

THE THIRTEEN STANZAS

I

*Soul of “good will,” you who go with groans
seeking through other ways
the happiness you have left in your Creator.
Why do you insist on “walking” on your own
without knowing the way and the dangers
you are going to encounter?
Blind you go, not knowing
that the infinite is your happiness,
that you are “nothing”
and on your own you cannot arrive!*

II

*God has a “Vehicle”
that is at your disposal,
which is the Spirit of Truth
and only he can take you.
He is infinite Ocean
whom you will never exhaust.*

III

*Let yourself be attracted, plunge into him,
let go of your footing,*

*love the good and the truth,
trust, and think of nothing else,
for he himself will lead you.
Faith, love, and trust – this will suffice.*

IV

*Don't try to know him by judging his ways,
because you will never succeed.
One day he will be as an impetuous wind
that will blow you around as a little dry leaf.*

V

*Another day, as divine Eagle
by your neck he will take you with his beak
and he will carry you through the desert
where no consolations you will be able to find
and many temptations will come to you.*

VI

*Heed not the “desert”
and in the temptations be faithful to your God.
Love and trust, even though you have falls.
Think of the One who carries you
and he himself will lift you up.
This is the way and through this way
you have to arrive.*

VII

*If inside the belly of a whale,
like Jonah, you sometimes feel,
doubt not that this also is he,
who submersed in the sea
carries you to shore, hidden in his bosom,
so that the wild beasts cannot touch you.*

VIII

*If one day you feel like a stone, hard and cold,
and you cannot love,
he is the Rock, and he carries you in his bosom
so that the tempest may not touch you;
keep on trusting, for this is the way
and through another you will never arrive.*

IX

*If you come to feel that your passions are burning
as a bonfire you cannot quench,
he is the fire that wants to purify you.
Unite yourself to the Immaculate Host,
offer yourself as victim that immolates itself
on the altar of sacrifice,
because you are drawing near to your Creator.
The purer your desire to offer yourself,
the sooner the holocaust will reach Him.*

*Doubt not that this is the way
and you are closer than you were yesterday.*

X

*If after suffering a little
you feel flooded by a sublime joy,
doubt not that he is your rest,
and he invites you to rest.
Love, rejoice,
but do not become attached to the joy
because you still have a long way to go
where thorns and aridities will not be lacking.*

XI

*Now your Guide begins to reveal himself;
he has given you a foretaste of his joy,
but your rest lies not in the "joy,"
but in the One to whom he leads you.
If you linger in the taste of the joy,
forget not that you will lose your "rest";
he invites you to keep on going,
you are free to follow him or not.*

XII

*Toward the Cross he leads you
but you yourself have to choose it
for this Cross is "death" and "Life,"
Life of God, which with the death of the "I"
you will be acquiring.*

*If you decide to enter into the Cross,
"to die" you must decide as well
and this has to be done freely:
your life for His Life,
as He gave his life for you
to give you the Life.*

XIII

*If you choose the Cross,
let yourself be nailed to it:
"My food is to do the Will of Him who sent me."
Do not go sampling other "food,"
for it alone is your strength
for accepting the "death"
that will give you a new life.
Then you will know the One who was your way,
because in Him you will be moved,
and you will live in perfect communion
with the Father and the Son
in their same Spirit,
that Vehicle
who was your Guide.*

FIRST STANZA

*Soul of "good will," you who go with groans
seeking through other ways
the happiness you have left in your Creator.
Why do you insist on "walking" on your own
without knowing the way and the dangers
you are going to encounter?
Blind you go, not knowing
that the Infinite is your happiness,
that you are "nothing"
and on your own you cannot arrive!*

