Revelations of Divine Love

JULIAN OF NORWICH

Revelations of Divine Love

XVI Revelations of Divine Love (1670 text)

Rendered into modern English with AI (Claude) and edited



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Original text: *XVI Revelations of Divine Love, Shewed to a Devout Servant of Our Lord, Called Mother Juliana, an Anchorete of Norwich*, edited by Serenus (Hugh Paulinus) Cressy OSB (1605–1674) (London, 1670), from the EEBO-TCP transcription B20816 (github.com/textcreationpartnership/B20816) (CC0), checked in a few places against the 1670 scan (archive.org/details/bim_early-english-books-1641-1700_xvi-revelations-of-divin_cressy-r-f-s_1670). Cressy printed from a manuscript of the same family as the Paris manuscript (Bibliothèque nationale, fonds anglais 40), so the wording differs here and there from the British Library's Sloane MS 2499, on which most modern editions are based. The long s is printed as s; Cressy's dedication, preface, chapter headings, italics and marginal glosses are omitted; his few glosses in parentheses within the text are kept as printed. Cressy has 85 chapters; they are re-divided here at the standard 86 chapter breaks. Modern version: rewritten from the 1670 English with AI (Claude), then edited for accuracy and consistency. Not reviewed by a human specialist. Free to reuse under CC BY-SA 4.0. The small numbers set in the text are chapter and paragraph.

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INTRODUCTION

In May 1373 a woman of thirty, so ill that her parish priest had come to give her the last rites, saw a series of sixteen visions, or "showings," as she lay looking at a crucifix: blood running from under the crown of thorns, all that is made held in her hand like a hazelnut, Christ's face drying in his last pains, and a long night in which she felt the devil at her throat. She later lived as an anchoress, enclosed in a cell beside the church of St. Julian in Norwich, and is known to us probably only by the church's name. She wrote a short account soon after her illness—thought to be the earliest surviving book in English by a woman—and, after some twenty years of reflection, this much longer one, usually dated to the 1390s or a little later.

The Long Text is a work of theology as well as of vision. Julian asks how sin can exist if God is good, and is told that "sin is behovely"—fitting, or necessary—"but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well." She sees no anger in God, only in us; in the parable of a lord and a servant who falls into a ditch while running to do his lord's will, she finds that God looks on human failure with pity rather than blame; and she speaks of Christ, and of God, as our mother. The book ends with the answer she was given after fifteen years of asking what it all meant: "Love was his meaning."

The left column is the first printed edition, made in 1670 by the English Benedictine Serenus Cressy from a manuscript close to the one now in Paris; its English is Julian's Middle English with the spelling partly updated. Chapter and paragraph numbers in the margin follow the standard 86-chapter division of modern editions. The right column is a faithful modern-English version.

Before the Showings

Chapters 1–3
The sixteen showings listed; the three gifts Julian asked for; her illness in May 1373, when she was thirty and a half.

CHAPTER 1: THE SIXTEEN SHOWINGS

Julian lists the sixteen revelations of love that Jesus Christ showed her.

1.1 This is a revelation of love that Jesus Christ, our endless bliss, made in sixteen showings, of which:

1.2 The first is of his precious crowning with thorns. In it were contained and specified the blessed Trinity, with the Incarnation and the union between God and man's soul, together with many fair showings and teachings of endless wisdom and love. In this first showing all the showings that follow are grounded and joined.

1.3 The second is of the discoloring of his fair face, as a sign of his dear and precious Passion.

1.4 The third is that our Lord God almighty, all wisdom and all love, just as truly as he has made all things that are, just as truly does and works all things that are done.

1.5 The fourth is the scourging of his tender body, with plentiful shedding of his precious blood.

1.6 The fifth is that the fiend is overcome by the precious Passion of Christ.

1.7 The sixth is the honorable thanking of our Lord God, with which he rewards all his blessed servants in heaven.

1.8 The seventh is the frequent feeling of well-being and woe. The feeling of well-being is gracious touching and enlightening, with true certainty of endless joy. The feeling of woe is of

temptation by heaviness and weariness of our fleshly living. With this came the spiritual understanding that we are kept just as truly in love, in woe as in well-being, by the goodness of God.

1.9 The eighth is the last pains of Christ and his cruel dying.

1.10 The ninth is of the delight that the blessed Trinity has in the hard Passion of Christ after his pitiful and sorrowful dying. In this joy and delight he wills that we be in solace and mirth with him until we come to the glory in heaven.

1.11 The tenth is our Lord Jesus Christ, his blessed heart cloven right in two by love.

1.12 The eleventh is a high spiritual showing of his dear and precious Mother.

1.13 The twelfth is that our Lord God is all sovereign being.

1.14 The thirteenth is that our Lord God wills that we have great regard for all the deeds he has done. He did them in the great nobility of the making of all things, and in the excellence of the making of man, which is above all his works, and in the precious amends he has made for man's sin, turning all our blame into endless honor. Then he means this: "Behold and see. By the same might, wisdom, and goodness by which I have done all this, by the same might, wisdom, and goodness I shall make well all that is not well, and you shall see it." And in this he wills that we keep ourselves in the faith and truth of Holy Church, not wishing to know his secrets, except as far as they belong to us in this life.

1.15 The fourteenth is that our Lord God is the ground of our beseeching. In this two fair properties were seen: the one is rightful prayer, the other is true trust, and he wills both to be equally large. In this way our prayer delights him, and he of his goodness fulfills it.

1.16 The fifteenth is that we shall suddenly be taken from all our pain and from all our woe. Of his goodness we shall come up above, where we shall have our Lord Jesus for our reward, and be filled full with joy and bliss in heaven.

1.17 The sixteenth is that the blessed Trinity, our Maker, in Christ Jesus our Savior, dwells endlessly in our soul, honorably

rewarding and commanding all things, mightily and wisely saving and keeping us for love. And we shall not be overcome by our enemy.

CHAPTER 2: THREE GIFTS

The showings came in May 1373 to a woman who had asked God for three gifts.

2.1 This revelation was made to a simple creature unlettered, living in mortal flesh, in the year of our Lord 1373, the fourteenth day of May. Before this, the creature had desired three gifts by the grace of God.[1]

2.2 The first was remembrance of the Passion.

2.3 The second was bodily sickness.

2.4 The third was to have, by God's gift, three wounds. As for the first, it seemed to me that I had some feeling for the Passion of Christ, but still I desired to have more by the grace of God. I wished I had been there at that time with Magdalen and with the others who were Christ's lovers. Then I might have seen bodily the Passion that our Lord suffered for me, and might have suffered with him as others did who loved him. Therefore I desired a bodily sight, in which I might have more knowledge of the bodily pains of our Savior, and of the compassion of our Lady and of all his true lovers who were living at that time and saw his pains. For I wished to be one of them and to suffer with them. Any other sight or showing of God I never desired, none, until the soul should depart from the body, for I believed I would be saved by the mercy of God. This was my meaning: I wanted, because of that showing, to have afterward a truer remembrance of the Passion of Christ. As for the second, there came to my mind with contrition, freely, without any seeking, a wholehearted desire to have by God's gift a bodily sickness. I wanted that sickness to be so severe as to be unto death, so that in that sickness I might receive all the rites of Holy Church. I

1 This is the date as Cressy prints it; the manuscripts differ, giving the 8th or the 13th of May.

wanted to believe myself that I would die, and I wanted all creatures who saw me to suppose the same. For in that sickness I wanted no kind of comfort of fleshly or earthly life. I desired to have all the kinds of pains, bodily and spiritual, that I would have if I were dying: all the fears and temptations of fiends, and all other kinds of pains, except the passing out of the soul. And I intended this because I wanted to be purged by the mercy of God, and afterward to live more to the honor of God because of that sickness. For I hoped that it might be to my reward when I died, since I desired to be soon with my God and Maker.

2.5 These two desires, for the Passion and for the sickness, I asked of him with a condition, for it seemed to me that this was not the common practice of prayer. Therefore I said: "Lord, you know what I want. If it is your will, may I have it. And if it is not your will, good Lord, do not be displeased, for I want nothing but what you will."

2.6 This sickness I desired in my youth, so that I might have it when I was thirty years old.

2.7 As for the third, by the grace of God and the teaching of Holy Church, I conceived a mighty desire to receive three wounds in my life. They were the wound of true contrition, the wound of natural compassion, and the wound of wholehearted longing for God.

2.8 Just as I asked for the other two with a condition, so I asked mightily for this third without any condition. The two desires mentioned before passed from my mind, and the third remained continually.

CHAPTER 3: THE SICKNESS

At thirty and a half Julian falls mortally ill and fixes her eyes on the crucifix.

3.1 And when I was thirty and a half years old, God sent me a bodily sickness, in which I lay three days and three nights. On the fourth night I received all my rites of Holy Church, and did not expect to live until day. After this I lay two days and two nights,

and on the third night I often thought I was about to pass away, and so did those who were with me. And yet in this I felt a great reluctance to die. It was not for anything on earth that I delighted to live for, nor for any pain that I was afraid of, for I trusted in God for his mercy. It was because I wished to live so as to love God better, and for a longer time, so that I might, by the grace of that living, have the more knowing and loving of God in the bliss of heaven. For it seemed to me that all the time I had lived here was so little and so short in comparison with that endless bliss. I thought: "Good Lord, may I not live longer to your honor?"

3.2 And I understood by my reason and by the feeling of my pains that I would die, and I assented fully, with all the will of my heart, to be at God's will.

3.3 Thus I endured until day, and by then my body was dead from the middle downward, as far as I could feel.

3.4 Then I was helped to be set upright, propped up with help, so as to have more freedom of my heart to be at God's will, and to think on God while my life lasted.

3.5 My curate was sent for to be at my ending. Before he came I had set my eyes upward and could not speak. He set the cross before my face and said, "I have brought the image of our Savior. Look at it and take comfort from it." It seemed to me that I was well as I was, for my eyes were set upward into heaven, where I trusted to come by the mercy of God.

3.6 But nevertheless I agreed to set my eyes on the face of the crucifix, if I could, and so I did, for it seemed to me that I could endure longer looking straight ahead than straight up. After this my sight began to fail. It grew as dark around me in the room as if it had been night, except on the image of the cross, where an ordinary light remained, and I did not know how. Everything apart from the cross was ugly and fearful to me, as if it were thronged with fiends.

3.7 After this the upper part of my body began to die, so far that I scarcely had any feeling. My greatest pain was shortness of breath and the failing of life.

3.8 Then I truly expected to pass away. In this state all my pain was suddenly taken from me, and I was as whole as ever I was before, especially in the upper part of my body. I marveled at this sudden change, for it seemed to me a secret working of God, and not of nature. And yet, feeling this ease, I trusted no more that I would live, nor was the feeling of this ease full ease to me. It seemed to me that I would rather have been delivered from this world, for my heart was set on it with all my will.

3.9 Then it came suddenly to my mind that I should desire the second wound, as our Lord's gift and of his grace, that my body might be filled full with remembrance and feeling of his blessed Passion, as I had prayed before. For I wanted his pains to be my pains, with compassion, and afterward longing for God.

3.10 So it seemed to me that I might, with his grace, have the wounds I had desired before. But in this I never desired any bodily sight, nor any kind of showing of God. I desired compassion with him, such as it seemed to me a natural soul might have with our Lord Jesus, who for love was willing to become a mortal man. I desired to suffer, living in my mortal body, as God would give me grace.

The First Showing

Chapters 4–9
Blood running from under the crown of thorns; the little thing like a hazelnut; Mary; God is all that is good.

CHAPTER 4: THE CROWN OF THORNS

Blood runs from under the crown of thorns; Julian sees the Trinity and Mary.

4.1 And in this, suddenly I saw the red blood running down from under the garland, hot and fresh, plentiful and lively, just as it was at the time when the garland of thorns was pressed on his blessed head. It was he, both God and man, the same who suffered for me. I perceived truly and mightily that it was he himself who showed it to me, without any intermediary.

4.2 And in the same showing the Trinity suddenly filled my heart with the utmost joy. And so I understood it shall be in heaven without end for all who come there. For the Trinity is God; God is the Trinity; the Trinity is our Maker; the Trinity is our keeper; the Trinity is our everlasting lover; the Trinity is our endless joy and our bliss, by our Lord Jesus Christ and in our Lord Jesus Christ. And this was shown in the first sight and in all of them, for when Jesus appears, the blessed Trinity is understood, as I see it.

4.3 And I said, *Benedicite, Domine!* I said this with a mighty voice, out of reverence in my meaning. I was very greatly astonished, for the wonder and marvel I felt that he who is so worthy

of reverence and so much to be feared would be so familiar with a sinful creature living in this wretched flesh.[1]

4.4 So I took it at that time that our Lord Jesus, in his courteous love, wanted to show me comfort before the time of my temptation. For it seemed to me that it might well be that I would be tempted by fiends before I died, by the permission of God and under his keeping.

4.5 With this sight of his blessed Passion, together with the Godhead that I saw in my understanding, I knew well that this was strength enough for me against all the fiends of hell and against all spiritual enemies—yes, and for all creatures living who shall be saved.

4.6 In this he brought our Lady Saint Mary to my understanding. I saw her spiritually in bodily likeness: a simple and humble maiden, young in age, grown a little beyond a child, of the stature she had when she conceived.

4.7 God also showed me in part the wisdom and the truth of her soul. In this I understood the reverent beholding with which she beheld her God, who is her Maker, marveling with great reverence that he would be born of her, a simple creature of his making.

4.8 For this was her marveling: that he who was her Maker would be born of her who was made.

4.9 And this wisdom and truth, knowing the greatness of her Maker and the littleness of herself who is made, made her say very humbly to Gabriel, "Lo, here am I, God's handmaiden."

4.10 In this sight I truly understood that she is greater in worthiness and fullness than all that God made beneath her. For above her there is nothing that is made except the blessed humanity of Christ, as I see it.

1 Latin, "Bless (us), Lord!" Cressy prints *Benedicite dominus*.

CHAPTER 5: THE HAZELNUT

God is our clothing; all that is made lies in Julian's hand like a hazelnut.

5.1 At the same time that I saw this sight of the head bleeding, our good Lord showed a spiritual sight of his intimate loving. I saw that he is to us everything that is good and comforting for our help.

5.2 He is our clothing. For love he wraps us and winds us about, embraces us and wholly encloses us, and hangs about us for tender love, so that he may never leave us. And so in this sight I saw that he is everything that is good, as I understand it.

5.3 And in this he showed a little thing, the size of a hazelnut, lying in the palm of my hand, as it seemed to me, and it was as round as a ball. I looked at it with the eye of my understanding and thought, "What can this be?" And it was answered generally thus:

5.4 "It is all that is made." I marveled how it could last, for it seemed to me that it might suddenly have fallen into nothing because of its littleness.

5.5 And I was answered in my understanding: "It lasts, and ever shall, for God loves it." And so all things have being through the love of God.

5.6 In this little thing I saw three properties.

5.7 But what did I see in it? Truly, the Maker, the Keeper, the Lover. For until I am substantially united to him, I can never have full rest or true bliss. That is to say, I must be so fastened to him that there is nothing at all that is made between my God and me.

5.8 This little thing that is made, it seemed to me, might have fallen into nothing because of its littleness.

5.9 We need to have knowledge of this: that we should delight in nothing that is made, in order to love God and have God, who is unmade.

5.10 For this is the reason why we are not all at ease of heart and soul: we seek rest here in this thing that is so little, in which there is no rest, and we do not know our God, who is all-mighty, all-wise and all-good, for he is true rest.

5.11 God wills to be known, and it pleases him that we rest in him.

5.12 For all that is beneath him does not suffice us.

5.13 And this is the reason why no soul is at rest until it is emptied of all things that are made. When she is willingly emptied, for love, to have him who is all, then she is able to receive spiritual rest.

5.14 And our good Lord also showed that it is a very great pleasure to him that a simple soul should come to him naked, plainly and intimately. For this is the natural dwelling of the soul, by the touching of the Holy Spirit, as I understand it in this showing: "God, of your goodness, give me yourself, for you are enough for me. And I can ask nothing that is less that could be full honor to you. And if I ask anything that is less, I am always in want; but only in you I have everything."

5.15 And these words of the goodness of God are very dear to the soul, and come very near to the will of our Lord; for his goodness fills all his creatures and all his blessed works without end.

5.16 For he is endlessness, and he made us only for himself, and restored us by his precious Passion, and ever keeps us in his blessed love; and all this is of his goodness.[2]

CHAPTER 6: GOD'S GOODNESS

Our many means of prayer all come from God's goodness, which reaches our lowest need.

6.1 This showing was given to my understanding to teach our soul wisely to cleave to the goodness of God. And at that same time the custom of our prayer was brought to my mind: how we are

2 Cressy's "endlesse head" is the Middle English noun "endlesshead," meaning endlessness.

accustomed, for lack of knowing love, to use many means. Then I saw truly that it is more honor to God, and more true delight, that we faithfully pray to himself, of his goodness, and cleave to it by his grace, with true understanding and steadfast belief, than if we used all the means that heart can think of.

6.2 For if we use all these means, it is too little, and not full honor to God. But in his goodness is the whole, and nothing at all is lacking there.

6.3 For this, as I shall now say, came to my mind at the same time. We pray to God by his holy flesh and by his precious blood, his holy Passion, his precious death and honorable wounds; and all the blessed nature and the endless life that we have from all this, it is of the goodness of God. And we pray to him by the love of his sweet Mother who bore him; and all the help that we have from her, it is of his goodness. And we pray by his holy cross that he died on; and all the help and all the virtue that we have from that cross, it is of his goodness.

6.4 And in the same way, all the help that we have from special saints and from all the blessed company of heaven, the precious love and the holy endless friendship that we have from them, it is of his goodness.

6.5 For the means that the goodness of God has ordained to help us are very fair and many.

6.6 Of these the chief and principal means is the blessed nature that he took from the Maiden, with all the means that went before and came after, which belong to our redemption and to our endless salvation.

6.7 Therefore it pleases him that we seek him and worship him through means, understanding and knowing that he is the goodness of all.

6.8 For the highest prayer is to the goodness of God, and it comes down to us, to the lowest part of our need. It quickens our soul and makes it live, and makes it grow in grace and virtue. It is nearest in nature and readiest in grace.

6.9 For it is the same grace that the soul seeks, and ever shall, until we truly know our God, who has us all enclosed in himself.

6.10 A man walks upright, and the food in his body is shut in as in a very fine purse; and when the time of his necessity comes, it is opened and shut again very decently.[3]

6.11 And that it is he who does this is shown there where he says that he comes down to us, to the lowest part of our need. For he has no contempt for what he made, nor does he disdain to serve us in the simplest office that belongs by nature to our body, for love of the soul that he made in his own likeness.

6.12 For as the body is clad in its clothing, and the flesh in the skin, and the bones in the flesh, and the heart in the chest, so are we, soul and body, clad and enclosed in the goodness of God. Yes, and more intimately: for all these vanish and waste away, but the goodness of God is ever whole, and nearer to us beyond any comparison.

6.13 For truly our Lover desires that the soul cleave to him with all its powers, and that we be evermore cleaving to his goodness. For of all things that heart can think, this pleases God most and succeeds soonest.

6.14 For our soul is so preciously loved by him who is highest that it surpasses the knowing of all creatures.

6.15 That is to say, there is no creature that is made that can know how much, and how sweetly, and how tenderly our Maker loves us. And therefore we can, with his grace and his help, stand in spiritual beholding, with everlasting marveling at this high, surpassing, immeasurable love that our Lord has for us, of his goodness.

6.16 And therefore we may ask of our Lover, with reverence, all that we will. For our natural will is to have God, and the good will of God is to have us. And we can never cease willing or loving until we have him in fullness of joy.

6.17 And then we can will no more; for he wills that we be occupied in knowing and loving until the time comes that we shall be fulfilled in heaven.

6.18 And therefore this lesson of love was shown, with all that follows, as you shall see. For the strength and the ground of all

was shown in the first sight. For of all things, the beholding and the loving of the Maker makes the soul seem least in its own sight, and most fills it with reverent fear and true humility, and with plenty of charity to its fellow Christians.

CHAPTER 7: MARY, AND THE BLEEDING HEAD

Julian sees Mary's humility, and drops of blood like rain from the eaves.

7.1 And to teach us this, as I understand it, our good Lord showed our Lady Mary at the same time: that is to say, the high wisdom and truth that she had in beholding her Maker.

7.2 This wisdom and truth made her behold her God as so great, so high, so mighty and so good. This greatness and this nobility of her beholding of God filled her with reverent fear. And with this she saw herself so little and so low, so simple and so poor, in comparison with her God, that this reverent fear filled her with humility. And so, on this ground, she was filled with grace and with all kinds of virtues, and she surpasses all creatures.

7.3 And all the time that he was showing what I have now said in spiritual sight, I saw the bodily sight continuing, of the plenteous bleeding of the head. The great drops of blood fell down from under the garland like pellets, seeming as if they had come out of the veins. As they came out they were brownish red, for the blood was very thick; and as they spread they were bright red; and when they came to the brows, there they vanished.

7.4 And notwithstanding, the bleeding continued until many things were seen and understood. Nevertheless, the fair head and the living head continued in the same beauty and liveliness.

7.5 The plenteousness is like the drops of water that fall off the eaves of a house after a great shower of rain, which fall so thick that no one can number them with any bodily understanding.

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3 Cressy prints "Soule"; the word is generally read as Middle English "sowel," food, and the passage describes the body's digestion and excretion.

And for their roundness, as they spread over the forehead, they were like the scale of a herring.[4]

7.6 These three things came to my mind at the time: pellets, for the roundness of the blood as it came out; the scale of a herring, for the roundness as it spread; the drops from the eaves of a house, for the plenteousness beyond number.

7.7 This showing was quick and lively, and hideous, and fearful, and sweet, and lovely. And of all the sight that I saw, what comforted me most was that our good Lord, who is so worthy of reverence and fear, is so intimate and so courteous. And this most filled me with delight and sickness of soul.

7.8 And to help me understand this, he showed this plain example. The greatest honor that a solemn king or a great lord can do a poor servant is to be intimate with him; and especially if he shows it himself, with a full true meaning and with a glad countenance, both in private and openly. Then this poor creature thinks thus: "Look, what greater honor and joy could this noble lord do me than to show me, who am so little, this marvelous intimacy? Truly, it is more joy and delight to me than if he gave me great gifts and were himself distant in manner."[5]

7.9 This bodily example was shown so high that this man's heart might be ravished, and he might almost forget himself for joy at this great intimacy.

7.10 So it is with our Lord Jesus and with us. For truly it is the greatest joy that can be, as I see it, that he who is highest and mightiest, noblest and worthiest, is lowest and humblest, most intimate and most courteous. And truly and verily, he shall show us all this marvelous joy when we see him.

7.11 And our good Lord wills that we believe and trust, rejoice and delight, comfort ourselves and take solace, as we can with his grace and with his help, until the time that we see it truly. For the greatest fullness of joy that we shall have, as I see it, is

4 Cressy prints "Seal of her Ring," a misreading of "scale of herring," as the next paragraph shows; his "plentuous head" and "roundhead" are the Middle English nouns for plenteousness and roundness.

5 "Chere" (cheer) means the face or countenance, the expression a lord shows; it is rendered "countenance" throughout.

this marvelous courtesy and intimacy of our Father, who is our Maker, in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Brother and our Savior.

7.12 But no one can know this marvelous intimacy in this life unless he has it by a special showing of our Lord, or by a great plenty of grace inwardly given by the Holy Spirit. But faith and belief, with charity, deserve the reward; and so it is had by grace.

7.13 For our life is grounded in faith, with hope and charity. The showing is made to whomever God wills; it plainly teaches the same, opened and declared with many secret points belonging to our faith and belief, which are honorable to know.

7.14 And when the showing, which is given for a time, has passed and is hidden, then faith keeps it, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, until our life's end.

7.15 And so, by the showing, it is nothing other than faith, no less, no more, as can be seen from our Lord's meaning in the same matter by the time it comes to the last end.

CHAPTER 8: SIX THINGS UNDERSTOOD

What Julian learned from the first showing, and why it was shown for all her fellow Christians.

8.1 And as long as I saw this sight of the plenteous bleeding of the head, I could never stop saying these words: *Benedicite, Domine!* In this showing I understood six things.

8.2 The first is the tokens of the blessed Passion and the plenteous shedding of his precious blood.

8.3 The second is the Maiden, who is his precious Mother.

8.4 The third is the blessed Godhead, which ever was and ever shall be: all might, all wisdom and all love.

8.5 The fourth is all things that he has made. For I know well that heaven and earth, and all that is made, is great, large, fair and good. But the reason why it appeared so little to my sight was that I saw it in the presence of him who is the Maker. For to

a soul that sees the Maker of all things, all that is made seems very little.

8.6 The fifth is that he made all things that are made for love, and by the same love it is kept, and shall be without end, as was said before.

8.7 The sixth is that God is all things that are good, as I see it; and the goodness that all things have, it is he.

8.8 And our Lord showed all this in the first sight, and gave me space and time to behold it. And the bodily sight stopped, and the spiritual sight dwells in my understanding. And I remained in reverent fear, rejoicing in what I saw, and desiring, as far as I dared, to see more, if it were his will, or to see the same sight for a longer time.

8.9 In all this I was greatly stirred in charity toward my fellow Christians, that they might all see and know the same that I saw. I wanted it to be a comfort to them, for all this sight was shown in general. Then I said to those who were with me, "For me, today is Doomsday."

8.10 I said this because I expected to die. As I understand it, on the day that a man or woman dies, he is judged individually, as he shall be without end.

8.11 I said this because I wanted them to love God the better, and to make them mindful that this life is short, as they might see by example. For all this time I expected to die, and that was a marvel to me, and in part a wonder, for it seemed to me that this vision was shown for those who would live. All that I say of myself, I mean in the person of all my fellow Christians, for I am taught in the spiritual showing of our Lord God that he means it so.

8.12 And therefore I pray you all for God's sake, and counsel you for your own profit, that you leave off looking at the wretch to whom it was shown. Instead look mightily, wisely, and humbly upon God, who of his courtesy, love, and endless goodness willed to show it generally, for the comfort of us all. For it is God's will that you take it with great joy and delight, as Jesus Christ has shown it to you.

CHAPTER 9: NOT GOOD BECAUSE OF THE SHOWING

The showing does not make Julian better than others; she believes as the Church teaches.

9.1 For I am not good because of the showing, but only if I love God the better. And in so far as you love God the better, it is more to you than to me.

9.2 I do not say this to those who are wise, for they know it well. I say it to you who are simple, for ease and comfort, for we are all one in love. Truly, it was not shown to me because God loves me better than the least soul that is in grace. I am sure there are many who never had a showing or sight beyond the common teaching of Holy Church, and who love God better than I. For if I look at myself in particular, I am truly nothing; but in general I am, I hope, in unity of charity with all my fellow Christians. In this unity stands the life of all mankind that shall be saved, for God is all that is good, as I see it.

9.3 And God has made all that is made, and God loves all that he has made. And he who loves all his fellow Christians in general, for God's sake, loves all that is.

9.4 For in mankind that shall be saved, all is included: that is to say, all that is made, and the Maker of all. For in man is God, and in God is all; and he who loves thus loves all.

9.5 And I hope by the grace of God that whoever looks at it in this way shall be truly taught and mightily comforted, if he needs comfort. I speak of those who shall be saved, for at this time God showed me no others.

9.6 But in all things I believe as Holy Church preaches and teaches. I had understood the faith of Holy Church beforehand, and I hope by the grace of God to keep it fully in practice and custom. It stood continually in my sight, and I willed and intended never to accept anything that might be contrary to it. With this intent and with this meaning I looked at the showing with all my diligence, for in all this blessed showing I beheld it as in God's meaning.

9.7 All this was shown in three ways: that is to say, by bodily sight, by words formed in my understanding, and by spiritual sight. But I cannot and may not show the spiritual sight as openly or as fully as I would like. Yet I trust in our Lord God almighty that he shall, of his goodness and for love of you, make you take it more spiritually and more sweetly than I can or may tell it.

The Second to Seventh Showings

Chapters 10–15
The darkening face; God in a point; the scourging; the fiend overcome; God's thanks; joy and woe in turn.

CHAPTER 10: THE DARKENING FACE

The second showing: the discolored face of Christ; seeking and beholding; the sea floor.

10.1 And after this I saw with bodily sight, in the face of the crucifix that hung before me, a part of his Passion, which I beheld continually: contempt, spitting, soiling, and buffeting, and many lingering pains, more than I can tell, and often changing of color. Once I saw how half the face, beginning at the ear, became covered over with dry blood, until it closed into the middle of the face. After that the other half was covered in the same way. Meanwhile it vanished in this part just as it had come.

