

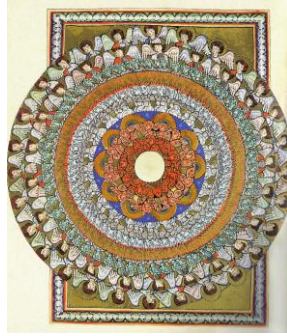
**The *transcendence of War and Peace* by the spiritual sense of Christian
Theology**
**La *transcendència de la Guerra i la Pau* pel sentit espiritual de la Teologia
Cristiana**
**La *trascendencia de la Guerra y la Paz* por el sentido espiritual de la Teología
Cristiana**
A *transcendência da Guerra e da Paz* pelo sentido espiritual da Teologia Cristã
Eirini ARTEMI¹

Abstract: “War” and “peace” are subject to theological, philosophical, moral, and political construction. In Christian theology, “war” and “peace” have to do with the relations of people with God, with themselves and with the other people in every place of this earth. The transcendence of the war and peace has literal and spiritual meaning. In the Christian view of peace, it is necessary to relate to justice and includes the dimensions of inner peace or a spiritual peace. This understanding is different from a more secular outlook means peace at the level of exterior dimensions –outer dimension–. As far as the word “war” can mean spiritual struggling with our passions or with the demons and with the other people in our daily life. The teachings on peace and on war, deriving from the sacred texts of Christianity, effectively guide adherents to attain inner peace, to extend it outwardly and to try to get rid of the passions which are cause of war. The latter relates to our passions and sins.

Keywords: War – Peace – Passions Christian Teaching – *Theosis* – Demons.

Resumen: “Guerra” y “paz” están sujetas a una construcción teológica, filosófica, moral y política. En la teología cristiana, “guerra” y “paz” tienen que ver con las relaciones de las personas con Dios, consigo mismas y con los demás en todos los lugares de esta tierra. La trascendencia de la guerra y la paz tiene un significado literal y espiritual. En la visión cristiana de la paz es absolutamente necesario estar conectado con la justicia e incluye las dimensiones de la paz interior o la paz espiritual. Esta comprensión, a diferencia de una perspectiva más secular, significa paz en el nivel de las dimensiones exteriores –dimensión exterior–. En cuanto a la palabra “guerra” puede significar lucha espiritual con nuestras

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pasiones o con los demonios y con las demás personas en nuestra vida diaria. Las enseñanzas sobre la paz y la guerra, que se derivan de los textos sagrados del cristianismo, guían eficazmente a sus seguidores a alcanzar la paz interior, para extenderla hacia el exterior y tratar de deshacerse de las pasiones que son causa de la guerra. Este último está relacionado con nuestras pasiones y pecados.

Palabras-clave: Guerra – Paz – Pasiones Enseñanza Cristiana – *Theosis* – Demonios.

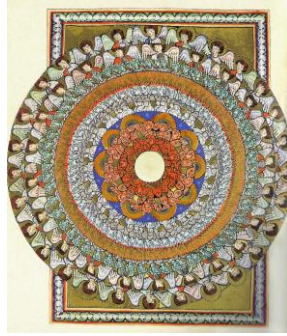
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I. The teaching of peace in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament the concept of peace is something wider than peaceful coexistence or inner tranquility. The peaceful coexistence of people for the Jewish man, who had experience of wars, is something very important, since the political, social, and economic conditions contribute to the integration and happiness of man. It is the communication of man with God which brings peace and lead man into the transcendence of passions and finally to salvation². As Isaiah says: “Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; 'For Yah, the Lord, is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation’”.³

² “As passion is the keynote of the self-life, so serenity is the keynote of the transcendent life. Rising into it, man is lifted above disharmony and disturbance. When Perfect Good is realized and known, not as an opinion or an idea, but as an experience or a possession, then calm vision is acquired, and tranquil joy abides through all hardships. *The Transcendent Life* is ruled, not by passions, but by principles. It is founded not upon fleeting impulses, but upon abiding laws. In its clear atmosphere the orderly sequence of all things is revealed, so that there is seen to be no room for sorrow, anxiety, or regret.” – ALLEN, James. “[From Passion to Peace](#)”. In: [The James Allen Free Library](#).

³ Is. 12:2, *New King James Version* (NKJV).



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Initially, peace existed in Paradise, where the first people lived peacefully among themselves and in relation to nature and animals.⁴ This peace was lost because of the sin and disobedience of Adam and Eve. Humans, animals, and whole nature lost the heavenly peace and since then, corruptions, sin, stress and in general the accompanying situations of sin entered the life of man.⁵

The concept of peace in the Bible does not only mean the absence of the evils of war, or the interval between two wars. It means every good, wealth, happiness, salvation and glory which men had as fruits from their relationship with God. It is of great significance that the Septuagint who translated the Old Testament in Greek they rendered with the word “peace” all the goods and hopes of human life which the Hebrew word shalom contains. The word for peace is ‘shalom’ means much more than the absence of conflict. It is a holistic idea, referring to the wellbeing of body, mind, soul and society.

The idea of shalom echoes through the whole Bible. Peace refers to relationships between people,⁶ nations⁷, and God with men.⁸ Peace is a desired status in each of these arenas, and shalom is often tied to a covenant or a promise kept. A familiar friend “friend of my peace”⁹ is one with whom you would be at ease, a trusted companion. “Peace” was the standard greeting¹⁰, still used today.

⁴ “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that [a]moves on the earth”. Gen. 1:28, NKJV.