The soul lost her happiness when she lost the light, the sense of God and of her "nothingness." This is the unconsciousness affirmed by the original sin, the spirit of darkness which man accepted when he disobeyed his Creator, accepting the temptation: «*You will be like God, knowing good and evil*» (Gn 3,5). When we say «*soul of "good will," you who go with groans,*» we are referring to the human being, descendant of Adam, who carries in himself the Divine Nature in his fallen human nature, and this divine reality groans with cries of supplication because it tends towards the Being who is its Being, but the human being tends towards the *unconsciousness* of the "non-being," and in this way he drags along with him this Divine Reality which is substantially united to his human nature. This is why it is said «*seeking through other ways the happiness you have left in your Creator,*» because the human nature and the Divine Nature form an inseparable unity from the moment the Only Begotten, who is the

Divine Nature, took on the Human Nature in Adam, and the human being, due to original sin, ever since Adam, on obeying the creature and disobeying the Will of God, is naturally oriented to the human (the creature) and not to the Divine (the Creator), and on feeling within himself the “groans” of his Soul, he seeks happiness where it is not – in the human appetites – subjugating in this way his Divine Nature to the unconsciousness in which his human nature is submersed, under the domination of the tempter whom he obeyed.

Believing herself a knower of good and evil – a pride injected by the tempter – the soul seeks happiness where she thinks it can be found. The “enemy-tempter” insinuates, she accepts: happiness lies in love, in truth, in justice, in purity, in freedom, and so on. In her determination to be happy, she resolves to obtain at any cost that reality in which she hopes to find happiness. But when she believes that she possesses one of these “realities,” she realizes that she lacks another one in order to be happy. In this way she continues her frenzied race, running into ever greater difficulties, which at times lead her to despair.

She is led to despair because this is the objective of the “tempter” when suggesting, not a lie, but a part of the truth: happiness lies in love, in truth, in justice, in purity, or in freedom. The truth is that all these realities are in God and in Him lies the happiness.

The “spirit of evil” takes advantage of this search in order to feed her conceit and egotism – her pride! And man, instead of getting closer to his objective – the happiness which is in God – is moving away from God through sin. He pursues love and falls into lust, pursues truth and falls into anger, pursues justice and falls into cruelty, pursues purity and falls into scrupulosity and puritanism, pursues freedom and falls into the slavery of his disordered passions.

The soul (human being) is blind under the shadow of her participation in the “spirit of darkness”; this is why she doesn’t “know” her Divine Reality, God, her Being, nor does she “recognize” her own helplessness, her “nothingness.”

And let no one believe that he is not blind and that he already “knows” just because he has, through his studies, a book-knowledge of God and of the soul. For the “knowledge” that opens the “eyes of the soul” and gives the light, enters not from “outside” but emerges from “within,” as a consequence of a righteous life, directed by one’s conscience, as will be explained further on.

The more certain the soul is of her knowledge, the denser is the darkness that covers her, the blinder she is.

To the extent that the human being is purifying himself from his egotism, he is “opening his eyes,” allowing the light to enter him, and he goes on realizing that he “knows” less and less and when he identifies with the light, he knows that he doesn’t “know,” he realizes he knows nothing, then he “knows” what he is: “nothing.”

And about this St. John of the Cross says:

*«He who truly gets there
all his trust in self collapses;
what he knew at first,
now appears very lowly;
and his knowledge grows so much,
that he is left knowing nothing,
having transcended all knowledge.»*

The soul of light (the human being enlightened by the Divine light) never makes a *definitive* judgment of good and evil, or of the behavior of other souls, because she

knows that only God sees the line that separates the good from the evil, and the human being is judged by Him according to his righteousness and intention. The most she can do is to form for herself a simple opinion in a general sense.

THIRD STANZA

*Let yourself be attracted, plunge into him,
let go of your footing,
love the good and the truth,
trust, and think of nothing else,
for he himself will lead you.
Faith, love, and trust – this will suffice!*

The soul lets herself be attracted by the “spirit of the good” by obeying the voice of her conscience.

She plunges into him and lets go of her footing when she doesn’t reason things out seeking her “*convenience*,” but rather, loving the truth and the good, she follows the voice of her *conscience*, trusts it and thinks of nothing else. «... *Everything that is not according to conscience is a sin*,» says the letter to the Romans (Rom 14:23).