10.2 I saw this bodily, dimly and darkly. I desired more bodily light, to have seen more clearly, and I was answered in my reason: "If God will show you more, he shall be your light; you need none but him."[1]

10.3 For I saw him and sought him. We are now so blind and so unwise that we can never seek God until he of his goodness shows himself to us. And when we see anything of him by grace, then we are stirred by the same grace to seek with great desire to see him more blissfully. And thus I saw him and sought him,

1 Cressy's "sweinly" is obscure; other manuscripts read "swemely," glossed variously as "dimly" or "sorrowfully."

and I had him and lacked him. As I see it, this is and should be our common working in this life.

10.4 Once my understanding was led down to the bottom of the sea. There I saw hills and dales, green, seeming as if overgrown with seaweed and gravel. Then I understood this: if a man or woman were there under the broad water, and he could have sight of God, as God is with a man continually, he would be safe in soul and body and take no harm. And beyond that, he would have more solace and comfort than all this world may or can tell.

10.5 For he wills that we believe that we see him continually, though it seems to us that it is but little; and in this belief he makes us always gain grace. For he will be seen, and he will be sought, and he will be awaited, and he will be trusted.

10.6 This second showing was so low, and so little, and so simple, that my spirits were in great labor in beholding it, mourning, fearful, and longing. For at times I was afraid, not knowing whether it was a showing or not. Then at various times our Lord gave me more sight, by which I understood truly that it was a showing.

10.7 It was a figure and a likeness of our foul black deeds, which our fair bright blessed Lord bore for our sin. It made me think of the holy Vernicle at Rome, which he imprinted with his own blessed face when he was in his hard Passion, willingly going to his death, and often changing color: brownness and blackness, pitifulness and leanness.[2]

10.8 Many marveled at this image, asking how it could be. He imprinted it with his blessed face, which is the fairest of heaven, flower of earth, and the fruit of the Maiden's womb. How then could this image be so discolored and so far from fairness? I wish to tell this as I have understood it by the grace of God.

10.9 We know in our faith and in our belief, by the teaching and preaching of Holy Church, that the blessed Trinity made man-

2 The vernicle (from "Veronica") was the cloth venerated at St. Peter's in Rome, said to bear the imprint of Christ's face after Saint Veronica wiped it on the way to the cross.

kind in his image and likeness. In the same way we know that when man fell so deep and so wretchedly by sin, there was no other help to restore man but through him who made man.

10.10 And he who made man for love willed by the same love to restore man to the same bliss, and beyond it.

10.11 And just as we were made like the Trinity in our first making, our Maker willed that we should be like Jesus Christ our Savior in heaven without end, by the power of our own making.

10.12 Then, between these two, he willed, for love and for the honor of man, to make himself as like man in this mortal life, in our foulness and in our wretchedness, as man could be without guilt. This is what it means, as said before: it was the image and the likeness of our foul black deeds, in which our fair bright blessed Lord hid his Godhead.

10.13 But truly I dare say, and we ought to believe, that there was never so fair a man as he, until his fair color was changed by labor and sorrow, Passion and dying.

10.14 This is spoken of in the second revelation, and in the eighteenth chapter, where more is said of the same likeness. Where it speaks there of the Vernicle at Rome, it means it by the various changing of color, sometimes more comforting and lively, and sometimes more pitiful and deathly, as may be seen hereafter. And this vision was a teaching to my understanding that the continual seeking of the soul pleases God greatly. For the soul can do no more than seek, suffer, and trust.

10.15 And this is worked by the Holy Spirit in every soul that has it.

10.16 And the clearness of finding comes by special grace, when it is his will. The seeking with faith, hope, and charity pleases our Lord; and the finding pleases the soul and fills it with joy.

10.17 And thus I was taught, to my understanding, that seeking is as good as beholding, for the time that he will allow the soul to be in labor. It is God's will that we seek on into the beholding of him, for by that he shall show us himself by his special grace when he will.

10.18 And he himself shall teach how a soul shall conduct itself in beholding him. That is most honor to him, and most profit to the soul, and most received in humility and virtues, with the grace and leading of the Holy Spirit. For as I see it, when a soul simply yields itself to God with true trust, either in seeking or in beholding, it gives the most honor that it can give.

10.19 These are two workings that may be seen in this vision: the one is seeking, the other is beholding. The seeking is common to all: every soul may have it with his grace, and ought to have it with the discretion and teaching of Holy Church.

10.20 It is God's will that we have three things in our seeking of his gift. The first is that we seek willingly and diligently, without sloth, as far as we can with his grace, gladly and cheerfully, without unreasonable heaviness and vain sorrow. The second is that we wait for him steadfastly for love of him, without grumbling and striving against him, until our life's end, for it shall last but a while. The third is that we trust in him mightily, with full and true faith. For it is his will that we know that he shall appear suddenly and blissfully to all his lovers.

10.21 For his working is secret, and he will be perceived; and his appearing shall be sweet and sudden. And he will be trusted, for he is most intimate and courteous. Blessed may he be.

CHAPTER 11: GOD IN A POINT

The third showing: God does all that is done, and there is no doer but he.

11.1 And after this I saw God in a point, that is to say, in my understanding. By this sight I saw that he is in all things. I looked attentively, seeing and knowing in that sight that he does all that is done. I marveled in that sight with a gentle fear, and thought, "What is sin?" For I saw truly that God does all things, however little they are. And I saw truly that nothing is done by chance or by accident, but all by the aforesaid wisdom of God. If there is chance or accident in the sight of man, our blindness and lack of foresight is the cause. For the things that are in the aforesaid

wisdom of God have been there from without beginning. He leads them rightfully, honorably, and continually to the best end, as it comes about, befalling us suddenly, without our knowing. And so, by our blindness and our lack of foresight, we say these things happen by chance and accident.

11.2 This is how I understand it in this showing of love, for I know well that in the sight of our Lord God there is no chance or accident. Therefore I had to grant that all things that are done are well done, for our Lord God does all. At this time the working of creatures was not shown, but only that of our Lord God in the creatures, for he is at the midpoint of all things, and he does all. And I am sure that he does no sin.

11.3 And here I saw truly that sin is no deed, for in all this, sin was not shown. And I would no longer marvel at this, but looked to our Lord to see what he would show.

11.4 And thus, as far as it could be for the time, the rightfulness of God's work was shown to the soul.

11.5 Rightfulness has two fair properties: it is right, and it is full. And so are all the works of our Lord. For this they need neither the working of mercy nor of grace, for they are all rightful, and in them nothing at all is lacking. At another time he showed sin naked for my beholding, as I shall tell, and afterward how he uses the working of mercy and of grace. This vision was shown to my understanding because our Lord wills to have the soul turned truly to the beholding of him, and in general of all his works, for they are wholly good. And all his judgments are easy and sweet, and two great eyes, bringing the soul that has turned from beholding the blind judging of man into the fair, sweet judging of our Lord God.[3] For man holds some deeds well done and some deeds evil, but our Lord does not see them so. Just as all that has being in nature is of God's making, so all that is done is properly God's doing. For it is easy to understand that the best deed is well done. And as well as the best and highest deed that is done, so well is the least deed done, and all in the

3 Cressy prints "two great eyes"; other manuscripts read "to great ease."

property and the order that our Lord ordained for it beforehand, without beginning. For there is no doer but he.

11.6 I saw most truly that he never changed his purpose in any manner of thing, and never shall, without end. For nothing was unknown to him in his rightful ordinance from without beginning. And therefore all things were set in order before anything was made, as it should stand without end, and no manner of thing shall fall short of that point; for he has made all things in fullness of goodness.

11.7 And therefore the blessed Trinity is always fully pleased in all his works. And he showed all this most blessedly, meaning this: "See, I am God. See, I am in all things. See, I do all things. See, I never take my hands off my works, and never shall, without end. See, I lead all things to the end that I ordained them to from without beginning, by the same might, wisdom, and love with which I made them. How should anything be amiss?" So mightily, wisely, and lovingly was the soul examined in this vision. Then I saw truly that I must assent, with great reverence and joy in God.

CHAPTER 12: THE SCOURGING

The fourth showing: the scourged body bleeding plenteously; the blood that washes us.

12.1 And after this, as I watched, I saw the body bleeding plenteously, as it seemed from the scourging. It was like this: the fair skin was broken very deep into the tender flesh by sharp blows, all over the sweet body. The hot blood ran out so plenteously that neither skin nor wound could be seen, but it was as if all were blood. And when it came to where it should have fallen down, there it vanished. Nevertheless the bleeding continued a while, until it could be seen with careful attention. And this was so plenteous to my sight that I thought, if it had been so in nature and in substance at that time, it would have made the bed all bloody and would have overflowed all around.

12.2 Then it came to my mind that God has made plenteous waters on earth for our service and for our bodily ease, out of the tender love he has for us. But it delights him more that we take his blessed blood most wholesomely to wash us from sin; for there is no liquid that is made that he so delights to give us. For it is most plenteous, as it is most precious, and that by the power of the blessed Godhead; and it is our own nature, and it blissfully overflows us by the power of his precious love. The dear, worthy blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, as truly as it is most precious, so truly is it most plenteous. Behold and see the power of this precious plenty of his dear, worthy blood. It descended down into hell and broke its bonds, and delivered all who were there who belong to the court of heaven. The precious plenty of his dear, worthy blood overflows all the earth, and is ready to wash from sin all creatures who are of good will, who have been or shall be. The precious plenty of his dear, worthy blood ascends up into heaven in the blessed body of our Lord Jesus Christ; and there it is in him, bleeding, praying for us to the Father, and it is and shall be so as long as we need it. And evermore it flows in all heaven, rejoicing in the salvation of all mankind who are there and shall be, fulfilling the number that is lacking.

CHAPTER 13: THE FIEND OVERCOME

The fifth showing: by the Passion the fiend is overcome; Julian laughs at his malice.

13.1 And afterward, before God showed any words, he allowed me to behold him for a fitting time, and all that I had seen, and all the understanding that was in it, as far as the simplicity of the soul could take it in.

13.2 Then, without voice and without opening of lips, he formed these words in my soul: "By this the fiend is overcome." Our Lord said this word meaning his blessed Passion, as he had shown before. In this our Lord showed a part of the fiend's malice, and fully his powerlessness; for he showed that his Pas-

sion is the overcoming of the fiend. God showed that the fiend now has the same malice that he had before the Incarnation; and he labors just as hard, and just as continually he sees that all souls of salvation escape him honorably by the power of Christ's precious Passion. That is his sorrow, and he is most wretchedly put to shame. For all that God permits him to do turns to joy for us, and to shame and pain for him. And he has as much sorrow when God gives him leave to work as when he does not work. That is because he can never do as much evil as he would like, for his might is all locked in God's hand. But in God there can be no wrath, as I see it. For our good Lord, endlessly having regard to his own honor and to the profit of all who shall be saved, with might and right withstands the reprobate, who out of malice and wickedness busy themselves to oppose God's will and act against it.

13.3 I also saw our Lord scorn his malice and set his powerlessness at nothing, and he wills that we do so. At this sight I laughed mightily, and that made those who were around me laugh, and their laughing was a delight to me. I thought that I wished all my fellow Christians had seen what I saw; then they would all have laughed with me. But I did not see Christ laughing. Yet I know well that the sight he showed me made me laugh; for I understood that we may laugh, comforting ourselves and rejoicing in God, because the fiend is overcome. And where I saw him scorn the fiend's malice, it was by a looking of my understanding into our Lord; that is to say, an inward showing of truthfulness, without change of countenance. For as I see it, this is an honorable property in God, and it is enduring.

13.4 And after this I grew serious, and said: "I see three things: game, scorn, and earnest. I see game, in that the fiend is overcome; I see scorn, in that God scorns him, and he shall be scorned; and I see earnest, in that he is overcome by the blessed Passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was done in very great earnest and with grievous labor." And where I said that he is scorned, I meant that God scorns him; that is to say, because God sees him now as he shall do without end. For in

this God showed that the fiend is damned. And this is what I meant where I said he shall be scorned: I saw that he shall be scorned at Doomsday by all who shall be saved, whose salvation he has greatly envied. For then he shall see that all the woe and tribulation he has done them shall be turned into increase of their joy without end; and all the pain and sorrow that he wanted to bring them to shall go with him to hell forever.

CHAPTER 14: GOD'S THANKS

The sixth showing: God thanks his servants in heaven, with three degrees of bliss.

14.1 And after this our Lord said: "I thank you for your service and for the labor of your youth." And in this my understanding was lifted up into heaven, where I saw our Lord God as a lord in his own house, a lord who has called all his dear, worthy friends to a solemn feast. Then I saw that the Lord took no seat in his own house; but I saw him reign royally in his house, and he fills it all with joy and mirth, endlessly to gladden and comfort his dear, worthy friends, most intimately and most courteously, with marvelous melody, in endless love, in his own fair, blissful countenance. And this glorious countenance of the Godhead fills all heaven with joy and bliss. God showed three degrees of bliss that each soul shall have in heaven who has willingly served God in any degree on earth. The first is the honor and thanks that he shall receive from our Lord God when he is delivered from pain. This thanks is so high and so honorable that it seems to him that it would fill him even if there were nothing more. For it seemed to me that all the pain and labor that could be suffered by all living men could not have deserved the honorable thanks that one man shall have who has willingly served God. For the second: all the blessed creatures that are in heaven shall see that honorable thanking, and he makes the man's service known to all who are in heaven. And at this point this example was shown: if a king thanks his subjects, it is a great honor to them; and if he makes it known to the whole

realm, then their honor is much increased. And for the third: as new and as delightful as it is when it is first received, just so shall it last without end. And I saw that this was shown intimately and sweetly: that the age of every man shall be known in heaven, and he shall be rewarded for his willing service and for his time. And especially the age of those who willingly and freely offer their youth to God is surpassingly rewarded and wonderfully thanked. For I saw that whenever, at whatever time, a man or woman is truly turned to God, for one day's service and for his endless will he shall have all these three degrees of bliss. And the more the loving soul sees this courtesy of God, the gladder she is to serve him all her life.

CHAPTER 15: WELL-BEING AND WOE

The seventh showing: Julian passes about twenty times between comfort and desolation.

15.1 And after this he showed a sovereign spiritual delight in my soul. In this delight I was filled with everlasting assurance, mightily fastened, without any painful fear. This feeling was so glad and so spiritual that I was wholly in peace, in ease, and in rest, so that there was nothing on earth that could have grieved me. This lasted only a while. Then I was turned and left to myself, in heaviness and weariness of my life and loathing of myself, so that I could scarcely have the patience to live. There was no comfort, and nothing to ease my feeling, except faith, hope, and charity; and these I had in truth, but very little in feeling.

15.2 And soon after this our blessed Lord gave me again the comfort and the rest in soul, delight and assurance, so blissfully and so mightily that no fear, no sorrow, and no pain, bodily or spiritual, that could be suffered would have distressed me. And then the pain showed again to my feeling, and then the joy and the delight; and now the one, and now the other, at various times—I suppose about twenty times. And in the time of joy I might have said with Saint Paul, "Nothing shall separate me

from the charity of Christ." And in the pain I might have said with Saint Peter, "Lord, save me, I perish."

15.3 This vision was shown to teach me, as I understand it, that it is profitable for some souls to feel in this way: sometimes to be in comfort, and sometimes to fail and be left to themselves. God wills that we know that he keeps us always equally securely, in woe and in well-being. And for the profit of his soul a man is sometimes left to himself, although his sin is not always the cause. For at this time I had not sinned in a way for which I should be left to myself, since it was so sudden. Nor did I deserve to have had this blessed feeling; but our Lord gives it freely when he wills, and sometimes allows us to be in woe, and both are one love. For it is God's will that we hold ourselves in comfort with all our might; for bliss is lasting without end, and pain is passing, and shall be brought to nothing for those who shall be saved. Therefore it is not God's will that we follow the feeling of pains in sorrow and mourning over them, but that we quickly pass over them and hold ourselves in the endless delight that is God.

The Eighth Showing

Chapters 16–21
The drying of Christ's body in his last pains; his thirst; Mary's compassion; Julian chooses Jesus for her heaven.

CHAPTER 16: THE DRYING OF THE BODY

The eighth showing: Christ's face and body dry and discolor as he nears death.

16.1 After this Christ showed a part of his Passion near his dying. I saw the sweet face as if it were dry and bloodless, with the pallor of dying; then deadly pale and languishing; and then turning more deathly, to blue; and afterward to brownish blue, as the flesh turned more deeply dead. For his Passion showed itself to me most specifically in his blessed face, and especially in his lips. There I saw these four colors—in the lips that before were fresh and ruddy, lively and delightful to my sight. This was a pitiful change, to see this deep dying; and also his nose, shriveled together and dried, as I saw it. And the sweet body grew brown and black, all changed and turned from its own fair, fresh, and lively color into dry dying. For at the very time that our blessed Savior died upon the cross, there was a dry, sharp wind, wondrously cold, as I saw it. And when all the precious blood that could pass from the sweet body had bled out of it, there was still a moisture in the sweet flesh of Christ, as it was shown.[1] Loss of blood and pain, drying from within, and the blowing of the wind and the cold, coming from without, met

1 Cressy prints "most cloggering together"; "most" seems to stand for "nose," as in the manuscripts.

together in the sweet body of Christ; and these four dried the flesh of Christ over the course of time. And though this pain was bitter and sharp, yet it was very long-lasting, as I saw it. And the pain dried up all the living spirits of Christ's flesh. So I saw the sweet flesh dry before my eyes, part after part drying with marvelous pain; and as long as any spirit had life in Christ's flesh, so long he suffered. This long pain seemed to me as if he had been dead a week, dying, at the point of passing out of life, always suffering the great pain. And where I said it seemed as if he had been dead a week, this signifies that the sweet body was so discolored, so dry, so shriveled, so deathlike, and so pitiful, as if he had been dead seven nights, continually dying. And I thought the drying of Christ's flesh was the greatest pain, and the last, of his Passion.[2]

CHAPTER 17: "I THIRST"

Christ's bodily and spiritual thirst; the pains of his drying flesh.

17.1 And in this drying, there was brought to my mind this word that Christ said, "I thirst." For I saw in Christ a double thirst, one bodily and another spiritual. This word was shown for the bodily thirst, and for the spiritual thirst it was shown as I shall say afterward. And I understood by the bodily thirst that the body felt a lack of moisture, for the blessed flesh and bones were left all alone without blood and moisture. The blessed body dried all alone a long time, with the wrenching of the nails and the weight of the body. For I understood that, because of the tenderness of the sweet hands and the sweet feet, and the great hardness and grievousness of the nails, the wounds grew wide. And the body sagged under its weight from hanging a long time. And there was the piercing and scraping of the head, and the binding of the crown, all baked with dry blood, with the sweet hair clinging the dry flesh to the thorns, and the thorns to the drying flesh. And in the beginning, while the flesh was fresh and bleeding, the continual pressing of the thorns made the wounds wide.

2 "Sennet" (sennight) = seven nights, a week.

And furthermore I saw that the sweet skin and the tender flesh, with the hair and with the blood, was all torn and loosened all around by the thorns, and broken in many pieces. It was hanging as if it would quickly have fallen down while it still had its natural moisture. How it was done I did not see. But I understood that it was by the sharp thorns and the rough, grievous setting on of the garland, unsparing and without pity, which all broke the sweet skin with the flesh, and the hair loosened it from the bone. Because of this it was broken in pieces like a cloth, and sagged downward, as if it would quickly have fallen for heaviness and for looseness. And that was great sorrow and fear to me, for it seemed to me that I would not for my life have seen it fall.

17.2 This continued a while, and afterward it began to change. I looked and marveled how this could be. And then I saw that it was because it began to dry, and to lose a part of the weight that was all around the garland. And so it was encircled all around, as it were garland upon garland. The garland of thorns was dyed with the garland of blood, and that other garland and the head were all one color, like clotted blood when it has dried. The skin and the flesh that could be seen of the face and of the body were finely wrinkled, with a tawny color, like a dry board when it is aged, and the face was more brown than the body. I saw four kinds of drying. The first was bloodlessness. The second, pain following after. The third is that he was hanging up in the air, as people hang a cloth to dry. The fourth, that his bodily nature asked for liquid, and no kind of comfort was given to him. Ah, hard and grievous was that pain, but much more hard and grievous it was when the moisture failed, and everything began to dry, shrinking in this way. These were two pains that showed in the blessed head. The first worked toward the drying while the flesh was moist. The other was slow, with shrinking and drying, with the blowing of the wind from outside, which dried him more and pained him with cold, more than my heart can think, along with all the other pains. Of these pains I saw that all I can say is too little, for it cannot be told. The showing of Christ's

pains filled me full of pains. For I knew well that he suffered only once, but he would show it to me and fill me with remembrance of it, as I had desired before. And in all this time of Christ's presence I felt no pain except for Christ's pains.

17.3 Then I thought that I had known very little what pain it was that I asked for. Like a wretch I repented, thinking that if I had known what it would be, I would have been loath to pray for it, for it seemed to me that my pains surpassed any bodily death. I thought, "Is any pain in hell like this?" And I was answered in my reason: "Hell is another pain, for there is despair. But of all pains that lead to salvation, this is the greatest: to see the one you love suffer." How could any pain be greater than to see him who is all my life, all my bliss, and all my joy, suffer? Here I felt steadfastly that I loved Christ so much above myself that there was no pain that could be suffered like the sorrow I had to see him in pain.

CHAPTER 18: COMPASSION

Mary's compassion, and the compassion of all creation, at Christ's pain.

18.1 Here I saw in part the compassion of our Blessed Lady Saint Mary for Christ. She was so united to him in love that the greatness of her love was the cause of the greatness of her pain. For in this I saw a substance of natural love, continued by grace, which his creatures have for him. This natural love was most fully shown in his sweet Mother, and surpassingly. For as much as she loved him more than all others, her pain surpassed all others'. For always, the higher, the mightier, the sweeter the love is, the more sorrow it is to the lover to see the body that he loved in pain. And so all his disciples and all his true lovers suffered more pain than their own bodily dying. For I am sure by my own feeling that the least of them loved him so far above himself that it surpasses all that I can say.

18.2 Here I saw a great union between Christ and us, as I understand it. For when he was in pain, we were in pain, and all

creatures that could suffer pain suffered with him. That is to say, all the creatures that God has made for our service. The firmament and the earth failed for sorrow in their nature at the time of Christ's dying. For it belongs by nature to their property to know him as their Lord, in whom all their power stands. And when he felt, they had by their nature to feel with him, as much as they could, for sorrow of his pains. And thus those who were his friends suffered pain for love. And generally all, that is to say, even those who did not know him, suffered for lack of every kind of comfort, except the mighty secret keeping of God. I mean two kinds of people who did not know him, as may be understood by two persons. The one was Pilate. The other person was Saint Dionysius of France, who was a pagan at that time. For when he saw the wonders and marvels, sorrows and fears that befell at that time, he said, "Either the world is now at an end, or else he who is the Maker of nature is suffering." Therefore he wrote on an altar, "This is an altar of the unknown God."[3] God of his goodness makes the planets and the elements work in their nature for the blessed man and for the cursed alike. In that time this was withdrawn from both. That is why those who did not know him were in sorrow at that time. Thus was our Lord Jesus pained for us. And we all stand in this kind of pain with him, and shall do so until we come to his bliss, as I shall say hereafter.

CHAPTER 19: JESUS FOR MY HEAVEN

Tempted to look up from the cross to heaven, Julian chooses Jesus alone for her heaven.

19.1 At this time I wanted to look away from the cross, and I dared not. For I knew well that while I looked at the cross I was sure and safe. Therefore I would not consent to put my soul in peril, for apart from the cross there was no safety from the fear of

3 Julian follows the medieval tradition that identified Dionysius the Areopagite (Acts 17:34) with Saint Denis, first bishop of Paris. The "unknown God" echoes Acts 17:23.

fiends. Then I had a suggestion in my reason, as if it had been said to me in a friendly way: "Look up to heaven, to his Father." And then I saw well, with the faith that I felt, that there was nothing between the cross and heaven that could have harmed me. Here I had either to look up or else to answer. I answered inwardly with all the might of my soul, and said, "No, I cannot, for you are my heaven." I said this because I did not want to look up. For I would rather have been in that pain until Doomsday than have come to heaven any other way than by him. For I knew well that he who bound me so sorely would unbind me when he willed. Thus was I taught to choose Jesus for my heaven, whom I saw only in pain at that time. No other heaven pleased me than Jesus, who shall be my bliss when I come there. And this has always been a comfort to me, that by his grace I chose Jesus to be my heaven in all this time of passion and sorrow. That has been a lesson to me, that I should evermore do so: choose Jesus alone for my heaven, in well-being and in woe. And yet, like a wretch, I had repented, as I said before, thinking that if I had known what pain it would be, I would have been loath to pray for it. Here I saw truly that this was the grumbling and frailty of the flesh, without the assent of the soul, and God assigns no blame to it. Repenting and willful choice are two contraries, and I felt both at that time. And these are two parts, the one outward, the other inward. The outward part is our mortal flesh, which is now in pain and now in woe, and shall be so in this life. I felt much of it at this time, and that was the part that repented. The inward part is a high and blissful life, which is all in peace and love, and this is felt more secretly. And this is the part in which I mightily, wisely, and willfully chose Jesus for my heaven. And in this I saw truly that the inward part is master and sovereign over the outward. It does not care for nor heed the wills of the outward part, but all its intent and will is set endlessly on being united to our Lord Jesus. That the outward part should draw the inward to assent was not shown to me. But that the inward part draws the outward part by grace, and that

both shall be united in bliss without end by the power of Christ: this was shown.

CHAPTER 20: THE GREATNESS OF HIS PAIN

Christ suffered more than all men, through the union of his Godhead and his love.

20.1 And thus I saw our Lord Jesus languishing a long time, for the union of the Godhead gave strength to the manhood, for love, to suffer more than all men could. I mean not only more pain than all men could suffer. I mean also that he suffered more pain than all the people of salvation who ever were, from the very beginning to the last day, could tell or fully think. We must have regard to the worthiness of the highest, most honored King, and to his shameful, spiteful, and painful death. For he who is highest and worthiest was most foully condemned and utterly despised. For in his Passion this is to be thought and known: that he who suffered is God. After this we see the two other points, which are lower. The one is what he suffered, and the other is for whom he suffered. And in this he brought to mind in part the height and nobility of the glorious Godhead, and with it the preciousness and the tenderness of the blissful body, which are united together; and also the loathness that is in our nature to suffer pain. For just as he was most tender and pure, so he was most strong and mighty to suffer. And he suffered for the sin of every man who shall be saved. He saw every man's sorrow, desolation, and anguish, and sorrowed for it out of his nature and his love. For as much as our Lady sorrowed for his pains, so much did he suffer sorrow for her sorrows; and more still, inasmuch as his sweet manhood was worthier in nature. For as long as he was capable of suffering, he suffered for us and sorrowed for us. And now he is risen and no longer capable of suffering; yet he suffers with us, as I shall say afterward. And as I beheld all this by his grace, I saw that the love which he has for our soul was so strong in him that he chose this suffering willingly, with great desire, and suffered it mildly, with great joy.

For the soul that beholds in this way, when it is touched by grace, shall truly see that the pains of Christ's Passion surpass all pains. That is to say, these are pains which shall be turned into everlasting joy by the power of Christ's Passion. It is God's will, as I understand it, that we have three ways of beholding his blessed Passion. The first is to behold the hard pain that he suffered, with contrition and compassion. Our Lord showed this at this time, and gave me strength and grace to see it. I watched for his passing with all my might, and expected to see the body quite dead, but I did not see him so. And right at the moment when it seemed to me that the life could last no longer, and that the showing of the end must be near,

CHAPTER 21: THE CHANGED COUNTENANCE

Suddenly Christ's countenance on the cross changes to joy, and Julian's joy with it.

21.1 suddenly, as I was beholding the same cross, he changed to a blissful countenance. The changing of his blessed countenance changed mine, and I was as glad and merry as it was possible to be. Then our Lord brought merrily to my mind, "Where is now any point of your pain or of your anguish?" And I was very merry. I understood that we are now, as our Lord means it, on his cross with him in our pains and in our passion, dying. And as we willingly abide on the same cross, with his help and his grace, to the last point, suddenly he shall change his countenance to us, and we shall be with him in heaven. Between the one and the other there shall be no time at all, and then all shall be brought into joy. And this is what he meant in this showing: "Where is now any point of your pain or of your grief?" And we shall be full of bliss. And here I saw truly that if he showed us his blissful countenance now, there is no pain on earth or in any other place that would trouble us. All things would be joy and bliss to us. But because he shows us the sorrowful countenance of his Passion, as he bore his cross in this life, we are in distress and labor with him, as our nature requires. And the reason why

he allows this is that he wills, of his goodness, to make us heirs with him in his bliss. And for this little pain that we suffer here, we shall have a high, endless knowing in God, which we could never have without it. And the harder our pains have been with him on his cross, the greater shall our honor be with him in his kingdom.

