

**SAINT GREGORY'S « MORALIA »
AND SAINT JOHN OF THE CROSS**

Commentary on Job's chapters one and three*

In one preceding article we have attempted a general approach to the « *Moralia* » of Pope St. Gregory the Great and its influence in the writings of St. John of the Cross. It was our conclusion that the Gregorian commentary on the Book of Job occupies a more central position in the mystical theology of St. John of the Cross than in that of his predecessors.

In our present study we are going to inquire, more in particular, such influence of St. Gregory's through his commentary to chapters one and three of the Book of Job.

**I. - GREGORY'S COMMENTARY
ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF JOB**

The very first biblical figure chosen by John of the Cross to illustrate the situation of the soul in the 'noche oscura' is Job surrounded by his 'consolers' (Prólogo to the *Subida*, n. 4). These latter are the three friends of Job, introduced in Job 2: 11-13, whose mission ostensibly was to console Job over the terrible calamities he had just suffered and which are described in the first and second chapter. John of the Cross refers three different times to these opening chapters of the Book of Job, establishing a parallel between the calamities suffered by Job and the suffering of the soul in the 'noche oscura' (N I 12: 3; N II 23: 6, Ll II: 28).

* Cf. *Ephemerides Carmeliticae* 27 (1976) 453-488.

A. - *The Literal Meaning of the First Chapter of Job*

Job 1 opens (vv. 1-5) with a description of Job as a saintly man, rich in material possessions, livestock and servants, and blessed with seven sons and three daughters whose religious welfare he diligently watches over by offering sacrifice to God each week. In v. 6 the scene changes to the court of Heaven where, together with the good angels, Satan stands before God. God asks Satan: « Numquid considerasti servum meum Job, quod non sit ei similis in terra...? » (v. 8) But Satan answers (vv. 9-11) that perhaps Job is virtuous because God has surrounded him with so much prosperity. Let God withdraw His blessings and then we will see how deeply religious Job is. God permits the test (vv. 12-19) and all of Job's possessions, his oxen and asses, sheep and camels are stolen, his servants and all his children are killed. The disasters, four in number, are announced to Job by four messengers who come in one after the other, and as one messenger is still speaking another interrupts with news of a new disaster, thus contributing cumulatively to the shock effect on poor Job¹. Job. (vv. 20-22) responds admirably, referring all to the will of God. In Job 2, Satan is still not satisfied when God asks him a second time to admire Job (v. 3). Job has only been deprived of external goods, now let him be touched in his own flesh. Satan, therefore, « percussit Job ulcere pessimo, a planta pedis usque ad verticem ejus » (v. 7). Job, « sedens in sterquilinio » (v. 8), is criticized by his wife (v. 9) but again responds admirably by accepting the will of God (v. 10). Verses 11-13 introduce the three friends of Job, they have come to console him but in the chapters that follow they become his severe critics.

The suffering that is depicted in Job 1 and 2 consists, therefore, in Job's feeling the loss of external possessions and his children and the appearance of physical sickness attaching to his own body. There is no disruption of his spiritual equilibrium. Job's response to the losses incurred in ch. 1 is: « Dominus dedit, Dominus abstulit; sicut Domino placuit, ita factum est. Sit nomen Domini benedictum » and his response to the sickness in ch. 2 is: « si bona suscep-

¹ Lévêque, *Job et son Dieu*, I, pp. 191-198, points out how in Job 1 and 2 the author is gradually building up for Job such an unexpected and sudden confrontation with disaster as to totally overwhelm him. The disasters in chapter one are caused first by man, then by nature, and the losses involve first external possessions and then Job's own children; in chapter two, the disaster this time touches Job in his own flesh. The messengers in chapter one are out of breath as they arrive to inform Job, thus leaving Job no time to absorb the shock or even 'swallow' (cf. Job 7:19: « Usquequo non parcis mihi, nec dimittis me ut glutiam salivam meam »).

pimus de manu Dei, mala quare non suscipiamus?»². Job's spiritual life and relation with God is, therefore, as calm and peaceful as it was before the disasters.

How is it, then, that John of the Cross can say, referring to a text in which Job is lamenting the loss of his former prosperity, that Job experienced (« experimentó ») the Dark Night (N II 7: 1)? In the Dark Night, according to John of the Cross, the soul feels « un profundo vacío y pobreza de tres maneras de bienes... que son temporal, natural y *espiritual* » (N II 6: 4), the soul suffers « a causa de su flaqueza natural y *moral y espiritual* » (N II 5: 6). Job hasn't lost any spiritual goods in ch. 1 nor does he exhibit any spiritual weakness. It is true that, in the speeches that follow in the central section of the dialogues, Job does express a feeling of alienation from God but again we must ask: why does John of the Cross throughout N II illustrate the spiritual sufferings of souls by citing texts where Job literally is agonizing over the effects of a physical sickness that was identified in Job 2 as a grievous ulcer and loathsome sores? John of the Cross consistently does this (e.g. in N II 9: 8, 9; N II 11: 6; cf. C 12: 9). The Saint is evidently not viewing Job's unfortunate condition literally when he says that Job 30: 17: « Nocte os meum perforatur doloribus, et qui me comedunt non dormiunt » expresses the suffering of the soul in the spiritual noche: « porque aquí por 'la boca' se entiende la voluntad, la cual es traspasada con estos dolores, que en despedazar al alma ni cesan ni duermen, porque las dudas y recelos que traspasan al alma así nunca duermen ». (N II 9: 8).

Similarly, in N II 11: 6 John of the Cross says the words of Job 7: 2-4 express the sadness of the soul mystically wounded and inflamed by love and suffering « tinieblas espirituales » in the Dark Night of the spirit, but in this text Job is lamenting the persistence of physical pain which does not allow him (literally) to sleep at night nor relax during the day. Job indicates the reason for such discomfort in the verse immediately following: « Induta est caro mea putredine; et sordibus pulveris cutis mea aruit et contracta est » (Job 7: 5). Job is suffering from the disease he contracted in ch. 2: 7-8. A literal approach to the Book of Job would relate such texts to the facts given in the opening chapters. This is what Luis de León does. On the words of Job in ch. 6 and 7, Maestro Luis commentary

² On the theological significance of these two responses of Job see Lévêque, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 198-210. Here Job manifests a perfect equilibrium of affectivity in his experience of an abrupt change from happiness to sadness.

consists of a diagnosis of Job's illness which, he explains, has its origin not only in the ulcerous sores but also in « la melancolía » that increases at nighttime thus explaining Job's suffering at night and Luis extends his diagnosis by citing excerpts from medical authorities such as Galen and Aetio on the nature of 'melancolía'³. John of the Cross, in his first reference to Job as a figure of the soul suffering the Dark Night explicitly rejects « melancolía » as a diagnosis of the crisis saying that it is a false judgment like the one given by « los consoladores de Job » (*Subida*, Prólogo: 4) and as to his mystical use of Job 7: 2-4 he says he is viewing Job as a « profeta » whose words are to be read « espiritualmente » (N II 11: 6).

Let us now see whether Gregory's 'spiritual' commentary on the first chapter of Job suggests a theology of the 'noche oscura'.

B. - *Job, the Prophet of the Dark Night of the Soul*

In the 'Praefatio' to the *Moralia*, Gregory explains why the case of Job is related to our own spiritual life. Just as aromatic ointments give off their pleasing fragrance only when they are agitated or shaken, so Job, when he lived in peaceful prosperity, « sibi notus erat et Deo: qui si non flagellaretur, a nobis nullatenus agnosceretur » (I 519). Because he was shaken by sufferings, Job's spiritual life reaches us like a fragrance: « virtutis opinio commota per flagella fragravit. Et qui quietus in se ipso quod erat continuit, commotus ad notitiam omnium odorem suae fortitudinis aspersit » (Ibid.).

Job's enjoyment of spiritual peace and prosperity is likened to Day, but in his sufferings, he entered into a Night:

Unde bene per prophetam dicitur: 'In die mandavit Dominus misericordiam suam, et in nocte declaravit' (Ps. 41:9). Misericordia enim Domini in die mandatur, quia in tranquillo tempore cognoscendo percipitur; in nocte vero declaratur, quia donum, quod in tranquillitate sumitur, in tribulationibus manifestatur (Ibid).

The *Nox* of Psalm 41: 9 is again applied by Gregory (II 284) to a period in the spiritual life of all souls wherein they feel the withdrawal of God's protection, the loss of former consolations, spiritual weakness and emptiness and overwhelming sadness and

³ Cf. *Exposición del Libro de Job*, ed. cit., on Job 6 and 7 and Job 30:17.

darkness. This is a passive purification of the soul, and Gregory has situated it in a definite period of the spiritual life. Distinguishing three stages in the spiritual life, the « inchoatio », « medietas » and « perfectio » (II 302; cf. II 241-242), Gregory repeatedly says that beginners, the « inchoantes » (I 1015), are prone to spiritual vices, especially pride over their incipient spiritual progress⁴. Established « in quadam novae inchoationis teneritudine » and enjoying consolations uninterruptedly (« sine interruptione »), beginners tend to nurture presumption (privatam fiduciam) (I 902-903). Thus God must intervene and the soul, even though it has begun to practice virtue, must undergo a passive purification and experience its own infirmity.

We think that this Gregorian teaching is in the background of the doctrine of John of the Cross on the necessity for the « principiantes » to enter the « noche » (N 1: 1) because they have fallen into spiritual pride (N I 2: 1, « satisfacción de sus obras y de sí mismos »; Ibid. n. 2, « soberbia y presunción »)⁵. In illustration of this let us

⁴ Gregory treats of the vices of 'beginners' commenting Job 8:16 (I 848-850), Job 15:32-33 (I 1014-1016) and Job 33:29 (II 301-302).

⁵ In N I 6:1 the Saint speaks of another vice of the « principiantes »; because of their « gula espiritual » they do not observe « discreción... que es lo que Dios mira y acepta en todo el camino espiritual », they are described as « pasando de los límites del medio en que consisten... las virtudes ». In N I 13:3 he says God purifies the soul from these excesses which are rooted in « gula espiritual »: [Dios] tiene *refrenada* la concupiscencia y *enfrenado* el apetito, de manera que no se puede cebar de ningún gusto ni sabor sensible... de tal manera que queda impuesta el alma, reformada y empresada según la concupiscencia..., pierde la fuerza de las pasiones y concupiscencia... enjugados así los apetitos... por medio desta sobriedad espiritual ». By this the soul learns « *discreción* » (N I 12:3) and the Saint compares the soul to Job who suffered disasters (Job 1 and 2) and was thus prepared to hear the speech of God (Job 38 ff) (Ibid.). Gregory, commenting Job 2, speaks of *discretio* and the vices opposed to it (I 610-611), and commenting God's speech in Job 38 he speaks of the necessity of *discretio* in the spiritual life, the soul must stay within proper 'limits' (II 462-465); and to correct our excesses, God intervenes and prevents our impulses from realizing what they want: « [Deus] sub mensura contemplationis humiliat, ut licet plus appetat, ultra tamen quam sibi conceditur non ascendat » (II 475). Commenting Job 38: 28-30. « Quis est pluviae pater?... De cujus utero egressa est glacies? ». Gregory speaks of God 'repressing' the spiritual excesses of the « inchoantes » in words suggestive of N I 13: 3: « Quid est ergo quod Dominus prius quidem patrem se pluviae insinuat, postmodum vero de suo egredi utero glaciem narrat, seque gelu gignere de coelo pronuntiat, nisi quod miro modo nostri pectoris terram ad suscipienda verbi semina, et prius per occultae gratiae pluviam infundit, et postmodum, ne in conceptis virtutibus *immoderatus* profuatur disciplina intimae dispensationis *premit* ut quam acceptae gratiae pluvia irrigat, etiam disciplinae rigor *astringat*, ne si aut antequam debet, aut plusquam necesse est conceptas virtutes proferat, fruges in herbam vertat? Plerumque enim *ab inchoantibus* opus bonum dum priusquam oportet ostenditur, a grano perfectionis inanitur, et plerumque virtutes dum plus quam necesse est exuberant exhalant. Unde et electorum suorum Dominus vel ante tempus desideria remuit, vel rursus in tempore ultra profectus *premit*, ne si

read two texts of Gregory taken from his commentary on chapters of the Book of Job that John of the Cross himself will point out to us. The Saint, in N II 11: 6, sees expressed in the words of Job 7: 2-4 the suffering of the soul in the Dark Night, and in N II 5: 5 he says the words of Job 7: 20 express the suffering of the soul in the «conocimiento y el sentimiento de sus males y miserias» in the Night. Gregory sees in Job's words in chapter 7 the doctrine of the passive purification of the soul in which the soul feels the absence of God and its own weakness:

Job 7:18, 'Visitat eum diluculo, et subito probas illum'... Diluculo ergo nos Dominus visitat, quia erroris nostri tenebras luce suae cognitionis illustrat, contemplationis munere sublevat, in arcem virtutis exaltat. Sed notandum quod Deus postquam diluculo visitat, subito hominem probat, quia et accedendo corda nostra ad virtutes provehit, et recedendo concuti tentatione permittit. Si enim post virtutum munera nulla tentatione concutitur, has se habere animus ex semetipso gloriatur. Ut ergo et firmitatis dona habeat, et infirmitatem suam humiliter agnoscat, per accessum gratiae ad alta sustollitur, et per recessum quid ex semetipso sit probatur... Diluculo ergo Deus visitat, sed subito post visitationem probat, quia et collato munere sublevat, et abstracto ad paululum, ipsum sibi hominem demonstrat. Quod eo usque procul dubio patimur, quo, detersa funditus labe peccati, ad promissae incorruptionis substantiam reformemur (I 831-832).

Similarly, John of the Cross cites Job 10: 16 in LI II: 13, interpreting the words of Job (as we shall see later on) in the Gregorian sense. Gregory also interprets the words of Job in chapter 10 as signifying the purifying experience of the loss of spiritual supports.

aut antequam debent, aut plus quam debent, proficiant, per profectus sui magnitudinem in elationis defectum cadant. Nam cum cor post peccata compungitur, terra quae aruerat infusione pluviae rigatur; et cum relictis iniquitatibus bona exsequi opera proponit, quasi post infusionem semen accipit. Et plerique cum desideria sancta concipiunt, in summis jam exerceri virtutibus inardescunt ut non solum culpa operationem non inquinat, sed nec cogitationem pulset. Et *adhuc* quidem in corpore positi sunt, sed nil jam perpeti de communionem praesentis vitae volunt; imitari per intentionem internam mentis stabilitatem appetunt, sed intervenientibus tentationibus reverberantur, ut videlicet infirmitatis suae meminerint, et elati de virtutibus quas accipiunt non sint. Quod dum mira disciplinae *repressionem* agitur, quid aliud quam super infusam terram gelu de coelo generatur? Quid aliud quam de Dei utero glacies producitur, quando de interno secreto dispensatio egreditur, et voluntates nostrae etiam in bonis desiderii *frenantur*?... Occulta cordis vestri semina jam prodire in frugem quaerunt, sed superni moderaminis gelu *premuntur*, ut tanto post fecundius exeant, quanto divini iudicii prementia pondera patientius portant » (II 512-513).