She doesn’t think about whether what she does will turn out good or bad, better or worse, or whether it will make her happy or make her suffer....

This and no other is the “*following*” that the Lord refers to; this is the one that gives the human soul the “light of life.”

And St. Theresa is right in what she says in these verses about the soul searching for God:

*«And if perchance you know not
where to find Me,
don't go looking here and there,
but if you want to find Me,
you must search for Me within you.»*

TWELFTH STANZA

*Toward the Cross he leads you
but you yourself have to choose it
for this Cross is “death” and “Life,”
Life of God, which, with the death of the “I,”
you will be acquiring.
If you decide to enter into the Cross,
“to die” you must decide as well
and this has to be done freely:
your life for His Life,
as He gave his life for you
to give you the Life.*

If the soul accepts the chalice and decides for the Will of God, renouncing her own will: «*Not my will but Thy Will be done*» (Lk 22:42), the Spirit leads her toward the Cross that the Divine Justice disposes.

The weight of this cross depends on the docility of the soul. The more she rebels, the heavier it will be and her “agony” will be prolonged. She, the soul, must be like a sheep that lets herself be led to the slaughter without opening her mouth, imitating her Master and Lord.

After accepting the chalice, she will undertake the way to Calvary; she will be delivered into the hands of her “executioners,” those who will put to death the “old man”; she with Jesus will travel the way of the Will of the Father and with Him all will be easy and even delightful.

She finds herself under the sword of the Divine Justice with all her goods: honor, fame, reputation, affections, comforts, material possessions, etc., and even her very

life.

It begins with the failure of her public life. Everything turns against her... but she is happy, very happy, because she has left all those things behind upon fixing her gaze on God alone, and she would not exchange a single thread of her hair for all the treasures, affections, and kingdoms of this world.

God's Justice has begun to act, and it will not stop until it has conformed her to the Son: *«Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!»* (Lk 23:46). The soul surrenders her spirit to the Father to live only by the Holy Spirit.

THIRTEEN STANZA

*If you choose the Cross,
let yourself be nailed to it:
“My food is to do the Will of Him who sent me.”
Do not go sampling other “food,”
for it alone is your strength for accepting the “death”
that will give you a new life.
Then you will know the One who was your way,
because in Him you will be moved,
and you will live in perfect communion
with the Father and the Son
in their same Spirit,
that Vehicle who was your Guide.*

If the soul lets herself be nailed to the Cross of the Will of God, renouncing her own will *at each moment*, she will feel a great strength and even joy in the suffering.

In the measure of her fidelity, she will *actually* go on dying to every one of her desires, and she will feel that indescribable joy of a true freedom of spirit.

Nothing in this world will now be able to separate her from her Creator. Her union with Jesus Christ Crucified is so intimate and real that she shares in His very sentiments and desires: «*My food is to do the Will of Him who sent me*» (Jn 4:34). For her there is no other food; only the Will of God satiates her “hunger” for happiness. Even in her body she feels the sufferings of the Passion of Christ, and she lives His agony for the sake of the salvation of souls. This is for her the best gift and her strength, which will enable her to say with Christ: «*All is accomplished*» (Jn 19:30). Because Christ will accomplish in her the mission that was entrusted to Him by the Father.

Oh, if all the souls would only realize this and would *truly* surrender themselves, accepting the chalice that the Father’s Justice disposes, heaven would already be on earth because heaven is God and He would be living in all the souls!

Thy Kingdom come, O Lord!

*«Give thanks to the Lord,
acclaim his name;*

*among the nations make known his deeds,
proclaim how exalted is his name.*

*Sing praise to the Lord for his glorious achievement;
let this be known throughout all the earth.*

*Shout with exultation, O city of Zion,
for great in your midst
is the Holy One of Israel!»*

(Is. 12:4-6)