The Ninth to Twelfth Showings

Chapters 22–26
"If I could suffer more, I would"; the three heavens; the wound in his side; Mary; "I it am."

CHAPTER 22: "IF I COULD SUFFER MORE"

The ninth showing: "Are you well pleased that I suffered for you?" and Christ's endless love.

22.1 Then our good Lord spoke, asking, "Are you well pleased that I suffered for you?" I said, "Yes, good Lord, thank you; yes, good Lord, blessed may you be." Then Jesus our good Lord said, "If you are pleased, I am pleased. It is a joy, a bliss, an endless delight to me that I ever suffered the Passion for you. And if I could have suffered more, I would have suffered more." In this feeling my understanding was lifted up into heaven, and there I saw three heavens. I marveled greatly at this sight, and I thought: I see three heavens, and all of them of the blessed manhood of Christ. None is greater, none is less, none is higher, none is lower, but all are equal in bliss. For the first heaven, Christ showed me his Father, in no bodily likeness, but in his property and in his working; that is to say, I saw in Christ that the Father is. The working of the Father is this: that he gives reward to his Son Jesus Christ. This gift and this reward is so blissful to Jesus that his Father could have given him no reward that would have pleased him better. For the first heaven, that is, the pleasing of the Father, was shown to me as a heaven, and it was full of bliss. For he is well pleased with all the deeds that Jesus has done for our salvation. Therefore we are his not only by his buying of us, but also by the courteous gift of his Father: we are his bliss, we

are his reward, we are his honor, we are his crown. And this was a singular marvel and a most delightful thing to behold, that we are his crown. What I am saying is so great a bliss to Jesus that he counts as nothing his labor and his Passion and his cruel and shameful death. And in these words, "If I could suffer more, I would suffer more," I saw truly that as often as he could die, so often he would, and love would never let him have rest until he had done it. And I looked with great diligence to know how often he would die if he could. And truly the number passed my understanding and my wits so far that my reason could not, and was not able to, comprehend it or take it in. And when he had died so often, or was to die so often, still he would count it as nothing for love, for all of it seems to him only little in comparison with his love. For though the sweet manhood of Christ could suffer only once, his goodness can never cease offering. Every day he is ready to do the same, if it could be. For if he, he said, would for my love make new heavens and new earths, it would be only little in comparison, for he could do this every day if he wished, without any labor. But to die for my love so often that the number passes a creature's reason—this is the highest offer that our Lord God could make to man's soul, as I see it. Then his meaning is this: "How then could it be that I should not do for your love all that I can? That deed does not grieve me at all, since I would die so often for your love, having no regard for my hard pains." And here I saw, as the second beholding in his blessed Passion, that the love that made him suffer surpasses all his pains as far as heaven is above earth. For the pain was a noble, precious, and honorable deed, done once in time by the working of love. And love was without beginning, is, and shall be without end. Because of this love he said this word most sweetly: "If I could suffer more, I would suffer more." He did not say, "If it were needful to suffer more," but, "If I could suffer more." For even if it were not needful, if he could suffer more, he would. This deed and this work for our salvation was ordained as well as God could ordain it. It was done as honorably as Christ could do it. And in this I saw a full bliss in Christ,

for his bliss would not have been full if it could have been done any better than it was done.

CHAPTER 23: THREE HEAVENS

Christ's words show three heavens: the Father pleased, the Son honored, the Spirit delighted.

23.1 And in these three words, "It is a joy, a bliss, and an endless delight to me," three heavens were shown, in this way: by the joy I understood the pleasure of the Father; by the bliss, the honor of the Son; and by the endless delight, the Holy Spirit. The Father is pleased, the Son is honored, and the Holy Spirit delights. And here I saw the third beholding in his blessed Passion, that is to say, the joy and the bliss that make him delight in it. For our courteous Lord showed me his Passion in five ways. The first is the bleeding of the head. The second is the discoloring of his blessed face. The third is the plentiful bleeding of the body, as from scourging. The fourth is the deep drying. These four were shown, as was said before, for the pains of the Passion. And the fifth is what was shown for the joy and the bliss of the Passion. For it is God's will that we have true delight with him in our salvation, and in this he wills that we be mightily comforted and strengthened. And so he wills, purely by his grace, that our soul be occupied in this; for we are his bliss, for he delights in us without end, and so shall we in him, by his grace. All that he does for us, and has done, and ever shall do, was never cost or burden to him, nor could be, except only that he died in our manhood, beginning at the sweet Incarnation and lasting until the blessed Rising on Easter morning. That is how long the cost and burden of our redemption in deed lasted, and in that deed he rejoices endlessly, as was said before. Ah, Jesus, let us take heed of this bliss that is in the blessed Trinity over our salvation, and let us desire to have as much spiritual delight, by his grace, as was said before; that is to say, that our delight in our salvation be like the joy that Christ has in our salvation, as far as it can be while we are here. The whole Trinity worked in

the Passion of Christ, ministering to us through him an abundance of virtue and a plenty of grace; but only the Maiden's Son suffered, and in this the whole blessed Trinity rejoices. And this was shown in this word: "Are you well pleased?" By that other word Christ said, "If you are well pleased, I am well pleased," it was as if he had said, "It is joy and delight enough to me, and I ask nothing else of you for my labor, except that I might please you."

23.2 And in this he brought to my mind the nature of a glad giver. A glad giver always takes only little heed of the thing he gives; all his desire and all his intent is to please and comfort the one to whom he gives it. And if the receiver takes the gift gladly and thankfully, then the courteous giver counts as nothing all his cost and all his labor, for the joy and delight he has, because he has pleased and comforted the one he loved. This was shown plentifully and fully. Think wisely, too, of the greatness of this word, "ever." For in it was shown a high knowledge of the love that he has in our salvation, with the manifold joys that follow from the Passion of Christ. One is that he rejoices that he has done it in deed and shall suffer no more. Another is that by it he has bought us from the endless pains of hell. Another is that he brought us up into heaven and made us to be his crown and his endless bliss.

CHAPTER 24: THE WOUNDED SIDE

The tenth showing: Christ leads Julian into his side, a place large enough for all who will be saved.

24.1 With a glad countenance our good Lord looked into his side and gazed with joy, and with his sweet looking he led the understanding of his creature through that same wound into his side, within. And there he showed a fair and delightful place, large enough for all mankind that shall be saved, to rest in peace and in love. And with this he brought to mind his dear and precious blood and his precious water, which he let pour out for love. And with that sweet beholding he showed his blessed heart

cloven in two. And with his rejoicing he showed to my understanding, in part, the blessed Godhead, as far as he would at that time strengthen the poor soul to understand it, as far as it can be put into words; that is to say, the endless love that was without beginning, and is, and shall be forever. And with this our good Lord said most blissfully, "Lo, how I love you," as if he had said, "My darling, behold and see your Lord, your God, who is your Maker and your endless joy. See your own brother, your Savior. My child, behold and see what delight and bliss I have in your salvation, and for my love rejoice with me." And also, for greater understanding, this blessed word was said: "Lo, how I love you," as if he had said, "Behold and see that I loved you so much, before I died for you, that I would die for you. And now I have died for you, and suffered willingly what I could. And now all my bitter pain and all my hard labor is turned to everlasting joy and bliss, for me and for you. How could it now be that you should ask me for anything that pleased me, and I should not very gladly grant it to you? For my delight is your holiness, and your endless joy and bliss with me." This is the understanding, as simply as I can tell it, of this blessed word, "Lo, how I loved you." Our good Lord showed this to make us glad and merry.

CHAPTER 25: MARY EXALTED

The eleventh showing: "Will you see her?" Julian sees Mary exalted.

25.1 And with this countenance of mirth and joy our good Lord looked down on the right side and brought to my mind where our Lady stood at the time of his Passion, and said, "Will you see her?" And in this sweet word it was as if he had said, "I know well that you want to see my blessed Mother, for after myself she is the highest joy that I could show you, and the greatest delight and honor to me, and she is the one most desired to be seen by all my blessed creatures." And because of the marvelous, high, and singular love that he has for this sweet Maiden, his blessed Mother, our Lady Saint Mary, he shows her bliss and joy through the meaning of this sweet word, as if he said, "Will you see how I

love her, so that you may rejoice with me in the love that I have for her, and she for me?" And also, for greater understanding, our good Lord speaks this sweet word in love to all mankind that shall be saved, as if to one person, as if he said, "Will you see in her how you are loved? For love of you I have made her so high, so noble, so worthy. And this delights me, and so I will that it delight you." For after himself she is the most blessed sight. But by this I am not taught to long to see her bodily presence while I am here, but the virtues of her blessed soul—her truth, her wisdom, her charity—by which I am taught to know myself and reverently fear my God. And when our good Lord had shown this and said this word, "Will you see her?" I answered and said, "Yes, good Lord, thank you. Yes, good Lord, if it is your will." Often I prayed this, and I expected to have seen her in a bodily likeness, but I did not see her so. And Jesus, in that word, showed me a spiritual sight of her. Just as I had seen her before, little and simple, so he showed her then high and noble and glorious, and pleasing to him above all creatures. And so he wills it to be known that all those who delight in him should also delight in her.

25.2 And for greater understanding he showed this example: if a man loves one creature singularly above all creatures, he will make all other creatures love and delight in that creature whom he loves so much. And in this word that Jesus said, "Will you see her?" it seemed to me that it was the most delightful word he could give me about her, together with the spiritual showing that he gave me of her. For our Lord showed me nothing in particular except our Lady Saint Mary, and he showed her three times. The first was as she conceived; the second, as she was in her sorrow under the cross; and the third, as she is now, in delight, honor, and joy.

CHAPTER 26: "IT IS I"

The twelfth showing: Christ, more glorified, says again and again, "It is I."

26.1 And after this our Lord showed himself more glorified, as I saw it, than I had seen him before. By this I was taught that our soul shall never have rest until it comes into him, knowing that he is full of joy, intimate and courteous, and blissful, and true life. Often our Lord Jesus said, "It is I, it is I, it is I who am highest. It is I whom you love. It is I in whom you delight. It is I whom you serve. It is I for whom you long. It is I whom you desire. It is I whom you mean. It is I who am all. It is I whom Holy Church preaches and teaches you. It is I who showed myself to you before." The number of your words passes my wits and understanding and all my powers, for they were of the highest, as I saw it. For in them is contained I cannot tell what; but the joy that I saw in the showing of them passes all that the heart can think or the soul may desire. And therefore these words are not explained here; but let every man, according to the grace that God gives him in understanding and longing, receive them in our Lord's meaning.

The Thirteenth Showing

Chapters 27–40
Sin is behovely, but all shall be well; the great deed at the last day; sin turned to honor.

CHAPTER 27: "SIN IS BEHOVELY"

The thirteenth showing: sin was necessary, "but all shall be well."

27.1 And after this our Lord brought to my mind the longing that I had for him before; and I saw that nothing hindered me but sin. And so I beheld it generally in us all, and it seemed to me that if sin had not been, we should all have been clean and like our Lord as he made us. And so in my folly, before this time, I often wondered why, by the great foresaid wisdom of God, the beginning of sin was not prevented; for then, it seemed to me, all should have been well. This stirring was much to be forsaken; and nevertheless I mourned and sorrowed over it, without reason and discretion. But Jesus, who in this vision informed me of all that I needed, answered with this word and said: "Sin is behovely, but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well."[1] In this naked word "sin," our Lord brought to my mind generally all that is not good: the shameful contempt and the utmost tribulation that he bore for us in this life, and his dying, and all his pains and passion, bodily and spiritual, and the pains of all his creatures, spiritual and bodily. For we are all troubled in part, and we shall be troubled, following our Master Jesus, until we are fully purged of our mortal flesh and of all our inward affections that are not truly good.

1 Behovely: fitting, necessary.

And the beholding of this, with all the pains that ever were or ever shall be. And with all this I understood the Passion of Christ to be the greatest pain, surpassing all. And all this was shown in a touch, and quickly passed over into comfort; for our good Lord did not want the soul to be afraid of this ugly sight. But I did not see sin; for I believe it had no kind of substance, nor any part of being, nor could it be known except by the pain that is caused by it. And this pain is something, as I see it, for a time; for it purges us and makes us know ourselves and ask for mercy. For the Passion of our Lord is comfort to us against all this, and so is his blessed will. And for the tender love that our good Lord has for all who shall be saved, he comforts readily and sweetly, meaning this: "It is true that sin is the cause of all this pain; but all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well." These words were shown very tenderly, showing no kind of blame to me or to anyone who shall be saved. Then it would be very unnatural of me to blame God or wonder at him because of my sin, since he does not blame me for sin. And in these same words I saw a high, marvelous secret hidden in God, which secret he shall make open, and it shall be known to us in heaven. In that knowing we shall truly see the cause why he allowed sin to come. And in that sight we shall have joy without end.

CHAPTER 28: COMPASSION FOR SINNERS

Christ's compassion for us because of sin, and our tribulations as his.

28.1 Thus I saw how Christ has compassion on us because of sin. And just as I was filled before with pain and compassion in the Passion of Christ, so in this I was in part filled with compassion for all my fellow Christians. For he loves very much the people who shall be saved, that is to say, God's servants. Holy Church shall be shaken in sorrow and anguish and tribulation in this world, as men shake a cloth in the wind. And to this our Lord answered, showing in this manner: "Ah, a great thing shall I make of this in heaven, of endless honor and of everlasting joy."

Yes, I saw this far: that our Lord rejoices in the tribulation of his servants, with pity and compassion. And on each person whom he loves, in order to bring them to his bliss, he lays something that is no fault in his sight, by which they are humbled and despised in this world, scorned and mocked and cast out. And he does this to prevent the harm they would take from the pomp and the pride and the vainglory of this wretched life, and to make their way ready to come to heaven, in bliss without end, everlasting. For he says: "I shall break you all to pieces, away from your vain affections and your vicious pride; and after that I shall gather you, and make you humble and mild, clean and holy, by uniting you to me." And then I saw that every natural compassion that a man has for his fellow Christian in charity is Christ in him; and that every kind of abasement that was shown in his Passion was shown again here in this compassion. In this there were two kinds of understanding in our Lord's meaning. The one was the bliss that we are brought to, in which he wants us to rejoice. The other is for comfort in our pain. For he wants us to know that it shall all turn to our honor and profit by the power of his Passion; and to know that we have suffered nothing at all alone, but with him, and to see him as our ground; and to see that his pains and his tribulation surpass all that we may suffer so far that it cannot be fully thought. And the attentive beholding of this will save us from grumbling and despair in the feeling of our pains. And if we see truly that our sin deserves it, yet his love excuses us, and of his great courtesy he takes away all our blame, and beholds us with compassion and pity, as children, innocent and not hateful.

CHAPTER 29: "HOW MIGHT ALL BE WELL?"

Julian asks how all can be well given the harm sin has done.

29.1 But in this I stood beholding generally, sorrowfully and mournfully, saying thus to our Lord in my intention, with very great fear: "Ah, good Lord, how could all be well, given the great harm that comes by sin to your creatures?" And here I desired,

as much as I dared, to have some more open explanation by which I might be eased in this. And to this our blessed Lord answered very humbly and with a most lovely countenance, and showed that Adam's sin was the greatest harm that ever was done or ever shall be, until the world's end. And he also showed that this is openly known in all Holy Church on earth. Furthermore, he taught me that I should behold the glorious amends; for this making of amends is more pleasing to the blessed Godhead, and more honorable for man's salvation, beyond comparison, than ever the sin of Adam was harmful. So our blessed Lord means this, and in this teaching, that we should take heed to this: "For since I have made well the greatest harm, it is my will that you know by this that I shall make well all that is less."[2]

CHAPTER 30: TWO PARTS

Our salvation is open to us; everything beyond it is God's secret counsel.

30.1 He gave understanding of two parts. The one part is our Savior and our salvation. This blessed part is open, clear, fair and light, and plentiful; for all mankind that is of good will, and that shall be, is comprehended in this part. To this we are bound by God, and drawn, and counseled, and taught inwardly by the Holy Spirit, and outwardly by Holy Church in the same grace. In this our Lord wants us to be occupied, rejoicing in him, for he rejoices in us. And the more plentifully we take of this with reverence and humility, the more thanks we deserve from him, and the more benefit to ourselves. And thus we may see and rejoice that our part is our Lord. The other part is hidden and shut away from us; that is to say, all that is beside our salvation. For that is our Lord's secret counsel, and it belongs to the royal lordship of God to have his secret counsels in peace; and it belongs to his servants, for obedience and reverence, not to want to know his counsels. Our Lord has pity and compassion on us because some creatures make themselves so busy about it; and I am sure

2 "Asseethe" (asseth): amends, satisfaction, from the Old French for "enough."

that if we knew how greatly we would please him and ease ourselves by leaving it, we would. The saints in heaven want to know nothing but what our Lord wants to show them; and also their charity and their desire are ruled according to the will of our Lord. And so we ought to want our will to be like theirs. Then we shall will and desire nothing but the will of our Lord, as they do; for we are all one in God's meaning. And here I was taught that I should rejoice only in our blessed Savior Jesus, and trust in him for all things.

CHAPTER 31: "I MAY MAKE ALL THINGS WELL"

"I may make all things well"; Christ's spiritual thirst lasts until the last day.

31.1 And so our good Lord answered all the questions and doubts that I might raise, saying most comfortingly: "I may make all things well, and I can make all things well, and I shall make all things well, and I will make all things well; and you shall see for yourself that all manner of thing shall be well." Where he says "I may," I understand it of the Father; and where he says "I can," I understand it of the Son; and where he says "I will," I understand it of the Holy Spirit; and where he says "I shall," I understand the unity of the blessed Trinity, three Persons and one truth. And where he says "You shall see for yourself," I understand the coming of all mankind that shall be saved into the blissful Trinity. And in these five words God wants us to be enclosed in rest and peace. And so the spiritual thirst of Christ shall have an end. For this is the spiritual thirst of Christ: the love-longing that lasts, and ever shall, until we see that sight at Doomsday. For we who shall be saved, and shall be Christ's joy and his bliss, are some of us still here, and some are yet to come, and so shall some be until that day. Therefore this is his thirst and love-longing: to have us all together, here in him, to our endless bliss, as I see it. For we are not now as fully whole in him as we shall be then. For we know in our faith, and it was also shown in all the showings, that Christ Jesus was both God

and man. And as regards the Godhead, he is himself highest bliss, and was from without beginning, and shall be without end; and this true, endless bliss can never be raised or lowered in itself. And this was plentifully seen in every showing, and namely in the twelfth, where he says, "It is I who am highest." And as regards Christ's manhood, it is known in our faith, and also shown, that he, through the power of the Godhead, for love, to bring us to his bliss, suffered pains and passion, and died.

31.2 And these are the works of Christ's manhood, in which he rejoices. And he showed that in the ninth showing, where he says, "It is a joy, a bliss, and an endless delight to me that ever I suffered passion for you." And this is the bliss of Christ's works. And this is what he means where he says in the same showing: we are his bliss, we are his reward, we are his honor, we are his crown. For as regards Christ being our head, he is glorified and beyond suffering; but as regards his body, in which all his members are knit, he is not yet fully glorified, nor wholly beyond suffering. For the same thirst and longing that he had upon the tree of the cross (which desire, longing and thirst, as I see it, was in him from without beginning), the same he has still, and shall have until the time that the last soul that shall be saved has come up to his bliss. For as truly as there is a property in God of compassion and pity, so truly there is a property in God of thirst and longing. And by the power of this longing in Christ, we are to long for him in return, without which no soul comes to heaven. And this property of longing and thirst comes from the endless goodness of God, just as the property of pity comes from his endless goodness. And though he has longing and pity, they are different properties, as I see it. And in this stands the point of spiritual thirst, which lasts in him as long as we are in need, drawing us up to his bliss. And all this was seen in the showing of compassion; for that shall cease at Doomsday. Thus he has pity and compassion on us, and he has longing to have us; but his wisdom and his love do not allow this to come until the best time.

CHAPTER 32: THE GREAT DEED

A deed God will do at the last day that will make all things well.

32.1 One time our good Lord said, "All manner of thing shall be well." And another time he said, "You shall see for yourself that all manner of thing shall be well." And from these two the soul took different kinds of understanding. One was this: he wants us to know that he takes heed not only of noble things and great ones, but also of little and small ones, of low and simple ones, of the one and of the other. And this is what he means when he says, "All manner of thing shall be well," for he wants us to know that the least thing shall not be forgotten. Another understanding is this. There are many evil deeds done in our sight, and such great harms taken, that it seems to us impossible that it should ever come to a good end. And we look upon this, and sorrow and mourn for it, so that we cannot rest in the blissful beholding of God as we ought to. And the cause is this: the use of our reason is now so blind, so low, and so simple that we cannot know the high, marvelous wisdom, the might, and the goodness of the blissful Trinity. And this is what he means where he says, "You shall see for yourself that all manner of thing shall be well." It is as if he said, "Take it now faithfully and trustfully, and at the last end you shall truly be in the fullness of joy." And so in the same five words said before, "I may make all things well," I understand a mighty comfort concerning all the works of our Lord God that are yet to come. There is a deed which the blissful Trinity shall do on the last day, as I see it. And what the deed shall be, and how it shall be done, is unknown to all creatures beneath Christ, and shall remain so until it is done. The goodness and the love of our Lord God want us to know that it shall be. And his might and his wisdom, by the same love, will cover and hide from us what it shall be and how it shall be done. And the reason he wants us to know it in this way is that he wants us to be the more at ease in our soul and peaceful in love, leaving off the beholding of all the tempests that might hinder us from

truly rejoicing in him. This is the great deed ordained by our Lord God from without beginning, treasured and hidden in his blessed breast, known only to himself, and by this deed he shall make all things well. For just as the blessed Trinity made all things out of nothing, so the same blessed Trinity shall make well all that is not well. And at this sight I marveled greatly, and considered our faith, thinking thus. Our faith is grounded in God's word, and it belongs to our faith that we believe that God's word shall be kept in all things. And one point of our faith is that many creatures shall be damned. Such are the angels that fell out of heaven through pride, who are now fiends. Such are many on earth who die outside the faith of Holy Church, that is to say, those who are non-Christians. Such also are many who have received Christianity and live an unchristian life, and so die outside charity. All these shall be damned to hell without end, as Holy Church teaches me to believe. And with all this standing, it seemed to me impossible that all manner of thing should be well, as our Lord showed at this time. And to this I had no other answer in the showing of our Lord but this: "What is impossible to you is not impossible to me. I shall keep my word in all things, and I shall make all things well." And in this I was taught by the grace of God that I should hold myself steadfastly in the faith as I had understood it before. And with this I was taught that I should stand firm and soberly believe that all manner of thing shall be well, as our Lord showed at the same time. For this is the great deed that our Lord God shall do, and in this deed he shall keep his word in all things, and he shall make well all that is not well. But what the deed shall be, and how it shall be done, no creature beneath Christ knows, nor shall know until it is done. This is the understanding that I took of our Lord's meaning at this time.

CHAPTER 33: HELL AND PURGATORY

Julian asks to see hell and purgatory and is not shown them.

33.1 And yet, as far as I dared, I desired in this that I might have some sight of hell and of purgatory. But it was not my intention to put to the test anything that belongs to our faith. I truly believed that hell and purgatory exist for the same end that Holy Church teaches. My intention was rather that I might see, for my learning, everything that belongs to my faith, so that I might live the more to God's honor and to my own profit. And for all that I could desire, I could see nothing at all of this, except as it was said before in the first showing, where I saw that the devil is reproved by God and endlessly damned. In this sight I understood that all the creatures who are of the devil's condition in this life and end in it are no more mentioned before God and all his holy ones than the devil is, even though they are of mankind, whether they have been baptized or not. For though the revelation was shown of goodness, and little mention was made in it of evil, yet I was not drawn by it from any point of the faith that Holy Church teaches me to believe. For I had sight of the passion of Christ in various showings: in the first, in the second, in the fourth, and in the eighth, as was said before. In these I had in part a feeling of the sorrow of our Lady and of his true friends who saw his pains. But I did not see the Jews who put him to death so particularly specified. Nevertheless I knew in my faith that they were accursed and damned without end, except those who were converted by grace.[3]

33.2 And I was strengthened, and learned in general to keep myself in the faith in every point, and in all things as I had understood it before. I hoped that I was in it with the mercy and the grace of God, and I desired and prayed in my intention that I might continue in it until my life's end. It is God's will that we

3 Julian reports the common Christian teaching of her time; the Catholic Church has since rejected the charge of collective Jewish guilt for Jesus's death (*Nostra aetate*, 1965).

have great regard for all the deeds that he has done, for by this he wants us to know, trust, and believe all that he shall do. But we must always leave off beholding what the deed shall be, and desire to be like our brothers, the saints in heaven, who will nothing at all but God's will. Then we shall rejoice only in God, and be well satisfied both with his hiding and with his showing. For I saw truly in our Lord's meaning that the more we busy ourselves to know his secrets, in that or in any other thing, the farther we shall be from knowing them.

CHAPTER 34: TWO KINDS OF SECRETS

The great secret God keeps hidden, and those he wants known.

34.1 Our Lord showed two kinds of secrets. One is this great secret, with all the secret points belonging to it, and he wants us to know these secrets as hidden until the time that he will clearly show them to us. The other kind are the secrets which he himself showed openly in this revelation. These are secrets which he will make open and known to us, for he wants us to know that it is his will that we know them. They are secrets to us, but not only because he wants them to be secrets to us. They are secrets to us because of our blindness and our unknowing. And therefore he has great pity, and therefore he will make them open to us himself, so that we may know him, and love him, and cleave to him. For all that is profitable for us to understand and to know, our good Lord will most courteously show us what it is, through all the preaching and teaching of Holy Church. God showed the very great pleasure that he has in all men and women who mightily and wisely receive the preaching and teaching of Holy Church, for it is he who is Holy Church. He is the ground, he is the substance, he is the teaching, he is the teacher, he is the end, and he is the reward. This is why every natural soul labors. And this is known, and shall be known, to each soul to whom the Holy Spirit declares it. And I truly hope that all those who seek in this way shall succeed, for they seek God. All that I have now said, and more that I shall say hereafter,

is comfort against sin. For in the third showing, when I saw that God does all that is done, I did not see sin, and then I saw that all is well. But when God showed me concerning sin, then he said, "All shall be well."

CHAPTER 35: A CERTAIN CREATURE

Julian asks about one person she loves and is taught to look at the general, not the particular.

35.1 And when God Almighty had shown so plenteously and so fully of his goodness, I desired to know whether a certain creature whom I loved would continue in good living, which I hoped had begun by the grace of God. And it seemed that I hindered myself by this particular desire, for I was not taught at this time. And then I was answered in my reason, as if by a friendly intermediary: "Take it generally, and behold the courtesy of your Lord God as he has shown it to you. For it is more honor to God to behold him in all things than in any particular thing." I assented, and with that I learned that it is more honor to God to know all things in general than to take delight in any particular thing. And if I were to act wisely according to this teaching, I should not be glad for any particular thing, nor greatly distressed by any manner of thing, for "All shall be well." For the fullness of joy is to behold God in all things. Our good Lord made all things by his blessed might, wisdom, and love, and by the same he leads them continually to the same end, and will bring them there to himself. And when it is time we shall see it. And the ground of this was shown in the first showing, and more openly in the third, where it says, "I saw God in a point." All that our Lord does is rightful, and all that he permits is honorable. And in these two both good and evil are comprehended, for all that is good our Lord does, and what is evil our Lord permits. I do not say that evil is honorable. I say that the permission of our Lord God is honorable, for by it his goodness shall be known without end, and his marvelous humility and

mildness, through this working of mercy and grace.[4] Rightfulness is that thing which is so good that it cannot be better than it is. For God himself is true rightfulness, and all his works are done rightfully, as they have been ordained from without beginning by his high might, his high wisdom, and his high goodness. And just as he has ordained it for the best, so he works continually and leads it to the same end. And he is always fully pleased with himself and with all his works. And the beholding of this blessed accord is very sweet to the soul that sees it by grace. All the souls that shall be saved in heaven without end are made rightful in the sight of God, and by his own goodness. In this rightfulness we are endlessly and marvelously kept, above all creatures. And mercy is a working that comes from the goodness of God, and it shall go on working as long as sin is permitted to pursue rightful souls. And when sin no longer has leave to pursue them, then the working of mercy shall cease. And then all shall be brought into rightfulness, and shall stand in it without end. By his permission we fall. In his blessed love, with his might and his wisdom, we are kept. And by mercy and grace we are raised to manifold more joy. And so he wants to be known and loved in rightfulness and in mercy, now and without end. And the soul that wisely beholds in grace is well satisfied with both, and rejoices endlessly.

CHAPTER 36: MIRACLES TO COME

God himself will do a deed for all who are saved; miracles come after sorrow.