Commenting Job 10: 12, « Vitam et misericordiam tribuisti mihi et visitatio tua custodivit spiritum meum », Gregory says the soul « quae longo virtutis studio innovata videbatur » cannot progress « nisi nos superna visitatio vel ad amorem compungendo vivificet vel ad timorem flagellando restauret... Humanum quippe spiritum visitatio superna custodit, cum hunc virtutibus ditatum, vel flagello percutere, vel compungere amore non desinit » (I 902-903). Job, whose words are being commented, is therefore a figure of the soul undergoing this spiritual trial.

Job who is to suffer « in nocte adversitatis » (I 563) after the 'Day' of his prosperity prophetically announces the « tribulationis noctem » undergone by Christ according to Psalm 15: 7 « usque ad noctem increpauerunt me renes mei » (I 650 on Job 3: 3) and the Night in which souls are purified⁶. This last is the 'moral' or 'spiritual' meaning of the first chapter of Job. Thus, after explaining Job 1 literally, then its mystical forshadowing of the sufferings of Christ, Gregory says: « Servata quippe veritate historiae, imitari spiritaliter possumus quod carnaliter audimus » (I 545)⁷.

C. - Job 1 interpreted 'moraliter'

Job who in vv. 1-3 is presented as a holy man enjoying great wealth is a figure of the soul enjoying the abundance and tranquillity of spiritual prosperity (I 543-546). His seven sons and three daughters are the seven virtues (gifts) of the Holy Spirit and the three theolo-

⁶ In the « Praefatio » Gregory also uses the image of *Nox* for the condition of our present life. Job's example also illumines the darkness of this 'night': « Sed libet inter haec mira divinae dispensationis opera cernere quomodo ad illuminandam noctem vitae praesentis astra quaeque suis vicibus in coeli faciem veniant, quousque in finem noctis Redemptor humani generis, quasi verus lucifer, surgat. Nocturnum namque spatium, dum decedentium succedentiumque stellarum cursibus illustratur, magno coeli decore peragitur. Ut ergo noctis nostrae tenebras suo tempore editus, vicissimque permutatus stellarum radius tangeret, ad ostendendam... inter flagella patientiam, venit Job. Ecce quam fulgentes stellas in coelo cernimus, ut inoffenso pede operis iter nostrae noctis ambulemus » (I 524). John of the Cross uses 'Night' in this sense in Poem 2 (« Que bien sé yo la fonte que mana y corre... ») where the phrase « aunque es de noche » is repeated thirteen times and where he also says « En esta noche oscura de esta vida... ».

⁷ Gregory begins a literal interpretation of chapter one of Job but does not continue it to the end, stopping after verse 5 to begin the mystical interpretation of same verses after which he again returns to them interpreting them « moraliter » and at the end of this he says: « Haec itaque sub intellectu triplici diximus, ut fastidienti animae varia alimenta proponentes, aliquid, quod eligendo sumat, offeramus. Hoc tamen magnopere petimus, ut qui ad spiritalem intelligentiam mentem sublevat, a veneratione historiae non recedat » (I 554). The rest of chapter one is then interpreted in the three-fold sense.

gical virtues, faith, hope, and charity⁸. From these arise many other spiritual goods, the seven thousand sheep of Job are our pure thoughts: « Ovium enim septem millia possidemus, cum cogitationes innocuas, perfecta cordis munditia, intra nosmetipsos inquisitio veritatis pabulo pascimus » (I 545), and since camels kneel down to receive burdens, Job's three thousand camels signify the soul's virtue of fraternal assistance to others: « Camelos procul dubio possidemus, cum cogitationes nostras ad infirmitatis fraternae compassionem flectimus, ut vicissim onera nostra portantes, alienae infirmitati compati condescendendo noverimus » (Ibid.) but camels can also signify our correct administration of temporal affairs (« terrenarum rerum bonae dispensationes » Ibid.). We possess Job's five hundred yoke of oxen, « cum concordēs virtutes exarant duritiā mentis » (Ibid.) and on the five hundred asses, Gregory says: « Bene ergo per asinas, pigrum quidem animal, sed tamen portandis oneribus deditum, simplices cogitationes accipimus; quia dum nostram plerumque ignorantiam cognoscimus, levius onera aliena toleramus »⁸ (I 545-546). The very large family of servants Job had is our well-governed state of mind: « Multam nimis familiam possidemus, cum cogitationes innumeras sub mentis dominatione restringimus; ne ipsa sui multitudine animum superent, ne perverso ordine discretionis nostrae principatum calcant » (I 546).

On Job 1: 4 « Et ibant filii ejus, et faciebant convivium per domos, unusquisque in die suo. Et mittentes vocabant tres sorores suas, ut comederent et biberent cum eis » Gregory comments: « Filii per domos convivium faciunt, dum virtutes singulae juxta modum proprium mentem pascunt. Et bene dicitur: ' Unusquisque in die suo '. Dies enim uniuscujusque filii, est illuminatio uniuscujusque virtutis » (I 547). Gregory then describes the grace proper to each of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit⁹ indicating how each reinforces the others: « Sed illud in hoc filiorum convivio perscrutandum video,

⁸ This section of the *Moralia* is a theological source for St. Thomas when treating of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in I-II Q. 68, a. 1-8 (also in II-II when treating of the Gifts).

⁹ « Ut enim haec ipsa dona breviter septiformis gratiae replicem... Sapientia ergo in die suo convivium facit, quia mentem de aeternorum spe et certitudine reficit. Intellectus in die suo convivium parat, quia in eo quod audita penetrat, reficiendo cor, tenebras ejus illustrat. Consilium in die suo convivium exhibet; quia dum esse praeciptem prohibet, ratione animum replet. Fortitudo in die suo convivium facit; quia dum adversa non metuit, trepidanti menti cibos confidentiae apponit. Scientia in die suo convivium parat, quia in ventre mentis ignorantiae jeiunium superat. Pietas in die suo convivium exhibet, quia cordis viscera misericordiae operibus replet. Timor in die suo convivium facit; quia dum premit mentem, ne de praesentibus superbiat, de futuris illam spei cibo confortat » (I 547). This text is cited and commented by St. Thomas in I-II Q. 68, a. 6, ad 2.

quod semetipsos invicem pascunt. Valde enim singula quaelibet virtus destituitur, si non una alii virtus virtuti suffragetur... Quia ergo alternato ministerio virtus a virtute reficitur, recte dicitur quod apud se filii vicissim convivantur » (Ibid)¹⁰. That the seven sons called the three sisters to feast with them means that the virtues nourish faith, hope and charity.

Job 1:5 reads: « Cumque in orbem transissent dies convivii, mittebat ad eos Job et sanctificabat illos; consurgensque diluculo, offerebat holocausta pro singulis. Dicebat enim: Ne forte peccaverint filii mei, et benedixerint Deo in cordibus suis ». The action of sacrifice performed by Job is the soul's spiritual sacrifice of a right intention after self-examination, by which the soul is cleansed from any spiritual vices that may have affected its practice of virtue. This is done best in prayer: « Hos virtutum sensus melius preces quam discussiones inveniunt; nam ea quae perscrutari in nobismetipsis plenius nitimur, saepe verius orando quam investigando penetramus » (I 548). Such prayer is a total sacrifice: « Holocaustum per singulos filios offerimus, cum pro unaquaque virtute Domino hostiam nostrae precis immolamus... Holocaustum namque totum incensum dicitur. Holocaustum igitur dare, est totam mentem igne compunctionis incedere, ut in ara amoris cor ardeat, et quasi delicta propriae sobolis, inquinamenta cogitationis exurat » (I 548-549). The good that we do must constantly be under the surveillance of daily examination (I 549-551) and as the precious aromatic spices which God told Moses to blend and beat into a fine powder for incense (Exodus 30:34-36), so our virtues must be joined together and subjected to minute examination if our good works are to rise as incense towards God (I 552-553)¹¹. This is to be done perseveringly to the end, says Gregory commenting Job 1:5 « Sic faciebat Job cunctis diebus » (I 554).

¹⁰ This text of Gregory is used by St. Thomas in I-II Q. 68, a. 5: « Utrum dona Spiritus Sancti sint connexa » (cf. 'sed contra' and ad 3).

¹¹ « Thymiana quippe ex aromatibus compositum facimus [Exodus 30:34], cum in altari boni operis, virtutum multiplicitate redolemus. Quod mistum et purum fit; quia quanto virtus virtuti jungitur, tanto incensum boni operis sincerius exhibetur... In tenuissimum pulverem aromata universa conterimus, cum bona nostra quasi in pilo cordis, occulta discussione tundimus; et si veraciter bona sint, subtiliter retractamus. Aromata ergo in pulverem redigere, est virtutes recogitando terere, et usque ad subtilitatem occulti examinis revocare... quia tunc nimirum bona nostra veraciter in conspectu iudicis placent, cum haec mens subtilius recogitando conterit, et quasi de aromatibus pulverem reddit; ne... odorem de se subtilius non aspergat » (I 553). John of the Cross uses similar expressions. In C 16:8 he says « el alma junta todas estas virtudes... y así juntas las ofrece ella al Amado » and in C 17:5 he describes God's motion in the soul causing the virtues to give of their fragrance: « como cuando menean las especias aromáticas, que al tiempo que se hace aquella moción derraman el abundancia de su olor... ».

Job 1:6-12 literally contains the dialogue between Satan and God over the authenticity of Job's service of God and God's decision to permit Job to suffer external disasters. At issue here spiritually, says Gregory, is a soul who has been enjoying the abundance of spiritual prosperity (as explained above) with its inevitable consequences of spiritual imperfection: *Plerumque enim dum virtutum fructus fecunde reddimus, dum continua prosperitate pollemus, aliquantulum mens erigitur, ut a semetipsa sibi existere bona quae habet, arbitretur* (I 587).

Thus God, « *mira dispensatione pietatis* » (I 588)¹², withdraws his consoling presence, leaving the soul feeling spiritually destitute: « *in bonis de quibus gaudebat concutitur, imbecillitatis suae debilitate cognita, in spe divini adjutorii robustius solidetur* » (Ibid).

The soul is now going to feel spiritual weakness and the absence of consolation:

Sed nonnunquam, dum mens nostra tanti muneris plenitudine atque ubertate fulcitur, si continua in his securitate perfruitur, a quo sibi haec sint obliviscitur; seque a se habere putat, quod nunquam sibi abesse considerat. Unde fit ut aliquando se haec eadem gratia utiliter subtrahat, et praesumentis menti, quantum in se infirmatur, ostendat (I 593).

Each spiritual gift the soul enjoyed « *quasi amittitur* » (Ibid.), the soul is going to feel « *virium defectum intra mentis arcana* » (I 594). Job 1:13-19 which literally describes Job's sudden loss of his material possessions and then of his children is interpreted by Gregory spiritually of the soul's loss of all its spiritual supports. The series of disasters begins in Job 1:13-15 where we find Job's sons and daughters eating and drinking wine at the house of the first-born son; during this peaceful scene the first calamity is announced to Job. Spiritually, this is a picture of the soul in whom the various virtues and gifts are nourishing themselves in Wisdom, the first gift of the Spirit¹³. In the midst of this domestic harmony Job is told

¹² Cf. I 594: « *Mira autem hoc nobiscum dispensatione agitur ut mens nostra culpa nonnunquam pulsatione feriatur* » and I 596: « *pia conditoris dispensatione agitur* ».

¹³ « *In electorum corde prior bonorum sequentium sapientia nascitur, atque haec per donum Spiritus quasi primogenita proles profertur. Quae profecto sapientia, nostra fides est, propheta attestante, qui ait: 'Nisi credideritis non intelligetis' (Isaiah 7:9). Tunc enim vere ad intelligendum sapimus, cum cunctis quae conditor dicit, credulitatis nostrae fidem praebemus. In domo ergo fratris primogeniti convivantur filii, cum virtutes reliquiae epulantur in fide... quia nisi virtutes reliquae sapientiae epulis repletas, ea quae appetunt prudenter agant, virtutes esse nequaquam possunt* » (I 588-589). The last line of this text is cited by St. Thomas in II-II Q. 47, a. 14, 'sed contra'.

that his oxen and asses were stolen and the boys guarding them were killed, that is, spiritually, while the soul is enjoying prosperity the devil comes and corrupts our serious thoughts (oxen) by sinful attractions and he upsets our simplicity (asses) by tempting us with all kinds of subtleties and we thus fall into torpor and negligence in the practice of fraternal charity (I 589). The boys that are killed while guarding Job's livestock signify our circumspection which is overcome by the devil's surprise attack (I 590).

In Job 1:16 the second disaster is announced: lightning struck and killed the sheep and the boys guarding them. Spiritually, this indicates how impure spirit tempt our innocent thoughts with libidinous desires and often overcome our circumspection (I 590)¹⁴. The third disaster is announced in Job 1:17: three bands of brigands broke in on the camels and stole them killing the boys guarding them. The camels signify our administration of temporal affairs in which we are an easy target for the devil since involvement in such duties inevitably upsets our interior equilibrium, thus opening the way for temptation: « Quasi enim tres turmas contra camelos facere, est terrenarum dispensationum studia modo illicito opere, modo superflua locutione, modo inordinata cogitatione vastare; ut dum se ad administranda exterius mens efficaciter extendere nititur, a sui consideratione separetur, et eo damna quae de semetipsa patitur nesciat, quo erga aliena fortiori studio quam decet elaborat » (I 591). And our circumspection collapses in these unexpected emergencies¹⁵.

The fourth and most crushing disaster is announced in Job 1:18-19: « Filiis tuis et filiabus vescentibus et bibentibus vinum in domo fratris sui primogeniti, repente ventus vehemens irruit a regione deserti, et concussit quatuor angulos domus, quae corruens oppressit liberos tuos, et mortui sunt... ». Spiritually the house with the four corners is the soul's interior building raised up on the four cardinal virtues, it collapses under temptation:

In quatuor vero angulis domus ista consistit, quia nimirum solidum mentis nostrae aedificium, prudentia, temperantia, fortitudo, iustitia sustinet. In quatuor angulis domus ista subsistit, quia in quatuor virtutibus tota boni operis structura consurgit... Ventus ergo vehemens quatuor angulos domus concutit; dum fortis tentatio occultis motibus quatuor virtutes quatit; et quasi quassatis

¹⁴ « Quia ergo ab aereis potestatibus contra cogitationeum nostrarum munditiam flamma livoris irruit, de coelo ignis ad oves venit. Saepe enim mundas mentis nostrae cogitationes ardore libidinis accedunt; et quasi igne oves concremant, dum castos motus animi, luxuriae tentatione perturbant » (I 590).

