensual nature is only in Jesus she is sure to add, "in whom is the fader and the holy gost" (14:58:64). Our beginnings are in the life of the Trinity and in our deepest nature we enjoy a certain union with the Trinity, but the fulfillment of this union in the lifting up of our sensual nature into substance is through Jesus and in becoming like Jesus. We move into the life of the Trinity through Jesus.

The shape of our final salvation is given in Christ; however, the entire Trinity is involved in the accomplishment of this salvation. In a chapter devoted specifically to the Trinity

⁴³ See Hide's discussion of the ME sense of *shall* as signifying necessity: Hide, *GO*, 159.

Julian concludes a paragraph in which she has outlined three properties of the working of the Trinity writing:

For alle oure lyfe is in thre: in the furst (we haue) oure beyng, and in the seconde we haue oure encresyng, and in the thyrde we haue oure fulfylling. The furst is kynde, the seconde is mercy, the thyrde is grace (14:58:30-33).

In concluding that “alle oure lyfe is in thre,” Julian implies that our life is inseparable from the working of the Trinity. In the keeping of our *kyndely* substance in the Father we have our being; in the keeping of our sensuality in the Son we have our increasing; and in the rewarding of the Holy Spirit we have our fulfilling. The particular working of each person of the Trinity together thus marks the span of our lives giving it shape and direction.

After briefly identifying the sense in which our life is in three, Julian identifies these three aspects of our lives in terms of three more descriptives of the properties of the working of the three persons of the Trinity: *kynde*, mercy, and grace respectively. Julian thus intertwines a description of the predestined life course of the chosen between two descriptions of the working of the three persons of the Trinity. The metaphor of knitting is a favourite of Julian's and here, in the very structure of the text, she gives a rhetorical example of such knitting and in this gives another sense of the intimacy of our life with the working of the Trinity.

Julian's writing on the manner in which we are made in the *imago trinitatis* is essentially in accord with Augustine's own view on the matter.⁴⁴ Julian clearly draws on Augustine's notion of an analogy and even participatory link⁴⁵ between the Trinity and the intellectual faculties of mind or memory, reason, and will. Julian does however use slightly different language which may itself serve as commentary on Augustine's own terms. In place of

⁴⁴See Nuth, *WD*, 104-112.

⁴⁵Bell, *IL* 104.

intellectus Julian refers to wisdom, which is of course no major departure. Julian consistently refers to love as the property of the Spirit. In place of *memoria*, which refers to the Father, Julian uses the terms might (14:58:34) and truth (14:44:12). Bell describes *memoria* as what God uses to call the soul back⁴⁶ and as the soul's ultimate incapacity to forget its origins⁴⁷. Julian's reference to the Father in terms of might should be seen also in light of her identification of the property of the working of the father in terms of *kynd* or nature. The might of the Father may thus be associated with a remaining fundamental power in human beings that is the basis for return to God. The use of the word truth in place of *memoria* is more obviously related to the sense in *memoria* of a truth remembered, that is, once again, the basis for the spiritual journey of return.

In terms of the manner in which each aspect of the *imago trinitatis* may be seen as oriented to our final destiny, Julian writes that being made with the same properties as God the soul, “evyr more it doyth that it was made for: it seeth god, and it beholdyth god and it louyth god” (14:44:14). Being made in the image of the Trinity is ultimately oriented to the full enjoyment of God. Further on in the same passage Julian also writes of the soul: “the bryghtnes and clerness of truth and wysedome makyth him to see and know that he is made for loue” (14:44:19-21). The love that is the blossom of the Son and the Father, likewise blooms out of truth and wisdom in humanity. There is a playful ambiguity in terms of whether the love in which the soul is kept is the soul's own love or the love of God or the Holy Spirit.

For Julian there is a sense in which we were created double precisely so that the entire Trinity might be involved in our destiny. In concluding a chapter on the Trinity she writes,

For only by oure reson we may nott profyte, but yf we haue evynly therwith mynde and loue, ne onely in oure

⁴⁶Bell, *IL*, 97.

⁴⁷Bell, *IL*, 102.

kyndly grounde that we haue in god, we may not be savyd, but yf we haue, co(m)yng of the same grounde, mercy and grace. For of these thre werkynges alle to geder we receyue all oure goodys, of whych the furst be goodys of kynde. For in oure furst making god gaue vs moch good and a grete good as we myght receyve onely in oure spyryte; but his forseeyng perpos in his endlesse wysdom wolde that we were doubyll (14:56:51-59).