36.1 Our Lord God showed that a deed shall be done, and he himself shall do it. And it shall be honorable, and marvelous, and plenteous, and by him it shall be done, and he himself shall do it. And this is the highest joy that the soul understood: that God himself shall do it. And I shall do nothing at all but sin, and my sin shall not hinder his goodness from working. And I saw that the beholding of this is a heavenly joy in a fearful soul that by

4 "Suffer" and "sufferance" in the original here mean "permit" and "permission."

grace evermore desires God's will in godly fashion. This deed shall be begun here, and it shall be honorable to God and plenteously profitable to all his lovers on earth. And as we come to heaven, each in turn, we shall see it in marvelous joy. And it shall go on working in this way until the last day, and the honor and the bliss of it shall last in heaven before God and all his holy saints without end. This is how this deed was seen and understood in our Lord's meaning. And the reason he showed it is to make us rejoice in him and in all his works.

36.2 When I saw the showing continued, I understood that it was shown for a great thing that was then to come, which thing God showed that he himself would do. This deed has the properties said before. And he showed this most blessedly, meaning that I should take it with understanding, faithfully, and trustingly. But what the deed would be was kept secret from me. And in this I saw that he does not want us to be afraid to know the things that he shows. He shows them because he wants us to know them. By this knowing he wants us to love him, and delight in him, and endlessly rejoice in him. And for the great love that he has for us, he shows us all that is honorable and profitable for the time. And those things that he wants to keep secret now, yet of his great goodness he showed them hidden. In this showing he wants us to believe and understand that we shall see it truly in his endless bliss. Then we ought to rejoice in him for all that he shows and all that he hides. And if we do this willingly and humbly, we shall find great ease in it, and we shall have endless thanks from him for it. And this is the understanding of this word, "That it shall be done by me": that is to say, by man in general, that is to say, all who shall be saved. It shall be honorable, marvelous, and plentiful, and by me it shall be done, and God himself shall do it. And this shall be the highest joy that may be seen in the deed: that God himself shall do it, and man shall do nothing at all but sin. Then our Lord God means this, as if he said: "Behold and see: here you have matter for humility; here you have matter for love; here you have matter for knowing yourself; here you have matter for rejoicing in me. And for

my love, rejoice in me, for of all things, by this you can most please me." And as long as we are in this life, whenever by our folly we turn to beholding the reprobate, our Lord touches us tenderly and calls us blissfully, saying in our soul: "Let me alone, my dear worthy child. Attend to me. I am enough for you. And rejoice in your Savior and in your salvation." And that this is our Lord's working in us, I am sure that the soul that is pierced with it by grace shall see it and feel it. And though this deed is truly to be taken for man in general, yet it does not exclude the particular, for what our good Lord will do through his poor creatures is now unknown to me. But this deed and the other one mentioned before are not one and the same, but two different deeds. This deed shall be known sooner, and that shall be as we come to heaven; and to whom our Lord gives it, it may be known here in part. But the great deed mentioned before shall be known neither in heaven nor on earth until it is done. And furthermore, he gave special understanding and teaching about working and showing miracles, like this: "It is known that I have done miracles here before, many, and most high and marvelous, honorable and great. And as I have done, so I do now continually, and shall do in time to come." It is known that before miracles come sorrows, and anguish, and trouble. That is so that we should know our own feebleness and the misfortune that we have fallen into by sin, to humble us and make us cry to God for help and grace. And great miracles come afterward, and that from the high might and wisdom and goodness of God, showing his power and the joys of heaven, so far as this may be in this passing life, and that for the strengthening of our faith and the increase of our hope in charity. Therefore it pleases him to be known and worshiped in miracles. Then he means this: he wants us not to be borne down too low by the sorrows and storms that befall us, for it has always been so before miracles came.

CHAPTER 37: A GODLY WILL

In every soul to be saved there is a godly will that never consents to sin.

37.1 God brought to my mind that I would sin. And because of the delight that I had in beholding him, I did not readily attend to that showing. And our Lord very mercifully waited, and gave me grace to attend. And I took this showing singularly to myself. But by all the gracious comforts that follow, as you shall see, I was taught to take it for all my fellow Christians, all in general and nothing in particular. Though our Lord showed me that I would sin, by me alone all are understood. And in this I conceived a gentle fear. And to this our Lord answered: "I keep you very surely." This word was said with more love and sureness of spiritual keeping than I can or may tell. For just as it was shown to me before that I would sin, so too was the comfort shown: sureness of keeping for all my fellow Christians (who shall be saved). What could make me love my fellow Christians more than to see in God that he loves all who shall be saved as if they were all one soul? For in every soul that shall be saved there is a godly will that never finally assents to sin, nor ever shall. Just as there is a beastly will in the lower part that can will no good, so there is a godly will in the higher part. This will is so good that it can never will evil, without end, but always good. And therefore we are what he loves, and endlessly we do what pleases him. And our good Lord showed this in the wholeness of love in which we stand in his sight: yes, that he loves us now as well while we are here as he shall when we are there before his blessed face. But because of the failing of love on our part, therefore is all our toil.

CHAPTER 38: SIN TURNED TO HONOR

Every sin will be rewarded with bliss; David, Peter, Paul, Thomas, Mary Magdalene, John of Beverley.

38.1 And God showed that sin shall be no shame but honor to man. For just as to every sin there answers a pain, by truth, so for every sin a bliss is given to the same soul, by love. Just as different sins are punished with different pains according to how grievous they are, so shall they be rewarded with different joys in heaven for their victories, according as the sin has been painful and sorrowful to the soul on earth. For the soul that shall come to heaven is so precious to God, and the place so honorable, that the goodness of God never allows the soul that shall come there to sin finally. But what sinners they are who shall be so rewarded is made known in Holy Church on earth, and also in heaven, by surpassing honors. For in this sight my understanding was lifted up into heaven. And then God merrily brought to my mind David, and others in the Old Law with him without number. And in the New Law he brought to my mind first Magdalen, Peter and Paul, Thomas and Jude, Saint John of Beverley, and others also without number: how they are known in the Church on earth with their sins, and it is no shame to them, but all is turned to honor for them. And therefore our courteous Lord shows for them here in part what is fulfilled there, for there the token of sin is turned to honor. And Saint John of Beverley our Lord showed very highly, for our comfort, for intimacy (and for the country's sake), and brought to my mind how he is a natural neighbor and one known to us. And God called him plainly Saint John of Beverley, as we do, and that with a very glad and sweet countenance, showing that he is a very high saint in his sight, and a blessed one. And with this he mentioned that in his youth and in his tender age he was a dear worthy servant to God, greatly loving and fearing God. And nevertheless God allowed him to fall, mercifully keeping him so

that he did not perish nor lose any time.[5] And afterward God raised him to manifold more grace. And for the contrition and the humility that he had in his life, God has given him in heaven manifold joys, surpassing what he would have had if he had not sinned or fallen. And that this is true, God shows on earth by plentiful miracles done continually about his body. And all this was to make us glad and merry in love.

CHAPTER 39: THE SCOURGE OF SIN

Sin is the sharpest scourge; contrition, compassion and longing heal it.

39.1 Sin is the sharpest scourge that any chosen soul may be struck with. This scourge beats a man or woman all to pieces, and breaks him all to pieces, and purges him in his own sight. It goes so far that at times he thinks himself worthy of nothing but, as it were, to sink into hell, until contrition takes him by the touching of the Holy Spirit and turns the bitterness into hope of God's mercy. And then his wounds begin to heal and the soul to come alive, turned into the life of Holy Church. The Holy Spirit leads him to confession, to show his sins willingly, nakedly and truly, with great sorrow and with great shame that he has so defiled the fair image of God. Then he undertakes penance for every sin, enjoined by his confessor, as is grounded in Holy Church by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.[6]

39.2 And this is one humility that greatly pleases God; and another is to take humbly bodily sickness of God's sending; also outward sorrow and shame, with the reproof and contempt of the world, with all manner of grievance and temptations that we are cast into, spiritual and bodily. Most preciously our good Lord keeps us when it seems to us that we are nearly forsaken and cast away for our sin, and because we see that we have deserved

5 John of Beverley (d. 721), bishop of Hexham and then of York, was buried at Beverley in Yorkshire, where his cult flourished in late-medieval England. The story of his fall into sin is not found in the early accounts of his life.

6 Julian's "domes-man" (judge) is the priest who hears confession and assigns penance.

it. And because of the humility that we gain by this, we are raised very high in God's sight by his grace. And also, whom our Lord wills, he visits of his special grace with such great contrition, and also with compassion, and true longing for God, that they are suddenly delivered from sin and from pain, and taken up to bliss, and made equal with saints. By contrition we are made clean; by compassion we are made ready; and by true longing for God we are made worthy.

39.3 These are three means, as I understood, by which all souls come to heaven, that is to say, those who have been sinners on earth and shall be saved. For by these medicines every sinful soul must be healed. Though he is healed, his wounds are seen before God not as wounds but as honors. And so, on the contrary, as we are punished here with sorrow and with penance, we shall be rewarded in heaven by the courteous love of our God almighty, who wills that none who come there lose their labor in any degree. For he beholds sin as sorrow and pains to his lovers, in whom, for love, he assigns no blame. The reward that we shall receive shall not be little, but it shall be high, glorious, and honorable; and so shall all shame turn to honor and to joy. For our courteous Lord does not want his servants to despair because of frequent failing, nor because of grievous falling, for our falling does not hinder him from loving us. Peace and love are always in us, being and working; but we are not always in peace and in love. But he wants us to take heed of this: that he is the ground of all our whole life in love; and furthermore, that he is our everlasting keeper, and mightily defends us against all our enemies, who are very cruel and very fierce against us. And our need is so much the greater, for we give them occasion by our falling.

CHAPTER 40: FRIENDSHIP IN SIN

God keeps us tenderly while we sin, and this is no reason to sin.

40.1 And this is a sovereign friendship of our courteous Lord, that he keeps us so tenderly while we are in our sin. And further-

more, he touches us very secretly and shows us our sin by the sweet light of mercy and grace. But when we see ourselves so foul, then we think that God is angry with us for our sin. Then we are stirred by the Holy Spirit through contrition into prayer and desire, amending ourselves with all our might to slacken the wrath of God, until we find rest in soul and softness in conscience. And then we hope that God has forgiven us our sin; and it is true. And then our courteous Lord shows himself to the soul merrily and with a very glad countenance, with a friendly welcome, as if it had been in pain and in prison, saying this: "My dear darling, I am glad you have come to me in all your woe. I have always been with you, and now you see me loving, and we are united in bliss." Thus are sins forgiven by grace and mercy, and our soul honorably received in joy, just as it shall be when it comes into heaven, as often as it comes, by the gracious working of the Holy Spirit and the power of Christ's Passion. Here I understood truly that all manner of thing is made ready for us by the great goodness of God, so far that whenever we ourselves are in peace and in charity, we are truly safe. But because we cannot have this in fullness while we are here, therefore it befits us always to live in sweet praying and in loving longing with our Lord Jesus. For he always longs to bring us to the fullness of joy, as was said before, where he shows the spiritual thirst.

40.2 But now, because of all this spiritual comfort that has been spoken of before, if any man or woman is stirred by folly to say or to think, "If this is true, then it would be good to sin, to have the more reward," or else to count sin of less weight, beware of this stirring. For truly, if it comes, it is untrue and from the enemy. For the same true love that touches us all by his blessed comfort, that same blessed love teaches us that we shall hate sin only for love. And I am sure by my own feeling that the more each natural soul sees this in the courteous love of our Lord God, the more loath he is to sin, and the more he is ashamed. For if all the pain that is in hell, and in purgatory, and on earth were laid before us, to suffer it rather than sin, we should rather choose all that pain than sin. For sin is so vile and so much to be

hated that it can be likened to no pain that is not itself sin. And no harder hell than sin was shown to me, for a natural soul hates no pain but sin. For all is good but sin, and nothing is evil but sin. And when we give our intent to love and humility, by the working of mercy and grace, we are made all fair and clean.

40.3 And as mighty and as wise as God is to save man, just so willing he is. For Christ himself is the ground of all the laws of Christian people, and he taught us to do good against evil. Here we may see that he himself is this charity, and does to us as he teaches us to do. For he wants us to be like him in the wholeness of endless love to ourselves and to our fellow Christians. Just as his love is not broken toward us for our sin, so he does not want our love to be broken toward ourselves or toward our fellow Christians. Rather, we should nakedly hate sin, and endlessly love the soul as God loves it. Then we would hate sin as God hates it, and love the soul as God loves it. For these words that God said are an endless comfort: "I keep you very truly."

The Fourteenth Showing: Prayer

Chapters 41–43
"I am the ground of your beseeching"; prayer and trust;
prayer unites the soul to God.

CHAPTER 41: "I AM THE GROUND OF YOUR BESEECHING"

The fourteenth showing: "I am the ground of your beseeching";
rightful prayer and sure trust.

41.1 After this our Lord showed about prayer. In this showing I saw two conditions in our Lord's meaning. One is rightful prayer. The other is sure trust. But our trust is often not full, for we are not sure that God hears us, as we think, because of our unworthiness and because we feel nothing at all. We are often as barren and as dry after our prayers as we were before. And so, in our feeling, our folly is the cause of our weakness, for I have felt this myself. And all this our Lord suddenly brought to my mind, and he showed these words and said, "I am the ground of your beseeching." "First, it is my will that you have it. And then I make you will it. And then I make you beseech it, and you seek it. How then could it be that you should not have what you seek?" And so in the first reason, with the three that follow, our good Lord shows a mighty comfort, as can be seen in the same words. In the first reason, where he says, "And you beseech it," he shows very great pleasure and the endless reward that he will give us for our beseeching. And in the sixth reason he says, "How then could it be?" This was said as of an impossible thing. For it is the most impossible thing there can be that we should seek mercy and grace and not have it. For everything that our good Lord makes us beseech, he himself has ordained for us

from before all beginning. Here, then, we may see that our beseeching is not the cause of the goodness and grace that he does for us. The cause is his own goodness. And he showed that truly in all these sweet words, where he says, "I am the ground." And our good Lord wills that this be known by his lovers on earth. The more we know it, the more we shall beseech, if it is wisely taken, and such is our Lord's meaning. Beseeching is a true, gracious, lasting will of the soul, united and fastened into the will of our Lord by the sweet secret working of the Holy Spirit. Our Lord himself is the first receiver of our prayer, as I see it, and he takes it most thankfully. Greatly rejoicing, he sends it up above and sets it in a treasury where it shall never perish. It is there before God, with all his holy saints, continually received, always furthering our needs. And when we come to receive our bliss, it shall be given to us as a degree of joy, with endless honorable thanks from him. Our Lord is very glad and merry at our prayer. He looks for it and he wants to have it, for with his grace it makes us like him in condition, as we are like him in nature, and such is his blessed will. For he says this: "Pray wholeheartedly, inwardly, though it seems to you that it has no savor for you. It is still profitable enough, though you feel nothing. Pray wholeheartedly, inwardly, though you feel nothing, though you see nothing, yes, though you think you cannot. For in dryness and in barrenness, in sickness and in feebleness, your prayer is most pleasing to me, though you think it has little savor for you. And so is all your living prayer in my sight."

41.2 Because of the reward and the endless thanks that he will give us, he longs to have us praying continually in his sight. God accepts the good will and the labor of his servants, however we feel. Therefore it pleases him that we work in prayer and in good living, by his help and his grace, reasonably and with discretion, keeping our powers turned to him, until we have him whom we seek in fullness of joy, that is, Jesus. And he showed that in the fifteenth revelation, where he says, "You shall have me as your reward." Thanksgiving also belongs to prayer. Thanksgiving is a true inward knowing, with great reverence and loving fear, turn-

ing ourselves with all our powers to the working that our Lord stirred us to, rejoicing and giving thanks inwardly. Sometimes, for very abundance, it breaks out aloud and says, "Good Lord, great thanks; blessed may you be!" And sometimes the earth is dry and feels nothing, or else the enemy tempts us. Then reason and grace drive it to cry to our Lord aloud, recounting his blessed passion and his great goodness.[1] And so the power of our Lord's word turns into the soul, quickens the heart, enters by his grace into true working, and makes it pray most blessedly. And truly to rejoice in our Lord is a most loving thanksgiving in his sight.

CHAPTER 42: THREE THINGS IN PRAYER

Where our prayer springs from, how we should pray, and what its fruit is.

42.1 Our Lord wills that we have true understanding, especially in three things that belong to our prayer. The first is by whom and how our prayer springs. By whom, he shows when he says, "I am the ground." And how, by his goodness, for he says, "First, it is my will." The second is in what manner and how we should use our prayers: that our will be turned into the will of our Lord, rejoicing. This is what he means when he says, "I make you will it." The third is that we know the fruit and end of our prayer, which is to be united with our Lord and like him in all things. All this loving lesson was shown with this meaning and for this end. And he will help us, and he shall make it so, as he himself says. Blessed may he be! For it is our Lord's will that our prayer and our trust be equally large. If we do not trust as much as we pray, we do not give full honor to our Lord in our prayer. And we also hinder and pain ourselves. The cause, as I believe, is that we do not truly know that our Lord is the ground from whom our prayer springs. Nor do we know that it is given us by the grace of his love. If we knew this, it would make us trust that we shall have, by our Lord's gift, all that we desire. For I am sure that no

1 "Grant mercy" in the left column is "gramercy," great thanks.

one asks mercy and grace with a true intention unless mercy and grace have first been given to him. But sometimes it comes to our mind that we have prayed a long time, and yet it seems to us that we do not have what we asked. We should not be downcast because of this, for I am sure by our Lord's meaning that we are waiting either for a better time, or for more grace, or for a better gift. He wills that we have true knowledge in himself that he is being. In this knowledge he wills that our understanding be grounded, with all our powers, all our intentions, and all our meanings. In this ground he wills that we take our place and our dwelling. And by the gracious light of himself, he wills that we have understanding of the three things that follow. The first is our noble and excellent making. The second is our precious and dearly worthy redemption. The third is everything that he has made beneath us to serve us, which he keeps for love of us. He means this, as if he said: "Behold and see that I have done all this before your prayer, and now you exist and pray to me." And so he means that it belongs to us to know that the greatest deeds are done, as Holy Church teaches. And in beholding this, with thanksgiving, we ought to pray for the deed that is now being done: that he rule us and guide us to his honor in this life, and bring us to his bliss. For that he has done everything. He means that we should see that he does it, and that we should pray for it, for one without the other is not enough. If we pray and do not see that he does it, it makes us downcast and doubtful, and that is not to his honor. And if we see that he does it and do not pray, we do not do our duty. And so it cannot be; that is to say, it is not so in his beholding. But to see that he does it, and to pray along with it: so he is honored and we are helped. Whatever our Lord has ordained to do, it is his will that we pray for it, either in particular or in general. The joy and the bliss that it is to him, and the thanks and the honor that we shall have for it, pass the understanding of all creatures in this life, as I see it. For prayer is a right understanding of that fullness of joy that is to come, with true longing and sure trust. Savoring or seeing our bliss, to which we are ordained, makes us long by nature. True under-

standing and love, with sweet mindfulness of our Savior, graciously make us trust. And so we have it by nature to long and by grace to trust, and our Lord beholds us continually in these two workings, for it is our duty. And his goodness can assign no less to us than this, which belongs to us: to give our diligence to it. Even when we do it, it shall seem to us that it is nothing, and that is true. But let us do what we can and humbly ask mercy and grace, and all that we lack we shall find in him. And this is what he means where he says, "I am the ground of your beseeching." And so in those blessed words, together with the showing, I saw a full victory over all our wickedness and all our doubting fears.

CHAPTER 43: PRAYER UNITES THE SOUL TO GOD

Prayer is a witness that the soul wills what God wills.

43.1 Prayer unites the soul to God. The soul is always like God in nature and in substance, restored by grace, but it is often unlike him in condition, through sin on man's part. Then prayer is a witness that the soul wills as God wills. It comforts the conscience and makes a person able to receive grace. And so he teaches us to pray, and to trust mightily that we shall have what we pray for, for he beholds us in love and wills to make us partners in his good will and deed. Therefore he stirs us to pray for what it pleases him to do. For this prayer and good will, which we have as his gift, he will reward us and give us an endless reward. And this was shown in this word: "And you beseech it." In this word God showed such great pleasure and such great delight, as if he were greatly indebted to us for each good deed that we do, though it is he who does it. And because we beseech him mightily to do what pleases him, it is as if he said, "How could you please me more than by beseeching me mightily, wisely, and willingly to do the thing that I want done?" And so by prayer the soul is brought into accord with God. But when our courteous Lord, of his special grace, shows himself to our soul, we have what we desire. Then for the time we do not see

what more we should pray for, and all our intention, with all our powers, is set wholly on beholding him. This is a high, imperceptible prayer, as I see it. For the whole reason why we pray is to be united into the sight and beholding of him to whom we pray. We rejoice marvelously, with reverent fear and with such great sweetness and delight in him that we can pray nothing at all except as he stirs us for the time. And well I know that the more the soul sees of God, the more she desires him by grace. But when we do not see him in this way, then we feel need and cause to pray to Jesus for feeling, and because of our own inability. For when a soul is tempted, troubled, and left to herself in her unrest, then it is time to pray, to make herself supple and obedient to God. But by no kind of prayer does she make God supple to her, for he is always the same in love.

43.2 And so I saw that whenever we see a need for which we pray, our Lord God follows us, helping our desire. And when, of his special grace, we plainly behold him and see no other needs, then we follow him, and he draws us to himself by love. For I saw and felt that his marvelous and abundant goodness fulfills all our powers. With this I saw that his continual working in all manner of things is done so godly, so wisely, and so mightily that it surpasses all our imagining, and all that we can mean or think. And then we can do no more than behold him and rejoice, with a high, mighty desire to be wholly united into him, attending to his movement, rejoicing in his loving, and delighting in his goodness. And so, with his sweet grace, in our own humble, continual prayer, we shall come into him now in this life, by many secret touchings of sweet spiritual sights and feelings, measured to us as our simplicity can bear it. And this is worked, and shall be worked, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, until we die in longing for love. Then we shall all come into our Lord, knowing ourselves clearly and possessing God fully. We shall be endlessly all hidden in God, truly seeing and fully feeling him, hearing him spiritually, delightfully smelling him, and sweetly smelling him. And there we shall see God face to face, intim-

ately and fully.[2] The creature that is made shall see and endlessly behold God, who is the Maker. For no one can see God in this way and live afterward, that is to say, in this mortal life. But when he, of his special grace, wills to show himself here, he strengthens the creature above itself and measures the showing according to his own will, and it is profitable for the time.

2 Cressy prints "smelling" twice; the manuscripts give a different sense for the second (tasting or swallowing).

The Fourteenth Showing: Wrath and Mercy

Chapters 44–50
There is no wrath in God; our substance and our sensuality; mercy and forgiveness; how can God not blame us?

CHAPTER 44: TRUTH, WISDOM AND LOVE

A soul works God's will as Mary did, by truth and wisdom, from which love comes.

44.1 God showed in all the revelations many times that (a holy) man always works his will and his honor, continually, without ceasing. And what this working is was shown in the first, and on a marvelous ground, for it was shown in the working of the blessed soul of our Lady Saint Mary, by truth and wisdom. And how, I hope by the grace of the Holy Spirit, I shall tell as I saw. Truth sees God, and wisdom beholds God, and from these two comes the third, and that is a marvelous delight in God, which is love. Where truth and wisdom truly are, there love truly is, coming from them both, and all of God's making. For God is endless sovereign truth, endless sovereign wisdom, endless sovereign love, unmade. And a man's soul is a creature in God which has the same properties, made, and it always does what it was made for: it sees God, it beholds God, and it loves God. Therefore God rejoices in the creature, and the creature in God, endlessly marveling. In this marveling he sees his God, his Lord, his Maker, so high, so great, and so good in comparison with him who is made, that the creature scarcely seems anything to itself. But the brightness and clearness of truth and wisdom make him see

and know that he is made for love, and in this love God endlessly keeps him.

CHAPTER 45: TWO JUDGMENTS

God judges our substance, the Church judges our sensuality; Julian asks how both are true.

45.1 God judges us by our natural substance, which is always kept one in him, whole and safe without end, and this judgment comes from his rightfulness. And man judges by our changeable sensuality, which seems now one thing, now another, according to what it takes from the parts and shows outwardly. And this judgment is mixed, for sometimes it is good and easy, and sometimes it is hard and grievous. Insofar as it is good and easy, it belongs to rightfulness. Insofar as it is hard and grievous, our good Lord Jesus reforms it by mercy and grace, through the power of his blessed Passion, and so brings it into rightfulness.[1] And though these two are thus reconciled and united, yet both shall be known in heaven without end. The first judgment, which is of God's rightfulness, comes from his own high endless love. That is the fair, sweet judgment that was shown in all the fair revelation, in which I saw him assign to us no kind of blame. And though these were sweet and delightful, yet in beholding this alone I could not be fully eased. That was because of the judgment of Holy Church, which I had understood before and which was continually in my sight. And therefore by this judgment it seemed to me that I must necessarily know myself a sinner. And by the same judgment I understood that sinners are sometimes worthy of blame and wrath, and these two I could not see in God. And therefore my deliberation and desire were more than I can or may tell, for God himself showed the higher judgment at the same time, and so I had to accept it. And the lower judgment had been taught me earlier in Holy Church, and therefore I could in no way give up the lower judgment. Then

1 "Sensuality" is Julian's term for the soul as joined to the body and the senses. It has no sexual meaning.

this was my desire: that I might see in God in what way the judgment of Holy Church here on earth is true in his sight, and how it belongs to me truly to know it, so that both might be preserved, in a way that would be honorable to God and the right way for me. And to all this I had no other answer but a marvelous example of a lord and a servant, as I shall tell later, and that was shown very obscurely. And yet I remained in desire and will, to the end of my life, that I might by grace know these two judgments as it belongs to me. For all heavenly things, and all earthly things that belong to heaven, are comprehended in these two judgments. The more knowledge and understanding of these two judgments we have, by the gracious leading of the Holy Spirit, the more we shall see and know our feelings (and workings of grace). And the more we see them, the more naturally, by grace, we shall long to be filled with endless joy and bliss, for we are made for that. And our natural substance is now blissfully in God, and has been since it was made, and shall be without end.[2]

CHAPTER 46: NO WRATH IN GOD

We cannot fully know ourselves in this life; Julian sees that God is never angry.

46.1 But our passing life that we have here in our sensuality does not know what our self is, except in our faith. When we know and see truly and clearly what our self is, then we shall truly and clearly see and know our Lord God in fullness of joy. And therefore it must necessarily be that the nearer we are to our bliss, the more we shall long, and that both by nature and by grace. We may have knowledge of ourselves in this life by the continual help and power of our high nature, and in this knowledge we may increase and grow through the furthering and speeding of mercy and grace. But we may never fully know ourselves until the last point, and at that point this passing life and every

2 Here and in chapters 47–48 Cressy prints "feeling(s)" where the manuscripts read "failing(s)."

kind of woe and pain shall have an end. And therefore it properly belongs to us, both by grace and by nature, to long and desire with all our might to know ourselves. In this full knowledge we shall truly and clearly know our God in fullness of endless joy. And yet in all this time, from the beginning to the end, I had two kinds of beholding. The one was endless, continuing love, with assurance of keeping and blissful salvation, for all the showing was of this. The other was the common teaching of Holy Church, in which I had been instructed and grounded before, and which I willingly held in practice and understanding. And the beholding of this did not leave me, for the showing did not move me or lead me away from it in any point. But I had teaching in it to love it and delight in it, so that I might, with the help of our Lord and his grace, increase and rise to more heavenly knowing and higher loving. And so in all this beholding it seemed to me necessary to see and to know that we are sinners. We do many evils that we ought to leave, and leave many good deeds undone that we ought to do, and for this we deserve pain, blame, and wrath. And notwithstanding all this, I saw truly that our Lord was never angry, nor ever shall be. For he is God, he is good, he is truth, he is love, and he is peace; and his might, his wisdom, his charity, and his unity do not allow him to be angry. For I saw truly that it is against the property of his might to be angry, and against the property of his wisdom, and against the property of his goodness. God is that goodness which cannot be angry, for God is nothing but goodness. Our soul is united to him, unchangeable goodness, and between God and our soul there is neither wrath nor forgiveness in his sight. For our soul is so fully united to God by his own goodness that between God and our soul there can be nothing at all. And to this understanding the soul was led by love and drawn by might in every showing. That it is so, our good Lord showed, and how it is truly so, out of his great goodness. And he wills that we desire to know it, that is to say, as far as it belongs to his creatures to know it. For everything that the simple soul understood, God wills that it be shown and known. The things he wills to keep secret he himself

hides, mightily and wisely, out of love. For I saw in the same showing that much that is secret is hidden, which may never be known until the time that God of his goodness has made us worthy to see it. And with this I am well content, waiting on our Lord's will in this high marvel. And now I yield myself to our Mother Holy Church, as a simple child should.