¹⁵ In I 591 Gregory describes realistically the spiritual imbalances to which anyone in public affairs is exposed.

angulis domus eruitur, dum pulsatis virtutibus conscientia turbatur (I 592).

Job's children banqueting together inside are our other virtues mutually nourishing themselves; the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, each fortifying the soul against a specific spiritual danger¹⁶. This peaceful and harmonious spiritual balance is suddenly to be shattered. Gregory, as we noted above, sees in a soul enjoying spiritual security an inclination to spiritual presumption and self-satisfaction. God thus withdraws His supports in order to teach the soul self-knowledge. What the soul experiences is an immersion in and helpless exposure to those very imperfections against which it had felt so secure in the strength and consolation of its spiritual gifts:

Tunc enim vere cognoscimus bona nostra unde sunt, quando haec quasi amittendo, sentimus quia a nobis servari non possunt. Ad hoc itaque intimandae humilitatis magisterium, fit plerumque ut irruente tentationis articulo, tanta stultitia sapientiam nostram feriat, ut turbata mens, qualiter malis imminetibus obviet, vel contra tentationem quomodo se praeparet, ignoret. Sed hac ipsa stultitia cor prudenter eruditur, quia unde ad momentum desipit, eo post verius, quo et humilius, sapit; et sapientia unde quasi amittitur, inde certius possidetur. Aliquando dum sublimia intelligendo in elatione se animus erigit, in rebus imis et vilibus gravi hebetudine pigrescit, ut repente sibi etiam ima clausa videat, qui pernix summa penetrabat. Sed haec ipsa hebetudo intellectum nobis, dum subtrahit, servat, quia dum ad momentum cor humiliat, verius ad sublimia intelligenda confirmat. Aliquando dum cuncta nos agere consilii gravitate gaudemus, pulsante cause emergentis articulo, praecipitatione subita rapimur; et qui nos semper disposite vixisse credidimus, repente intima confusione vastamur. Sed tamen ejusdem confusionis eruditione discimus, ne nostris viribus consilis nostra tribuamus; et tanto maturius ad gravitatem restringimur, quanto ad hanc quasi amissam redimus. Aliquando dum mens fortiter adversa contem-

¹⁶ « Intra hos autem quatuor domus angulos filii convivantur, quia intra arcana mentis, quae principaliter his quatuor virtutibus ad summam rectitudinis culmen erigitur, virtutes caeterae quasi quaedam cordis soboles se invicem pascunt. Donum quippe Spiritus, quod in subjecta mente ante alia prudentiam, temperantiam, fortitudinem, justitiam format, eandem mentem ut contra singula quaeque tentamenta erudiat, in septem mox virtutibus temperat, ut contra stultitiam, sapientiam; contra hebetudinem, intellectum; contra praecipitationem, consilium; contra timorem, fortitudinem; contra ignorantiam, scientiam; contra duritiam, pietatem; contra superbiam det timorem » (I 592-593). This text of Gregory is a source for St. Thomas in the II-II when treating of the vices to which each of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit is opposed (cf. II-II Q. 46, a. 1 where « stultitia » is opposed to « sapientia » and Q. 8, a. 6 ad 1 and Q. 15 where « hebetudo » is opposed to « intellectus »).

nit, subortis adversitatis eventibus, hanc metus vehemens percutit. Sed per hunc concussa discit cui tribuat quod in quibusdam fortiter stetit; et tanto post validius fortitudinem retinet, quanto hanc repente irruente formidine sibi jam quasi elapsam videt. Aliquando dum magna nos scire gaudemus, repentinae ignorantiae caecitate torpescimus. Sed quo ignorantia mentis oculus ad momentum clauditur, eo post ad scientiam verius aperitur, ut nimirum flagello suae caecitatis eruditus, et scire ipsum a quo habeat sciat. Aliquando dum religiose cuncta disponimus, dum pietatis viscera plene nos habere gratulamur, quadam mentis duritia irruente percutimur. Sed quasi obdurati cognoscimus, cui pietatis habitae bona tribuamus; et pietas varius velut exstincta recipitur, dum quasi amissa amplius amatur. Aliquando dum subjectum se divinae formidini animus gaudet, repente superbia tentante rigescit. Sed tamen valde mox timens quia non timet, ad humilitatem se iterum festinus inflectit; et tanto hanc solidius recipit, quanto ejus virtutis pondus quasi amittendo pensavit (I 593-594).

Thus are Job's sons crushed by the falling house, but so are their three sisters: « Cum quibus etiam tres sorores occumbunt, quia in corde nonnunquam per flagella turbatur charitas, per formidinem concutitur spes, per quaestiones pulsatur fides » (I 594). The soul feels it has lost the strength of the theological virtues:

Saepe enim quasi a conditoris amore torpescimus, -dum ultra quam nobis congruere credimus, flagello fatigamur. Saepe dum plus quam necesse est mens formidat, fiduciam sibimet spei debilitat. Saepe dum immensis quaestionibus animus tenditur, perturbata fides quasi defectura fatigatur. Sed tamen vivunt filiae, quae domo concussa moriuntur, quia etsi intra conscientiam, spem, fidem, charitatemque pene occumbere perturbatio ipsa renuntiat, has tamen ante Dei oculos vivas perseverantia rectae intentionis servat. (I 594).

The admirable response of Job 1:21 which literally expresses his unchanged devotion to the will of God and his acceptance of the loss of all his material possessions and his children, is directed by Gregory to the soul suffering the spiritual loss of the strength and consolations it formerly enjoyed:

Cum igitur concessa nobis virtutum signa subtrahuntur, dicamus recte: ' Dominus dedit, Dominus abstulit; sicut Domino placuit, ita factum est; sit nomen Domini benedictum. Tunc enim vere ostendimus quia accepta recte tenuimus, cum profecto aequanimiter ad momentum sublata toleramus (I 600).

In all the spiritual authors who preceded John of the Cross in treating of the passive purification of the soul, described as Night and Darkness, we find the words of Job 1:21 addressed to the soul from whom God has withdrawn spiritual consolations, causing the experience of spiritual desolation. This text of Job is cited by Ruysbroeck and the 'Institutiones' of Tauler, it occurs no less than five times in Harphius. Osuna cites it once while Laredo does not, preferring the parallel text of Job 2:10 cited twice¹⁷. Yet the words of Job 1:21, which appear to have become a 'locus classicus' for the theology of the Night of passive purification, are notable by their absence from the writings of the Doctor of the 'Noche Oscura'.

D. - Gregory's 'spiritual' commentary on Job 1:
a source of John of the Cross?

Unlike Gregory, John of the Cross does not engage in a 'spiritual' interpretation of all the details of the disasters sustained by Job in chapter 1, nor does he actually cite any words from Job 1; the Saint only refers to this chapter summarily, staying fairly well within the limits of the literal sense. For the spiritual testimony of Job on the Dark Night, John of the Cross prefers to take his texts from later chapter of the Book of Job. However, in N II 7:1 he refers to Job's sadness over the loss of his former prosperity saying it indicates the experience of the Dark Night. Citing Job 16:13 ff.: « Yo, aquél que solía ser opulento y rico, de repente estoy deshecho y contrito... » the Saint says these words indicate Job experienced (« experimentó ») the 'noche'. The prosperity Job lost in chapter 1

¹⁷ Ruysbroeck, in the *De ornatu spiritualium nuptiarum*, L. II, c. 30: « Quid homini undique desolato agendum », treating of the suffering of the soul described as « nox » and « tenebrae » cites Job 1:21. Cf. *D. Ioannis Rusbrochii, summi atque sanctiss. viri, quem insignis quidem theologus alterum Dionysium Areopagitam appellat, Opera Omnia... reddita Latine per F. Laurentium Surium... Coloniae, Ex officina Haeredum Joannis Quentel, MDLII*, p. 335. The *Institutiones* of Tauler (*ed. cit.*) in c. 11 cite Job 1:21 when treating of the passive purification of the soul and the parallel text of Job 2:10 is cited in Tauler's Sermon for the Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost (*ed. cit.*, p. 435). The five citations of Job 1:21 in the *Theologia Mystica* of Harphius (*ed. cit.*) are found in the *Directorium*, c. 1, c. 47, c. 49; the *Eden*, c. 13 (in reference to the « desolatio » of the soul under the « nubes illa tenebrosa ») and c. 26 (with the images of « tenebrae » and « nox » from Psalm 138: 11-12). Harphius also sees a figure of the soul suffering the Night of desolation in Job 2; cf. *Directorium*, c. 49 and *Eden*, c. 13. Job 1:21 is cited by Osuna in the *Tercer Abecedario* (*ed. cit.*), T. II, c. 3. Laredo's two citations of Job 2:10 are in the *Subida del Monte Sión* III (*ed. cit.*), c. 29 (p. 186) where the words of the « prophet » Job are addressed to contemplative souls and c. 40 (p. 232) where « darkness » describes the soul's suffering.

appears, therefore, to be understood in a 'spiritual' sense here. As we noted above, John of the Cross does relate Job 1 to his theology of the 'noche oscura'. On three different occasions (N I 12:3; N II 23:6; LI II:28) he points out the parallel between Job's experience of disasters in chapter 1 and the soul's entry into the 'noche' and he relates Job 1 to sufferings that are « espirituales » (LI II: 28; cf. Ibid. n. 30: « espirituales y corporales ») and he says that God later multiplied for Job « los bienes en lo espiritual y temporal » (LI II:28).

Read literally, Job 1, of itself, does not suggest a theology of the Dark Night since Job has not yet experienced any spiritual losses. How, then, are we to read Job 1 if we would see its connection with the Dark Night of the soul? John of the Cross tells us that his doctrinal source for the theology of the 'noche oscura' is in Scripture, « particularmente en los salmos y en los profetas » (N I 8:5) and in N II the Job who is so frequently brought forth as an example of the soul in the 'noche' is constantly given the title « el profeta Job ». The 'prophetic' character of Job permits John of the Cross to see in his words a spiritual significance that transcends the literal meaning of the text as it applies to the person of Job alone. It is in his role of prophet that Job 'prefigures' the experience of the soul (cf. C 9:7: « el profeta Job... hablando con la misma ansia y deseo que aqui está el alma... »). Again, it is in his role as prophet that Job is said to have experienced the Dark Night (N II 5:6 and 7:1). To see in the words of Job a prophetic statement of our own spiritual life is, as John of the Cross himself says, to read them not literally but spiritually: « el profeta Job... hablando espiritualmente y a nuestro propósito » (N II 11:6).

The 'prophetic' meaning of the Book of Job, through which the words and experience of Job are lifted out of the confines of their literal setting and are realized « quotidie » in our spiritual life is, in the vocabulary of Gregory, grasped when we read Job « moraliter », that is, spiritually; and read in the *Moralia* Job 1 does present doctrinal affinities with the theology of the 'noche oscura'. Gregory provides us with the image of Night interpreted theologically of a passive purification of the soul in which the soul feels spiritual destitution in order to be purified of the vices characteristic of beginners in the spiritual life. Of the soul suffering in the Night, John of the Cross says: « Siente en sí un profundo vacío y pobreza de tres maneras de bienes... que son temporal, natural y espiritual » (N II 6:4). This is graphically illustrated by Gregory on Job's loss of all his goods, he says that it is necessary that the soul « virium defectum intra mentis arcana sentiret » (I 594), each of the soul's spiritual possessions « quasi amittitur » (I 593). John of the Cross says that

from the loss of its spiritual strength the soul suffers «viéndose puesta en los males contrarios, conviene a saber; miserias de imperfecciones...» (N II 6:4) and Gregory describes how the loss of the spiritual strength of the virtues plunges the soul into an experience of the evils and imperfections directly contrary to each of the spiritual gifts it formerly enjoyed (I 593).

In N II 7:7 the suffering souls are compared to those in purgatory where «aunque habitualmente tienen las tres virtudes teológicas, que son fe, esperanza y caridad» the actuality of their suffering «no les deja gozar del bien actual y consuelo de estas virtudes» and in N II 21:5 he says the soul «sufrió con constancia y perseveró» without the consolation of faith, hope and charity. Gregory also describes the souls sudden loss of the strength and consolation of the three theological virtues, the soul's faith is disturbed by doubts, its hope suffers from excessive fears and its charity is affected by a loss of sensible consolation but the soul pleases God by its *perseverantia* (I 594).

John of the Cross says the purpose of the 'Noche' is to teach the soul *conocimiento propio* and *humildad* (N I 12:2 and 7; LI I:19-20); Gregory says God permits the soul to suffer these spiritual losses «ad utilitatem *propriae cognitionis*» (I 594) and «Ad hoc itaque intimandae *humilitatis* magisterium» (I 593).

The Saint refers Job 1 to the role of the devil and «tentación» in the 'Noche' (N II 23:6) and in N I 14:2-3 he speaks of temptations from the «espíritu de fornicación tempting souls to impurity, the «espíritu de blasfemia» and the «*Spiritus vertiginis*» which «les oscurece el sentido, que los llena de mil escrúpulos y perplejidades tan intrincadas al juicio de ellos, que nunca pueden satisfacerse con nada ni arrimar el juicio a consejo ni concepto». The role of the devil and temptation is highly visible in Gregory's spiritual commentary on Job 1: «Ab immundis spiritibus fortis tentatio subripit, et a tranquillitatis suae statu conscientiam evertit» (I 592). We are tempted to impurity: «Immundi spiritus... luxuriae tentatione perturbant» (I 590); under temptation the soul appears to have lost the fear of God and even faith (I 593-594); «irruente tentationis articulo» we are stricken with «*stultitia*» and whereas we thought we could deal with problems «*consilii gravitate*», now «*intima confusione vastamur... repentinae ignorantiae caecitate torpescimus*» (I 593).

To the metaphor of the 'Noche' given in the first verse of the first stanza of the 'Noche Oscura', John of the Cross associates that of a house or household, expressed in the last verse of both the first and second stanza: «estando ya mi casa sosegada». The «*casa*» is the soul in its spiritual and sensible constitution (cf. N II

24:1), the Saint speaks of « la gente doméstica de su casa » (N II 14:2; cf. Ibid. n. 1: « todos los domésticos de su casa ») to signify the potencies, passions and appetites of the soul. The spiritual use of the metaphor of the house or household is highly visible in Gregory's theology of the 'Night' of the passive purification which he sees contained in Job 1. John of the Cross, however, elaborates the metaphor in a way not found in Gregory. For the Saint, the soul « sale de su casa de noche a oscuras, sosegados ya los de la casa, porque ninguno se lo estorbe » (N II 14:1) and his references are to the Canticle of Canticles 3:1-4 and 8:1 (see also N II 24: 3-4 and C 1:21). Whereas John of the Cross speaks of the soul escaping from the tyranny of its sensual household in the Night of suffering, Gregory's use of the metaphor comes from Job 1:13, 18 and 19 where the 'house' is one's spiritual edifice that comes crashing down on us in the 'Night' of suffering.