Due to being made double, the mercy of the Son and the grace of the Spirit must compliment and indeed complete what is begun in the *kyndly* ground of the Father. Further, the necessity for the involvement of the entire Trinity corresponds with the necessity for the mutual involvement of each of our faculties of reason, memory, and love. One is not sufficient without the other. The entirety and fullness of our good and salvation involves both the work of the entire Trinity and each of the properties in which we are made in the *imago trinitatis*.

Enclosed Progression

The intertwining of the working of the Trinity with the life of the soul gives a particular shape both to human intellectual faculties and to the course of human destiny. In the manner in which Julian conceives the shape of human destiny the motif of *exitus/reditus* may clearly be read⁴⁸. The notion of *exitus/reditus* comes to mystical theology through Plotinus. In brief, Plotinus conceives of a cyclical phenomenon of emanation from the One and return thereto. Emanation consists in a process of increasing distinct concreteness in terms of a movement from the One to intelligence (*nous*) to the Soul to embodiment in matter⁴⁹. Echoes of this process of emanation may be observed in the narrative of creation that Julian gradually develops through her text. The creation of the substance of the soul out of God is not unlike the emergence of *nous* and the soul's embodiment in sensuality and the consequences of this bears parallels to the

⁴⁸ Hide, *GO*, 57-60.

⁴⁹ Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981) 39.

emanation of matter. But, important differences remain and these will emerge as I explore how the motif of *exitus/reditus* is introduced through Julian's trinitarian soteriology. I should note here that Julian doesn't seem to have ever read Plotinus and does not use the terms he uses; however, the motif of the *exitus/reditus* achieved wide circulation in Christian theology and Julian has clearly appears made extensive use of it⁵⁰.

According to Julian, in the very moment of the soul's embodiment the process of return to God is in motion. This may be seen in Julian's conception of the source of faith in the soul:

Oure feyth comyth of the kynde loue of oure soule, and of the clere lyghte of oure reson, and of the stedfaste mynde which we haue of god in oure furst mayking. And what tyme oure soule is enspyred in oure body, in which we be made sensuall, as soone mercy and grace begynne to werke, having of vs cure and keypyng with pytte and loue, in which werkyng the holy gost formyth in oure feyth hope that we shall come agayne vp abovyn to our substance, in to the vertu of Crist, encresyd and fulfyllid throw the holy gost (14:55:14-21).

The fall occurs in the context of circularity both in the sense of a beginning that doesn't entirely end and in the sense of a promise of return. The substance's enclosure in the *kynd* of God signifies the continuity of God's will, as well as of a godly will, in humanity and this constitutes the beginning of the promise of return. The capacity to grasp this promise is given by virtue of being made in the image of the Trinity: our *kynde* love, clear reason and steadfast memory. At the very moment in which we become sensual, the Son and the Spirit are immediately at work in beginning to restore the sensuality of the soul to the substance of the soul and inasmuch as we experience this work hope is added to faith. Through being made in the *imago trinitatis* in the substance of our soul we are given the capacity to form faith and thus have the basis for our return. Our sensual nature is the realm of experience and when our experience is shaped by

⁵⁰ Hide, *GO*, 57.

faith we are enabled to see and experience the workings of mercy and grace and are given ground for hope in what is to come.

Julian's metaphor of enclosure implies the circularity of the motif of *exitus/reditus*. The soul is always in some sense held in God. I have alluded to many of the metaphors by which Julian expresses this revelation to her. One further image of enclosure that I have not touched upon is found in the structuring of time in salvation history. Julian is given a glimpse into this structure in these comforting words from "oure goode lorde:"

I may make alle thyng welle, and I can make alle thyng welle, and I shalle make alle thyng welle and I wylle make alle thyng welle; and thou shalt se thyselfe that alle maner of thyng shall be welle (13:31:2-6).