CHAPTER 47: MARVEL AND SUFFERING

Julian asks what God's mercy and forgiveness are, and feels five workings in herself.

47.1 Two points belonging to our soul are a debt we owe. One is that we reverently marvel. The other is that we humbly endure, always rejoicing in God, for he wills that we know that in a short time we shall see clearly in himself all that we desire. And notwithstanding all this, I beheld and marveled greatly: what is the mercy and forgiveness of God? For by the teaching that I had before, I understood that the mercy of God would be the forgiveness of his wrath after we have sinned. It seemed to me that, to a soul whose intention and desire is to love, the wrath of God would be harder than any other pain. And therefore I took it that the forgiveness of his wrath must be one of the principal points of his mercy. But for all that I could behold and desire, I could not see this point in the whole showing. How I saw and understood the working of mercy I shall tell somewhat, as God will give me grace. I understood this: man is changeable in this life, and through simpleness and ignorance he falls into sin. He is powerless and unwise of himself, and also his will is overwhelmed. In this time he is in tempest, and in sorrow, and in woe. The cause is blindness, for he does not see God. If he saw God continually, he would have no harmful feeling, nor any kind of stirring or sorrowing that serves sin. This I saw and felt at the same time. It seemed to me that the sight and the feeling were high, and plenteous, and gracious, compared with our common feeling in this life. But it still seemed to me low and small compared with the great desire that the soul has to see

God. For I felt in me five kinds of working, which are these: rejoicing, mourning, desire, fear, and true hope. Rejoicing, for God gave me understanding and knowledge that it was himself that I saw. Mourning, and that was for feeling. Desire, that was that I might see him ever more and more, understanding and knowing that we shall never have full rest until we see him clearly and truly in heaven. Fear was because it seemed to me all that time that the sight would fail and I would be left to myself. True hope was in the endless love that I saw: that I would be kept by his mercy and brought to bliss. And the rejoicing in his sight, with this true hope of his merciful keeping, gave me feeling and comfort, so that mourning and fear were not greatly painful. And yet in all this I beheld in the showing of God that this kind of sight of him cannot be continual in this life, and that is for his own honor and for the increase of our endless joy. And therefore we often fail of the sight of him. At once we fall into ourselves, and then we find no feeling of anything but the contrariness that is in ourselves. And that comes from the old root of our first sin, with all that follows from our own continuing in it. In this we suffer and are tempted, with feeling of sin and of pain in many different ways, spiritual and bodily, as is known to us in this life.

CHAPTER 48: MERCY AND GRACE

Wrath is in us, not in God; mercy keeps us and grace turns our falls into honor.

48.1 But our good Lord the Holy Spirit, who is endless life dwelling in our soul, keeps us very truly. He works a peace in it, brings it to ease by grace, makes it obedient, and reconciles it to God. And this is the mercy and the way in which our good Lord continually leads us as long as we are in this life, which is changeable. For I saw no wrath except on man's part, and that he forgives in us. For wrath is nothing else but a perversity and a contrariness to peace and love. And it comes either from feeling of might, or from feeling of wisdom, or from feeling of good-

ness. This feeling is not of God but is on our part, for through sin and wretchedness we have in us a wrath and a continual contrariness to peace and to love. And that he showed very often in his lovely countenance of compassion and pity. For the ground of mercy is in love, and the working of mercy is our keeping in love. And this was shown in such a way that I could not perceive the property of mercy otherwise than as if it were all love in love. That is to say, as I see it, mercy is a sweet, gracious working in love, mingled with plenteous pity. For mercy works in keeping us, and mercy works in turning all things to good for us. Mercy, for love, allows us to fail in measure. Insofar as we fail, so far we fall, and insofar as we fall, so far we die. For we must necessarily die insofar as we fail of the sight and feeling of God, who is our life. Our failing is fearful, our falling is shameful, and our dying is sorrowful. But yet in all this the sweet eye of pity and love never departs from us, nor does the working of mercy cease. For I beheld the property of mercy, and I beheld the property of grace, which have two kinds of working in one love. Mercy is a compassionate property, which belongs to motherhood in tender love. Grace is an honorable property, which belongs to royal lordship in the same love. Mercy works keeping, allowing, quickening, and healing, and all of it is from the tenderness of love. And grace works with mercy: raising, rewarding, endlessly surpassing what our loving and our labor deserve, spreading abroad and showing the high plenteousness and largeness of God's royal lordship in his marvelous courtesy. And this is from the abundance of love. For grace works our fearful failing into plenteous and endless solace. Grace works our shameful falling into high, honorable rising. And grace works our sorrowful dying into holy, blissful life. For I saw very truly that, just as our contrariness works for us here on earth pain, shame, and sorrow, so, on the contrary, grace works for us in heaven solace, honor, and bliss, and surpasses them so far that when we come up and receive that sweet reward which grace has made for us there, we shall thank and bless our Lord endlessly, rejoicing that we ever suffered woe. And that will be

because of a property of blessed love that we shall know in God, which we could never have known without woe going before. And when I saw all this, I had to grant that the mercy of God and the forgiveness lessen and waste away our wrath.

CHAPTER 49: GOD CANNOT FORGIVE, FOR HE CANNOT BE ANGRY

Our life is grounded in love; wrath is in us.

49.1 For it was a high marvel to the soul, which was continually shown in all the showings and which beheld with great diligence, that our Lord God, with regard to himself, cannot forgive, because he cannot be angry. It would be impossible. For this was shown: that our life is all grounded and rooted in love, and without love we cannot live. And therefore, to the soul that by his special grace sees so far into the high, marvelous goodness of God that we are endlessly united to him in love, it is the most impossible thing that can be that God should be angry. For wrath and friendship are two contraries. For he who wastes and destroys our wrath, and makes us meek and mild, we must necessarily believe that he is always in one love, meek and mild, which is contrary to wrath. For I saw very truly that where our Lord appears, peace is received, and wrath has no place. For I saw no kind of wrath in God, neither for a short time nor for a long one. For truly, as I see it, if God could be angry even for a while, we would have neither life, nor place, nor being. For as truly as we have our being from the endless might of God, and from the endless wisdom, and from the endless goodness, just as truly we have our keeping in the endless might of God, in the endless wisdom, and in the endless goodness. For though we feel in ourselves wrath, contention, and strife, yet we are all mercifully enclosed in the mildness of God, and in his meekness, in his benignity, and in his obedience. For I saw very truly that all our endless friendship, our place, our life, and our being is in God. For that same endless goodness that keeps us when we sin, so that we do not perish, that same endless goodness con-

tinually negotiates in us a peace against our wrath and our contrary falling. It makes us see our need, and with a true fear seek mightily to God to have forgiveness, with a gracious desire for our salvation. For we cannot be blissfully saved until we are truly in peace and in love, for that is our salvation.[3] And though we are angry, and the contrariness that is in us is now in tribulation, distress, and woe, as we fall into our blindness and our proneness, yet we are sure and safe by the merciful keeping of God, so that we do not perish. But we are not blissfully safe, in having our endless joy, until we are all in peace and in love: that is to say, fully pleased with God, and with all his works, and with all his judgments; and loving and content with ourselves, and with our fellow Christians, and with all that God loves, as love delights. And this God's goodness does in us. Thus I saw that God is our true peace; and he is our sure keeper when we ourselves are not at peace; and he continually works to bring us into endless peace. And so, when by the working of mercy and grace we are made meek and mild, then we are fully safe. Suddenly the soul is united to God when she is truly at peace in herself, for in him no wrath is found. And thus I saw that when we are all in peace and in love, we find no contrariness, nor any kind of hindrance. And that contrariness which is now in us, our Lord God in his goodness makes very profitable to us. For contrariness is the cause of all our tribulation and all our woe; and our Lord Jesus takes them and sends them up to heaven, and then they are made more sweet and delightful than heart can think or tongue can tell. And when we come there, we shall find them ready, all turned into true beauty and endless honor. Thus God is our steadfast ground, and he shall be our full bliss, and shall make us unchangeable, as he is, when we are there.

3 Cressy's "midhead" is a misprint for "mildhead," mildness.

CHAPTER 50: JULIAN'S QUESTION

How can God see us without blame when the Church teaches that we deserve it?

50.1 And in this mortal life mercy and forgiveness are our way, which always leads us to grace. And by the tempest and the sorrow that we fall into on our part, we are often dead, as people judge on earth; but in the sight of God the soul that shall be saved was never dead, nor ever shall be. But yet here I wondered and marveled with all the diligence of my soul, meaning thus: Good Lord, I see that you are truth itself, and I know truly that we sin grievously all day and are much to blame. And I can neither give up the knowing of this truth, nor do I see you showing us any kind of blame. How can this be? For I know by the common teaching of Holy Church, and by my own feeling, that the blame of our sins continually hangs upon us, from the first man until the time that we come up into heaven. This, then, was my marvel: that I saw our Lord God showing us no more blame than if we were as clean and as holy as the angels are in heaven. And between these two contraries my reason was greatly troubled by my blindness, and could have no rest, for fear that his blessed presence should pass from my sight and I should be left not knowing how he beholds us in our sin. For either I had to see in God that sin was all done away, or else I had to see in God how he sees it, by which I might truly know how it is fitting for me to see sin, and the manner of our blame. My longing endured as I beheld him continually; and yet I could have no patience, for great fear and perplexity, thinking: If I take it thus, that we are not sinners and not blameworthy, it seems that I would err and fail to know this truth. And if it is true that we are sinners and blameworthy, good Lord, how can it then be that I cannot see this truth in you, who are my God, my Maker, in whom I desire to see all truth? For three points make me bold to ask it. The first is that it is so lowly a thing; for if it were a high one, I would be afraid. The second is that it is so common; for if

it were special and secret as well, I would be afraid. The third is that I need to know it, as it seems to me, if I am to live here, for the knowing of good and evil, by which I may, by reason and by grace, separate them the more from each other, and love goodness and hate evil, as Holy Church teaches. I cried inwardly with all my might, seeking to God for help, meaning thus: Ah, Lord Jesus, King of bliss, how shall I be eased? Who shall tell me and teach me what I need to know, if I cannot at this time see it in you?

The Fourteenth Showing: The Lord and the Servant

Chapters 51–53
The parable of a servant who falls into a ditch while running to do his lord's will, and its meaning.

CHAPTER 51: THE LORD AND THE SERVANT

A servant runs to do his lord's will and falls into a ditch; the long meaning of the parable.

51.1 And then our courteous Lord answered, showing very mistily, by a wonderful example of a lord who has a servant, and he gave me sight for my understanding of both. This sight was shown double in the lord, and the sight was shown double in the servant. The one part was shown spiritually, in bodily likeness. The other part was shown more spiritually, without bodily likeness. For the first, I saw thus two persons in bodily likeness: that is to say, a lord and a servant. And with that God gave me spiritual understanding. The lord sits solemnly in rest and in peace; the servant stands before his lord reverently, ready to do his lord's will. The lord looks upon his servant very lovingly, and sweetly, and meekly; he sends him to a certain place to do his will. The servant not only goes, but suddenly he leaps up and runs in great haste, for love, to do his lord's will. And at once he falls into a slade and suffers very great sorrow; and then he groans, and moans, and wallows, and writhes; but he cannot rise or help himself in any way.[1] And of all this, the greatest

1 Slade: a hollow, dell, or ditch.

misery I saw him in was the lack of comfort; for he could not turn his face to look up at his loving lord, who was very near him, and in whom is full comfort. But like a man who was very feeble and unwise for the time, he attended to his feeling and to his enduring in woe. In this woe he suffered seven great pains. The first was the sore bruising that he took in his fall, which was great pain to him. The second was the heaviness of his body. The third was the feebleness that followed from these two. The fourth was that he was blinded in his reason and stunned in his mind, so far that he had almost forgotten his own love. The fifth was that he could not rise. The sixth was the pain most marvelous to me, and that was that he lay alone. I looked all about and beheld, and neither far nor near, nor high nor low, did I see any help for him. The seventh was that the place he lay in was long, hard, and grievous. I marveled how this servant could so meekly suffer all this woe. And I looked carefully to know whether I could perceive any fault in him, or whether the lord would assign him any kind of blame. And truly none was seen; for only his good will and his great desire were the cause of his falling. And he was as willing and as good inwardly as he was when he stood before his lord, ready to do his will. And just so, continually, his loving lord beholds him very tenderly, and now with a double countenance: one outward, very meekly and mildly, with great compassion and pity, and this was of the first showing; another inward, more spiritual. And this was shown with a leading of my understanding into the lord, in the restoring, in which I saw him greatly rejoice because of the honorable and noble rest to which he will and shall bring his servant by his plenteous grace; and this was of the other showing. And now my understanding was led back into the first, keeping both in mind. Then this courteous lord said in his meaning: Look at my beloved servant—what harm and distress he has had and taken in my service, for my love, yes, and for his good will! Is it not reasonable that I reward him for his fright and his fear, his hurt and his maiming, and all his woe? And not only this, but is it not fitting for me to give him a gift that would be better for him, and

more honorable, than his own health would have been? Or else it seems to me that I would be doing him no grace. And in this an inward, spiritual showing of the lord's meaning descended into my soul, in which I saw that it must necessarily be, given his great goodness and his own honor, that his dearly worthy servant, whom he loved so much, should be highly and honorably rewarded without end, above what he would have been if he had not fallen; yes, and so far that his falling, and all the woe he has taken from it, shall be turned into high, surpassing honor and endless bliss. And at this point the showing of the example vanished, and our good Lord led my understanding forth, in sight and in showing of the revelation, to the end. But notwithstanding all this leading forth, the marvel of the example never left me; for it seemed to me that it was given me as an answer to my desire. And yet I could not at that time take full understanding of it, to my ease. For in the servant, who was shown for Adam, as I shall say, I saw many different properties that could in no way be attributed to Adam alone. And so at that time I stood much in three knowings, for the full understanding of this marvelous example was not given me at that time. In this misty example the secrets of the revelation are still much hidden.[2] And notwithstanding this, I saw and understood that every showing is full of secrets. And therefore I must now tell three properties, by which I am somewhat eased. The first is the beginning of the teaching that I understood in it at that same time. The second is the inward learning that I have understood in it since. The third is the whole holy revelation from the beginning to the end, which our Lord God in his goodness often freely brings to the sight of my understanding. And these three are so united, as I understand it, that I cannot and may not separate them.

2 Cressy prints "three Knowings"; the manuscripts read "unknowing."

THE EXAMPLE STUDIED AGAIN

For twenty years Julian studies the lord and servant in detail: seat, clothing, looks and task.

And by these three as one I have teaching by which I ought to believe and trust in our Lord God that, of the same goodness with which he showed it, and for the same end, just so, of the same goodness and for the same end, he shall make it clear to us when it is his will. For twenty years after the time of the showing, less three months, I had inward teaching, as I shall say: "It is for you to take heed of all the properties and the conditions that were shown in the example, though you think that it is misty and indistinct to your sight." I assented willingly, with great desire, looking inwardly and carefully at all the points and the properties that were shown at that time, as far as my wit and my understanding will serve: beginning with my beholding of the lord and of the servant—the manner of the lord's sitting, and the place he sat on, and the color of his clothing, and the manner of his shape, and his outward countenance, and his nobility and his goodness within; and the manner of the servant's standing, and the place where, and how; and his manner of clothing, the color, and the shape; his outward behavior, and his inward goodness, and his willingness. The lord who sat solemnly in rest and in peace, I understand that he is God. The servant who stood before him, I understood that he was shown for Adam: that is to say, one man and his falling were shown at that time, so that by this it might be understood how God beholds all man and his falling. For in the sight of God all man is one man, and one man is all man. This man was hurt in his might and made very feeble. And he was stunned in his understanding, for he was turned away from beholding his lord; but his will was kept in God's sight. For I saw our Lord commend and approve his will, but he himself was hindered and blinded from knowing this will. And this is great sorrow and grievous distress to him; for he neither sees clearly his loving lord, who is very meek and

mild to him, nor does he see truly what he himself is in the sight of his loving lord. And I know well that when these two are wisely and truly seen, we shall get rest and peace here in part, and the fullness of the bliss of heaven, by his plenteous grace. And this was a beginning of the teaching which I saw at that same time, by which I might come to know in what manner he beholds us in our sin. And then I saw that only pain blames and punishes, and our courteous Lord comforts and helps. And he is always toward the soul with a glad countenance, longing and loving to bring us to his bliss. The place where the lord sat was simple: on the earth, barren and desert, alone in a wilderness. His clothing was wide and ample and very seemly, as befits a lord. The color of the clothing was blue as azure, most sober and fair. His countenance was merciful. The color of his face was a fair brown-white, with very comely features. His eyes were black, most fair and seemly, and showed a full and lovely pity. And within him was a high refuge, long and broad, all full of endless heavenliness. And the lovely look with which he looked on his servant continually, and especially in his falling, seemed to me as if it might melt our hearts for love and burst them in two for joy.[3] This fair look showed a seemly mixture, which was marvelous to behold. The one part was compassion and pity, the other joy and bliss. The joy and bliss surpass the compassion and pity as far as heaven is above earth. The pity was earthly, and the bliss heavenly. The compassion and pity of the Father was for the falling of Adam, who is his most loved creature. The joy and bliss was for the falling of his dearly beloved Son, who is equal with the Father. The merciful beholding of his lovely countenance filled all the earth and descended down with Adam into hell, and by this continuing pity Adam was kept from endless death. And this mercy and pity dwell with mankind until the time that we come up into heaven. But man is blinded in this life, and therefore we may not see our Father God as he is. And whenever he of his goodness wills to show himself to man, he shows himself intimately, as far as may be, notwithstanding that

3 "An heyward": probably "a high ward," a lofty stronghold or refuge.

I saw truly that we ought to know and believe that the Father is not man. But his sitting on the earth, barren and desert, means this: he made man's soul to be his own city and his dwelling place, which is the most pleasing to him of all his works. And when man had fallen into sorrow and pain, he was not wholly fit to serve in that noble office. And therefore our natural Father would prepare for himself no other place but to sit upon the earth, waiting for mankind, which is mixed with earth, until the time when by his grace his dearly beloved Son had brought his city back again into its noble fairness with his hard labor. The blueness of that clothing signifies his steadfastness. The brownness of his fair face, with the seemly blackness of the eyes, was most fitting to show his holy soberness. The largeness of his clothing, which was fair and flaming all about, signifies that he has enclosed in himself all the heavens and all endless joy and bliss.[4] And this was shown in a touch, in which I saw that my understanding was led into the lord, and in this I saw him greatly rejoice for the honorable restoring to which he wills to bring, and shall bring, his servant by his plenteous grace. And yet I marveled, beholding the lord and the servant described above. I saw the lord sit solemnly, and the servant standing reverently before his lord. In this servant there is a double meaning, one outward, the other inward. Outwardly he was clad simply, as a laborer who was prepared for toil, and he stood very near the lord, not directly in front of him, but partly to one side, and that on the left side. His clothing was a white kirtle, single, old, and all worn, stained with the sweat of his body, tight-fitting on him and short, as it were a handbreadth below the knee, threadbare, seeming as if it would soon be worn out, ready to be ragged and torn. And at this I marveled greatly, thinking: "This is now unseemly clothing for the servant who is so highly loved to stand in before so honorable a lord." And inwardly in him was shown a ground of love, and the love he had for the lord was equal to the love that the lord had for him.[5] The wisdom of the

4 Cressy prints "all heaviness"; the manuscripts read "all heavens."
5 Kirtle: a plain tunic reaching about to the knee.

servant saw inwardly that there was one thing to do which would be to the lord's honor. And the servant, for love, having no regard for himself nor for anything that might happen to him, hastily started up and ran at the sending of his lord, to do that thing which was his will and his honor. For it seemed by his outward clothing as if he had been a continual laborer and a hard toiler for a long time. And by the inward sight that I had, both in the lord and in the servant, it seemed that he was new—that is to say, newly beginning to labor—a servant who had never been sent out before. There was a treasure in the earth which the lord loved. I marveled and wondered what it might be, and I was answered in my understanding: it is a food which is lovely and pleasing to the lord. For I saw the lord sit as a man, and I saw neither food nor drink with which to serve him. This was one marvel. Another marvel was that this solemn lord had no servant but one, and him he sent out. I beheld, wondering what labor it might be that the servant should do. And then I understood that he should do the greatest labor and the hardest toil: that is, he should be a gardener, digging and ditching and sweating, and turning the earth up and down, and seek the depths, and water the plants in due time. And in this he should continue his labor, and make streams of sweat run, and make noble and plenteous fruit spring up, which he should bring before the lord and serve him with to his delight. And he should never come back until he had prepared this food all ready, as he knew it pleased the lord. And then he should take this food, with the drink, and carry it most honorably before the lord. And all this time the lord should sit right in the same place, waiting for the servant whom he sent out. And yet I marveled where the servant came from. For I saw in the lord that he has within himself endless life and every kind of goodness, except the treasure that was in the earth; and that too was grounded in the lord, in the marvelous depth of endless love. But it was not wholly to his honor until his servant had prepared it thus nobly and brought it before him, present in himself. And outside the lord there was nothing at all but wilderness.

THE SERVANT IS ADAM AND CHRIST

The lord is God the Father; the servant is both Adam and God's Son in Adam's kirtle.

And I did not understand all that this example meant, and therefore I marveled where the servant came from. In the servant is comprehended the second Person of the Trinity, and in the servant is comprehended Adam, that is to say, all men. And therefore when I say the Son, it means the Godhead, which is equal with the Father; and when I say the servant, it means Christ's manhood, which is the true Adam. By the nearness of the servant is understood the Son, and by the standing on the left side is understood Adam. The lord is God the Father; the servant is the Son, Jesus Christ; the Holy Spirit is the equal love that is in them both. When Adam fell, God's Son fell, because of the true union which was made in heaven: God's Son could not be separated from Adam, for by Adam I understand all men. Adam fell from life to death, into the slade of this wretched world, and after that into hell. God's Son fell with Adam into the slade of the Maiden's womb, she who was the fairest daughter of Adam; and that was to excuse Adam from blame in heaven and on earth. And mightily he fetched him out of hell.[6] By the wisdom and goodness that were in the servant is understood God's Son. By the poor clothing, as of a laborer standing near the left side, is understood the manhood of Adam, with all the misfortune and feebleness that follow. For in all this our good Lord showed his own Son and Adam as but one man. The virtue and goodness that we have are from Jesus Christ; the feebleness and blindness that we have are from Adam; and these two were shown in the servant. And thus our good Lord Jesus has taken upon himself all our blame, and therefore our Father neither may nor will assign more blame to us than to his own dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ. Thus he was the servant before his coming to earth, standing ready before the Father in purpose until the time when

6 Slade: the same word as the ditch into which the servant falls.

he would send him to do the honorable deed by which mankind was brought back into heaven—that is to say, notwithstanding that he is God, equal with the Father as regards the Godhead. But in his foreseeing purpose that he would be man, to save man by fulfilling the will of his Father, he stood before his Father as a servant, willingly taking upon himself all our burden. And then he started up very readily at the Father's will, and at once he fell very low into the Maiden's womb, having no regard for himself nor for his hard pains. The white kirtle is the flesh. The singleness is that there was nothing at all between the Godhead and the manhood. The tightness is poverty; the age comes from Adam's wearing it; the wornness is the sweat of Adam's labor; the shortness shows the servant-laborer. And thus I saw the Son stand, saying in his meaning: "Lo, my dear Father, I stand before you in Adam's kirtle, all ready to start up and to run. I would be on earth to your honor when it is your will to send me. How long shall I desire it?" The Son knew very truly when it was the Father's will, and how long he should desire—that is to say, as regards the Godhead, for he is the Wisdom of the Father. Therefore this meaning was shown for the understanding of the manhood of Christ. For all mankind that shall be saved by the sweet Incarnation and Passion of Christ, all of it is the manhood of Christ; for he is the head, and we are his members. To these members the day and the time are unknown when every passing woe and sorrow shall have an end, and the everlasting joy and bliss shall be fulfilled. All the company of heaven longs and desires to see that day and time; and for all who are under heaven and shall come there, their way is by longing and desiring. This desiring and longing was shown in the servant standing before the lord, or else in this way, in the Son standing before the Father in Adam's kirtle. For the longing and desiring of all mankind that shall be saved appeared in Jesus; for Jesus is in all who shall be saved, and all who shall be saved are in Jesus. And all is of the charity of God, with obedience, humility, and patience, and the virtues that belong to us. Also in this marvelous example I have teaching within me, as it were the begin-

ning of an ABC, by which I may have some understanding of our Lord's meaning; for the secrets of the revelation are hidden in it, notwithstanding that all the showings are full of secrets. The sitting of the Father signifies the Godhead—that is to say, it shows rest and peace, for in the Godhead there can be no toil. And that he shows himself as lord signifies something with regard to our manhood. The standing of the servant signifies labor; and his being on the left side signifies that he was not wholly worthy to stand directly before the lord. His starting up was the Godhead, and the running was the manhood. For the Godhead started from the Father into the Maiden's womb, falling into the taking of our nature, and in this falling he took great hurt. The hurt that he took was our flesh, in which, as soon as he took it, he felt mortal pains. That he stood fearfully before the lord, and not directly in front of him, signifies that his clothing was not decent for standing directly before the lord; nor could that, nor should that, be his office while he was a laborer; nor could he sit with the lord in rest and peace until he had won his peace rightfully with his hard labor. And the left side means that the Father willingly left his own Son in the manhood to suffer all man's pain without sparing him. By his kirtle being on the point of becoming ragged and torn are understood the rods and scourges, the thorns and the nails, the drawing and the dragging, the tearing of his tender flesh. As I saw in some part, the tender flesh was torn from the skull, falling in pieces, until the bleeding stopped; and then it began to dry again, clinging to the bone. And by the wallowing and writhing, the groaning and moaning, is understood that he could never rise with all his might from the time that he had fallen into the Maiden's womb until his body was slain and dead, and he yielded the soul into the Father's hand, with all mankind for whom he was sent. And at this point he first began to show his might, for then he went into hell. And when he was there, he raised up the great root out of the deep depths, which was rightfully knit to him in high heaven. The body lay in the grave until Easter morning, and from that time he never lay down again; for there the wallowing

and the writhing, the groaning and the moaning were rightfully ended. And our foul mortal flesh that God's Son took upon himself, which was Adam's old kirtle, tight, threadbare, and short, was then made by our Savior fair, new, white, and bright, and of endless cleanness, wide and ample, fairer and richer than the clothing which I saw on the Father; for that clothing was blue. And Christ's clothing is now of a fair and seemly mixture, so marvelous that I cannot describe it, for it is all of true honor. Now the lord does not sit on the earth in the wilderness, but he sits on his rich and noble seat, which he made in heaven most to his delight. Now the Son does not stand before the Father as a servant before the lord, fearfully clothed and partly naked, but he stands directly before the Father, richly clothed in blissful ampleness, with a crown of precious richness upon his head. For it was shown that we are his crown, and this crown is the Father's joy, the Son's honor, the Holy Spirit's delight, and endless marvelous bliss to all who are in heaven. Now the Son does not stand before the Father on the left side as a laborer, but he sits at the Father's right hand in endless rest and peace. But it is not meant that the Son sits at the right hand, beside him, as one man sits by another in this life; for there is no such sitting in the Trinity, as I see it. But he sits at his Father's right hand—that is to say, right in the highest nobility of the Father's joy. Now the Spouse, God's Son, is at peace with his beloved Wife, who is the fair Maiden of endless joy. Now the Son, true God and true man, sits in his city in rest and in peace, the city his Father has prepared for him by endless purpose; and the Father is in the Son, and the Holy Spirit in the Father and in the Son.

CHAPTER 52: GOD OUR FATHER AND MOTHER

God rejoices to be our Father, Mother, Spouse, Brother and Savior; we live in mixed well-being and woe.