These differences should not, however, rule out the possibility of a connection between Gregory's use of the metaphor and that of John of the Cross since we have seen that the Saint can treat texts of Gregory with creativity, turning metaphors into another direction. Yet, in spite of the differences there are some similarities. In addition to the presence of both the images of 'Night' and 'house' in his theology of the passive purification of the soul, Gregory also gives a spiritual interpretation of a 'household' suggestive of John of the Cross' description of a « casa sosegada » wherein « los domésticos » that is, our interior movements are to be quieted (« sosegados », N. II 14:1), « poniéndolos... en *silencio* » (N II 24:3) and making them stop their rebellious disturbances. There is a picture of a disordered spiritual household in C 18:1: « Aun los domésticos de su casa no le estando bien sujetos, sino que a cada ocasión sus siervos y esclavos, sin algún respeto, se enderezan contra él... ». Commenting the words of Job 1:3 « ac familia multa nimis » Gregory says:

Et bene cogitationum turba multae familiae appellatione signatur. Nam scimus quod absente domina, ancillarum linguae perstrepunt, *silentium* deserunt, deputati operis officia negligunt, totumque sibimet ordinem vivendi confundunt. At si repente domina veniat, mox perstrepentes linguae reticent, officia uniuscujusque operis repetunt; sicque ad opus proprium, ac si non recesserint, revertuntur. Si igitur a *domo mentis* ad momentum ratio discedat, quasi absente domina, cogitationum se clamor, velut garrula ancillarum turba multiplicat. Ut autem ratio ad mentem redierit, mox se confusio tumultuosa comescit; et quasi ancillae se ad injunctum opus tacite reprimunt, dum cogitationes protinus causis se propriis ad utilitatem subdunt (I 546).

This certainly suggests the idea of a « casa sosegada » in which the « domésticos » have been silenced. For John of the Cross this quieting of our interior household comes only through the passive purification of the Dark Night in which God withdraws all the supports of the soul, but the Saint has in mind the loss of goods that « temporal, natural y espiritual » (N II 6:4) and in N II 16:7 he tells the soul that in the Night God is « quitándote de las manos la hacienda »¹⁸. Could this be a 'reminiscence' of Gregory's spiritual interpretation of Job's loss of his household and property?

II. - GREGORY'S COMMENTARY ON CHAPTER THREE OF JOB

John of the Cross twice cites chapter three of Job, the same verse 24 appears in C 12:9 and N II 9:7 (though here only the second part of the verse is cited).

A. - *The literal meaning of Job 3 and the 'spiritual' meaning given by John of the Cross to Job 3:24 in C 12:9*

In chapter three, Job, having lost all his possessions and children and afflicted with an ulcerous condition covering his entire body, speaks alone of his misery. Because of the cursing, laments and despair expressed by Job in ch. 3, this opening monologue serves as an introduction to the dialogues that are to follow and is out of harmony with the peaceful acceptance of the will of God exhibited by Job¹⁹ in ch. 1 and 2.

There are three sections to this opening monologue. In vv. 2-10 Job begins by cursing the day he was born and the night he was conceived. He laments his ever coming into existence, wishing total

¹⁸ We take this reading of N II 16:7 from the manuscript of Seville = Ms. H(ispalense) cf. Lucinio, *Vida y Obras Completas de San Juan de la Cruz*, pp. 672 and 618. John of the Cross, in N II 9:9, says that in the « purgativa noche » the soul « se vea y sienta ajena y privada de » the « bienes de dones y virtudes ». Compare this with Gregory's doctrine that the soul « in nocte » suffers the loss of God's *donum* (I 519), the « bona » the soul loses are the « fructus virtutum » (I 587-588; cf. I 593: « bona nostra... amittendo »).

¹⁹ On the significance of chapter three in the structure of the Book of Job, see Lévêque, *Job et son Dieu*, I, pp. 343-344. Thematically, chapter three is related to the dialogues that follow rather than the Prologue of ch. 1 and 2. With Job's admirable religious response to suffering in ch. 1 and 2, the theological question was closed; a new ferment, given in ch. 3 where Job begins to question God's wisdom, was needed to initiate the dialogues.

annihilation for anything connected with his birth or conception figured in the images of Day and Night. The development of this wish involves the imagery of Day turning into darkness (vv. 4-5) and Night becoming increasingly darker (vv. 6-9)²⁰. In the second section (vv. 11-19) Job laments that he did not die at birth (vv. 11-12) or was aborted before time (v. 16), death would then have been a welcome release and he would now be at rest (vv. 13-15, 17-19). The third section (vv. 20-26) raises the question of why life, this 'light', is given to one in misery and who longs for the death that never comes.

The impression this chapter three leaves is one of absolute loathing for life and the meaninglessness which misery confers on it. Verse 24: « Antequam comedam, suspiro », in which Job describes his agony, literally can mean that Job's situation is so calamitous that he finds the sight of food revolting or that his sighs serve as his nourishment. Luis de León translates v. 24: « Porque antes de mi pan mi suspiro viene » explaining: « mi suspiro viene antes que mi descanso », that is, the little respite Job takes is paid for with torment, or it may mean: « el pan que me sustenta es suspiros ». Maestro Luis also interprets this verse of the symptoms of Job's physical disease which caused:

Hambre insaciable por una parte, y por otra no poder sufrir la comida. Que es enfermedad a quien Galeno y Tralliano y Paulo Egineta llaman *bóminos*, que nace de calor destemplado del estómago y de flaqueza del mismo. Y así el calor despierta continua hambre, y la flaqueza cría congoja en comiendo²¹.

²⁰ On the exegesis of these verses see Lévêque, op. cit., I, pp. 333-337. Job here is wishing that his existence be annihilated and return to the primeval darkness of chaos; v. 4: « dies ille vertatur in tenebras » is the exact opposite of Genesis 1:5 « fiat lux ».

²¹ *Exposición del Libro de Job*, ed. cit., on Job 3:24. Corderus (1592-1650) in his commentary on Job (1646), published by Migne, *Scripturae Sacrae Cursus Completus*, T. XIII, (Paris 1839) says on Job 3:24 that the Septuagint reads: « Ante escas quippe meus gemitus adest, et fleo ego coarctatus timore » and the Hebrew: « Nam ad facies panis mei suspirium meum veniet mihi ». The Hebrew « ad facies panis mei » implies more than the Vulgate's « antequam comedam » and means: « statim atque cibi ante oculos meos ad miseriam hanc vitam meam utcumque sustentandam apponuntur, ultro mihi erumpant suspiria ... a cibo prorsus abhorrens ». Corderus then says the Hebrew « ad facies » can also mean likeness or equality in time and then the verse would mean: « Quantum vel quoties comedo, tantum vel toties suspiro et lacrymas fundo » (Ibid. c. 501-502). Knabenbauer, *Commentarius in Librum Job*, p. 67, follows Corderus but notes that some translate: « panis cibique loco mihi sunt suspiria ». Marvin Pope, *Job*, The Anchor Bible, pp. 27 and 33, notes that the Hebrew literally says « to the face of » or « before » but can mean « instead of » and translates: « Instead of my food come sighs ». Cf. Bible de Jerusalem: « Pour nourriture, j'ai mes soupirs ». Lévêque *Job et son Dieu*, I, pp. 341-342,

In the *Cántico Espiritual* 12:9 John of the Cross says that the 'spiritual' meaning of Job 3:24 is the soul's desire to see clearly the God who has shown himself hidden in faith:

Porque no se puede creer cuán vehemente sea la codicia y pena que el alma siente cuando ve que se va llegando cerca de gustar aquel bien y no se le dan; porque cuanto más al ojo y a la puerta se ve lo que se desea y se niega, tanto más pena y tormento causa. De donde a este propósito espiritual dice Job (3:24): 'Antes que coma, suspiro; y como las avenidas de las aguas es el rugido y bramido de mi alma', es a saber, por la codicia de la comida, entendiendo allí a Dios por la comida; porque, conforme a la codicia del manjar y conocimiento dél, es la pena por él.

This is certainly not consistent with a literal reading of Job 3, Job is hardly ill at ease because he has tasted the joys of contemplation.

B. - *The 'spiritual' use of Job 3:24 in the 'Cántico Espiritual' and Gregory's commentary on Job 3*

The « propósito espiritual » to which John of the Cross relates Job 3:24, that is, the soul suffering because it has tasted and seen God whom it can't fully possess yet vehemently desires to grasp, is actually an expression of the main doctrinal themes of the 'Cántico Espiritual' 1-13:1. The theme of C 12, in which the citation occurs, is exactly this vehement desire of the soul (n. 1) which has as its cause the soul's elevation in contemplation (ibid.); since this contemplation is still imperfect, it makes the soul desire « la clara visión de Dios » (n. 4 and 5). The two preceding stanzas, C 10 and 11 develop the same theme; the soul, having felt the hidden presence of God and wounded by love, desires to see the « divina esencia » (C 11:2) and since this is impossible in this life, the soul desires to die in order to see God (Ibid. n. 6 and 7). We find the same themes dominating C 6-9. From the soul's imperfect contemplation comes the desire to see God « esencialmente » (C 6:5). The soul's desire to die in order to see God face to face, joined with the mystical wounding by love, is developed in C 7-9. Already in the first stanza, John of the

translates: « C'est qu'en guise de pain vient mon gémissement » and relates this to the theme of the « bread of tears » in the Psalms (it is interesting that Gregory, in his commentary on Job 3:24 cites Psalm 14:4 « Fuerunt mihi lacrymae meae panes » I 686).

Cross is speaking of the soul who desires to see God « por clara y esencial visión » (C 1:2), the soul has been wounded by love (ibid. and n. 16-22) and to this is added the theme of seeking God in hiddenness, since God has hidden Himself (ibid. n. 2-12).

Since the spiritual meaning attributed to Job 3:24 in C 12:9 is in direct doctrinal continuity with these dominant themes of C 1-13:1, John or the Cross apparently finds chapter three of Job favorable to the theological 'atmosphere' of this section of the *Cántico Espiritual*. To understand why such spiritual significance should be given to a scriptural text that is, literally, so distant theologically, we shall first see whether a reading of Job 3 in the *Moralía* permits us to breathe an 'atmosphere' congenial to the theology of the *Cántico Espiritual* 1-13:1; then we shall examine Gregory's interpretation of verse 24. Therefore, we are going to see: — the doctrinal themes of the C. 1-13, 1 developed by Gregory in his commentary Job. 3; — the « spiritual » meaning of job 3, 24.

1. *Doctrinal themes of the Cántico Espiritual 1-13:1*

In regard to the doctrinal themes of the CE 1-13:1 developed by Gregory in his commentary on Job 3 we will point out: the search for God in hiddenness; the search for God in C. 3; the same in C. 11; the joys of contemplation.

a) *The theme of C. 1: the search for God in hiddenness*

C 1, begins: 'Adonde te escondiste, Amado, y me dejaste con gemido?'; the soul complains that after having tasted God's presence: 'todavía haya de padecer la ausencia de su Amado' (n. 2) since God is 'escondido'... conviene al alma... tenerle por escondido y buscarle escondido' (n. 3).

John of the Cross passes to the necessity of the soul to hide itself, 'quedando escondida con El' (n. 9) and compares this to the search for hidden treasure; God is like a '*tesoro escondido*' (n. 9-10), to find it one must enter into its hiding place and thus be as hidden as the treasure itself.

Seek God « dentro de ti » (n. 8); since God is 'escondido' the soul must hide itself: 'porque el que ha de hallar una cosa escondida, tan a lo escondido y hasta lo escondido donde ella está ha de entrar, y cuando la halla él también está escondido como ella. Como quiera, pues, que tu Esposo amado es 'el tesoro escondido en el

campo' de tu alma (Matth. 13:44)... convendrá que para que tú le halles, olvidadas todas las tuyas y alejándote de todas las criaturas... (n. 9).

The soul must remain 'escondida' with God: 'mira que a ese escondrijo te llama El por Isaías (26:20) diciendo: 'Anda, *entra en tus retretes, cierra tus puertas sobre ti*', esto es, todas tus potencias a todas las criaturas, 'escóndete un poco hasta un momento'... (n. 10) n. 9: convendrá que... 'te escondas en tu *retrete interior del espíritu...*' (Matth. 6:6).

Abscondit se sponsus cum quaeritur, ut non inventus ardentius quaeratur; et differtur quaerens sponsa, ne inveniatur, ut tarditate sua capacior reddita, multiplicius quandoque inveniatur quod quaerebat.

Unde beatus Job cum diceret: 'Expectant mortem, et non venit', ut hoc ipsum quaerentium desiderium subtilius expleret, illico adjungit: 'Quasi effodientes thesaurum'. Omnes namque qui fodiendo thesaurum quaerunt, cum fodere altius coeperint, ad laborem instantium inardescunt; quia quo se *thesauro abscondito* jam jamque appropinquare aestimant, eo in effossione enixius laborant... (I 683 on Job 3:21).

Quia enim perfecte mori mundo non possumus, nisi intra mentis nostrae invisibilia a visibilibus abscondamur, recte ii qui mortificationem suam appetunt, thesaurum effodientibus comparantur. Mundo enim per invisibilem sapientiam morimur...

Sapientia quippe in rerum superficie non jacet; quia in invisibilibus latet, et tunc mortificationem nostram sapientiam contingentes apprehendimus, si relictis visibilibus in invisibilibus abscondamur; et sic hanc, cor effodientes, quaerimus, ut omne quod terrenum mens cogitat, a semetipso, manu sanctae discretionis ejiciat... (I 684).

Job 3:10: 'Quia non conclusit ostia ventris... '... Ostia quippe ventris sunt desideria concupiscentiae, de quibus per prophetam dicitur: '*Intra in cubicula tua, claude ostia tua*' (Isaiah 26:20). Cubicula quippe ingredimur, cum *secreta nostrae mentis intramus*. Ostia autem claudimus, cum desideria illicita coercemus (I 660).

In these texts, John of the Cross is speaking of « interior recogimiento » (n. 8 and 6); in the *Tercer Abecedario*, 21, ch. 4, Osuna sees the doctrine of 'recogimiento' in the words of Job 3:13-14, citing Gregory's commentary as the source²².