In "I may make alle thyng welle" Julian perceives the working of the Father. The word *may* thus refers to God's might and capacity to make all things well. This might is the abiding ground of our salvation and includes the manner in which the substance of our soul remains in the Father. Insofar as *may* refers to the ground, foundation and origin of both our souls and our salvation it refers to our deep past, which in some sense abides. "I can make alle thyng welle" pertains to the work of Christ in which we are made again, and enabled in our movement of return. "I can" refers to the present time. Julian understands, "I wylle make all thyng welle," in terms of the Holy Spirit's involvement in the eschatological fulfillment of our salvation, thus referring to the future. The span of our time lies between our origins in God and the fulfillment of our return to God by the working of the Holy Spirit. Even the time in between is conceived in terms of the enabling presence of Christ. Finally, "I shalle make alle thyng welle" refers to the work of the Trinity. Hyde recognizes a quality of necessity in *shalle* in its Middle English

usage⁵¹. As a whole the Trinity constitutes the entire span of time giving a shape to time that becomes its very nature and necessity. Ultimately time is bound to one beginning, progression and end insofar as its shape is conveyed by the working of three persons in one. In this picture of time, the soul is enclosed in the love of God by virtue of the nature of its past, present and future.

The process of return as it is conceived by Plotinus and other neo-platonists is a solitary journey without aid even from the One, and is progressively spiritual until every trace of matter and distinction drops away. In Christian adaptations of the notion of *exitus/reditus* the notion of the solitary nature of the return is decisively dropped as one may readily see in Julian's perception of an absolute saturation of presence and help. The spiritual nature of the return with an according hatred of matter has presented more of a temptation to mystics. Julian is not be counted among those who were caught in this snare.

If the Father and the Spirit constitute the enclosure of our destiny, the Son, as the mid-person meets us at the midpoint entering into sensual nature and thus into time and the realm of experience. The entry of the divine one into the midpoint, between the *exitus* and the *reditus* transforms the neo-platonist cosmology giving sensuality a new and lasting dignity. Our sensual nature is never transcended, but is transformed in being lifted up into substance by virtue of the incarnation and passion of Jesus. Further, as much as sensual nature constitutes the occasion of the fall and its attendant suffering, it is clearly considered a fortunate fall and equally the occasion for gain. Indeed the work of Jesus consists in *encrecyng*. The increase that occurs through the fall and its restoration in Christ is conceived in the sense of the heights being better known through acquaintance with the depths. As the soul comes to know its littleness, the immensity of God's love is better known. One might even say that the extent of the love of God

⁵¹ Hide, *GO*, 159.

is better known by having fought against it.

Implicit even in the above conceptions of the nature of increase is the priority of the notion of *onyng*. The knowledge of love is inseparable from the experience of love and love itself realizes *onyng*. The work of each person of the Trinity can, or rather should be conceived in terms of *onyng*. We are created as one in the Father, increased in oneness in the Son in this lifetime, and fulfilled in oneness in the Spirit in heaven⁵². The sense in which Jesus ultimately increases oneness is by lifting up sensuality into substance. The goodness that was only enjoyed spiritually will hence, by the fulfilling work of the Holy Spirit, also be enjoyed in our sensual nature. The material is thus reconciled with the spiritual. Oneness is increased by including the very sensuality that gave occasion for the fall into division.

The notion of increase or progress in terms of something that is gained as a result of emanation is lost to the neo-platonic tradition and indeed to aspects of the Christian tradition. Not so for Julian. Between the enclosure of the Father and the Spirit a quality of progression and development is accomplished through the Son. However, the Father and the Spirit cannot be excluded from this quality for in the Trinity where one works there work all. Most obviously, the Spirit's involvement may be observed in terms of the fulfillment of what is begun in Christ. The sense in which the Father is involved is less immediately apparent. The properties of the Son and the Spirit emerge from that of the Father, who is primarily associated with *kynd* as in nature, and thus the progression initiated by the Son and fulfilled by the Spirit must be seen as begun in the Father. In one sense then the picture here is of enclosed progression, but only if the loving manner of God's enclosure may be seen at play in the progression of oneness.

⁵² Hide, *GO*, 59.

Chapter 4

The Salvation of All

Readers of Julian of Norwich's *Showings* have frequently concluded a doctrine of universalism from her adage that all shall be well. While a good deal of the foregoing may be viewed as laying the ground for the argument that Julian is a universalist, I have to concede to Grace Jantzen's observation that while one may find a hope for the salvation of every soul in Julian's text, one does not find a doctrine of universalism⁵³. In these final pages, I will briefly explore Julian's most direct comments about hell and damnation. Julian's references to damnation and her sincere loyalty to Church teaching make strident claims that she is a universalist dubious. However, a radical hope for the salvation of all may nonetheless be discerned. I will conclude this paper with some final remarks on the nature of Julian's hope.