52.1 And thus I saw that God rejoices that he is our Father, and God rejoices that he is our Mother. And God rejoices that he is our true Spouse, and our soul his beloved wife. And Christ

rejoices that he is our Brother, and Jesus rejoices that he is our Savior. These are five high joys, as I understand, in which he wills that we rejoice, praising him, thanking him, loving him, endlessly blessing him, all who shall be saved. For the time of this life we have in us a marvelous mixture both of well-being and of woe. We have in us our Lord Jesus Christ risen; and we have in us the wretchedness and the harm of Adam's falling and dying. By Christ we are kept forever, and by his gracious touching we are raised into true trust of salvation. And by Adam's falling we are so broken in our feeling, in various ways, by sin and by sundry pains. In these we are made dark, and so blind that we can scarcely take any comfort. But in our intent we wait for God, and faithfully trust to have mercy and grace. And this is his own working in us. Of his goodness he opens the eye of our understanding, by which we have sight, sometimes more and sometimes less, according to the ability God gives us to receive it. And now we are raised into the one, and now we are allowed to fall into the other. And thus this mixture is so marvelous in us that we scarcely know how we stand, either of ourselves or of our fellow Christians, because of the marvelousness of this varied feeling. We know only that holy assent which we give to God when we feel him, truly willing to be with him with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our might. And then we hate and despise our evil stirring, and all that might be an occasion of sin, spiritual and bodily. And yet nevertheless, when this sweetness is hidden, we fall again into blindness, and so into woe and tribulation in various ways. But then this is our comfort: that we know in our faith that by the power of Christ, who is our Keeper, we never assent to it. Instead we grumble against it, and endure in pain and in woe, praying until the time that he shows himself to us again. And thus we stand in this mixture all the days of our life. But he wills that we trust that he is with us forever, and that in three ways. He is with us in heaven, true man in his own person, drawing us up; and that was shown in the spiritual thirst. And he is with us on earth, leading us; and that was shown in the third showing, where I saw God in a

point. And he is with us in our soul, endlessly dwelling, ruling and guiding us; and that was shown in the sixteenth, as I shall say. And thus in the servant was shown the blindness and the harm of Adam's falling. And in the servant was shown the wisdom and the goodness of God's Son. And in the lord was shown the compassion and the pity for Adam's woe. And in the lord was shown the high nobility and endless honor that mankind has come to by the power of the Passion and the death of his dear and worthy Son. And therefore he rejoices mightily in his falling, because of the high raising and fullness of bliss that mankind has come to, surpassing what we would have had if he had not fallen. And so that I might see this surpassing nobility, my understanding was led into God at the same time that I saw the servant fall. And thus we have matter for mourning, for our sin is the cause of Christ's pains; and we have lasting matter for joy, for endless love made him suffer. And therefore the creature that sees and feels the working of love by grace hates nothing but sin. For of all things, as I see it, love and hate are the hardest and most immeasurable contraries. And notwithstanding all this, I saw and understood this in our Lord's meaning: that we cannot in this life keep ourselves from sin, all holy in full cleanness, as we shall be in heaven. But we may well by grace keep ourselves from the sins that would lead us to endless pain, as Holy Church teaches us, and avoid venial sins, reasonably, as far as our power reaches. And if at any time we fall through our blindness and our wretchedness, let us readily rise, knowing the sweet touching of grace. Let us willingly amend ourselves according to the teaching of Holy Church, in proportion as the sin is grievous, and go forth with God in love. Let us neither fall too low on the one side, inclining to despair, nor be too reckless on the other side, as if we did not care. Let us rather humbly know our feebleness, knowing that we cannot stand for the twinkling of an eye except by the keeping of grace, and reverently cleave to God, trusting in him alone. For God's beholding is one thing, and man's beholding is another.[7] For it belongs to

7 "Over richless" in the 1670 text means "too reckless," that is, too careless.

man humbly to accuse himself, and it belongs to the proper goodness of our Lord God courteously to excuse man. And these are the two parts that were shown in the double countenance with which the lord beheld the falling of his beloved servant. The one was shown outwardly, very humbly and mildly, with great compassion and pity; and the other, of inward endless love. And just so our good Lord wills that we accuse ourselves willingly, and truly see and know his everlasting love that he has for us, and his plenteous mercy. And thus to see and know both together by grace is the humble accusing that our good Lord asks of us, and he himself works it where it is. And this is the lower part of man's life, and it was shown in the outward countenance. In this showing I saw two parts. The one is the pitiful falling of man. The other is the honorable amends that our Lord has made for man. The other countenance was shown inwardly, and that was more exalted, and all one. For the life and the power that we have in the lower part come from the higher, and come down to us from the natural love of the self, by grace. Between the one and the other there is nothing at all, for it is all one love. This one blessed love now has a double working in us. In the lower part are pains and passions, compassions and pities, mercies and forgiveness, and other such things, which are profitable. But in the higher part are none of these, but all one high love and marvelous joy, and in this marvelous joy all pains are wholly destroyed. And in this our good Lord showed not only our excusing, but also the honorable nobility that he shall bring us to, turning all our blame into endless honor.

CHAPTER 53: THE GODLY WILL

God takes the fall of a soul to be saved no harder than Adam's; he always loved mankind.

53.1 And thus I saw that he wills that we know that he takes the falling of any creature that shall be saved no harder than he took the falling of Adam. We know that Adam was endlessly loved, and safely kept in the time of all his need, and is now blissfully

restored in high, surpassing joys. For our Lord God is so good, so gentle and so courteous that he can never assign final fault to those in whom he shall be forever blessed and praised. And in what I have now said my desire was partly answered, and my great fear somewhat eased, by the lovely, gracious showing of our Lord God. In this showing I saw and understood very surely that in each soul that shall be saved there is a godly will that never assented to sin, nor ever shall. This will is so good that it can never will evil (finally), but evermore continually it wills good, and works good in the sight of God. Therefore our Lord wills that we know it in the faith and the belief, and especially and truly that we have all this blessed will whole and safe in our Lord Jesus Christ. For each nature with which heaven shall be filled had of necessity, by God's rightfulness, to be so knit and united in him that a substance was kept in it which could never, and should never, be parted from him. And that was through his own good will, in his endless purpose spoken of before. And notwithstanding this rightful knitting and this endless union, yet the redemption and the buying back of mankind is needful and profitable in every respect, since it is done for the same intent and the same end that Holy Church teaches us in our faith. For I saw that God never began to love mankind. For just as mankind shall be in endless bliss (fulfilling the joy of God with regard to his works), just so the same mankind has been in the foresight of God, known and loved from without beginning in his rightful intent. And by the endless intent and assent, and the full accord of all the Trinity, the middle Person willed to be the ground and head of this fair nature. Out of him we have all come, in him we are all enclosed, into him we shall all go, finding in him our full heaven in everlasting joy, by the foreseeing purpose of all the blessed Trinity from without beginning. For before he made us he loved us, and when we were made, we loved him. And this is a love made of the natural, substantial goodness of the Holy Spirit, mighty by reason of the might of the Father, and wise in mind of the wisdom of the Son. And thus man's soul is made by God, and in the same point knit to God. And thus I understood

that man's soul is made of nothing; that is to say, it is made, but of nothing that is made, in this way. When God was to make man's body, he took the slime of the earth, which is a matter mixed and gathered from all bodily things, and from that he made man's body. But for the making of man's soul he would take nothing at all, but made it. And thus the nature that is made is rightfully united to the Maker, who is substantial nature unmade, that is, God. And therefore there can and shall be nothing at all between God and man's soul. And in this endless love man's soul is kept whole, as all the matter of the revelation means and shows. In this endless love we are led and kept by God, and shall never be lost. For he wills that we know that our soul is a life, and this life, of his goodness and his grace, shall last in heaven without end, loving him, thanking him, praising him. And just as we shall be without end, so we were treasured in God, and hidden, known and loved from without beginning. Therefore he wills that we know that the noblest thing he ever made is mankind, and the fullest substance and the highest power is the blessed soul of Christ. And furthermore he wills that we know that this dear and worthy soul was preciously knit to him in its making. This knot is so subtle and so mighty that it is united into God. In this union it is made endlessly holy. Furthermore he wills that we know that all the souls that shall be saved in heaven without end are knit in this knot, and united in this union, and made holy in this holiness.

The Fourteenth Showing: Christ Our Mother

Chapters 54–63
Substance and sensuality joined in Christ; the motherhood of God; sin and the mother's care.

CHAPTER 54: FAITH

Our soul dwells in God and God in it; faith comes from our substance into our sensual soul.

54.1 And because of the great endless love that God has for all mankind, he makes no separation in love between the blessed soul of Christ and the least soul that shall be saved. For it is very easy to believe and trust that the dwelling of the blessed soul of Christ is very high in the glorious Godhead. And truly, as I understood in our Lord's meaning, where the blessed soul of Christ is, there is the substance of all the souls that shall be saved by Christ (in their exemplar and final cause). Highly ought we to rejoice that God dwells in our soul, and more highly ought we to rejoice that our soul dwells in God. Our soul is made to be God's dwelling place, and the dwelling place of our soul is God, who is unmade. It is a high understanding to see and know inwardly that God, who is our Maker, dwells in our soul. And it is a higher understanding, and more inward, to see and know that our soul, which is made, dwells in God in substance. From this substance, by God, we are what we are. And I saw no difference between God and our substance, but as if it were all God. And yet my understanding took it that our substance is in God: that is to say, that God is God, and our substance is a creature in

God. For the almighty truth of the Trinity is our Father, for he made us and keeps us in him. And the deep wisdom of the Trinity is our Mother, in whom we are enclosed. And the high goodness of the Trinity is our Lord, and in him we are enclosed, and he in us. We are enclosed in the Father, and we are enclosed in the Son, and we are enclosed in the Holy Spirit. And the Father is enclosed in us, the Son is enclosed in us, and the Holy Spirit is enclosed in us: all might, all wisdom and all goodness, one God, one Lord. And our faith is a virtue that comes from our natural substance into our sensual soul by the Holy Spirit. In this virtue all our virtues come into us, for without it no one can receive virtues. For it is nothing else but a right understanding, with true belief and sure trust, of our being: that we are in God, and he in us, which we do not see. And this virtue, with all the others that God has ordained to come to us in it, works great things in us. For Christ is mercifully working in us, and we are graciously according with him, through the gift and the power of the Holy Spirit. This working makes us Christ's children, and Christian in living.

CHAPTER 55: SUBSTANCE AND SENSUALITY

Christ presents us to the Father; mercy and grace begin when the soul is joined to the body.

55.1 And thus Christ is our way, surely leading us in his laws. And Christ in his body mightily bears us up into heaven. For I saw that Christ, having in himself all of us who shall be saved by him, honorably presents us to his Father in heaven. His Father receives this present most thankfully and courteously gives it to his Son Jesus Christ. This gift and working is joy to the Father, and bliss to the Son, and delight to the Holy Spirit. And of all the things that belong to us, what most delights our Lord is that we rejoice in this joy, which is in the blessed Trinity over our salvation. And this was seen in the ninth showing, where more is said of this matter. And notwithstanding all our feeling, woe or well-being, God wills that we understand and believe that we are

more truly in heaven than on earth. Our faith comes from the natural love of our soul, from the clear light of our reason, and from the steadfast memory of God which we have from our first making. And at the time our soul is breathed into our body, in which we are made sensual, mercy and grace at once begin to work, taking care and keeping of us with pity and love. In this working the Holy Spirit forms in our faith the hope that we shall come up again, above, to our substance, into the power of Christ, increased and fulfilled through the Holy Spirit. Thus I understood that the sensuality is grounded in nature, in mercy, and in grace. This ground enables us to receive gifts that lead us to endless life. For I saw most surely that our substance is in God. And I also saw that God is in our sensuality. For at the same point that our soul is made sensual, at that same point is the City of God ordained to him from without beginning. Into this city he comes, and he shall never leave it, for God is never out of the soul, in which he shall dwell blessedly without end. And this was said in the sixteenth showing, where it says, "The place that Jesus takes in our soul he shall never leave." And all the gifts that God may give to the creature he has given to his Son Jesus for us. These gifts he, dwelling in us, has enclosed in himself until the time that we have grown and matured, our soul with our body and our body with our soul, each of them taking help from the other until we are brought up to full stature, as nature works. And then, in the ground of nature, with the working of mercy, the Holy Spirit graciously breathes into us gifts leading to endless life. And thus my understanding was led by God to see in him and to know, to understand and to know, that our soul is a made trinity, like the unmade blessed Trinity, known and loved from without beginning, and in its making united to the Maker, as was said before. This sight was most sweet and marvelous to behold, peaceful and restful, sure and delightful. And because of the honorable union that God thus made between the soul and the body, it was necessary that mankind should be restored from double death. This restoring could never come about until the second Person in the Trinity had taken the lower part of

mankind, to whom the highest part was united in the first making. And these two parts were in Christ, the higher and the lower, which is but one soul. The higher part was always at peace with God in full joy and bliss. The lower part, which is sensuality, suffered for the salvation of mankind. And these two parts were seen and felt in the eighth showing, in which my body was filled with the feeling and memory of Christ's passion and his dying. And furthermore, with this there was a subtle feeling and a secret inward sight of the high part. And that was shown at the same time, where I could not, for all the suggestion offered me, look up into heaven. That was because of that same mighty beholding of the inward life. This inward life is that high substance, that precious soul, which is endlessly rejoicing in the Godhead.

CHAPTER 56: KNOWING GOD AND KNOWING OURSELVES

It is easier to know God than our own soul.

56.1 And thus I saw most surely that it is readier for us, and easier, to come to the knowledge of God than to know our own soul. For our soul is so deeply grounded in God and so endlessly treasured that we cannot come to the knowledge of it until we first have knowledge of God, who is the Maker to whom it is united. But nevertheless I saw that we have by nature, out of fullness, the desire to know our own soul wisely and truly. By this we are taught to seek it where it is, and that is in God. And thus by the gracious leading of the Holy Spirit we shall know them both in one. Whether we are stirred to know God or our soul, both are good and true. God is nearer to us than our own soul. For he is the ground in which our soul stands, and he is the means that keeps the substance and the sensuality together, so that they shall never be parted. For our soul sits in God in true rest, and our soul stands in God in sure strength, and our soul is rooted by nature in God in endless love. And therefore, if we want to have knowledge of our soul, and communion and loving converse with it, we must seek into our Lord God, in whom it is

enclosed. And of this enclosing I saw and understood more in the sixteenth showing, as I shall tell. And as regards our substance, it may rightly be called our soul; and as regards our sensuality, it may rightly be called our soul; and that is by the union it has in God. That honorable city in which our Lord Jesus sits is our sensuality, in which he is enclosed. And our natural substance is enclosed in Jesus, with the blessed soul of Christ sitting at rest in the Godhead. And I saw most surely that it must needs be that we should be in longing and in penance until the time that we are led so deep into God that we truly and verily know our own soul. And surely I saw that our good Lord himself leads us into this high depth in the same love with which he made us, and in the same love with which he bought us, by mercy and grace, through the power of his blessed passion. And notwithstanding all this, we can never come to the full knowledge of God until we first know our own soul clearly. For until it is in its full powers, we cannot be wholly holy; and that means that our sensuality, by the power of Christ's passion, is brought up into the substance, with all the profits of our tribulation that our Lord shall make us gain by mercy and grace. I had a partial touching of this, and it is grounded in nature; that is to say, our reason is grounded in God, who in his substance is nature. From this substantial nature mercy and grace spring and spread into us, working all things to the fulfilling of our joy. These are our grounds, in which we have our being, our increase, and our fulfilling. For in nature we have our life and our being, and in mercy and grace we have our increase and our fulfilling. These are three properties in one goodness, and where one works, all work, in the things that belong to us. God wills that we understand this, desiring with all our heart and with all our strength to have knowledge of them ever more and more, until the time that we are fulfilled. For to know them fully and to see them clearly is nothing else but the endless joy and bliss that we shall have in heaven, which God wills that we begin here in knowing his love. For we cannot profit by our reason alone unless we have memory and love equally with it. Nor can we be saved only

in our natural ground that we have in God, unless we also have mercy and grace, coming from the same ground. For from these three workings together we receive all our goods, of which the first are goods of nature. For in our first making God gave us as much good, and as great good, as we could receive in our spirit alone. But his foreseeing purpose, in his endless wisdom, willed that we should be double.

CHAPTER 57: FULL IN SUBSTANCE, FAILING IN SENSUALITY

In our substance we are full, in our sensuality we fail; Mary and Christ are our mothers.

57.1 And as regards our substance, he made us so noble and so rich that we evermore do his will and his honor. When I say "we" here, it means mankind that shall be saved. For truly I saw that we are what he loves, and do what pleases him, lastingly, without any ceasing. And from this, great riches, and from this, high noble virtues come in measure to our soul at the time that it is knit to our body; in this knitting we are made sensual. And thus in our substance we are full, and in our sensuality we fail. This failing God will restore and fulfill by the working of mercy and grace, flowing plenteously into us from his own natural goodness. And thus this natural goodness makes mercy and grace work in us. And the natural goodness that we have from him enables us to receive the working of mercy and grace. I saw that our nature is whole in God, in which he makes diversities flowing out of him to work his will; nature keeps them, and mercy and grace restore and fulfill them. And of these none shall perish. For our nature, which is the higher part, is knit to God in the making, and God is knit to our nature, which is the lower part, in his taking of our flesh. And thus in Christ our two natures are united. For the Trinity is comprehended in Christ, in whom our higher part is grounded and rooted; and the second Person has taken our lower part, which nature was first prepared for him. For I saw most truly that all the works that God has done, or ever shall do, were fully known to him and fore-

seen from without beginning. And for love he made mankind, and for the same love he himself would become man. The next good that we receive is our faith, in which our profiting begins. It comes from the high riches of our natural substance into our sensual soul, and it is grounded in us, and we in it, through the natural goodness of God, by the working of mercy and grace. And from it come all our goods, by which we are led and saved. For the commandments of God come in it, and in them we ought to have two kinds of understanding. The one is that we ought to understand and know which are his biddings, to love them and to keep them. The other is that we ought to know his forbiddings, to hate them and to refuse them; for in these two all our working is comprehended. Also in our faith come the seven sacraments, each following the other in the order in which God has ordained them for us, and all manner of virtues. For the same virtues that we have received from our substance, given to us in nature by the goodness of God, are by the working of mercy given to us in grace, renewed through the Holy Spirit. These virtues and gifts are treasured for us in Jesus Christ. For at the same time that God knit himself to our body in the Maiden's womb, he took our sensual soul. In this taking, having enclosed us all in himself, he united it to our substance. In this union he was perfect man; for Christ, having knit in himself every man who shall be saved, is perfect man. Thus our Lady is our Mother, in whom we are all enclosed, and of her we are born in Christ; for she who is Mother of our Savior is Mother of all who are saved in our Savior. And our Savior is our true Mother, in whom we are endlessly born, and we shall never come out of him. Plenteously, fully, and sweetly was this shown. And it is spoken of in the first showing, where it is said, "We are all enclosed in him, and he is enclosed in us." And that is spoken of in the sixteenth showing, where he says, "He sits in our soul." For it is his delight to reign blessedly in our understanding, and to sit restfully in our soul, and to dwell endlessly in our soul, working us all into him. In this working he wills that we be his helpers, giving him all our attention, learning his laws, keeping his teach-

ing, desiring that all be done that he does, truly trusting in him. For truly I saw that all our substance is in God.

CHAPTER 58: THREE PROPERTIES OF MOTHERHOOD

Fatherhood, motherhood and lordship in God; our life is in nature, mercy and grace.

58.1 God, the blessed Trinity, who is everlasting being, just as he is endless from without beginning, just so it was endlessly in his purpose to make mankind. This fair nature was first prepared for his own Son, the second Person. And when he willed, by full accord of all the Trinity, he made us all at once. And in our making he knit us and united us to himself. By this union we are kept as pure and as noble as we were made. By the power of that same precious union we love our Maker, and delight in him, praise him, and thank him, and endlessly rejoice in him. And this is the working which is wrought continually in each soul that shall be saved, which is the godly will spoken of before. And thus in our making God almighty is our natural Father, and God all wisdom is our natural Mother, with the love and the goodness of the Holy Spirit, which is all one God, one Lord. And in the knitting and in the union he is our very true Spouse, and we are his loved wife and his fair maiden, with whom he was never displeased; for he says, "I love you, and you love me, and our love shall never be parted in two." I beheld the working of all the blessed Trinity. In this beholding I saw and understood these three properties: the property of fatherhood, and the property of motherhood, and the property of lordship, in one God. In our Father almighty we have our keeping and our bliss, as regards our natural substance, which is ours by our making from without beginning. And in the second Person, in knowledge and wisdom, we have our keeping, and as regards our sensuality, our restoring and our saving; for he is our Mother, Brother, and Savior. And in our good Lord the Holy Spirit we have our rewarding and our repayment for our living and our labor, endlessly surpassing all that we desire, in his marvelous courtesy,

out of his high plenteous grace. For all our life is in three. In the first we have our being, and in the second we have our increasing, and in the third we have our fulfilling. The first is nature, the second is mercy, the third is grace. As for the first, I saw and understood that the high might of the Trinity is our Father, and the deep wisdom of the Trinity is our Mother, and the great love of the Trinity is our Lord. And all these we have by nature, in our substantial making. And furthermore, I saw that the second Person, who is our Mother substantially, the same dear worthy Person has now become our Mother sensually. For we are double by God's making, that is to say, substantial and sensual. Our substance is the higher part, which we have in our Father, God Almighty. And the second Person of the Trinity is our Mother in nature, in our substantial making, in whom we are grounded and rooted. And he is our Mother of mercy in taking our sensuality. And thus our Mother works for us in diverse ways, and in him our parts are kept undivided. For in our Mother Christ we profit and increase, and in mercy he reforms and restores us. And by the power of his Passion, his death, and his rising, he united us to our substance. This our Mother works in mercy for all his beloved children who are obedient and submissive to him. And grace works with mercy, and especially in two properties, as was shown. This working belongs to the third Person, the Holy Spirit: he works rewarding and giving. Rewarding is a gift of trust that the Lord gives to those who have labored. And giving is a courteous working which he does freely by grace, fulfilling and surpassing all that creatures deserve. Thus in our Father, God Almighty, we have our being. And in our Mother of mercy, Jesus Christ, we have our reforming and our restoring, and in him our parts are united and all made perfect man. And by the yielding and giving in grace of the Holy Spirit we are fulfilled. And our substance is in our Father, God Almighty; and our substance is in our Mother, God all wisdom; and our substance is in our Lord God the Holy Spirit, all goodness. For our substance is whole in each Person of the Trinity, which is one God. And our sensuality is only in the second Per-

son, Christ Jesus, in whom are the Father and the Holy Spirit. And in him and by him we are mightily taken out of hell and out of the wretchedness on earth, and honorably brought up into heaven, and blissfully united to our substance, increased in riches and nobility by all the power of Christ, and by the grace and working of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 59: JESUS OUR MOTHER

God is our Mother as truly as our Father; three ways of seeing his motherhood.

59.1 And all this bliss we have by mercy and grace. This kind of bliss we could never have had and known unless that property and goodness which is in God, by which we have this bliss, had been opposed. For wickedness has been allowed to rise up against that goodness; and the goodness of mercy and grace opposed that wickedness, and turned all to goodness and honor for all who shall be saved. For it is that property in God which does good against evil. Thus Jesus Christ, who does good against evil, is our true Mother. We have our being from him, where the ground of motherhood begins, with all the sweet keeping of love that follows endlessly. As truly as God is our Father, so truly is God our Mother. And he showed that in everything, and especially in these sweet words where he says, "It is I." That is to say: It is I, the might and the goodness of the fatherhood. It is I, the wisdom and the nature of the motherhood. It is I, the light and the grace that is all blessed love. It is I, the Trinity. It is I, the Unity. It is I, the high sovereign goodness of all manner of things. It is I who make you long. It is I, the endless fulfilling of all true desires. For there the soul is highest, noblest, and most honorable, and yet it is lowest, humblest, and mildest. And from this substantial ground we have all our virtues in our sensuality, by the gift of nature and by the help and furthering of mercy and grace, without which we cannot profit. Our high Father, God Almighty, who is being, knows us and loved us from before any time. From this knowing, in his most marvelous deep charity,

by the foreseeing, endless counsel of all the blessed Trinity, he willed that the second Person should become our Mother, our Brother, and our Savior. From which it follows that as truly as God is our Father, so truly is God our Mother. Our Father wills, our Mother works. Our good Lord the Holy Spirit confirms. And therefore it is fitting for us to love our God, in whom we have our being, reverently thanking and praising him for our making, mightily praying to our Mother for mercy and pity, and to our Lord the Holy Spirit for help and grace. For in these three is all our life: nature, mercy, and grace. From them we have mildness, patience, and pity, and hatred of sin and wickedness; for it belongs properly to virtues to hate sin and wickedness. And thus Jesus is our true Mother by nature, from our first making; and he is our true Mother in grace by taking our created nature. All the fair working and all the sweet natural offices of dear worthy motherhood are appropriated to the second Person. For in him we have this godly will, whole and safe without end, both in nature and in grace, from his own proper goodness. I understood three ways of beholding motherhood in God. The first is the ground of our natural making. The second is the taking of our nature, and there the motherhood of grace begins. The third is motherhood in working. And in that there is a spreading forth by the same grace, in length and breadth, in height and in depth without end; and all is one love.

CHAPTER 60: THE MOTHER'S SERVICE

Christ bears us to bliss and feeds us with himself in the sacrament.

60.1 But now I must see a little more of this spreading forth, as I understood it in our Lord's meaning: how we are brought back by the motherhood of mercy and grace into our natural place, where we were made by the motherhood of natural love, which natural love never leaves us. Our natural Mother, our gracious Mother—for he willed to become our Mother wholly in all things—laid the ground of his work very low and very mildly in the maiden's womb. And he showed that in the first showing, where

he brought the meek maiden before the eye of my understanding in the simple stature she had when he was conceived—that is to say, our high God, the sovereign Wisdom of all. In this low place he arrayed himself and made himself all ready in our poor flesh, to do himself the service and the office of motherhood in all things. The mother's service is nearest, readiest, and surest: nearest, for it is most of nature; readiest, for it is most of love; and surest, for it is most of truth. No one ever might or could do this office to the full but he alone. We know that all our mothers bear us to pain and to dying. But what of our true Mother Jesus? He alone bears us to joy and to endless living—blessed may he be. Thus he sustained us within himself in love and labor, until the full time when he willed to suffer the sharpest thorns and the most grievous pains that ever were or ever shall be, and died at last. And when he had done this, and so borne us to bliss, still all this could not satisfy his marvelous love. And he showed that in these high, surpassing words of love: "If I could suffer more, I would suffer more." He could die no more, but he would not stop working.[1] Therefore he must feed us, for the dear worthy love of motherhood has made him our debtor. The mother may give her child her milk to suck, but our precious Mother Jesus can feed us with himself, and does so most courteously and most tenderly with the Blessed Sacrament, which is the precious food of true life. And with all the sweet sacraments he sustains us most mercifully and graciously. And this is what he meant in these blessed words, where he said: "It is I that Holy Church preaches to you and teaches you." That is to say: all the health and the life of the sacraments, all the power and the grace of my word, all the goodness that is ordained in Holy Church for you—it is I. The mother may lay her child tenderly to her breast, but our tender Mother Jesus can lead us intimately into his blessed breast through his sweet open side, and show us there part of the Godhead and the joys of heaven, with spiritual certainty of endless

1 Cressy's punctuation is garbled here; the manuscripts read roughly: "Ah, what is that? But our true Mother Jesus, he alone bears us to joy."

bliss. And he showed that in the tenth[2] revelation, giving the same understanding in this sweet word, where he says, "Lo, how I love you," as he looked into his blessed side, rejoicing. This fair, lovely word "mother" is so sweet and so natural in itself that it cannot truly be said of anyone, nor to anyone, but of him and to him who is the true Mother of life and of all. To the property of motherhood belong natural love, wisdom, and knowing; and it is God. For though our bodily bringing forth is only little, low, and simple compared with our spiritual bringing forth, yet it is he who does it in the creatures by whom it is done. The natural, loving mother, who knows and understands the need of her child, keeps it most tenderly, as the nature and condition of motherhood requires. And always, as it grows in age and in stature, she changes her ways of acting, but not her love. And when it has grown older, she allows it to be chastised, to break down its vices and make the child receive virtues and grace. This working, with all that is fair and good, our Lord does in the one by whom it is done. Thus he is our Mother in nature by the working of grace in the lower part, for love of the higher. And he wants us to know it, for he wants to have all our love fastened on him. And in this I saw that every debt we owe, by God's command, to fatherhood and motherhood is fulfilled in truly loving God; and Christ works this blessed love in us. And this was shown in everything, and especially in the high, plenteous words where he says: "It is I whom you love."

CHAPTER 61: A MOTHER'S CARE

He lets us fall but never perish; we should run to him as a child to its mother.