²² On Job 3:14 « qui aedificant sibi solitudines », Gregory first speaks of souls who are filled with the noisy crowds of distractions: « quasi tanta frequentia turbarum premitur, quanta curarum importunitate laceratur » (I 668), then he continues: « At contra sancti viri, quia nihil hujus mundi appetunt, nullius procul dubio in corde tumultibus premuntur; omnes quippe inordinatos desideriorum motus a cubili cordis, manu sanctae considerationis ejiciunt, et quia transitoria cuncta despiciunt, ex his nascentes cogitationum insolentias non

The commentary on the verse 'Adónde te escondiste?' ends in n. 12 where 'darkness' is joined to 'hiddenness' as a condition for seeking God:

I 685-686

God is 'inaccesible y escondido', therefore, 'aunque más te parezca que le hallas y le sientes y le entiendes, siempre le has de tener por escondido y le has de servir escondido en escondido'... Souls 'cuanto menos distintamente le entienden, más se llegan a él, pues, como dice el profeta David (Ps. 17:12): '*puso su escondrijo en las tinieblas*'; así, llegando cerca de El, por fuerza has de sentir tinieblas en la flaqueza de tu ojo. Bien haces, pues, en todo tiempo, ahora de *adversidad*, ahora de *prosperidad* espiritual o temporal tener a Dios por escondido, y así clamar a El diciendo: 'Adónde te escondiste' (n. 12).

Gregory joins the themes of 'hiddenness' and 'darkness' commenting Job 3:23: 'Viro cujus abscondita est via, et circumdedit eum Deus tenebris' Gregory says our way in the spiritual life is 'abscondita' because 'nonnunquam ea ipsa quae recte nos agere credimus, an in districti iudicis examine recta sint, ignoramus... Unde sancti viri cum mala superant, sua etiam bene gesta formidant... tota quidem mente interna desiderant, sed tamen de incertitudine operum trepidi, quo gradiuntur ignorant... Tenebris namque homo circumdatur, quia quamvis coelesti desiderio ferveat, quid de semetipso sit dispositum intrinsecus, ignorat... His se tenebris Propheta circumdatum vidit, cum dispositionis intimae penetrare interna non potuit, dicens: '*Posuit tenebras latibulum suum*' (Ps. 17:12). Auctor enim noster, quia nobis in hoc exilium dejectis, lucem suae visionis abstulit, sese nostris oculis quasi in tenebrarum latibulo abscondit.

patiuntur... Solitudines quippe aedificare, est a *secreto cordis* terrenorum desideriorum tumultus expellere, et una intentione aeternae patriae in amorem intimae quietis anhelare. An non cunctos a se cogitationum tumultus expulerat, qui dicebat: 'Unam petii a Domino, hanc requiram, ut inhabitem in domo Domini' (Psalm. 26:4)? A frequentia quippe terrenorum desideriorum fugerat, ad magnam videlicet solitudinem semetipsum, ubi eo tutius nihil extraneum conspiceret, quo incompetens nihil amaret. A tumultu rerum temporalium magnum quendam *secessum* petierat quietam mentem, in qua tanto purius Deum cerneret, quanto hunc cum se solo solum inveniret... Manet vero in solitudine, quia perseverat in remota mentis intentione... a tumultu desideriorum temporalium trepidus *mentis secessum* peto... » (I. 668-670). Compare this with the theme of C 1:6 «entrarse en sumo recogimiento dentro de si misma, siéndole todas las cosas como si no fuesen».

I 679-680 (on Job 3:20)

Cum valde occulta sint divina iudicia... [and] inter divina iudicia gravi incertitudinis suae caligine humana mens premitur, sancti viri... ita *prosperitatem* saeculi despicientes calcant, sicut et *adversitatem* ejus calcantes tolerant...

John of the Cross in n. 12 says that since God is always to be sought as 'hidden', those persons are in error who « cuando no le entienden o le gustan o sienten, [piensan... que] está Dios más lejos y más escondido, siendo más verdad lo contrario... » This theme was already developed, and more directly in n. 3 and 4 where the words of « el profeta Job » (9:11) illustrate that sensible « sentimiento » is not a proof of God's presence nor is the lack of it a sign of God's absence²³, Gregory's commentary on Job 3:25 has affinities with this theme:

nn. 3 and 4

Ni [la] presencia sensible es cierto testimonio de su graciosa presencia, ni la sequedad y carencia de todo eso en el alma lo es de su ausencia en ella... [cf. n. 12: no repares en parte ni en todo lo que tus potencias pueden *comprender*]... si el alma sintiere gran comunicación o sentimiento o noticia espiritual, no por eso se ha de persuadir a que

I 687 (on Job 3:25)

Cumque se mercedem non augere considerant... *deseri formidant*... [and they fear] ne malum quod tolerant, non pia percussio disciplinae sit, sed animadversio justa vindictae. Potestas quippe divinae irae nostra *non potest mente comprehendere*, quia ejus dispensatio obscuris super nos dispositionibus, *saepe unde aestimatur deserere, inde nos re-*

²³ On the theme of God « inaccesible y escondido » in C 1, P. Eulogio writes: « Estamos ante uno de los puntos claves de dependencia del Pseudo Areopagita. Ignoramos si fray Juan de la Cruz oculta intencionalmente su fuente o la reproduce inconscientemente una vez que la ha asimilado... La dependencia directa o indirecta de la *Mystica Theologia* del Pseudo Dionisio Areopagita... es manifiesta » *San Juan de la Cruz y sus Escritos* (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1969), pp. 364-365 and note 133; cf. *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* III, 403. We think the *Moralia* is a more important source; in C 1: 3 the principal source of the doctrine of not trusting sensible feelings is Job 9:11 which is given a long commentary in the following paragraph and the interpretation is Gregorian (cf. Gregory's commentary on Job 9:11 in I 870 where he speaks of the incomprehensibility of God's presence).

aquello que siente... sea tener más a Dios o estar más en Dios, aunque más ello sea; y que, si todas esas comunicaciones sensibles y espirituales faltaren quedando ella en sequedad, tiniebla y *desamparo*, no ha de pensar que le falta Dios más así que así, pues que realmente *ni por lo uno puede saber de cierto estar en su gracia, ni por lo otro* estar fuera della...

cipit; et unde nos recipere creditur, inde derelinquit; ut plerumque hoc fiat gratia, quod ira dicitur, et hoc aliquando ira sit, quod gratia putatur...

Quia ergo potestas divinae irae minime cognoscitur, in cunctis necesse est ut sine cessatione timeatur.

b) *The theme of the search for God in C 3*

C 3, which begins with the verses « Buscando mis amores iré por esos montes y riberas », speaks of souls who refuse to work, thinking they will find God by simply praying and waiting for consolation (n. 1 and 2). Thus the soul that desires to find God must use every « diligencia », « ejercitándose en las virtudes, y ejercicios espirituales de la vida activa y contemplativa » (n. 1). The Saint cites Cant. of Canticles 3:1-4: « *En mi lecho de noche busqué al que ama mi alma; busquéle y no le hallé...* » (n. 2) and infers from this the necessity for the soul to seek God not « en su gusto y descanso », that is « de noche », but « *por la obra* » (n. 1), practicing « *mortificaciones* » (n. 4) and exercising itself in « la vida activa, junto con la contemplativa... porque para buscar a lo cierto a Dios y adquirir las virtudes, la una y la otra son menester » (ibid.)²⁴. These themes of

²⁴ Cf. I 760-763 where Gregory speaks of the necessity of joining the « *vita activa* » with the « *vita contemplativa* ». In C 3, speaking of the soul's « *deseo... verdadero* » to seek God actively by its « *diligencia* » (n. 1), John of the Cross likens the exercises of « *la vida contemplativa* » to « *los montes, que son altos* » (n. 4) and the active life to « *las riberas, que son bajas* » (ibid.); on these 'low' levels the soul must practice the « *ejercicios* » (« *poniendo por obra* ») of the « *vida activa* » (Ibid.). On this field of action, the soul encounters « *las fieras* » which are temptations to fear losing « *el favor del mundo* » and its pleasures (n. 7). Gregory, I 760-763, says: « *Quisquis ergo semetipsum Deo jam sacrificium obtulit, si perfecta desiderat, curet necesse est, ut non solum ad operationis se latitudinem, verum etiam ad culmina contemplationis extendat* »; citing Exodus 19:12, 13, 18, Gregory says the *Mons* which Moses ascended is contemplation, souls ascend « *ad aciem contemplationis* » but before rising they must exercise on the plains: « *Prius se in campo operis per exercitium probent* » (cf. I 760: « *per activae vitae opera* »). The *bestiae* below the mountain are the soul's irrational desires which must be mortified (cf. also I 757 where the *bestiae* are describe as « *in campo operis saevientes* ») but Gregory also says the soul must free itself « *ab appetitu gloriae temporalis* ». We have already noted (*supra*, note 23) affinities between this text of Gregory and S I 5:6.

C 3, including the vocabulary and imagery, suggest Gregory's commentary on Job 5:26²⁴ but Gregory, commenting Job 3:21, says that souls who desire the peace of contemplation have to learn to please God in activity, their desires for perfect contemplation are postponed in order to grow. Citing Cant. of Canticles 3:1 Gregory says that though the soul seeks God, He hides Himself in order that the soul seek Him « ardentius » (I 683). The search for God is expressed in terms of work (*labor, opus*) and dying to the world (*mortificatio*):

Mira enim divinitatis pietate agitur, cum is qui perfecto corde ad contemplationem tendit, humanis ministeriis occupatur... eorum desiderium differtur ut proficiat, et tarditatis suae sinu nutritur, ut crescat. Unde bene sponsa in sponsi sui desiderio anhelans clamat: ' *In lectulo meo per noctes quaesivi quem diligit anima mea; quaesivi illum et non inveni* ' (Cant. 3:1) (I 683).

Gregory then says that seeking God is like looking for hidden treasure, souls become « ardentiores *in opere* » (ibid) as they come near to what they are looking for: « Laborando ergo non deficient, sed magis ad usum *laboris* crescunt; quia quo jam praemia propinquiora considerant, eo *in opere* delectabilius exsulant » (ibid.). This work is understood as *mortificatio* (I 683-684).

c) *The themes of C 11*

John of the Cross introduces C 11 saying that God responds to the soul who has sought Him by leaving itself and all things: « El Sabio dice dél que ' *si le buscaré el alma como al dinero, le hallará* » (Prov. 2:4), y así esta alma enamorada que con más codicia que al dinero le busca... » (n. 1). Gregory, treating of the search for God in hidddiness and mortification, says, commenting Job 3:20: Mundo enim per invisibilem sapientiam morimur de qua per Salomonem dicitur: ' *Si quaesieris illam quasi pecuniam, et sicut thesauros effoderis eam* ' (Prov. 2:4, 5) (I 683).

In C 11, the soul, feeling the wound of love, asks that God show it His « divina esencia » (n. 2) causing it to die to this life. John of the Cross places this desire for the perfect vision of God in the context of a « cierta presencia afectiva » (n. 4) which God communicates to souls and by which He « *las recrea, deleita y alegra* » (n. 3). Gregory, commenting Job 3:17, also treats of this foretaste of perfect contemplation saying that Job « *contempletur quod conversi quique quietatem, quam percipere in aeternitate desiderant, hic jam per tranquillitatem mentis degustant... Illic requies lucis remunerat, quos hic interius recreans provectus fatigat* » (I 673-674). John of the

Cross uses the word « desfallecer » to describe the effect produced in the soul by this presence of God:

I 673-674 (on Job 3:17)

n. 10 [souls that are] '*fortalecidos en amor*'.

n. 4: [the communications of God] hacen tal efecto en el alma, que la hace codiciar y desfallecer en deseo de aquello que siente encubierto allí en aquella presencia; que es conforme a aquello que sentía David cuando dijo: '*Codicia y desfallece mi alma en las entradas del Señor*' (Ps. 83:3). Porque a este tiempo desfallece el alma con deseo de engolfarse en aquel sumo bien... y por eso con más fuerza es atraída el alma y arrebatada de este bien que ninguna cosa natural de su centro.

n. 10: el alma que ama a Dios más vive en la otra vida que en ésta, porque más vive el alma adonde ama que donde anima, y así tiene en poco esta vida *temporal*.

Qui vero in auctoris sui *amore roborantur*, quo magis in concupita Dei fortitudine conualescunt, eo a propria virtute deficiunt; et quo robustius aeterna appetunt, eo a temporalibus salubri defec-tione lassantur. Hinc Psalmista amoris sui robore fessus dicebat...

'*Concupivit, et defecit anima mea in atria Domini*' (Ps. 83:3). Qui nimirum cum diceret, '*Concupivit*', recte subdidit, '*Et defecit*': quia valde minor est divinitatis concupiscentia quam non mox etiam proprius sequitur defectus. Qui enim ad appetenda aeternitatis atria accenditur, dignum profecto est ut ab hoc *temporalitatis* amore lassetur, ut tanto frigescat ab studio saeculi, quanto surgit ardentior in amorem Dei... eo funditus *temporalibus* moritur, quo ad supernam vitam altius afflatus aeternitatis animatur. An non robore suo fessam se invenerat, quae dicebat: '*Anima mea liquefacta est, ut locutus est*' (Cant. 5:6)? Quia nimirum mens dum occultae locutionis aspiratione tangitur, a statu suae fortitudinis infirmata, ipso quo absorbetur desiderio liquatur et inde se apud semetipsam fessam invenit, unde ultra se esse conspicit fortitudinem, quam conscendit... Deus enim, qui sine situ omnia continet, nobis ad se venientibus locus non localis manet. Quem locum dum pertingimus, etiam in hac vita mentis nostrae tranquillitas, quanta fuerit perturbatio videmus...

John of the Cross follows the above theme with that of the soul's desire to die to this life (nn. 6-10). This is treated by Gregory commenting the very next verse, Job 3:18:

nn. 8-9

[death is desirable because] no puede estar esta vida *corruptible* del hombre con la otra vida... viendo [St. Paul] que no se puede vivir en gloria y en carne mortal juntamente... dice a los Filipines que '*desea ser desatado y verse con Cristo*' (Phil. 1:23).

I 674-675 (on Job 3:18)

Justos enim quamvis nullus desideriorum carnalium tumultus possideat, duris tamen vinculis eos in hac vita positos suae molestia *corruptionis* ligat... [Gregory then cites St. Paul who desired] *dissolvi et esse cum Christo*' (Phil. 1:23).