Before continuing I should note that Julian's world was Christendom and not the pluralistic context which defines contemporary considerations of soteriology. However, Julian was certainly aware of Jews and while she recognizes the Church's teaching that Jews are damned, she also notes that in her visions she didn't see anything regarding the damnation of the Jews (13:33:21-23)⁵⁴. The tension here relates to the tension that pervades Julian's entire text and that is the tension between Julian's faithfulness to Church teaching and her faithfulness to her own vision. The resolution of this tension is ultimately left to Julian's expectation of an unknown marvel in which she places great hope. I will return to a consideration of this unknown marvel. For the time being, suffice it to say that it is reasonable to conclude that Julian includes the fate of the Jews in the scope of her general hope.

⁵³ Grace Jantzen, *Julian of Norwich: Mystic and Theologian*. (Great Britain: Paulist Press, 1987) 179.

⁵⁴ See Nuth, *WD*, 164-165.

Julian may also have been dimly aware of the existence of Muslims, but she certainly would not have been aware of Buddhists, Hindus or other eastern religious traditions. These were not within Julian's radar as she pondered the question of the salvation of all. Consequently, one must be very cautious and perhaps tentative in the application of Julian's conclusions to contemporary questions of soteriology. At the same time, Julian reflects on the nature of the human soul, not simply the Christian soul, and so it is reasonable to extend her hope beyond the limits of the world that she happened to be aware of. One must of course be aware that such an extension constitutes a modern application of Julian's thought and one that would not have been in her purview.

The Threat of Damnation

As much as Julian's showings may be characterized as revelations of divine love, it is impossible to read her text in its entirety without noting her preoccupation with the question of damnation. One might say that the very focus on divine love in her showings fuels Julian's preoccupation. Up until the showing of the Lord and the Servant, Chapter 51, Julian is continuously asking how her showing that *all* shall be well may be reconciled with the Church's teaching regarding the damnation of unrepentant souls. Julian repeatedly confirms her faithfulness to Church teaching and her prayer is simply that she might be given understanding that would resolve the tension between Church teaching and her showings. After the vision of the Lord and Servant the prayers for enlightenment on the tension cease due in part to new insight concerning the enduring nature of the godly will in the saved. In fact, her fears are only somewhat eased and the desire behind her prayer is only partly answered (14:53:9-10). The threat of damnation remains and Julian seems to resign herself to the mystery of how then all can be well.

In considering Julian's thought on the threat of damnation one must recall that Julian was an anchoress and anchoritic spirituality, as evidenced in the *Ancrene Wisse*, alternated between bridal mysticism and a fear of damnation that borders on extreme. The very flight to the containment of the anchoress' cell may in part be understood in the context of a conception of the world as a space in which the devil roams as a hunting and devouring lion⁵⁵. Though Julian's text is certainly not without allusions to the prowling of the devil, it must be said that relative to the tone of the *Ancrene Wisse* the sense of threat in Julian's showings is overshadowed by her hope and her confidence in God's love.

When the devil does appear to Julian it is in a dream in which he approaches and tries to choke Julian to death but cannot. When Julian awakes she experiences the remnants of the devil's presence in a sensation of heat and the scent of a terrible stench. Julian wonders if she and the others in the room are about to be burned to death (14:67:16-19). Several things stand out in this experience. The first is that Julian is clearly disturbed by the dream. She wakes in a sweat with her heart pounding and feeling more dead than alive. The second is that in spite of her fear throughout the dream she declares that her trust in God's keeping never failed. The simultaneity of the sense of fear and the quality of trust and confidence recalls the duality or doubleness of the current human condition. For Julian in this experience the reality of danger and threat exists alongside a confidence that all shall be well.