61.1 And in our spiritual bringing forth he uses more tenderness in keeping us, beyond any comparison, by as much as our soul is of more value in his sight. He kindles our understanding; he prepares our ways; he eases our conscience; he comforts our

2 Cressy prints "jxth"; the reference is to the Tenth Revelation (chapter 24), the showing of Christ's wounded side.

soul; he lightens our heart, and gives us in part knowing and loving of his blissful Godhead, with gracious remembrance of his sweet manhood and his blessed Passion, and with courteous marveling at his high, surpassing goodness. And he makes us love all that he loves, for his love, and be well pleased with him and with all his works. And when we fall hastily, he raises us by his lovely embrace and his gracious touch. And when we are strengthened by his sweet working, then by his grace we willingly choose him, to be his servants and his lovers, lastingly, without end. And yet after this he allows some of us to fall harder and more grievously than we ever did before, as it seems to us. And then we, who are not altogether wise, think that all we have begun is worth nothing. But it is not so. For we need to fall, and we need to see it. For if we did not fall, we would not know how feeble and how wretched we are of ourselves, nor would we know so fully the marvelous love of our Maker. For we shall truly see in heaven, without end, that we have sinned grievously in this life; and notwithstanding this, we shall truly see that we were never hurt in his (eternal) love, nor were we ever of less value in his sight. And by the test of this falling we shall have a high and marvelous knowing of love in God without end. For hard and marvelous is that love which cannot and will not be broken by trespass. And this was one understanding of profit. Another is the lowliness and humility that we shall gain by the sight of our falling; for by it we shall be highly raised in heaven, and to that rising we could never have come without that humility. And therefore we needed to see it; and if we do not see it, though we feel it, it would not profit us. And commonly we fall first, and afterward we see it; and both are of the mercy of God. The mother may allow the child to fall sometimes, and to be distressed in various ways, for its own profit; but she can never allow any kind of peril to come to her child, for love. And though our earthly mother may allow her child to perish, our heavenly Mother Jesus can never allow us who are his children to perish; for he is almighty, all wisdom, and all love, and so is none but he—blessed may he be. But often, when

our falling and our wretchedness are shown to us, we are sorely afraid, and so greatly ashamed of ourselves that we scarcely know where we can hold ourselves. But then our courteous Mother does not want us to flee away, for nothing would be more loathsome to him. But he wants us then to take on the condition of a child. For when it is distressed and afraid, it runs hastily to its mother; and if it can do no more, it cries to the mother for help with all its might. So he wants us to do as the meek child does, saying thus: "My natural Mother, my gracious Mother, my dear worthy Mother, have mercy on me. I have made myself foul and unlike you, and I neither may nor can amend it except with your help and grace." And if we do not then feel ourselves eased at once, let us be sure that he is acting as a wise mother. For if he sees that it is for our profit to mourn and to weep, he allows it, with compassion and pity, until the best time, for love. And he wants us then to take on the property of a child, which always trusts naturally in the love of its mother, in well-being and in woe. And he wants us to hold mightily to the faith of Holy Church, and find there our dear worthy Mother, in solace and true understanding, with all the blessed communion. For one single person may often be broken, as it seems to oneself, but the whole body of Holy Church was never broken, nor ever shall be, without end. And therefore it is a sure thing, a good and a gracious one, to will humbly and mightily to be fastened and united to our Mother Holy Church, that is, Christ Jesus. For the flood of mercy, that is, his dear worthy blood and precious water, is plentiful to make us fair and clean. The blessed wounds of our Savior are open and rejoice to heal us. The sweet, gracious hands of our Mother are ready and diligent about us; for in all this working he does the true office of a nurse by nature, who has nothing else to do but attend to the salvation of her child. It is his office to save us; it is his honor to do it; and it is his will that we know it. For he wants us to love him sweetly and trust in him humbly and mightily. And he showed this in these gracious words: "I keep you very surely."

CHAPTER 62: KEPT IN OUR FALLING

God keeps us as tenderly in our falls as in comfort; all natures are whole in man.

62.1 For at that time he showed our frailty and our fallings, our breakings and our being brought to nothing, our humiliations and our burdens, and all our woe, as far as it seemed to me that it could befall in this life. And with that he showed his blessed might, his blessed wisdom, his blessed love: that he keeps us at such a time as tenderly and as sweetly, to his honor, and as surely, to our salvation, as he does when we are in the most solace and comfort. And beyond that he raises us spiritually and on high in heaven, and turns everything to his honor and to our joy without end. For his precious love he never allows us to lose time (since all things turn to our greater good). And all this comes from the natural goodness of God by the working of grace. God is nature in his being. That is to say, that goodness which is nature is God. He is the ground, he is the substance, he is the very thing that is nature. And he is true Father and true Mother of natures. And all the natures that he has made to flow out of him to do his will shall be restored and brought back into him by the salvation of man, through the working of grace.[3] For of all the natures that he has set in various creatures in part, in man is the whole in fullness: in virtue, in beauty and in goodness, in royalty and in nobility, in every manner of solemnity of preciousness and honor. Here we may see that we are all bound to God by nature, and we are bound to God by grace. Here we may see that we have no great need to seek far afield to know the various natures, but only to Holy Church, into our Mother's breast; that is to say, into our own soul, where our Lord dwells. And there we shall find everything now, in faith and in understanding, and afterward truly in himself, clearly, in bliss. But let no man or woman take this as something special to himself, for

3 "Kind" here, as throughout, means nature; "God is kind in his being" means that God is nature itself.

it is not so; it is general. For it is our precious Mother Christ, and for him this fair nature was prepared, for the honor and the nobility of man's making, and for the joy and the bliss of man's salvation, just as he saw, knew, and understood it from without beginning.

CHAPTER 63: HATING SIN BY NATURE AND BY GRACE

Sin is more painful than hell; the child does not despair of its mother's love.

63.1 Here we may see that truly we have it from nature to hate sin, and truly we have it from grace to hate sin. For nature is all good and fair in itself, and grace was sent out to save nature, and keep nature, and destroy sin, and bring fair nature back again to the blessed point from which it came, that is, God, with more nobility and honor by the virtuous working of grace. For it shall be seen before God, by all his holy ones, in joy without end, that nature has been tested in the fire of tribulation and found in it no lack and no fault. Thus nature and grace are of one accord, for grace is God, as uncreated nature is God. He is two in manner of working and one in love, and neither of them works without the other, nor are they parted. And when we, by the mercy of God and with his help, bring ourselves into accord with nature and with grace, we shall truly see that sin is worse, viler, and more painful than hell, beyond all comparison. For it is contrary to our fair nature; for as truly as sin is unclean, so truly is sin unnatural. And this is a horrible thing to see for the loving soul that would be all fair and shining in the sight of God, as nature and grace teach. But let us not be afraid of this, except so far as fear may help us. But humbly let us make our moan to our beloved Mother, and he will sprinkle us all over with his precious blood, and make our soul very soft and very mild, and heal us very fairly in the course of time, just as is most honor to him and joy to us without end. And of this sweet, fair working he shall never cease nor stop until all his beloved children are brought forth and born. And he showed that where he gave the

understanding of the spiritual thirst, that is, the love-longing that shall last until Doomsday. Thus in our true Mother Jesus our life is grounded, in his own foreseeing wisdom from without beginning, with the high might of the Father and the sovereign goodness of the Holy Spirit. And in taking our nature he gave us life, and in his blessed dying upon the cross he bore us to endless life. And from that time, and now, and ever until Doomsday, he feeds us and fosters us, just as the high sovereign nature of motherhood wills, and as the natural need of childhood asks. Fair and sweet is our heavenly Mother Jesus in the sight of our soul; precious and lovely are the gracious children in the sight of our heavenly Mother, with mildness and humility and all the fair virtues that belong to children by nature. For by nature the child does not despair of the mother's love; by nature the child does not presume upon itself; by nature the child loves the mother, and each of them the other. These are fair virtues, together with all others like them, by which our heavenly Mother is served and pleased. And I understood no higher stature in this life than childhood, in feebleness and failing of strength and of understanding, until the time our gracious Mother has brought us up into our Father's bliss. And there his meaning shall truly be made known to us in the sweet words where he says, "All shall be well, and you shall see it yourself, that all manner of thing shall be well."

63.2 And then the bliss of our motherhood in Christ shall begin anew in the joys of our Father God, and this new beginning shall last without end. Beginning thus, I understood that all his blessed children who have come out of him by nature shall be brought back into him by grace.

The Fifteenth Showing

Chapters 64–65
"Suddenly you shall be taken from all your pain"; the child rising from the body.

CHAPTER 64: "SUDDENLY YOU SHALL BE TAKEN"

The fifteenth showing: "Suddenly you shall be taken"; a child rises from a decaying body.

64.1 Before this time I had a great longing and desire, by God's gift, to be delivered from this world and from this life. For often I looked upon the woe that is here and the well-being and blessed being that is there. And if there had been no pain in this life but the absence of our Lord, it seemed to me at times that this was more than I could bear. And this made me mourn and long earnestly. And also because of my own wretchedness, sloth, and weariness I had no delight to live and to labor as it fell to me to do. And to all this our courteous Lord answered, for comfort and patience, and said these words: "Suddenly you shall be taken from all your pain, from all your sickness, from all your distress, and from all your woe. And you shall come up above, and you shall have me as your reward, and you shall be filled with joy and bliss. And you shall never again have any manner of pain, any manner of sickness, any manner of displeasure, any lack of will, but always joy and bliss without end. Why then should it grieve you to suffer a while, since it is my will and my honor?" And in this word ("Suddenly you shall be taken") I saw that God rewards man for the patience he has in awaiting God's will and his time, and that man extends his patience over the whole time of his living through not knowing

the time of his passing. This is a great profit, for if a man knew his time, he would not have patience beyond that time. And also God wills that while the soul is in the body, it should seem to itself that it is always on the point of being taken (out of it); for all this life and this longing that we have here is but a point. And when we are taken suddenly out of pain into bliss, then pain shall be nothing. And at this time I saw a body lying on the earth. This body appeared heavy and fearful, and without shape and form, as if it were a stinking swill of mire. And suddenly out of this body sprang a very fair creature, a little child, fully shaped and formed, swift and lively, and whiter than the lily, which quickly glided up into heaven. The swill of the body signifies the great wretchedness of our mortal flesh, and the littleness of the child signifies the cleanness and the purity of our soul. And I thought: with this body remains no fairness of this child, nor on this child dwells any foulness of this body.[1] It is far more blissful (for) man to be taken from pain than for pain to be taken from man; for if pain is taken from us, it may come again. Therefore it is a sovereign comfort and a blissful thing to behold, for a longing soul, that we shall be taken from pain. For in this promise I saw a merciful compassion that our Lord has for us in our woe, and a courteous promise of clear deliverance. For he wills that we be comforted in the surpassing joy. And he showed that in these words: "And you shall come up above, and you shall have me as your reward, and you shall be filled with joy and bliss." It is God's will that we set the point of our thought on this blissful beholding as often as we can, and keep ourselves in it as long as we can with his grace. For this is a blissful contemplation for the soul that is led by God, and very much to his honor for the time that it lasts. And when we fall back into ourselves through heaviness and spiritual blindness, and through feeling pains, spiritual and bodily, by our frailty, it is God's will that we know that he has not forgotten us. And this is what he means in these words, and he says for comfort: "And you shall never again have pain of any manner, nor any manner

1 "Swilge": a sodden, swill-like mass, a bog or slough.

of sickness, any manner of displeasure, any lack of will, but always joy and bliss without end. Why then should it grieve you to suffer a while, since it is my will and my honor?" It is God's will that we take his promises and his comforts as broadly and as strongly as we can take them. And he also wills that we take our waitings and our distresses as lightly as we can take them, and set them at nothing. For the more lightly we take them, and the less value we set on them for love, the less pain we shall have in feeling them, and the more thanks and reward we shall have for them.

CHAPTER 65: CHOSEN FOR LOVE

Whoever chooses God for love is loved without end.

65.1 And thus I understood that whatever man or woman willingly chooses God in this life for love may be sure that he is loved without end, with endless love that works that grace in him. For he wills that we hold this trustingly: that we be as sure in hope of the bliss of heaven while we are here as we shall be in certainty when we are there. And the more delight and joy we take in this sureness, with reverence and humility, the better it pleases him. For, as it was shown, this reverence that I mean is a holy, courteous fear of our Lord, to which humility is knit; and that is, that a creature sees the Lord marvelously great and herself marvelously little. For these virtues are possessed endlessly by those loved by God. And it may now be seen and felt in measure by the gracious presence of our Lord, when it is there. This presence is most desired in all things, for it works that marvelous sureness in true faith, and sure hope, by greatness of charity, in fear that is sweet and delightful. It is God's will that I see myself as much bound to him in love as if he had done for me all that he has done. And so every soul should think in regard to his love. That is to say, the charity of God makes in us such a unity that, when it is truly seen, no one can part himself from another. And thus each soul ought to think that God has done for him all that he has done. And he shows this to make us

love him, and delight in him, and fear nothing but him; for it is his will that we know that all the might of our enemies is locked in our Friend's hands. And therefore the soul that knows this surely shall fear no one but him whom she loves. All other fears she sets among passions, and bodily sickness, and imaginations. And therefore, though we are in so much pain, woe, and distress that it seems to us we can think of nothing at all but what we are in or what we feel, as soon as we can let us pass lightly over it and set it at nothing. And why? Because God wills to be known; for if we know him, and love him, and reverently fear him, we shall have patience and be in great rest. And all that he does should be a great delight to us. And our Lord showed this in these words: "Why then should it grieve you to suffer a while, since it is my will and my honor?" Now I have told you of fifteen showings, as God vouchsafed to minister them to my mind, renewed by illuminations and touchings, I hope, of the same Spirit that shows them all. Of these fifteen showings the first began early in the morning, about the hour of four, and it lasted, showing in order, very fair and calmly, each following the other, until it was noon of the day or past.

The Sixteenth Showing

Chapters 66–70
Julian says she raved; the fiend at her throat; the soul as a city with Jesus enthroned; "You shall not be overcome."

CHAPTER 66: "I HAD RAVED"

The pain returns; Julian tells a religious visitor she had raved, and is ashamed.

66.1 And after this the good Lord showed the sixteenth revelation on the following night, as I shall tell later. This sixteenth was the conclusion and confirmation of all the fifteen. But first I must tell you about my feebleness, wretchedness, and blindness. I said at the beginning, where it says, "And in this suddenly all my pain was taken from me," that of this pain I had no grief and no distress as long as the fifteen showings lasted. And at the end all was closed, and I saw no more. Soon I felt that I would live longer. And at once my sickness came back, first in my head, with a sound and a noise. Suddenly my whole body was filled with sickness, just as it had been before. I was as barren and as dry as if I had never had more than a little comfort, and like a wretch I mourned heavily, feeling my bodily pains and the lack of comfort, spiritual and bodily. Then a member of a religious order came to me and asked me how I was. I said I had been raving that day, and he laughed loudly and heartily. And I said, "The cross that stood before my face, I thought it bled fast." At this word the person I was speaking to grew very serious and marveled. At once I was deeply ashamed, and dismayed at my carelessness. I thought: this man takes seriously the least word I may say, and he saw nothing of it himself. And when I saw that

he took it so seriously and with such great reverence, I grew very greatly ashamed, and I would have gone to confession. But I could tell it to no priest, for I thought, "How would a priest believe me, when by saying I raved I showed that I myself did not believe our Lord God?" Nevertheless, I believed him truly for the time that I saw him. And so it was then my will and my intention to do forever, without end. But like a fool I let it pass out of my mind. Ah, look how wretched I was! This was a great sin and a great unnaturalness, that I, through the folly of feeling a little bodily pain, so unwisely abandoned for the time the comfort of all this blessed showing of our Lord God. Here you may see what I am of myself. But in this our courteous Lord would not leave me. I lay still until night, trusting in his mercy, and then I began to sleep.

CHAPTER 67: THE FIEND AT HER THROAT

In her sleep the fiend grips her throat; on waking she smells smoke no one else smells.

67.1 And at the beginning of my sleep it seemed to me that the fiend set himself at my throat, thrusting out a face very close to mine, like a young man's. It was long and wonderfully lean; I never saw any like it. Its color was red like a tile when it is newly fired, with black spots in it like freckles, fouler than the tile. His hair was red as rust that has not been scoured, cut short in front, with locks at the sides hanging down in tufts. He grinned at me with a malicious look and showed me white teeth, and so it seemed to me all the uglier. He had no body or hands of proper shape, but with his paws he held me by the throat, and would have stopped my breath and killed me, but he could not. This ugly showing was made while I slept, and none of the others was. And all this time I trusted to be saved and kept by the mercy of God.[1] And our courteous Lord gave me grace to wake, and I had scarcely any life in me. The people who were with me

1 Cressy prints "And so my kill me thought"; the words "my kill" appear to be a misprint, and the sense is "so it seemed to me the more ugly."

watched me and wet my temples, and my heart began to take comfort. And at once a little smoke came in at the door, with a great heat and a foul stench. Then I said, "*Benedicite, Domine!* Is everything here on fire?" And I thought it was a bodily fire that would burn us all to death. I asked those who were with me whether they smelled any stench. They said no, they smelled none. I said, "Blessed be God!" for then I knew well that it was the fiend, who had come only to tempt me. And at once I turned to what our Lord had shown me that same day, together with all the faith of Holy Church, for I regarded them as both one, and I fled to it as to my comfort. And at once everything vanished, and I was brought into great rest and peace, without sickness of body or fear of conscience.

CHAPTER 68: THE SOUL AS A CITY

The sixteenth showing: Jesus sits in the soul as in a city; "You shall not be overcome."

68.1 And then our good Lord opened my spiritual eye and showed me my soul in the midst of my heart. I saw the soul as large as if it were an endless world, and also as if it were a blessed kingdom. And by the conditions I saw in it, I understood that it is an honorable city. In the midst of that city sits our Lord Jesus, true God and true man, a fair person and of great stature, highest Bishop, most majestic King, most honorable Lord. I saw him clothed majestically in honor. He sits in the soul, upright, in peace and rest. And he rules and sustains heaven and earth and all that is. The manhood sits with the Godhead in rest. The Godhead rules and sustains without any instrument or effort. And the soul is wholly occupied with the blessed Godhead, that is, sovereign might, sovereign wisdom, and sovereign goodness. The place that Jesus takes in our soul he shall never leave, without end, as I see it, for in us is his most intimate home and his endless dwelling. And in this he shows the delight he has in the making of man's soul. For as well as the Father could make a creature, and as well as the Son could make a creature, so well

did the Holy Spirit will that man's soul should be made; and so it was done. And therefore the blessed Trinity rejoices without end in the making of man's soul, for he saw without beginning what would delight him without end. Everything he has made shows his lordship. Understanding of this was given at the same time by the example of a creature who is led to see great splendor and kingdoms belonging to a lord. And when it had seen all the splendor below, then, marveling, it was moved to seek up above to that high place where the lord dwells, knowing by reason that his dwelling is in the worthiest place. And so I understand truly that our soul may never have rest in things that are beneath itself. And when it rises above all creatures into itself, still it may not remain in beholding itself; rather, all its beholding is blessedly set in God, that is, the Maker dwelling in it, for in man's soul is his true dwelling. And the highest light and the brightest shining of the city is the glorious love of our Lord God, as I see it. And what can make us rejoice more in God than to see in him that he rejoices in us, highest of all his works? For I saw in the same showing that if the blessed Trinity could have made man's soul any better, any fairer, any nobler than it was made, he would not have been fully pleased with the making of man's soul. But because he made man's soul as fair, as good, as precious as he could make it as a creature, therefore the blessed Trinity is fully pleased without end in the making of man's soul. And he wills that our hearts be mightily raised above the depths of the earth and all vain sorrows, and that we rejoice in him. This was a delightful sight and a restful showing that is without end. And beholding this while we are here is very pleasing to God and a very great help to us. And the soul that beholds in this way is made like him who is beheld, and united to him in rest and in peace by his grace. And it was a singular joy and bliss to me that I saw him sitting, for the truth of sitting showed endless dwelling. And he gave me to know truly that it was he who had shown me everything before. And when I had beheld all this with careful attention, then our good Lord showed me words very humbly, without voice and without opening of lips,

just as he had done before, and said very sweetly: "Know it well now: it was no raving that you saw today. But take it and believe it, and keep yourself in it, and comfort yourself with it, and trust in it, and you shall not be overcome." These last words were said to teach me a very true certainty, that it is our Lord Jesus who showed me everything. And just as in the first word that our good Lord showed, referring to his blessed Passion—"By this the fiend is overcome"—so in the last word he said, with very true faithfulness, referring to us all: "You shall not be overcome." And all this teaching and this true comfort is meant for all my fellow Christians, as was said before, and so is God's will. And this word, "You shall not be overcome," was said very sharply and very mightily, for assurance and comfort against all the tribulations that may come. He did not say, "You shall not be troubled, you shall not be weighed down with toil, you shall not be distressed"; but he said, "You shall not be overcome."[2] God wills that we pay attention to this word, and that we always be strong in faithful trust, in well-being and in woe. For he loves us and delights in us, and so he wills that we love him and delight in him and trust mightily in him, and all shall be well. And soon everything was closed, and I saw no more after this.

CHAPTER 69: THE FIEND RETURNS

Heat and stench; Julian holds to the faith and the fiend is gone.

69.1 The fiend came back with his heat and his stench and kept me very busy. The stench was so vile and so painful, and the bodily heat also fearful and wearisome. I also heard a bodily talking, as if of two persons, and both, it seemed to me, talked at the same time, as if they were holding a parliament, with great commotion. And it was all soft whispering, and I did not understand what they said. All this was to drive me to despair, as I thought, for it seemed to me that they were mocking the saying of prayers on beads, which are said crudely, with much lack of

2 Cressy prints "for sickness and comfort"; "sickness" is evidently a misprint for "sikerness," assurance.

the devout attention and wise diligence that we owe to God in our prayer. And our good Lord God gave me grace to trust mightily in him, and to comfort my soul with bodily speech, as I would have done for another person who was in distress. It seemed to me that this commotion could not be likened to anything bodily.

69.2 I set my bodily eye on the same cross where I had seen comfort before that time; my tongue I set to speaking of Christ's Passion and repeating the faith of Holy Church; and my heart to fasten on God with all my trust and all my strength. And I thought to myself: "You now have great work to keep yourself in the faith, so that you are not taken by your enemies. If you would from this time on be always as busy keeping yourself from sin, that would be a good and a sovereign occupation." For I thought faithfully that if I were safe from sin, I would be fully safe from all the fiends in hell and the enemies of my soul. And so he kept me occupied all that night and the next morning, until it was about prime. And then at once they were all gone and departed, and nothing was left but the stink, and that lasted a while longer. And I scorned him. And so I was delivered from him by the power of Christ's Passion, for by this the fiend is overcome, as our Lord Jesus Christ said before.[3]

CHAPTER 70: KEEP IT IN FAITH

God left no sign, only his word; Julian is told to keep it in faith.

70.1 In all this blessed showing our good Lord gave me to understand that the sight would pass. This blessed showing the faith preserves, by his own good will and his grace. For he left me neither sign nor token by which I might know it, but he left me his own blessed word in true understanding, commanding me very mightily to believe it; and so I do, blessed may he be! I believe that he who showed it is our Savior, and that what he showed is in the faith. And therefore I love it, always rejoicing,

3 Prime: the first daytime hour of the Church's daily prayer, about six in the morning.

and to this I am bound by all his own meaning, together with the next words that follow: "Keep yourself in it, and comfort yourself with it, and trust in it." So I am bound to keep it in my faith. For on the same day it was shown, when the sight had passed, I forsook it like a wretch and said openly that I had been raving. Then our Lord Jesus in his mercy would not let it perish, but showed it all again within my soul with more fullness, with the blessed light of his precious love, saying these words very mightily and very humbly: "Know it well now: it was no raving that you saw this day." It was as if he had said: because the sight had passed from you, you lost it and could not or might not keep it; but know it now—that is to say, now you see it. This was said not only for that time, but also to lay on it the foundation of my faith, where he says immediately after: "But take it, and learn it, and keep yourself in it, and comfort yourself with it, and trust in it, and you shall not be overcome."

70.2 In these six words that follow, where he says "Take it," his meaning is to fasten it faithfully in our heart. For he wills that it dwell with us in faith until our life's end, and afterward in fullness of joy, willing that we always have faithful trust in his blessed promises, knowing his goodness. For our faith is opposed in various ways by our own blindness and by our spiritual enemies, within and without. And therefore our precious Lover helps us with spiritual light and true teaching, in various ways, within and without, by which we may know him. And therefore, in whatever way he teaches us, he wills that we perceive him wisely, receive him sweetly, and keep ourselves in him faithfully. For above the faith no goodness is kept in this life, as I see it, and beneath the faith there is no health of soul. But in the faith, there our Lord wills that we keep ourselves. For by his goodness and his own working we are to keep ourselves in the faith; and by his permission we are tested in the faith through spiritual enmity, and made strong. For if our faith had no enmity, it would deserve no reward, according to the understanding I have of our Lord's meaning.

Faith, Sin and Dread

Chapters 71–79
The three cheers of the Lord; sin and the soul's blindness; four kinds of dread; reverent fear; seeing our own sin.

CHAPTER 71: THREE KINDS OF COUNTENANCE

Christ's countenance of the Passion, of compassion, and of bliss.

71.1 Glad, and merry, and sweet is the blissful, lovely countenance of our Lord toward our souls, for he beheld us always living in love-longing. And he wills that our soul be of glad countenance toward him, to give him his reward. And thus I hope that by his grace he has drawn, and shall draw more, the outer countenance to the inner, and make us all one with him, and each of us one with the other, in true lasting joy that is Jesus. I understood three kinds of countenance of our Lord. The first is the countenance of the Passion, as he showed while he was with us in this life, dying.[1] And though this beholding is mournful and sorrowful, yet it is glad and merry, for he is God. The second kind of countenance is pity, and sorrow, and compassion. This he shows to all his lovers who have need of his mercy, with the certainty of his keeping. The third is the blissful countenance as it shall be without end, and this was shown most often and continued longest. And thus in the time of our pain and our woe he shows us the countenance of his Passion and his Cross, helping us to bear it by his own blessed power. And in the time of our sinning he shows us the countenance of compassion and pity,

1 "Chear" (cheer) is the expression of the face, the countenance; Julian's "three cheers" are three kinds of countenance.

mightily keeping us and defending us against all our enemies. And these two are the common countenances which he shows us in this life, mingling the third with them. That is his blessed countenance, partly like what it shall be in heaven. It comes by the gracious touch and the sweet illumination of spiritual life, by which we are kept in true faith, hope, and charity, with contrition and devotion, and also with contemplation, and all kinds of true joys and sweet comforts. The blissful countenance of our Lord God works this in us by grace.

CHAPTER 72: SIN AND THE BLISSFUL SIGHT

Sin keeps us from seeing God; three kinds of knowing.

72.1 But now I must tell in what way I saw sin as deadly in the creatures who shall not die for sin, but live in the joy of God without end. I saw that two contraries cannot be together in one place. The most contrary things there are, are the highest bliss and the deepest pain. The highest bliss there is, is to have God in the clarity of endless light: truly seeing him, sweetly feeling him, having him all peacefully in fullness of joy. And thus the blissful countenance of our Lord God was shown in part. In this showing I saw that sin was the most contrary, so much so that as long as we are mingled with any part of sin, we shall never see clearly the blessed countenance of God. And the more horrible and the more grievous our sins are, the deeper we are, for that time, from this blessed sight. And therefore it often seems to us as if we were in peril of death, and partly in hell, because of the sorrow and the pain that sin is to us. And thus for the time we are dead to the true sight of our blissful life. But in all this I saw faithfully that we are not dead in the sight of God, and he never passes from us. But he shall never have his full bliss in us until we have our full bliss in him, truly seeing his fair, blissful countenance. For we are ordained to it by nature, and brought to it by grace. Thus I saw how sin is deadly for a short time to the blessed creatures of endless life. And the more clearly the soul sees the blissful countenance by the grace of loving, the more it

longs to see it in fullness, that is to say, in his own likeness. For although our Lord God dwells in us now, and is here with us, and embraces us, and encloses us for tender love, so that he may never leave us, and is nearer to us than tongue can tell or heart can think, yet we may never cease from mourning, nor from weeping, nor from seeking, nor from longing, until we see him clearly in his blissful countenance. For in that precious sight no woe can remain, nor any well-being fail. And in this I saw matter for mirth and matter for mourning. It is matter for mirth that our Lord our Maker is so near to us, and in us, and we in him, by the faithfulness with which his great goodness keeps us. It is matter for mourning because our spiritual eye is so blind, and we are so borne down by the weight of our mortal flesh and the darkness of sin, that we cannot see our Lord God clearly in his blissful countenance. No, and because of this darkness we can scarcely believe or trust his great love and the faithfulness of our keeping. And this is why I say that we may never leave off mourning nor weeping. This weeping does not mean only the pouring out of tears from our bodily eyes, but also has a more spiritual meaning. For the natural desire of our soul is so great and so immeasurable that, if all the noble things God ever made in heaven and on earth were given to us for our joy and our comfort, and we did not see the fair, blissful countenance of himself, still we should never leave off mourning, nor spiritual weeping —that is to say, painful longing—until we truly see the fair, blissful countenance of our Maker. And if we were in all the pain that heart can think or tongue can tell, and at that time we could see his blissful countenance, all this pain would not grieve us. Thus that blissful sight is the end of every kind of pain to loving souls, and the fulfilling of every kind of joy and bliss. And he showed that in the high and marvelous words where he says: "It is I who am highest; it is I whom you love; it is I who am all." It belongs to us to have three kinds of knowing. The first is that we know our Lord God. The second is that we know ourselves: what we are through him, by nature and by grace. The third is that we know humbly how our self stands against our sin and against

our feebleness. And this whole showing was made for these three, as I understand it.