There are also affinities between C 11 and Gregory's commentary on Job 3:9:

n. 4. Le comunica Dios ciertos visos entreoscuros de su divina hermosura, y hacen tal efecto en el alma que... desfallece el alma con *deseo de engolfarse* en aquel sumo bien... es atraída el alma y *arrebata*... n. 8. Es de saber que aquí el alma *habla condicionalmente* cuando dice que la mate su vista... supuesto que no puede verla sin morir, que, *si sin eso pudiera ser, no pidiera que la matara*... pero supuesto que no puede estar esta vida... con la otra... dice: '*máteme*', etc.

n. 9: Esta doctrina da a entender san Pablo a los de Corinto, diciendo: '*No queremos ser despojados, mas queremos ser sobrevestidos, porque lo que es mortal sea absorto de la vida*' (II Cor. 5:4). Pero, viendo él que no se puede vivir en gloria y en carne mortal juntamente...

I 659 (on Job 3:9)

intus usque ad fixae visionis certitudinem pressi noctis caligine non ascendant. Saepe autem ita mens accenditur, ut quamvis in carne sit posita, in Deum tamen omni subjugata carnali cogitatione *rapiatur*; nec tamen Deum sicut est conspicit... Saepe ita ut est, *absorberi desiderat*, ut aeternam vitam, *si possit fieri, sine interventu corporeae mortis* attingat. Unde Paulus, cum ardentem internam lucem quaereret, sed tamen utcumque exterioris mortis damna formidaret, ait: '*Quandiu sumus in hoc habitaculo ingemiscimus gravati, eo quod nolumus exspoliari, sed supervestiri, ut absorbeatur quod mortale est a vita*' (II Cor. 5:4). Sancti igitur viri videre verum mane appetunt, et, *si concedatur, etiam cum corpore* illud attingere lucis intimae secretum volunt. Sed quantolibet ardore intentio-

nis exsiliant, adhuc antiqua nox gravat, et corruptibilis hujus carnis oculos... iudex justus a conuitu interni sui fulgoris premit.

John of the Cross then (n. 10) speaks of how death is even naturally desirable as a release from the pressures of this life, and it is interesting to note that this is the literal meaning of the verses of Job 3 that Gregory is commenting here²⁵. In addition, therefore, to the doctrinal affinities, Gregory's commentary on Job 3 contains four of the scriptural citations used by John of the Cross in C 11.

d) *The Job of ch. 3*

A figure of the soul who has tasted the joys of contemplation and, wounded by love, is sad over the prolongation of this life and desires to die. Job 3:20-21 reads: « Quare data est misero lux, et vita his qui in amaritudine animae sunt. Qui expectant mortem, et non venit... ». Whereas these verses literally express Job's lament over the meaninglessness and misery of life and his desire for annihilation in death, Gregory sees Job speaking in the light of contemplation: « beatus Job cum supernam requiem contemplatus... » (I 680). Job speaks in the person of souls wounded by love over the joys of eternity and sad over pleasures of the present life: « cunctaque hujus mundi prospera mens eorum eo aegre tolerat, quo supernae felicitatis est amore sauciata, tantoque magis in praesentis dulcedinis aspernatione erigitur, quanto hanc conspicit, quia furtive sibi in aeternae gloriae despectu blanditur » (ibid.). The provisional nature of this

²⁵ In C 11:10 the Saint says death is even desirable for the soul « que se siente necesitada de las cosas de acá »: « No le puede ser al alma que ama amarga la muerte, pues en ella halla todas sus dulzuras y deleites de amor; no le puede ser triste su memoria, pues en ella halla junta la alegría; ni le puede ser pesada y penosa, pues es el remate de todas sus pesadumbres y penas y principio de todo su bien. Tiénela por amiga y esposa, y con su memoria se goza como en el día de su desposorio y bodas: y más desea aquel día y aquella hora en que ha de venir su muerte, que los reyes de la tierra desearon los reinos y principados ». Compare this with Job's longing for the release of death in Job 3:13-22: « Nunc enim dormiens silerem, et somno meo requiescerem, cum regibus... terrae, qui aedificant sibi solitudines; aut cum principibus qui possident aurum, et replent domos suas argento... Ibi impii cessaverunt a tumultu, et ibi requieverunt fessi robore. Et quondam vincti pariter sine molestia, non audierunt vocem exactoris. Parvum et magnus ibi sunt, et servus liber a domino suo... Quare misero data est lux, et vita his qui in amaritudine animae sunt? Qui expectant mortem, et non venit, quasi effodientes thesaurum; gaudentque vehementer cum invenerint sepulchrum? ».

contemplation causes souls to feel pain at having to remain in this life which hinders it from seeing God face to face:

Lux enim miseris datur, quando ii qui sublimia contemplant, esse se in hac peregrinatione miseros agnoscunt, claritatem transitoriae prosperitatis accipiunt. Et cum valde defleant quia tarde ad patriam redeunt, tolerare insuper honoris onera compelluntur. Amor eos aeternorum conterit... (I 680). In amaritudine quippe animae sunt omnes electi... quia longe huc a facie conditoris projecti, adhuc in aeternae patriae gaudiis non sunt... cor bonorum amaritudinem suam novit, quia aerumnam exsilii, in qua projectum laceratur, intelligit... (I 681) 'Qui exspectant mortem, et non venit'... Sic quippe mortificari appetunt, *ut jam perfecte*, si liceat, *conditoris sui faciem contemplantur*. Sed eorum desiderium differtur, ut proficiat... Unde beatus Job cum diceret: 'Expectant mortem, et non venit', ut hoc ipsum quaerentium desiderium subtilius expleret, illico adjungit... (I 682-683).

In C 8, which begins « Mas cómo perseveras, ¡ oh vida!, no viiendo donde vives... », the soul, « *herida de amor* » (n. 2), expresses its sadness « que no se acaba de morir... quéjese de la duración de la vida corporal » (ibid.) and in C 10:7, the soul desires to see God « *cara a cara* ».

2. The 'spiritual' meaning of Job 3:24

The 'propósito espiritual' to which John of the Cross directs the words of Job 3:24 in C 12:9, that is, the soul's sorrow at not being able to perfectly see the God whom it has tasted in contemplation, is readily understandable to one reading Job 3 in the *Moralia*. Verse 24 is part of the third section of Job's speech, which begins in v. 20, and we have just seen how Gregory interprets the words of Job 3:20-21 of souls who, having been struck by the joys of contemplation, suffer at having their desire to see God postponed (I 680-683). In C 12:9 John of the Cross introduces Job 3:24 speaking of the vehemence of this desire of the soul: « cuán vehemente sea la codicia y pena que el alma siente cuando ve que se va llegando cerca de gustar aquel bien y no se le dan; porque cuanto más al ojo y a la puerta se ve lo que se desea y se niega, tanto más pena y tormento causa ». Gregory introduces Job 3:24 speaking of the soul who « *splendoris intimi ardenti se desiderio affligit* » (I 686) yet must suffer the darknesses in which God hides Himself.

C 12:9

I 686 Job 3:24:

De donde a este propósito espiritual dice Job (3:24): 'Antes que coma, suspiro; y como las avenidas de las aguas es el rugido y bramido de mi alma', es a saber, por la codicia de la comida, *entendiendo allí a Dios por la comida*; porque, conforme a la codicia del manjar y conociendo de él, es la pena por él.

'Antequam comedam, suspiro...'. Comedere namque est animae, supernae lucis contemplationibus pasci... Nisi enim suspiraret, non comedit; quia qui se in hoc exsilio per desideriorum coelestium lamenta non humiliat, aeternae patriae gaudia non degustat... Suspirat autem qui comedit, quia quos amor veritatis afficit, etiam refectio contemplationi pascit... Luctu enim suo anima pascitur cum ad superna gaudia flendo sublevatur, et intus quidem doloris sui gemitus tolerat...²⁶.

Immediately following this citation of Job in C 12:9, John of the Cross, in C 13:1 and 2, continues his explanation of the sufferings of the soul who desires to see God:

C 13:1

I 659 (on Job 3:9)

La causa de padecer el alma tanto a este tiempo por él es que, como se va juntando más a Dios, *siente en sí más el vacío de Dios y gravísimas tinieblas* en su alma... porque, en tanto que Dios no deriva en ella algún *rayo de luz* sobrenatural de sí, esle Dios intolerables tinieblas cuando se-

Cum ad supernae lucis radium aciem mentis erigimus, ipsa infirmitatis nostrae obscuritate caligamus... in contemplatione sua, antiquae noctis adhuc *tenebras sentiant...* etsi mente jam ad summa exsiliunt...

²⁶ See St. Bernard's spiritual use of Job 3:24 in *Sermo primus in Septuagesima* (ed. cit., T. III, p. 87): « Commovetur enim intra me spiritus meus, suspirans nimirum ad patriam illam, in qua nec numerus est, nec mensura, nec pondus. Quandiu enim in pondere, et mensura, et numero universa corporis et animae bona recipio? Quanti mercenarii in domo patris mei abundant panibus, ego autem hic fame pereó! Nam de corporali cibo ad Adam dictum est, et pervenit usque ad me: 'In sudore vultus tui vesceris pane tuo'. Sed et cum laboravero, panis datur mihi in pondere, potus in mensura, pulmenta in numero. Et de corporali quidem sic. Quid vero de spirituali? Utique *antequam comedam, suspiro*: atque utinam cum suspiravero et flevero, vel fragmentum exiguum merear de coelesti convivio, et tanquam catellus edam de micis quae cadunt de mensa dominorum meorum ».

gún el espíritu está cerca della, porque la luz sobrenatural escurece la natural con su exceso. Todo lo cual dio a entender David cuando dijo: [the Saint cites Ps. 96: 2-3]...

Y en otro salmo dice: '*Puso por su cubierta y escondrijo las tinieblas...*' (Ps. 17:12) es a saber, para el alma que se va llegando; porque, cuanto el alma más a El se llega, siente en sí todo lo dicho, hasta que Dios la entre en sus *divinos resplandores* por transformación de amor; y entre tanto, siempre está el alma como Job (23:3) diciendo...

'*sicut tenebrae ejus, ita et lumen ejus*' (Ps. 138:12).

Pero, como Dios por su inmensa piedad²⁷, conforme a las tinieblas y vacíos del alma son también las consolaciones y regalos que hace... (n. 2).

[because of its sufferings, the soul is raised] a suma *contemplación*... En los grandes deseos y *fervores* de amor... según los grandes *fervores* y ansias de amor *que han precedido* en el alma, suelen ser también las mercedes y visitas que Dios le hace desta manera envió al alma *entre estas fatigas* ciertos rayos de sí con tal gloria y fuerza de amor...

I 685-686 (on Job 3:23)

Immediately before commenting v. 24 Gregory applies v. 23: 'circumdedit eum Deus *tenebris*' to the soul who 'quavis coelesti desiderio ferveat'. His se *tenebris* Propheta circumdatum vidit, cum dispositionis intimae penetrare interna non potuit dicens: '*Posuit tenebras latibulum suum*' (Ps. 17:12). Auctor enim noster, quia nobis in hoc exsiliu dejectis, lucem suae visionis abstulit, sese nostris oculis quasi in tenebrarum latibulo abscondit... Cumque *tenebras* quibus circumdatur respicit, *splendoris intimi* ardenti se desiderio affligit; omnique intentionis adnisi semetipsam concutit, et supernam lucem, quam condita deseruit, repulsa quaerit...

I 680 (on Job 3:20)

'*Sicut tenebrae ejus, ita et lumen ejus*' (Ps. 138:12).

I 686 (on Job 3:24)

Suspirat ergo antequam comedat, quia *prius* gemitibus tribulationis afficitur, [cf. I 685: coelesti *desiderio ferveat*] et postmodum *contemplationis* refectio-
ne satiatur... eo refectio-
nis pabulum percipit, quo *vis amoris* per lacrymas emanat...

Unde fit plerumque, ut *in ipsis piis fletibus* illa interni gaudii claritas erumpat; et mens, quae

²⁷ Cf. Gregory's expressions on Job 3:21: «Mira enim divinitatis pietate agitur», «mira dispensatione pietatis» (I 682).

in torpore prius caeca jacuerat,
ad inspectionem *fulgoris* intimi
suspiriis vegetata conualescat.

C. - *The use of Job 3:24 in the 'Noche Oscura' II 9:7*

John of the the Cross again cites « el profeta Job » 3:24 in N II 9:7 but this time only the second part of the verse is given: « ' De la manera que son las avenidas de las aguas, asi el rugido mio ' ». The meaning of pain and sorrow which the Saint sees here is present literally in the verse, but John of the Cross attributes these words of Job to mystical experience. N II 9 treats of the suffering of the soul in the « noche oscura de contemplación » (n. 2), the sufferings of the soul are « penosos... efectos » caused by the « luz de contemplación » (n. 10) which is showing the soul its « flaqueza e imperfección... y disposiciones que en si tiene o contrarios » (n. 11). Read literally, there is nothing in Job 3 to indicate that Job is suffering because he is receiving infused contemplation yet John of the Cross introduces « el profeta Job » three times in II 9 (nn. 7, 8, 9) as speaking from his experience of the effects of « esta noche contemplativa » (n. 6). As we did in the preceding section, before examining the interpretation of verse 24 we shall first look for any doctrinal affinities between Gregory's commentary on Job 3 and the theology of the 'noche oscura' .

1. *Doctrinal themes of the 'Noche Oscura' developed by Gregory on Job 3*

a) *The use of 'tenebrae' for the active mortification of inordinate desires*

Job's speech in ch. 3 begins with the imagery of Day and light turning into darkness and Night turning into increasing depths of darkness:

Pereat dies in qua natus sum, et nox in qua dictum est: Conceptus est homo! Dies ille vertatur in tenebras... Obscurent eum tenebrae et umbra mortis; occupet eum caligo, et involvatur amaritudine. Noctem illam tenebrosus turbo possideat... Sit nox illa solitaria... Obtenebrentur stellae caligine ejus... (Job 3:3-9).

Whereas literally Job is here expressing his wish that his existence be annihilated, Gregory, interpreting these verses «moraliter» (I 650), explains the «Dies» first as «mundi hujus prosperitas» which ends in «tribulationis tenebras... Hanc tribulationis noctem postremo incarnationis suae tempore passurum se Dominus nuntiabat, cum per Psalmistam quasi ex praeterito diceret: 'Usque ad noctem increpauerunt me renes mei' (Ps. 15:7) (Ibid.). But «Dies» can also mean «peccati delectatio» (Ibid.) and then the meaning of v. 3 is «pereat delectatio» (I 651). Verse 4: «Dies illa vertatur in tenebras» is thus commented by Gregory:

Dies quippe in tenebras vertitur, cum culpa in ipso delectationis exordio, ad quem perditionis finem rapiat, videtur. In tenebras diem vertimus, cum nosmetipsos districte punientes, ipsa delectationis pravae blandimenta per districta poenitentiae lamenta cruciamus, cum flendo insequimur quidquid in corde taciti ex delectatione peccamus... Hic itaque dies, id est, haec peccati delectatio, a Domino non requiretur, si animadversione spontanea punitur... Quasi enim sub quadam *obscuritate* tegitur quidquid tunc in memoriam iudicis non revocatur... (I 651).