Another thing that stands out about the dream of the devil is the very fact that it was a dream. Julian notes that while the rest of her showings occur in a waking state this showing of the devil occurred while she was asleep. Julian doesn't comment on this contrast except to make the contrast itself explicit. One is drawn to wonder whether there is any significance in the fact

⁵⁵ *Anchoritic Spirituality: Ancrene Wisse and Associated Works*. Translated by Savage, A., and Watson, N.. (New York: Paulist Press, 1991) 182. For the original English text see, *The English Text of the Ancrene Riwe: Ancrene Wisse: Edited from MS Corpus Christi College Cambridge 402*, Edited by J.R.R. Tolkien. EETS os 249 (Oxford, 1962).

that for Julian the vision of an encounter of evil is of another quality and type than the visions of God's saving work.

Julian's showings are clear and specific when elucidating the nature and intent of the consequences of sin in the present time; however, when the question turns to eternal consequences Julian becomes vague, uncertain and often hesitant. The appearance of the devil only in dream states may be recalled here alongside the curious fact that Julian's prayer for a vision of hell and purgatory is never granted. This absence is in marked contrast to the visions of many of her contemporaries who at times seem to have visions of nothing but purgatory and hell. Julian's clearest vision concerning damnation is found in the fifth revelation concerning the eternal damnation of the devil. The eternal suffering of the devil consists of the suffering that the devil intended for those that were finally saved. The suffering that the devil did cause for the saved is turned to joy and this same suffering is left with the devil in his eternal damnation (5:13:46-48). Interestingly, Julian's only vision of the sufferings of damnation directly pertains only to the devil and relates back to the eternal joy of the saved.

Later, when Julian does not receive a vision of purgatory or hell, she comes to understand from the vision of the devil's damnation that "alle the creatures that be of the devylles condiscion in thys lyfe and ther in endyng, ther no more mencyon made of them before god and alle his holyn then of the devylle" (13:33:11-14). Julian here recognizes the possibility that even the baptized could succumb to such a fate. It is noteworthy that Julian doesn't remark on the nature of the experience of the damnation of human beings and even seems loath to refer to it as damnation. Instead, she alludes to a sense in which the unsaved are forgotten. Again, the locus of attention is the heavenly host with the experience of the damned understood only with regard to the experience of the saved. Here the experience of the saved in relation to the damned is not joy, as it was with regard to the devil, but almost a non-experience – a not-

mentioning.

In the Short Text of Julian's showings, written not long after the visions first occurred, Julian reflects more on the specific nature of sin and the consequent nature of damnation. Julian concludes there that sin is nothing and that those who love sin will end up as nothing⁵⁶. This line of thinking is consistent with Julian's discussion in the Long Text of wrath as a direct consequence of the individual's rebellion against his own deepest nature. Notably, Julian omits her earlier reflections on the specific nature of damnation in the more evolved Long Text. The movement from describing damnation in terms of non-existence to damnation in terms of not being mentioned before God seems to mark an increasing hesitancy on Julian's behalf to make definite conclusions concerning the nature of damnation without wishing to dismiss the possibility of damnation.

Julian's comments on the soul's disappearance into nothingness in the Short Text and in the Long Text of not being mentioned before God both relate to a quality of absence from God. As much as Julian's thought here becomes vague and hesitating there is simultaneously a sense in which she reaches into her profoundest observations on the nature of sin and damnation. Ultimately Julian urges that it is not hell that is to be feared but hell's sin. The pains of hell mean nothing apart from the horror of sin (16:76:5-8). Julian clarifies the precise nature of the evilness and even pain of sin when she writes that there is nothing more painful for the soul than to have turned away from God (16:76:11). Those of the devil's condition, who participate in hell's sin, are finally those who have turned away from God. Building on Julian's thought on the nature of the substance of the soul as a participation in God, it is possible to conclude that the horror of damnation is nothing less than the horror of having turned away from the loving source and core of one's own being.

⁵⁶C&W, *Showings*, 166.

Dread

While Julian may wonder how her showings and Church teaching harmonize on a theological level, she is clear about their complementarity on a pastoral level. Indeed Julian is confident that all that is “speedfulle” for us to know is in the teaching of the Church (13:34:13). All that is useful, all that speeds the soul on its way is in Church teaching. One may discern an analogy in Julian's approach to Origen's own thought on the matter as when he writes that the Logos “wisely utters threatening words with a hidden meaning to frighten people who would not otherwise be able to turn away from the flood of their sins.”⁵⁷ While Julian may not go as far in her speculations as Origen does concerning the exclusively didactic nature of the teaching on damnation, she is certainly far more enthusiastic and confident in writing about the purpose of this teaching than she is concerning its specific content. The purpose that Julian identifies relates to the cultivation of a sense of dread.