CHAPTER 73: THREE WAYS OF SHOWING

Bodily sight, words and spiritual sight; two spiritual sicknesses, impatience and despair.

73.1 All this blessed teaching of our Lord God was shown in three parts: that is to say, by bodily sight, by words formed in my understanding, and by spiritual sight. For the bodily sight, I have told what I saw as truly as I can. For the words, I have told them just as our Lord showed them to me. And for the spiritual sight, I have told some part, but I can never tell it fully. And therefore I am moved to say more of this spiritual sight, as God will give me grace. God showed two kinds of sickness that we have. The one is impatience, or sloth, for we bear our labor and our pain heavily. The other is despair, or doubtful fear, as I shall say later. In general he showed sin, in which all is included, but in particular he showed none but these two. And these two are what most afflict and trouble us, as I gather from what our Lord showed me, and he wills that we be amended of them. I speak of such men and women as hate sin for the love of God and dispose themselves to do God's will. Through our spiritual blindness and bodily heaviness, we are most inclined to these. And therefore it is God's will that they be known, and then we should refuse them as we do other sins. And as a help against this, our Lord very humbly showed the patience that he had in his hard Passion, and also the joy and the delight that he has in that Passion for love. And he showed this as an example, so that we should bear our pains gladly and easily, for that is a great pleasure to him and an endless profit to us. And the reason we are afflicted by them is that we do not know love. Though the three Persons of the blessed Trinity are all equal in themselves, the soul received most understanding in love. Yes, and he wills that in all things we have our beholding and our rejoicing in love. And it is to this knowing that we are most blind. For some of us believe

that God is almighty and may do all, and that he is all wisdom and can do all. But that he is all love and will do all, there we fail. And this not-knowing is what most hinders God's lovers, as I see it. For when we begin to hate sin and amend ourselves by the ordinance of Holy Church, there still remains a fear that hinders us, because we look at ourselves and at the sins we have done before. And some of us fear because of our everyday sins, for we do not hold to our promise, nor keep the cleanness in which our Lord sets us, but often fall into so much wretchedness that it is shameful to say it. And looking at this makes us so sorry and so heavy that we can scarcely see any comfort. And we sometimes take this fear for humility, but it is a foul blindness and a wickedness. And we cannot despise it as we do another sin that we recognize, for it comes from a lack of true judgment, and it is against truth. For of all the properties of the blessed Trinity, it is God's will that we have most faithfulness and delight in love, for love makes might and wisdom very humble toward us. For just as by the courtesy of God he forgets our sin once we repent, so he wills that we forget our sin, as regards our unreasonable heaviness and our doubtful fears.

CHAPTER 74: FOUR KINDS OF FEAR

Fear of fright, fear of pain, doubtful fear, and reverent fear, which alone pleases God.

74.1 For I understood four kinds of fear. One is the fear of a fright that comes upon a person suddenly through frailty. This fear does good, for it helps to purge a person, as bodily sickness does, or other such pain that is not sin; for all such pains help a person if they are patiently taken. The second is fear of pain, by which a person is stirred and wakened from the sleep of sin. For one who is sound asleep in sin is not able for the time to receive the soft comfort of the Holy Spirit until he has taken on this fear of pain, of bodily death, and of spiritual enemies. And this fear stirs us to seek comfort and mercy from God. And so this fear helps us as an entry, and makes us able to have contrition by the

blissful touch of the Holy Spirit. The third is doubtful fear. Doubtful fear, insofar as it draws toward despair, God wills to have turned in us into love by the true knowing of love; that is to say, that the bitterness of doubt be turned into the sweetness of natural love by grace. For it can never please our Lord that his servants doubt his goodness. The fourth is reverent fear. For there is no fear in us that fully pleases God except reverent fear, and that is gentle. For the more it is had, the less it is felt, because of the sweetness of love. Love and fear are brothers. They are rooted in us by the goodness of our Maker, and they shall never be taken from us, without end. We have it by nature to love, and we have it by grace to love; and we have it by nature to fear, and we have it by grace to fear. It belongs to lordship and to fatherhood to be feared, as it belongs to goodness to be loved. And it belongs to us who are his servants and his children to fear him for lordship and fatherhood, as it belongs to us to love him for Godhead. And though this reverent fear and love are not both one, but are two in property and in working, yet neither of them can be had without the other. And therefore I am sure that he who loves, fears, though he feels it but little. All fears other than reverent fear that are offered to us, though they come under the color of holiness, are not so true. And by this they can be told apart. That fear which makes us quickly flee from all that is not good and fall into our Lord's breast, as the child into the mother's arms, with all our intent and with all our mind, knowing our feebleness and our great need, knowing his everlasting goodness and his blessed love, seeking only to him for salvation, cleaving to him with faithful trust—the fear that brings us into this working is natural, and gracious, and good, and true. And all that is contrary to this either is wrong or is mixed with wrong. Then this is the remedy: to know them both and refuse the wrong. For the natural property of fear which we have in this life by the gracious working of the Holy Spirit shall be the same in heaven before God: gentle, courteous, very sweet. And thus in love we shall be intimate and near to God, and in fear we shall be gentle and courteous to God, and both alike, in one and

the same way. Let us desire, then, of our Lord God to fear him reverently, and love him humbly, and trust in him mightily. For when we fear him reverently and love him humbly, our trust is never in vain. For the more we trust, and the more mightily we trust, the more we please and honor our Lord in whom we trust. And if we lack this reverent fear and humble love, as God forbid we should, our trust shall soon be misruled for that time. And therefore we greatly need to pray our Lord for grace that we may have this reverent fear, and humble love by his gift, in heart and in work. For without this no one can please God.[2]

CHAPTER 75: NEED, LOVE, LONGING

God's three longings for us, and the reverent fear all creatures will feel at the end.

75.1 I saw that God can do all that we need. And these three that I shall speak of are Need, Love, Longing. Pity and love keep us in the time of our need. And longing in the same love draws us into heaven, for the thirst of God is to have humankind in general into himself. In this thirst he has drawn his holy souls who are now in bliss. And so, gaining his living members, he is ever drawing and drinking, and yet he still thirsts and longs. I saw three kinds of longing in God, and all to one end.[3] The first is that he longs to teach us to know him and to love him ever more and more, as is fitting and profitable to us. The second is that he longs to have us up into bliss, as souls are when they are taken out of pain into heaven. The third is to fill us with bliss, and that shall be fulfilled on the last day, to last forever. For I saw, as is known in our faith, that then pain and sorrow shall be ended for all who shall be saved. And not only shall we receive the same bliss that souls before us have had in heaven, but we shall also receive a new bliss, which shall flow plenteously out of God into us and fill us. And these are the good things which he has ordained to give us from without beginning. These good things

2 Cressy prints "make Love," apparently a misprint for "meek love" (humble love).
3 Cressy's "deedeth" is evidently a misprint for "needeth."

are treasured and hidden in himself, for until that time the creature is neither able nor worthy to receive them. In this we shall truly see the cause of all the deeds that God has done. And furthermore we shall see the cause of all things that he has permitted. And the bliss and the fulfilling shall be so deep and so high that, for wonder and marvel, all creatures shall have toward God such great reverence and fear, surpassing all that has been seen and felt before, that the pillars of heaven shall tremble and quake. But this kind of trembling and fear shall have no kind of pain. Rather, it belongs to the worthy majesty of God to be beheld thus by his creatures, fearfully trembling and quaking, and this for much greater joy, endlessly marveling at the greatness of God the Maker and at the least part of all that is made. For the beholding of this makes the creature marvelously humble and mild. Therefore God wills that we will to have knowledge of this, desiring the sight and the working, and it also belongs to us to do so, both by nature and by grace. For it leads us in the right way, and keeps us in true life, and unites us to God. And as good as God is, so great he is. And as much as it belongs to his Godhead to be loved, so much it belongs to his great highness to be feared. For this reverent fear is the fairest courtesy that is in heaven before God's face. And as much as he shall be known and loved beyond what he is now, so much he shall be feared beyond what he is now. Therefore it must necessarily be that all heaven and all earth shall tremble and quake when the pillars tremble and quake.

CHAPTER 76: REVERENT FEAR

The soul taught by the Holy Spirit hates sin more than hell; the fiend's false accusations.

76.1 I speak only a little of this reverent fear, for I hope it may be seen in what has been said above. But I know well that our Lord showed me no souls but those that fear him. For I know well that the soul that truly takes the teaching of the Holy Spirit hates sin more, for its vileness and horribleness, than it hates all the

pain that is in hell. For the soul that beholds the natural goodness of our Lord Jesus hates no hell; but hell is sin, as I see it. And therefore it is God's will that we know sin, and pray busily, and labor willingly, and seek teaching humbly, so that we do not fall blindly into it, and so that if we fall, we rise readily. For it is the greatest pain the soul can have, to turn from God at any time by sin. The soul that wants to be at rest should flee from other people's sins, when they come to mind, as from the pain of hell, seeking into God for help against it. For the beholding of other people's sin makes as it were a thick mist before the eye of the soul, and for that time we cannot see the fairness of God, unless we can behold those sins with contrition along with the sinner, with compassion on him, and with holy desire to God for him. For without this it harms, and troubles, and hinders the soul that beholds them. This I understand in the showing of the compassion. In this blessed showing of our Lord I have understanding of two contraries. The one is the greatest wisdom that any creature can practice in this life. The other is the greatest folly. The greatest wisdom is for a creature to act according to the will and the counsel of his highest sovereign Friend. This blessed Friend is Jesus, and it is his will and counsel that we hold ourselves with him, and fasten ourselves intimately to him evermore, in whatever state we are. For whether we are foul or clean, we are always the same in his love. For well-being or for woe, he wants us never to flee from him. But because of the changeability that is in ourselves, we often fall into sin. Then this comes upon us by the stirring of our enemy, and by our own folly and blindness. For they say this: "You know well that you are a wretch, a sinner, and also unfaithful, for you do not keep your covenant. You often promise our Lord that you will do better, and right away you fall again into the same, especially into sloth and the wasting of time." For that, as I see it, is the beginning of sin, especially for the creatures who have given themselves to serve our Lord with inward beholding of his blessed goodness. And this makes us afraid to appear before our courteous Lord. Then it is our enemy who wants to set us back with

his false fear of our wretchedness, through the pain with which he threatens us. For it is his intention to make us so heavy and so sorry in this that we should let the blessed beholding of our everlasting Friend slip out of mind.

CHAPTER 77: THE ENMITY OF THE FIEND

The fiend loses more by our rising than he gains by our falling; we bear the penance God gives.

77.1 Our good Lord showed the enmity of the fiend. By this I understood that all that is contrary to love and to peace is of the fiend and of his party. We fall because of our feebleness and our folly. We rise to greater joy because of the mercy and grace of the Holy Spirit. And if our enemy wins anything from us by our falling (for that is his delight), he loses many times more in our rising by charity and humility. And this glorious rising is such great sorrow and pain to him, because of the hatred he has for our soul, that he burns continually in envy. And all this sorrow that he would make us have shall turn back upon himself. And it was for this that our Lord scorned him, and showed that he shall be scorned. And this made me laugh mightily. Then this is the remedy: that we acknowledge our wretchedness and flee to our Lord. For always, the needier we are, the more profitable it is for us to touch him. And let us say this in our intention: "I know well that I have deserved pain. But our Lord is almighty, and can punish me mightily; and he is all wisdom, and can punish me wisely; and he is all goodness, and loves me tenderly." And it is profitable for us to abide in this beholding. For it is a very lovely humility in a sinful soul, wrought by the mercy and grace of the Holy Spirit, when we willingly and gladly take the scourging and the chastising that our Lord himself will give us. And it shall be very tender and very easy, if we will only hold ourselves content with him and with all his works. For the penance that a person takes upon himself was not shown to me. That is to say, it was not shown to me specifically. But this was shown specially, and highly, and with a very lovely countenance: that we should

humbly and patiently bear and suffer the penance that God himself gives us, with remembrance of his blessed Passion. For when we remember his blessed Passion with pity and love, then we suffer with him, as his friends did who saw it. And this was shown in the thirteenth showing, near the beginning, where it speaks of pity. For he says: "Do not accuse yourself that your tribulation and your woe are all your fault. For I do not want you to be heavy or sorrowful indiscreetly. For I tell you, whatever you do, you shall have woe. And therefore I want you to know wisely your penance, which you are in continually, and to take it humbly for your penance. And then you shall truly see that all this living is profitable penance." This place is prison; this life is penance; and he wants us to rejoice in the remedy. The remedy is that our Lord is with us, keeping us and leading us into the fullness of joy. For this is an endless joy to us in our Lord's meaning: that he who shall be our bliss when we are there is our keeper while we are here, our way and our heaven, in true love and faithful trust. And he gave understanding of this in all of it, and especially in the showing of his Passion, where he made me mightily choose him for my heaven. Let us flee to our Lord, and we shall be comforted. Let us touch him, and we shall be made clean. Let us cleave to him, and we shall be sure and safe from all kinds of perils. For our courteous Lord wants us to be as intimate with him as heart may think or soul may desire. But let us beware that we do not take this intimacy so recklessly as to abandon courtesy. For our Lord himself is sovereign intimacy, and as intimate as he is, so courteous he is; for he is truly courteous. And the blessed creatures who shall be in heaven with him without end: he wants them to be like himself in all things. And to be perfectly like our Lord is our true salvation and our full bliss. And if we do not know how we shall do all this, let us ask it of our Lord, and he shall teach us. For it is his own delight and his honor. Blessed may he be.

CHAPTER 78: SEEING OUR OWN SIN

God shows us our sin by the light of his mercy, and only as much as we can bear.

78.1 Our Lord in his mercy shows us our sin and our feebleness by the sweet, gracious sight of himself. For our sin is so foul and so horrible that he in his courtesy will not show it to us except by the light of his mercy. It is his will that we have knowledge of four things. The first is that he is the ground from whom we have all our life and our being. The second is that he keeps us mightily and mercifully in the time that we are in our sin, among all our enemies, who are very fierce against us. And we are in all the more peril because we give them occasion for it, and we do not know our own need. The third is how courteously he keeps us and makes us know that we are going astray. The fourth is how steadfastly he waits for us and does not change his countenance. For he wants us to be turned and united to him in love, as he is to us. And thus by gracious knowledge we may see our sin profitably, without despair. For truly we need to see it, and by the sight we should be made ashamed of ourselves, and broken down as regards our pride and our presumption. For we must truly see that of ourselves we are nothing at all but sin and wretchedness. And thus by the sight of the lesser (part of sin) that our Lord shows us, the greater, which we do not see, is wasted away. For he in his courtesy measures the sight to us, since it is so foul and so horrible that we could not endure to see it as it is. And thus by this humble knowledge, through contrition and grace, we shall be broken from all things that are not our Lord. And then our blessed Savior shall perfectly heal us and unite us to himself. Our Lord means this breaking and this healing for humankind in general. For he who is highest and nearest to God may see himself sinful and needy along with me. And I, who am the least and the lowest of those who shall be saved, may be comforted along with him who is highest. So has our Lord united us in charity, when he showed me that I should

sin. And for the joy that I had in beholding him, I did not readily attend to that showing. And our courteous Lord paused there and would teach me no further until he gave me grace and will to attend. And from this I was taught that, though we are lifted high into contemplation by the special gift of our Lord, we must still have along with it sight and knowledge of our sin and of our feebleness. For without this knowledge we cannot have true humility, and without this we cannot be safe. And I also saw that we cannot have this knowledge from ourselves, nor from any of our spiritual enemies, for they do not wish us so much good. For if it were up to their will, we should never see it until our dying day. Then we are greatly bound to God, that he himself, out of love, wills to show it to us in the time of mercy and grace.

CHAPTER 79: FOR ALL, NOT FOR ME

Julian's sin was shown for all; God wants us to acknowledge sin and turn quickly to him.

79.1 Also I had more understanding in this, in that he showed me that I should sin. I took it nakedly as meant for my own individual person, for I was not moved otherwise at that time. But by the high, gracious comfort that followed afterward I saw that his meaning was for humankind in general. That is to say, it was for all humankind, which is sinful and shall be until the last day. Of this humankind I am a member, as I hope, by the mercy of God. For the blessed comfort that I saw is large enough for us all. And there I was taught that I should see my own sin, and not other people's, unless it may be for the comfort or help of my fellow Christians. And also in the same showing, where I saw that I should sin, I was taught to be fearful because of my uncertainty about myself. For I do not know how I shall fall, nor do I know the measure or the greatness of my sin. For I would have liked to know that, fearfully, and to that I had no answer. Also our courteous Lord at that same time showed very sweetly and very mightily the endlessness and the unchangeability of his love, and also his great goodness and his gracious inward keeping, so

that the love between him and our souls shall never be parted, forever without end. And thus in the fear I have matter for humility, which saves me from presumption. And in the blessed showing of love I have matter for true comfort and joy, which saves me from despair. All this intimate showing of our courteous Lord is a lovely lesson and a sweet, gracious teaching from himself for the comforting of our soul. For he wants us to know, by the sweetness of his intimate love, that all that we see or feel, within or without, which is contrary to this, is of the enemy and not of God. For example: if we are stirred to be more careless of our living, or of the keeping of our heart, because we have knowledge of this plenteous love, then we have great need to beware of this stirring, if it comes. It is false, and we greatly ought to hate it, for it has no likeness to God's will. And when we have fallen through frailty or blindness, then our courteous Lord touches us, stirs us and keeps us. And then he wants us to see our wretchedness and humbly acknowledge it. But he does not want us to remain there. Nor does he want us to busy ourselves greatly with accusing ourselves, nor does he want us to be too miserable about ourselves. He wants us to turn our attention to him quickly. For he stands all alone, and waits for us continually, moaning and mourning until we come. And he is in haste to have us with him. For we are his joy and his delight, and he is the salve of our life. There, I say, he stands all alone: I leave aside speaking of the blessed company in heaven, and speak only of his office and his working here on earth, according to the conditions of the showing.

Love Was His Meaning

Chapters 80–86
Reason, the Church and grace; God's longing; the three properties of light, love and faith; "Love was his meaning."

CHAPTER 80: THREE THINGS WE STAND BY

Reason, the teaching of the Church, and the working of the Holy Spirit; Christ waits mourning for us.

80.1 By three things man stands in this life, and by these three God is honored and we are helped, kept, and saved. The first is the use of man's natural reason. The second is the common teaching of Holy Church. The third is the inward gracious working of the Holy Spirit. And these three are all of one God. God is the ground of our natural reason; and God is the teaching of Holy Church; and God is the Holy Spirit. They are all distinct gifts, and he wills that we have great regard for them and accord ourselves to them. For these work in us continually, all together, and they are great things. He wills that we have knowledge of this greatness here, as it were in an ABC— that is to say, that we may have a little knowledge of that of which we shall have the fullness in heaven, and that is to help us. We know in our faith that God alone took our nature, and none but he. And furthermore, we know that Christ alone did all the great works that belong to our salvation, and none but he. And just so he alone acts now in the last end. That is to say, he dwells here in us, and rules us, and gives to us in this life, and brings us to his bliss. And so he shall do as long as any soul is on earth that shall come to heaven. He will do it to this extent: if there were no such soul on earth but one, he would be with that one all alone until he

had brought it up to his bliss. I believe and understand the ministry of holy angels, as the learned tell of it, but it was not shown to me. For he himself is nearest and humblest, highest and lowest, and does all. And he does not only all that we need, but also all that is honorable to our joy in heaven. And where I say that he waits for us moaning and mourning, this means all the true feeling that we have in ourselves in contrition and in compassion, and all the moaning and mourning we have because we are not united with our Lord. Whatever of this is profitable, it is Christ in us. And though some of us feel it seldom, it never passes from Christ until he has brought us out of all our woe, for love never allows him to be without pity. And when we fall into sin, and leave off remembering him and keeping our own soul, then Christ alone bears all the charge of us. And so he stands moaning and mourning. Then it belongs to us, out of reverence and natural love, to turn quickly to our Lord and not leave him all alone. He is here alone with us all; that is to say, he is here only for us. And when I am estranged from him by sin, despair, or sloth, then I let my Lord stand alone, in so far as he is in me. And so it goes with all of us who are sinners. But though we do this often, his goodness never allows us to be alone. He is with us lastingly, and tenderly he excuses us, and always shields us from blame in his sight.

CHAPTER 81: PENANCE

God dwells in the soul as his city; our natural longing for him is our penance.

81.1 Our good Lord showed himself to his creature in various manners, both in heaven and on earth, but I saw him take no place except in man's soul. He showed himself on earth in the sweet Incarnation and his blessed Passion. And in another manner he showed himself on earth, where I said I saw God in a point. And in yet another manner he showed himself on earth as it were on a pilgrimage. That is to say, he is here with us, leading us, and shall be until he has brought us all to his bliss in heaven.

He showed himself reigning at various times, as was said before, but principally in man's soul. He has taken his resting place there, and his honorable city. Out of that honorable seat he shall never rise or move, without end. Marvelous and solemn is the place where the Lord dwells. And therefore he wills that we readily attend to his gracious touching, rejoicing more in his whole love than sorrowing in our frequent falls. For of anything we may do, the greatest honor to him is that we live gladly and merrily for his love in our penance. For he beholds us so tenderly that he sees all our living here to be penance. For the natural longing in us for him is a lasting penance in us. He works this penance in us and mercifully helps us to bear it. For his love makes him long, and his wisdom and his truth, with his rightfulness, make him suffer us to be here. And in this manner he wills to see it in us, for this is our natural penance, and the highest, as I see it. For this penance never leaves us until the time that we are fulfilled, when we shall have him as our reward. And therefore he wills that we set our hearts on the passing over—that is to say, from the pain that we feel into the bliss that we trust.

CHAPTER 82: PITY, NOT BLAME

God looks on us with pity, not blame; in falling and rising we are kept in one love.

82.1 But here our courteous Lord showed the moaning and the mourning of our soul, meaning this: "I know well that you will live for my love, merrily and gladly suffering all the penance that may come to you. But because you do not live without sin, you are heavy and sorrowful. And if you could live without sin, you would suffer for my love all the woe that might come to you, and that is true. But do not be too much aggrieved by sin that befalls you against your will (that is, not maliciously)." And here I understood that the lord looked on the servant with pity and not with blame, for this passing life does not require us to live wholly without sin. He loves us endlessly, and we sin habitually. He shows it to us very gently, and then we sorrow and mourn

with discretion, turning ourselves to behold his mercy, cleaving to his love and to his goodness, seeing that he is our medicine, knowing that we do (nothing) but sin. And so, by the humility that we gain in the sight of our sin, faithfully knowing his everlasting love, thanking and praising him, we please him. "I love you and you love me, and our love shall never be parted in two; and for your profit I suffer." And all this was shown in spiritual understanding, he saying this blessed word: "I keep you very surely." And I saw in our blessed Lord a great desire that we should live in this manner—that is to say, in longing and rejoicing, as all this lesson of love shows. By this I understand that all that is contrary to this is not from him but from enmity. And he wills that we know it by the sweet gracious light of his natural love. If there is anyone living on earth who is continually kept from falling, I do not know of it, for it was not shown to me. But this was shown: that in falling and in rising we are always preciously kept in one love (by which we were chosen before others from all eternity). For in beholding God we do not fall, and in beholding ourselves we do not stand. Both of these are true, as I see it. But the beholding of our Lord God is the higher truth. So we are much bound to him, that he wills to show us this high truth in this life. And I understood that while we are in this life it is most profitable for us to see both of these at once. For the higher beholding keeps us in spiritual joy and true rejoicing in God. The other, which is the lower beholding, keeps us in fear and makes us ashamed of ourselves. But our good Lord always wills that we hold ourselves much more in the beholding of the higher, and yet not leave off knowing the lower, until the time that we are brought up above. There we shall have our Lord Jesus as our reward, and be filled with joy and bliss without end.

CHAPTER 83: LIFE, LOVE AND LIGHT

Life, love and light are three properties of God; faith is our light in the night.

83.1 I had, in part, touching, sight, and feeling of three properties of God, on which the strength and the effect of all the revelation rest. They were seen in every showing, and most especially in the twelfth, where it often says, "It is I." The properties are these: life, love, and light. In life is marvelous intimacy. In love is gentle courtesy. And in light is endless nature. These three properties were seen in one goodness, and my reason wished to be united to that goodness and to cleave to it with all its might. I beheld with reverent fear, marveling greatly at the sight and feeling of the sweet accord by which our reason is in God. I understood that it is the highest gift that we have received, and that it is grounded in nature. Our faith is a light coming naturally from our endless day, that is, our Father God. In this light our Mother Christ and our good Lord the Holy Spirit lead us in this passing life. This light is measured discreetly, and stands by us in the night as we need it. The light is the cause of our life; the night is the cause of our pain and all our woe. In this woe we desire endless reward and thanks from God, for with mercy and grace we willingly know and believe our light, walking in it wisely and mightily. And at the end of woe our eyes shall suddenly be opened, and in clearness of sight our light shall be full. That light is God our Maker, Father and Holy Spirit, in Christ Jesus our Savior. So I saw and understood that our faith is our light in our night, and that light is God, our endless day.

CHAPTER 84: CHARITY

This light is charity: charity unmade, charity made, and charity given.

84.1 This light is charity, and the measuring of this light is done for our profit by the wisdom of God. For the light is neither so large that we may see our blissful day clearly, nor is it wholly

shut away from us. It is such a light that we may live in it, earning reward with labor, keeping in store the honorable thanks of God. And this was seen in the sixth showing, where he says, "I thank you for your service and for your labor." So charity keeps us in faith and in hope, and faith and hope lead us in charity. And at the end all shall be charity. I had three kinds of understanding in this light of charity. The first is charity unmade. The second is charity made. The third is charity given. Charity unmade is God. Charity made is our soul in God. Charity given is virtue, and that is a gracious gift of working, in which we love God for himself, and ourselves in God, and all that God loves for God's sake.

CHAPTER 85: LOVED BEFORE WE WERE MADE

We have been known and loved in God's purpose without beginning.

85.1 And at this sight I marveled greatly. For notwithstanding our simple living and our blindness here, our courteous Lord endlessly beholds us in this working, rejoicing. And of all things, we may please him best by believing this wisely and truly, and by rejoicing with him and in him. For as truly as we shall be in the bliss of God without end, praising and thanking him, so truly have we been in the foresight of God, loved and known in his endless purpose from without beginning. In this unbegun love he made us. In the same love he keeps us, and never allows us to be hurt in any way by which our bliss might be lessened. And therefore, when the judgment is given and we are all brought up above, then we shall clearly see in God the secrets which are now hidden from us. And then none of us shall be moved to say in any matter, "Lord, if it had been thus, it would have been well." But we shall all say with one voice, "Lord, blessed may you be, for it is thus: thus it is well. And now we see truly that all things are done as it was your ordinance before anything was made."

CHAPTER 86: LOVE WAS HIS MEANING

The book is unfinished; fifteen years later Julian learns that love was the Lord's meaning.

86.1 This book is begun by God's gift and his grace, but it is not yet completed, as I see it. For charity, let us all pray together, with God's working, thanking, trusting, rejoicing. For so our good Lord wills to be prayed to, by the understanding that I took in all his own meaning, and in the sweet words where he says very merrily, "I am the ground of your beseeching." For truly I saw and understood in our Lord's meaning that he showed it because he wills to have it known more than it is. In that knowing he will give us grace to love him and cleave to him. For he beholds his heavenly treasure, and solace in heavenly joy, in drawing our hearts from the sorrow and darkness which we are in. And from the time that it was shown, I often desired to know what our Lord's meaning was. And fifteen years after and more, I was answered in spiritual understanding, thus: "What? Would you know your Lord's meaning in this thing? Know it well: Love was his meaning. Who shows it to you? Love. Why does he show it to you? For love. Hold yourself in it, and you shall know more of the same. But you shall never know anything else in it, without end." So I was taught that love is our Lord's meaning. And I saw very surely in this and in all, that God made us and loved us; and that love was never slackened, nor ever shall be. And in this love he has done all his works. And in this love he has made all things profitable to us. And in this love our life is everlasting. In our making we had a beginning, but the love in which he made us was in him from without beginning. In this love we have our beginning. And all this we shall see in God without end.[1]

1 Cressy prints "that our God made us, he Loved us"; the manuscripts read "that before God made us, he loved us."