The «tenebrae» are purifying and sanctifying, through mortification the soul withdraws into 'obscurity' and is hidden from the 'light' of its disordered affections: Quasi quaedam *tenebrae* peccata poenitentium *abscondunt*... (I 651).

...omne quod tegitur, velut *in tenebris occultatur*... Hic ergo dies vertatur in tenebras, ut videlicet omne quod delinquimus, nos per poenitentiam feriamus (I 652).

Commenting v. 5 «Obscurent eum tenebrae...» Gregory says: Diem profecto *tenebrae obscurant*, quando delectationem mentis inflicta poenitentiae lamenta transverberant (I 652).

The soul «quasi nubilo *caliginis obscuratur*» (I 654) when it mortifies its disordered desires by a «vehemens poenitentiae spiritus» (I 655).

In Gregory's doctrine of spiritual purification as a withdrawal from daylight and entrance into darkness, do we not breathe the spiritual atmosphere created by John of the Cross in Book One of the *Subida*? The theme of *Subida* I is «esta noche oscura de mortificación de apetitos y negación de los gustos en todas las cosas» (S I 4:1) and in S I 3:1 John of the Cross explains why the image of «Noche» is applied to mortification:

Llamamos aquí 'noche' a la privación del gusto en el apetito de todas las cosas, porque así como la noche no es otra cosa

sino privación de la luz y, por el consiguiente, de todos los objetos que se pueden ver mediante la luz... así también se puede decir la mortificación del apetito noche para el alma, porque, privándose el alma del gusto del apetito en todas las cosas, es quedarse como a oscuras y sin nada. Porque, así como la potencia visiva mediante la luz se ceba y apacienta de los objetos que se pueden ver, y apagada la luz no se ven, así el alma mediante el apetito se apacienta y ceba de todas las cosas que según sus potencias se pueden gustar, el cual también apagado, o, por mejor decir, mortificado, deja el alma de apacentarse en el gusto de todas las cosas, y así se queda según el apetito a oscuras y sin nada.

John of the Cross' use of the imagery of « luz » for the « gozo » of the soul from which it withdraws by mortification and remains « a oscuras » is suggestive of Gregory's use of « Dies » for the « delectationis gaudium » (I 654) and the formulas *obscuratur*, and *in tenebris occultatur* for the soul mortifying its desires.

That these texts of Gregory could inspire a theology of the 'noche oscura' is suggested by the influence Gregory's commentary exerted on two mystical theologians who have been regarded as 'precursors' of the Doctor of the 'Noche'. In the fourteenth-century English spiritual classic, *The Scale of Perfection* written by Walter Hilton, we meet the words « dark night » which Hilton, as John of the Cross, explains as a withdrawal of the soul's affections from the false light of the world (Bk. II, ch. 25). The source of Hilton's theology of the « spiritual night » in Bk. II, ch. 24 is Gregory's commentary on Job 3:3 « Pereat dies in qua natus sum » and, as John of the Cross appears to have done, Hilton takes Gregory's spiritual use of « tenebrae » a step further by attaching it to 'night'; the Gregorian doctrine of the soul hidden and covered by darkness enables Hilton to speak of a « safe darkness » (Ibid.) reminding one of John of the Cross'. « A oscuras y segura »²⁸. The single text of St. Anthony

²⁸ See Walter Hilton, *The Scale of Perfection*, ed. by Dom Gerard Sitwell, O.S.B. (London: Burns Oates, 1953). Bk. II, ch. 24 is entitled: « Of an evil day and a good night, and what they signify; and how the love of the world is compared to an evil day and the love of God to a good night » and Hilton says: « It was the day that Job cursed when he said: 'Pereat dies in qua natus sum' (Job 3:3). May the day perish in which I was born. It was not the day in the course of the year created by God that he cursed, but the day made by man, that is the concupiscence and love of the world into which he was born without knowing it. It was of this day that he asked God that it should perish and no longer endure... The man who perceives that the love of this world is false... must stay for a time in the night.. This night consists in nothing else than a withdrawal of the soul from the things of earth by a great desire and longing to love and see and experience Jesus and spiritual things. This is the night; for just as the night is dark and material objects are hidden in it and exterior

of Padua which has been said to foreshadow the doctrine of the 'noche oscura' takes its spiritual use of « Nox » from Gregory's commentary on Job 3:3, 7²⁹.

There is a further indication that John of the Cross is in contact with Gregory's commentary on these verses of Job 3 in the affinities between Gregory's commentary on Job 3:9 « Obtenebrentur stellae caligine ejus » where he speaks of the « *minima vitia* » which spiritual persons still have to mortify (I 658) and the doctrine of S I 11 which treats of the necessity of mortifying « todos los apetitos, por *mínimos* que sean » (title). John of the Cross speaks of spiritual

occupations cannot be carried on, so a man who determines to fix his mind on Jesus and to desire only his love, must give neither his thoughts nor his love to bodily creatures. In this way his thoughts will be made free and his affections will not be entangled in anything beneath him. If he can do this, he is in the night, for he is in darkness. But this night is good and the darkness luminous, for it keeps out the false love of the world and brings nearer the true day of the love of Jesus » (Ibid. pp. 204-205). *The Scale of Perfection* shows the influence of the *Moralia* on several other occasions. On Hilton as a 'precursor' of John of the Cross, see the article « Walter Hilton » in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* VII, 525-530: « De façon plus explicite qu'aucun de ses prédécesseurs connus, il [Hilton] esquisse les degrés [of the contemplative life], qui seront familiers aux lectures de saint Jean de la Croix... la nuit active du retrait de tout ce qui peut satisfaire les sens... » (Ibid. 528).

²⁹ Cf. I. Heerinckx, O.F.M., *S. Antonius Patavinus auctor mysticus in Antonianum* VII (1932), pp. 39-76; 164-200. The text of St. Anthony Heerinckx adduces as foreshadowing the « noche oscura » is from the Sermon « *In Litaniis, secundum Lucam XI* » published in *S. Antonii Pat. Thaumaturgi Incliti Sermones Dominicales et in Solemnitatibus*, ed. Locatelli Patavii: Sodalitas Universalis Sancti Antonii Patavini Edit. 1895 ss.) pp. 879-880 where Anthony is giving a spiritual interpretation of Luke 11:5-8: « Quis vestrum habebit amicum et ibit ad illum media nocte, et dicet illi: Amice, commoda mihi tres panes... »; the « *media nocte* » is the time of spiritual suffering (cf. S II 6:5 where John of the Cross also sees the 'noche oscura' in the *media nocte* of Luke 11:5) in which the soul feels « *quantus dolor et angustia. In vita contemplativa nulla meritis dulcedo, in activa nulla consolatio, et in oratione mentis obcaecatio et circa temporalia evagatio* » and Anthony cites *Thren.* 3:44 « *posuisti nubem ne transiret oratio* » (cited by John of the Cross in N II 8:1). This text of Anthony begins with: « *Nox dicta, quod noceat oculis, est tribulatio vel tentatio, quae oculum rationis impedit, de qua Job: 'Sit nox illa solitaria, nec laude digna'* (Job 3:7). *Nox tentationis tunc est solitaria cum consensum in homine non invenit, nec laude digna cum ei homo non arridet nec applaudit. In hac nocte ad Christum amicum tuum debes ire, et illi dicere: 'Amice, commoda mihi tres panes'* ». Gregory, on Job 3:3 speaks of the « *tribulationis noctem* » (I 650) and uses the expression « *tenebrosa nox* » for « *antiqui hostis oscura suggestio* » (I 649). Reading the sermons of St. Anthony we were impressed by the extent of his use of the *Moralia*; for example, in the Sermon for the Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, commenting Luke 10:23-37, (ed. cit., pp. 414-425) there are no less than seventeen citations of Job, with explicit references to Gregory, and in the « *Sermo Moralis de Poenitentia* » which is included (Ibid. pp. 420-422) Anthony presents Gregory's commentary on Job 3:3-12 where « *Dies* » is « *peccati delectatio* » which is turned to darkness by mortification.

persons who have conquered many serious vices and still fail to mortify small imperfections:

Habiéndolas [Dios] sacado del mundo, y muértoles los gigantes de sus pecados y acabado la multitud de sus enemigos... ellos todavía traban amistad y alianza con la gente menuda de imperfecciones... (n. 7; cf. n. 4: aunque la imperfección sea muy *mínima* »).

Gregory introduces Job 3:9 with: *Et saepe mens, quae adversa multa et fortia superat, unum in se, et fortasse minimum, quamvis magna intentione invigilet, non expugnat* » (I 658).

The scriptural texts which Gregory then interprets spiritually of the soul which has failed to conquer one little vice suggest those in which John of the Cross finds a « *figura* » of the same doctrine. The Saint says in S I 11:7:

De lo dicho tenemos figura en el libro de los *Jueces* (2:3), donde se dice que vino el ángel a los hijos de Israel y les dijo que, porque no habían acabado con aquella gente contraria, sino antes se habían confederado con algunos de ellos, por eso se los había de dejar entre ellos por enemigos para que les fuesen ocasión de caída y perdición. Y justamente hace Dios esto con algunas almas... [who] todavía traban amistad y alianza con la *gente menuda* de imperfecciones, no acabándolas de mortificar...

Gregory says:

Unde bene rursum scriptum est: '*Hae sunt gentes quas Dominus dereliquit ut erudiret in eis Israel*' (*Judges* 3:1). Ad hoc namque quaedam *minima vitia* nostra retinentur, ut sese nostra intentio sollicitam in certamine semper exerceat; et eo de victoria non superbiat, quo vivere in se *hostes* conspicit, a quibus adhuc vinci formidat. Israel ergo reservatis *gentibus* eruditur, quando in quibusdam *minimis vitiis* elatio virtutis nostrae comprimitur, et in *parvis* sibi resistentibus discit, quod ex se majora non subigit (I 658).

After the citation of *Judges* 2:3 in S I 11:7, John of the Cross immediately adds:

También en el libro de *Josué* (6:21) tenemos figura acerca de lo dicho cuando le mandó Dios a Josué, al tiempo que había de comenzar a poseer la tierra de promisión, que en la ciudad de Jericó de tal manera destruyese cuanto en ella había, que no dejase cosa en ella viva, desde el hombre hasta la mujer... para

que entendamos cómo para entrar en esta divina unión [cf. n. 7: en esta *tierra de promisión* de la unión divina] ha de morir todo lo que vive en el alma, poco o mucho, *chico* y grande... (Ibid. n. 8).

Gregory, jus before his citation of *Judges* 3:1 and still commenting Job 3:9 of the « *parva reprehensibilia* » souls fail to mortify, says:

Unde et bene cum Israelitico populo, percepta repromissionis terra, partiretur, Ephraim tribui Chananaeus gentilis populus non occisus sed factus tributarius dicitur, sicut scriptum est: 'Habitavit Chananaeus in medio Ephraim tributarius' (*Joshua* 16:10). Quid enim Chananaeus, gentilis videlicet populus, nisi vitium significat? Et saepe magnis virtutibus *terram repromissionis ingredimur*, quia spe intima de aeternitate roboramur. Sed dum inter acta sublimia, *vitia quaedam parva* retinemus, quasi Chananaeum vivere in terra nostra concedimus. Qui tamen tributarius efficitur, quia hoc ipsum vitium, quod subigere non possumus, ad usum nostrae utilitatis humiliter retorquemus; ut eo de se mens et in summis vilia sentiat, quo suis viribus etiam *parva* quae appetit, non expugnat (I 658).

Though there is a slight variation in the verses cited, the 'spiritual' use of both *Judges* and *Joshua* in S I 11 seems to us too close to Gregory's commentary on Job 3:9 to be merely coincidental. We also see that John of the Cross is not 'copying' Gregory word for word but injects his own personal theological concern into these texts; whereas Gregory sees in the persistence of small vices an occasion for spiritual progress since they keep the soul humble, John of the Cross views them as steps to further spiritual ruin.

b) *The 'darkness' felt in the soul's approach to God and the doctrine of N II 16*

The theme of N II 16, which comments the verse « A oscuras y segura », is the the spiritual value of the « oscuridad de esta noche » (N II 15: declaración). The first reason given is that the soul can only err by guiding itself by its own lights; in this life it is so difficult to arrive at the truth, our 'natural' lights can only deceive us on our way to God (nn. 2-5) so the Saint says: « ¡ Oh mísera suerte de vida, donde con tanto peligro se vive y con tanta dificultad la verdad se conoce!; pues lo más claro y verdadero nos es más oscuro y dudoso, y por eso huimos dello, siendo lo que más nos con-

viene; y lo que más luce y llena nuestro ojo lo abrazamos y vamos tras de ello, siendo lo que peor nos está y lo que a cada paso nos hace dar de ojos » (n. 12). Thus the soul must « ir a oscuras para ir segura » (ibid.), it is good for the soul to be « escondida » from itself (n. 13). The Saint tells the soul to rejoice that « tomando Dios la mano tuya, te guía a oscuras como a ciego a donde y por donde tú no sabes, ni jamás con tus ojos y pies, por bien que anduvieran, atinaras a caminar » (n. 7).