Not surprisingly, Julian's thinking on dread is inseparable from the theme of doubles. The very nature of the soul's constitution as both sensual and substantial necessitates the activity of both dread and love in the soul's return to God. Julian identifies the reconciliation of the soul's sensuality and substance as an element of the return to God and in the process of reconciliation, in which each moves into the other, two basic errors may arise: despair and presumption. In the soul's expanding awareness of its sensual nature, by grace, the soul may be overwhelmed by its sinfulness and begin to doubt in God's goodness and might to accomplish the soul's salvation. Julian identifies this as a quality of doubtful dread which leads to despair (16:74:13). This type of dread is unhealthy to the soul and God's will is to transform this dread

⁵⁷Origen as quoted by John Sachs in "Apocatastasis in patristic theology." *Theological Studies* 54/4 (Dec 1993) 623.

into love that once again recognizes God's good intent for the soul.

On the other hand, as the soul further realizes its substantial nature, again by grace, the soul becomes aware of its enclosure in the love of God and may be tempted to presumption, which is a recklessness that presumes upon God's boundless love by making this love an occasion for license. At this point it is healthy for the soul to experience dread. This occurs by becoming reacquainted with an awareness of how the soul, in itself, is completely vulnerable and cannot know the extent of its sinfulness nor how it might next succumb to sin (16:79:12-14). Knowing our feebleness is the other side of knowing God's lordship in the sense that acquaintance with our weakness leads to awareness of the extent to which we depend on God for salvation. This awareness has the quality of dread.

Julian writes that love and dread are brothers (16:74:20) and that one should not be had without the other (16:74:29). The two relate to a double vision of God. The knowing of God as good arouses love, while the knowing of God as the Lord on whom the soul depends inspires dread. A sense of how the two work together may be found in examining the affects of dread when it is healthy. Julian calls the dread holy that "makyth vs to hastely fle fro all all that is nott goode and falle into oure lordes brest, as the chylde in to the moders arme"(16:74:34-35). Dread describes the experience that results in flight: an awareness of evil and feebleness. Love is the recognition that God is the source of all good and that God, like a mother, yearns to protect and comfort the fearful soul. Love gives the flight direction, orienting the soul to take refuge in God. Love without dread leads to presumption while dread without love leads to despair.

Pastorally, Julian's showings and the Church teaching on damnation are mutually supportive. The showings of divine love provide a sense of direction and inspire the soul with hope and confidence for the journey. Julian does not refute Church teaching, primarily because

of her love and obedience to the Church, but Julian also recognizes that the Church teaching on the possibility of damnation inspires a quality of dread that pertains to the seriousness of the journey of return to God. In order to guard against arrogant recklessness, awareness of God's love must be balanced by awareness of the human propensity to turn away from God.

The Communal Nature of Salvation

The question may remain concerning the extent to which Julian's love for the Church and obedience to its teachings held her back from pursuing the full soteriological implications of her showings. However, it should also be noted that Julian's showings inform her very ecclesiology in such a way that the tension between Church teaching on damnation and her showings concerning sin and salvation is given one more arena in which to play.

Often Julian's soteriology is discussed with little reference to her ecclesiology, except to note her anxiety concerning the contrast between her showings and Church teaching. This is a grave mistake insofar as Julian tends to avoid considering salvation in terms of the pursuit of an isolated individual. Indeed, for Julian the individual Christian is inconceivable apart from the body of the Church. The extent to which Julian identifies the individual Christian with the body of believers may be found in the parallel that Julian draws between looking into the heart of the Church and looking into one's own soul (14:62:25). Julian implies that looking into the heart of the Church is nothing less than looking into one's own soul. In fact the vision is even grander for Julian also writes that the Church is at the heart of creation such that the diverse natures of all creatures may be found comprehended in the body of the Church. The diverse natures of all creatures flow out from God and are restored to God through the salvation of humankind (14:62:25). In the salvation story of the Church is thus comprehended the salvation of every individual who is to be saved as well as the restoration of creation, in all its diversity, to the one

God.

The communal nature of salvation involves a measure of security for the individual soul. The individual is bound to fall and be broken over and over, but the Church, as a whole, is never broken. The individual is thus wise to attach herself to the body of the Church, which is the body of Christ (14:61:59-63). There is a sense here in which the constant virtue of the body of believers is participated in by the individual whose virtue is inconstant.

To use a term that Julian favours, the love of God is the force that knits each person to another. This knitting is such that "no man can parte them selfe from other" (15:62:19-20).

As much as the love of God knits the soul to Godself, so does this love accomplish a oneing among humans. In this oneing a type of rapprochement occurs between the high and the low such that the highest are able to see themselves needy with the lowest and the lowest may be comforted with the highest (16:78:28,29). The parallel between the nature of the Church and the nature of the soul becomes explicit here in a pattern of redemption. In the same way that grace is mutually communicated between the high substance and the low sensuality of the soul, so in the Church each communicates grace to the other in the onening that God's love accomplishes between diverse kinds. The higher comes down to the lower "of the kynde loue of the selfe by grace" (14:52:87). This love is kynde because it makes the lower like the higher. The higher and the lower are no longer separated, but are the "doubyll werkyng" of one loue (14:52:90).

The sense in which *all* shall be well takes on a slightly different connotation in light of Julian's ecclesiology. The *all* could possibly be seen as the body of the Church. Julian says of herself that as a singular being she is nothing, but that in general, with all other Christians, in the oneness by which God knits Christians together, she has her being (1:9:9,10). It is possible to conclude from this that the *all* refers to the general body of believers, from which one could

potentially exclude oneself and fall into non-existence. More likely, the *all* could refer to the entirety of creation as it is knitted together into a knot by the love of God. In this latter sense, the Church acts as a sacrament to the world and the medium through which all shall be well. The ambiguity here perhaps reflects the general tension between Church teaching and the showings. It is nonetheless worthwhile to note that while Church teaching may have caused Julian to hesitate to express the full extent of her hope in the salvation of all, the very manner in which Julian experiences and thinks about the Church itself after the showings expresses a hope in the extension of salvation from those most close to God in the Church outwards to an undetermined generality.

The Hye Marveyale

Following an analysis of the range of often contradictory opinions that Origen expressed on the matter of salvation, Crouzel concludes that with regard to the universality of *apokatastasis*, or restoration, the most that can be said is that Origen hoped for it⁵⁸. Crouzel suggests that systematic thinking, especially on divine realities, is unable to “grasp the antitheses that express the real.” Origen is thus to be praised for not attempting to “reach God by a system” and for being unashamed to grope “in the dark places of the faith.”⁵⁹ In this regard Julian too is to be praised for not simplistically and prematurely reducing the tensions and contradictions that she encounters in her fidelity to both Church teaching and her showings. Julian's refusal to choose between the two, suggests neither indecision nor hesitancy due to fear of condemnation, but rather a sense of the fruitfulness of doubleness and its consequent tensions.

Hans Urs Von Balthasar writes, "When we come to the question of judgment and

⁵⁸Henri Crouzel, *Origen*. Worrall, A.S.. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989) 265.

⁵⁹Ibid, 266.

redemption, we are at the inexpressible limits."⁶⁰ Julian goes to the inexpressible limits, to the "dark places of the faith," and in the end she is to be praised for her respect for the darkness. There is little doubt that Julian hopes for the salvation of all, but she declines to convert this hope into a doctrinal formulation. Julian respects the inexpressible and nowhere is this more obviously apparent than in the fact that Julian's hope for the salvation of all is most powerfully expressed in reference to the unknown: the "hye marveyle."

Julian's showings ultimately culminate in a sense of marvel or wonder. The deed by which salvation is accomplished is described as "mervelous" (13:36:2) and it is beheld in heaven in "marvelous joy" (13:36:11). Julian's marvelling is due in part to her realization that the deed is done by God "and I shalle do ryght nought but synne; and my synne shall nott lett his goodnes workyng" (13:36:6,7). The manner in which God works bewilders Julian and her marvel is a grateful delight that the human failure to do anything but sin finally cannot prevent the unfolding of salvation.