Commenting Job 3:23 « Viro, cujus abscondita est via, et circumdedit eum Deus tenebris » Gregory says that our way to God is hidden because « nonnunquam ea ipsa quae recte nos agere credimus, an in districti iudicis examine recta sint, ignoramus. Saepe enim, sicut et longe superius diximus, opus nostrum causa damnationis est, et proventus putatur esse virtutis... Salomone attestante, qui ait: 'Est via quae videtur homini recta; novissima autem e jus ducunt ad mortem' (Prov. 14:12). Unde sancti viri cum mala superant, sua etiam bene gesta formidant... Sciunt enim quia corruptionis adhuc pondere gravati, dijudicare bona subtiliter nesciunt... Et tota quidem mente interna desiderant, sed tamen de incertitudine operum trepidi *quo gradiuntur ignorant*... sub qua sit aestimatione iudicis iter sui operis nescit... Tenebris namque homo circumdatur, quia quamvis coelesti desiderio ferveat, quid de semetipso sit dispositum intrinsecus, ignorat... An tenebris circumdatus non est, qui plerumque praeteritorum non meminit, futura non invenit, praesentia vix cognoscit? Tenebris se circumdatum quidam sapiens viderat, cum dicebat: 'Quae in prospectu sunt, invenimus cum labore: et quae in coelis sunt, quis investigabit?'. (Wis. 9:16). His se tenebris Propheta circumdatum vidit, cum dispositionis intimae penetrare interna non potuit, dicens: 'Posuit tenebras latibulum suum' (Ps. 17:12). Auctor enim noster quia nobis in hoc exsilium dejectis, lucem suae visionis abstulit, sese nostris oculis quasi in tenebrarum latibulo abscondit »³⁰. Tauler cites the words of Job 3:23 on three different

³⁰ In N II 16:11 John of the Cross cites these words of Psalm 17:12 and in the next paragraph (n. 12) he speaks of the difficulty we have in knowing the truth in this life. The Saint also (n. 11) cites these words of Psalm 17:12 « *tenebrosa aqua en las nubes del aire* » commenting: « La cual 'agua tenebrosa en las nubes del aire' es la *oscura contemplación y Sabiduría divina en las almas* ». Compare this with Gregory's commentary on Job 36:28 (II 405-403) where the « *tenebrosa aqua in nubibus* » of Psalm 17:12 is interpreted as « *occulta scientia in prophetis* ». There are other affinities between Gregory's commentary on Job 36 and the doctrine of N II 16; Gregory, speaking of the obscurity of the contemplation of God in this life (II 401-403) cites the words « *Posuit tenebras latibulum suum* » of Psalm 17:12 saying the judgments of God are « *impenetrata* » for us, he uses (II 397-401) the word *Nox* two times to express the spiritual suffering of the soul. We have already seen that John of the Cross in the following chapter (N II 17) shows familiarity with Gregory's commentary on the next chapter of Job (Job 37).

occasions, applying the text to the sufferings of the soul in the Dark Night and mentioning Gregory as the source of his mystical interpretation of the 'tenebrae'³¹.

John of the Cross says that « el alma no sólo va 'segura' cuando va así 'a oscuras', sino aun se va más ganando y aprovechando... porque comúnmente, cuando el alma va recibiendo mejoría de nuevo y aprovechando, es por donde ella menos entiende; antes muy de ordinario piensa que se va perdiendo... Así... cuando el alma va aprovechando más, va a oscuras y no sabiendo » (N II 16:8). Gregory, on Job 3:25, says: Ejus [Dei] dispensatio *obscuris* super nos dispositionibus, saepe unde aestimatur deserere, inde nos recipit; et unde nos recipere creditur, inde derelinquit (I 687).

In N II 16:10, the Saint says that the « más principal causa por que aquí el alma a oscuras va segura... es de parte de... esta oscura noche de contemplación... » The two Psalms cited to illustrate this doctrine are given by Gregory in his commentary on Job 3:

N II 16:11

'Puso Dios por su escondrijo y cubierta las tinieblas...' (Ps. 17:12)³²... Y así lo que en Dios es luz y claridad más alta, es para el hombre tiniebla más oscura... conviene a saber, para el entendimiento natural.

Esta oscura noche de contemplación... la pone tan cerca de

I 652 (on Job 3:5
'Obscurent eum tenebrae...')

Possunt etiam per tenebras occulta judicia designari. In luce namque quod videmus agnoscimus; in tenebris vero aut omnino nihil cernimus, aut incerto visu caligamus. Occulta ergo judicia quasi quaedam ante oculos nostros tenebrae sunt, quia perscrutari nequaquam possunt. Un-

³¹ Tauler, in the *Sermon for the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity* (sermon 1) (ed. cit. pp. 387-388) says: « angusta, tenebrosa, desolata et incognita via est, de qua S. Job, immo Spiritus per Job loquitur, ubi ait (Job 3:23): 'Viro cuius abscondita est via, et circumdedit eum Deus tenebris'... Hic foeminae in viros abeunt... Est autem, ut dixi, tenebrosa admodum via haec. Quaecunque enim superius hinc dicta sunt, auferuntur istis, nec omnino sapiunt eis; quorsum autem tendere debeat, ignorant; sicque fit, ut magna hic pressuram sentiant, ut merito de eis dici queat: 'Circumdedit eos Deus tenebris'. Quae verba D. Gregorius exponens, ait 'Tenebris homo circumdant, quia ignorantiae suae caligine premitur; et saepe unde placari iudex creditur, inde ad irascendum placidus instigatur ». Tauler then identifies this « via tenebrosa et incognita » with the « via angusta » of Matth. 7:14 and adds: « Credite mihi; difficile ac periculosum est regere eos qui hanc tenebrosam gradiuntur viam ». Tauler again cites Job 3:23 in the *Sermon for the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity* where the « tenebrae » are qualities of the « incognoscibilitatis Dei » and are associated with the « divina caligo » of the Pseudo Areopagite; also in the *Sermon for the Feast of St. Matthew*.

Dios, que la ampara y *libra* de todo lo que no es Dios... (n. 10).

de et de Deo scriptum est: '*Posuit tenebras latibulum suum*' (Ps. 17:12). Et quia absolvi non meremur, agnoscimus: sed praeveniente nos divina gratia, per ejus judicia occulta *liberamur*. Diem igitur *tenebrae obscurant* cum flendum nostrae delectationis gaudium, ab illo justae animadversionis radia inscrutabilia ejus judicia misericorditer occultant.

We have already seen that the Gregorian formulas: « *tenebrae... abscondunt* » and « *in tenebris occultatur* » suggest the theology of the verse « *a oscuras y segura* ».

In N II 16:13 John of the Cross cites Psalm 30:21 to illustrate that in contemplation the soul is « *escondida y amparada de sí misma y de todos los daños de criaturas...* »: N II 17:6 where contemplation is called '*secreta*' because it has the 'propiedad de *esconder* al alma en sí » and N II 23:1 where « *en celada* » means « *en escondido* » in contemplation.

N II 16:13-14

I 684 (on Job 3:22)

[Of the soul « *escondida* » in contemplation] se entiende lo que también David dice en otro salmo, diciendo: '*Esconderlos has en el escondrijo de tu rostro de la turbación de los hombres...*'. (Ps. 30:21); en lo cual se entiende toda manera de amparo, porque estar '*escondidos* en el rostro de Dios de la turbación de los hombres' es estar fortalecidos en esta oscura contemplación contra todas las ocasiones que de parte de los hombres les pueden sobrevenir; y con estar '*amparados* en su tabernáculo de la contradicción de las lenguas', es estar el alma engolfada en esta '*agua tenebro-*

divina contemplatio quoddam sepulcrum mentis est, quo *absconditur anima...* mortui in sepulcro abscondimur, cum mortificati exterius, *in secreto internae contemplationis celamur*. Sancti igitur viri ab importunitate desideriorum temporalium, a tumultu inutilium curarum, a clamore perstreptentium perturbationum, semetipsos sacri verbi gladio mortificare non desinunt, atque intus ante Dei faciem in sinu mentis abscondunt. Unde bene per Psalmistam dicitur: '*Abscondes eos in abscondito vultus tui a conturbatione hominum*' (Ps. 30:21). Quod quamvis perfecte postmodum fiat, etiam nunc ex

³² Cf. *supra*, note 30.

sa '... donde, por tener el alma todos los apetitos y afecciones destetados... está libre de todas las imperfecciones que contradicen al espíritu, así de su misma carne, como de las demás criaturas...

porque aquí todos los apetitos y fuerzas y potencias del alma están recogidas de todas las demás cosas empleando su conato y fuerza sólo en obsequio de su Dios.

magna parte agitur, cum a temporalium desideriorum tumultibus delectatione in interiora rapiuntur; ut mens eorum dum in amorem Dei tota tenditur, nulla inutili perturbatione laceretur... valde ad inventam requiem contemplationis hilarescit; ut extinctus mundo lateat, et a cunctis exteriorum rerum perturbationibus intra sinum se intimi amoris abscondat.

2. The 'spiritual' interpretation of Job 3:24

John of the Cross introduces Job 3:24 in N II 9 where he is speaking of the passive « purgación » (n. 1) of the soul which is necessary because of the 'contrariety' between our spiritual life and the Divine perfections (nn. 2-3). This purification is a « noche », in it the soul suffers from its imperfections which it feels under the light of contemplation (nn. 10-11). « El profeta Job » is said to have experienced this (nn. 7-9). On Job 3:26 « Nonne dissimulavi? nonne silui? nonne quievi? et venit super me indignatio » Gregory says that though Job had lived a santly life he was permitted to suffer because God « quotidie etiam de minimis purget... saepe ipsa nostra justitia, ad examen divinae justitiae deducta, iniustitia est » (I 690). This passive purification has already been qualified as a *Nox* by Gregory (cf. supra, pp. 44-46). Gregory also associates darkness with the contemplation in which souls painfully experience their spiritual weakness and vices. Commenting Job 3:9 Gregory says: « cum ad supernae lucis radium aciem mentis erigimus, ipsa infirmitatis nostrae obscuritate caligamus... in contemplatione sua, antiquae noctis adhuc tenebras sentiant » (I 659)³³. We have seen that the sadness expressed by Job in Job 3:20 ff. is explained by Gregory as the result of Job's experience of contemplation (cf. supra, pp. 66-68). In addition to these doctrinal affinities, we find in Gregory's commentary on Job 3 the same verses of three Psalms used by John of the Cross in N II: Psalms 17:12, 30:21 and Psalm 138:12 « Sicut tenebrae ejus, ita et lumen ejus » (I 680) cited in N II 7:3. All of this creates in chapter three of Job a theological atmosphere in which verse 24 can receive the mystical significance attributed to it by John of the Cross:

³³ In Part Two of our study we shall study in greater detail Gregory's use of *Nox* and *tenebrae* in his theology of contemplation.

N II 9:7

Tanto se levantan y cercan en dolor y pena las afecciones del alma, que no sé cómo se podría dar a entender sino por la semejanza que el profeta Job, estando en el mismo trabajo de él, por estas palabras dice: '*De la manera que son las avenidas de las aguas, así el rugido mio*' (3:24); porque así como algunas veces las aguas hacen tales avenidas que todo lo anegan y llenan...

Ibid. n. 8

las dudas y recelos que traspasan al alma.

Ibid. n. 9

se... sienta ajena y privada de todos ellos [bienes de dones y virtudes]... y le parezca que de ellos está tan lejos, que *no se pueda persuadir que jamás ha de venir*.

Ibid. n. 7

[comparing the « dolor y pena » of the soul with « las aguas... que todo lo anegan y llenan »] así este rugido y sentimiento del alma algunas veces crece tanto, que, anegándola y traspasándola toda, llena de angustias y dolores espirituales todos sus afectos profundos y fuerzas sobre todo lo que se puede encarecer.

Sospecha que está perdida.

I 686-687

Job 3:24 « *Et quasi inundantes aquae sic rugitus meus* ». Aquae, cum inundant, cum impetu veniunt; et crescentibus multipliciter voluminibus, intumescunt. Sancti vero dum mentis suae oculis divina iudicia opponunt, dum de occulta super se sententia trepidant, dum se ad Deum pervenire posse confidunt, sed tamen *ne non perveniant metuunt*, dum praeteritorum suorum recolunt, quae deflent, dum quae sibi adhuc futura sunt, quia nesciunt, pertimescunt;

quasi quaedam in eis aquarum more volumina colliguntur, quae in moeroris rugitus quasi in subjecta littora defluunt. Vir igitur sanctus vidit quanta sint in lamentis poenitentiae volumina cogitationum; atque ipsas moeroris undas inundantes aquas vocavit...

Quos cum divina subito flagella corripiunt, auctoris sui se gratiam offendisse *susplicantur*,

quia vel infirmitatibus praepe-diti, vel amaritudinibus pressi, ad imendenda proximis pia opera non assurgunt. Et cor in lamentum vertitur, quia corpus a devotionis suae ministerio retardatur.

I 687 (on Job 3:25)

Justi igitur deflent et pavent, et magnis se lamentis cruciant, quia *deseri formidant*; et quamvis de correptione sua gaudeant, eorum tamen trepidam mentem correptio ipsa perturbat; ne ma-

N II 8:1

Ni rezar ni asistir con advertencia a las cosas divinas puede, ni menos en las demás cosas y tratos temporales.

lum quod tolerant, non pia percussio disciplinae sit, sed animadversio justa vindictae.

N II 6:2

Es grave y lastimera pena creer que la ha dejado Dios... sentirse sin Dios, y castigada... y que está [Dios] enojado.

CONCLUSION

Our examination of Gregory's commentary on chapter three of Job was occasioned by the 'spiritual' interpretation of Job 3:24 in C 12:9. The manifestly non-literal interpretation of this verse by John of the Cross here is, we believe, explainable by a reading of Gregory's commentary. In addition to the affinities in the use of verse 24, the presence, in Gregory's commentary, of the same spiritual themes including nine of the other citations of Scripture in C 1 — 13:1³⁴, suggests that we associate the author of the *Cántico Espiritual* with these pages of the *Moralia*.

The second use of Job 3:24 by John of the Cross, this time for the theology of the 'noche oscura', occasioned another examination of Gregory's commentary on Job 3. Whereas in C 12:9 only the first three words of Job 3:24 are commented by John of the Cross, in N II 9:7 these words are omitted and only the last part of verse 24 is cited and commented. This separate treatment of the parts of verse 24 appears to respond to the way Gregory treats the text; Gregory gives a separate commentary on the first three words, interpreting them of the soul's desire to see God the response of God Who communicates the light of contemplation — which is the theme of the *Cántico Espiritual* — and then the last part of verse 24 is commented by Gregory of the suffering and fear of the soul who feels God has rejected it — which is the theme of the *Noche Oscura*. Gregory's

³⁴ Isaiah 26:20 in C 1:10; Psalm 17:12 in C 1:12; Cant. 3:1 in C 3:2; Prov. 2:4 in C 11:1; Psalm. 83:3 in C 11:4; Phil. 1:23 and II Cor. 5:4 in C 11:9; Psalms. 17:12 and 138:12 in C 13:1.

commentary on Job 3 reveals affinities with the theology of the 'noche oscura' both in doctrinal themes as well as citations of Scripture. We have heard Gregory speak of 'Darkness' as a condition into which the soul must enter in order to be purified and in which God leads the soul who thinks He has abandoned it, he explains contemplation as a reality in which the soul is 'hidden' and purified and in which the soul experiences the 'darkness of night' and he presents Job as a figure of the soul undergoing a passive purification. In addition, five of the citations of Scripture used by John of the Cross in the theology of the 'noche oscura' are found in or explainable by a reading of this section of the *Moralia*³⁵.

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³⁵ Judges 2:3 in S I 11:7 (Gregory cites Judges 3:1); Joshua 6:21 in S I 11:8 (Gregory cites Joshua 16:10); Psalms 17:12 and 30:21 in N II 16:11 and 13; Psalm 138:12 in N II 7:3.