In the midst of Julian's delighted marvelling, her thoughts turn to the "the reprovdy" (13:36:45) and she reflects that in such moments Jesus gently turns one's gaze back to himself, the saviour. In the return to the contemplation of the saviour, Julian writes that the accomplishment of salvation by the saviour is to be taken "for the generall man, yett it excludyth nott the specyalle; for what oure good lorde wylle do by his poure creatures, it is now vnknown to me"(13:36:51-53). My earlier comment about the possibility for the individual soul to be excluded from the salvation extended to the general body of the Church seems to be disputed here. Julian hangs back from saying anything definitive on the matter and concludes that the fate of the reprovdy is finally unknown to her. However, it must be noted that the unknown for

⁶⁰Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth: Exposition and Interpretation*. Translated by Oakes, E.T.. (San Francisco: Communio Books, 1951) 246. For a further discussion of this theme see Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *Dare We Hope "That All Men Shall Be Saved"?: With a Short Discourse On Hell* (Colorado: Ignatius Press, 1988).

Julian is an occasion for hope as she indicated earlier in the same chapter in saying that we should delight in God "for all that he shewyth and for all that he hydyth" (13:36:31).

The hidden is indeed a source of hope for Julian. While her showings never fully reveal how all shall be well, Julian is given intimations of the coming accomplishment of a great deed that is distinct from the deed of salvation that Julian is given to see (13:36:54ff.). Throughout Julian's showings she continues to return to contemplations of the great deed referring to it as a "hye marveyle" (14:46:49). Julian writes that the deed will be hidden in both heaven and earth until it is done, but this doesn't prevent Julian from marvelling about the nature of the deed. In the subsequent paragraph Julian turns to a discourse on miracles. She refers to miracles as "mervelous" which is noteworthy insofar as *mervelous* and *marveyle* are words that are repeatedly associated with the great deed. Miracles for Julian represent the divine surprises that emerge out of sorrow and trouble. Arguably then, Julian's intent in introducing the discourse on miracles immediately following her mention of the great but unknown deed is to suggest that it is possible that the great deed will upset our current expectations concerning the fate of those who now suffer under unrelieved slavery to sin.

The "hye marveyle" refers to the great deed, but, significantly, Julian also uses this precise term to refer to the showing that she is given that there is no forgiveness in God because there is no wrath in God (14:49:1ff.). God doesn't hold any sin against the soul and so, ultimately, it is not entirely meaningful to speak of God's forgiveness. In God's sight forgiveness is unnecessary and this is a marvel because of the radical difference between the way that God sees the soul and the way that the soul sees itself in its propensity to sin. The use of the term "hye marveyle" for both the great deed and the absence of wrath in God has obvious connotations.

The sense of marvel that is the consummation of Julian's showings is not intended to be

understood as the luxury or special grace of a solitary mystic. To the contrary, Julian asserts that "to reverently marveyle" belongs to the soul as one of two debts (14:47:1,2). The soul's marvelling centres on the absence of wrath in God. Interestingly, the second debt of the soul is to "meekly suffer, evyr enjoyeng in God"(14:47:2). These two debts recall the theme of doubles in every respect. The substance and sensuality of the soul; God's vision and the soul's vision of itself; and the necessity of both love and dread to combat despair and presumption all pertain to the two debts of the soul. The union with God in the substance of our souls, God's loving vision of us and our response of love to God all relate to the sense of marvel that by nature belongs to the soul. On the other hand, the propensity to sin of the sensual aspect of the soul, the knowledge of ourselves as broken, and the consequent dread each relate to the inevitable suffering of the soul which Julian insists must be rejoicingly endured. Another double is suggested here and that is the necessity of beholding both the "hye marveyle" and the teaching of the Church. Arguably, Julian implies that the teaching of the Church relates to one very real aspect of the double vision which is that we are sinners deserving wrath while the *hye marveyle* relates to the fact that there is nonetheless an absence of wrath in God.

Exploration of Julian's references to the *hye marveyle*, suggest a radical hope for the salvation of all. Julian clearly has intimations of the nature of the unknown great deed, but in finally leaving it as a mystery Julian retains her hope as a hope rather than a doctrinal formulation. Further, Julian's text is by no means unambiguous or even entirely consistent in terms of how she attempts to resolve the tensions or antitheses of the dual beholdings that run through her text. While she hopes for the salvation of all, she also clearly believes in the reality of hell and considers the possibility for the soul to refuse God even as much as this implies a refusal of the soul's own being. In the end Julian is left with the tensions that she prayed would be reconciled. However, Julian's showings finally offer her a new experience of the lacuna, the

unknown, the unspeakable space between poles and that experience is best described as hope.

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