⁵ Gen 1-3.

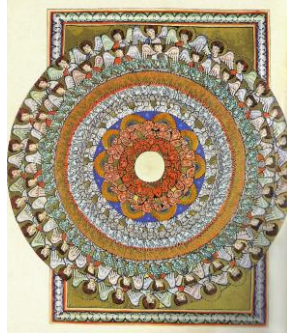
⁶ Gen. 34:21, NKJV.: “These men are at peace with us. Therefore let them dwell in the land and trade in it. For indeed the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters to us as wives, and let us give them our daughters”.

⁷ 1 Kings 5:12, NKJV.: “So the Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as He had promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty together”.

⁸ Ps. 85:8, NKJV.: “I will hear what God the Lord will speak, For He will speak peace To His people and to His saints; But let them not turn back to folly”.

⁹ Ps. 41:9, NKJV.

¹⁰ 1 Sam. 25:6, NKJV.



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To sum up, peace is directly related to the actions and attitudes of individuals; but it is ultimately a gift from God, “I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the Lord, do all these things”¹¹, and in Leviticus it is said, “I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none will make you afraid; I will rid the land of evil beasts, and the sword will not go through your land”.¹² The presence of peace indicates God’s blessing on man’s obedience as it is underlined in Isaiah “The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever”¹³, and in Malachi, “My covenant was with him, one of life and peace, And I gave them to him that he might fear Me; So he feared Me And was reverent before My name”.¹⁴

Peace is the result of man’s faith and trust in God, “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You”.¹⁵ An important addition is the reference of the part of shalom which must include the fair and transparent punishment of any crime. For this reason, the law of talion or the order an eye for an eye, expressing the principle of reciprocal justice measure for measure¹⁶ is given.

II. *The teaching of war in the Old Testament*

Warfare was part of the life of the Old Testament people of God. At times, God himself commanded Israel to go to war against enemies and to their own way of living. In Deuteronomy, Joshua and Judges, God often tells his people to fight and destroy foreign tribes to gain the Promised Land for Israel,

¹¹ Is. 45:7, NKJV.

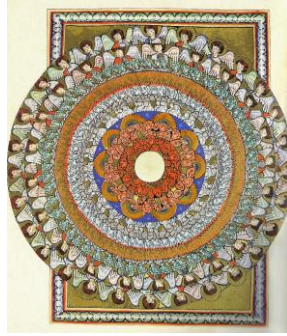
¹² Lev. 26:6, NKJV.

¹³ Is. 32:17, NKJV.

¹⁴ Mal. 2:5, NKJV.

¹⁵ Is. 26:3, NKJV.

¹⁶ Ex. 21:23-27, NKJV.



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The lord your God will drive out those nations before you, little by little [...] the Lord your God will deliver them over to you, throwing them into great confusion until they are destroyed [...] no one will be able to stand up against you; you will destroy them.¹⁷

The Old Testament Prophet, Joel, tells the people that God wants them to go and fight, “Prepare for war! Rouse the warriors! Let all the fighting men drawn near and attack”.¹⁸

The verb ‘to make war’ (nilham) and the noun form milhama (war) appear about 164 and 320 times respectively in the Bible. This relatively high frequency reflects the importance of the subject in the Bible.¹⁹ The intimate connection between Yahweh and war is derived from two critical events in the history of Israel. The first one is linked to the liberation of Israel from the slavery of the Egyptian Pharaoh; from that point on, Yahweh is known as a warrior, as the song of Moses underlines after the passing of Israel through the Red Sea.²⁰ Secondly, perception of Yahweh as a God warrior is further reinforced by the conquest of Canaan, a phase during which God is portrayed both as one who fights for his people and as one who wishes his people to engage in active war in their longing for freedom.²¹

We are not going to analyze books and passages which have to do with the war in the Old Testament. We will summarize that the war in the Old Testament was used as a tool of the state necessary for survival. It was a theological means to

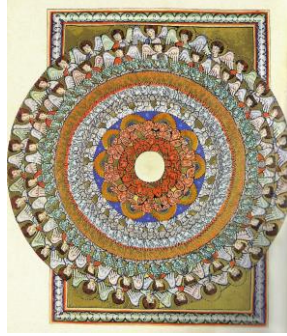
¹⁷ Deut. 7:22-24, NKJV.

¹⁸ Joel 3:9-10, NKJV.

¹⁹ ADEBOYE, Godwin Oriyomi. “[The Theology of Peace and War in Old Testament and Its Relevance to Solving the Dilemma of Insecurity in Nigeria](#)”, 5.

²⁰ “Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and spoke, saying: “I will sing to the Lord, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea! The Lord is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father’s God, and I will exalt Him. The Lord is a man of war; The Lord is His name. 4 Pharaoh’s chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.”, Ex. 15:1-4, NKJV.

²¹ Deut 1:30; 20:1. ADEBOYE, Godwin Oriyomi. “[The Theology of Peace and War in Old Testament and Its Relevance to Solving the Dilemma of Insecurity in Nigeria](#)”, 7.



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communicate God's supremacy and power in the ancient near east. Moreover, it was a tool of judgment against sin with that kind of covered. War was always bloody, but it also had a purpose. In God's economy, that purpose was to wipe out evil and to be glorified as Sovereign, not gratuitous violence. Reading the books of the Old Testament, it is easy for anyone to realize that the Old Testament may seem to endorse war as a means of divine judgment or protection. It is important to be underlined that moreover God's command to Israelites for making just war, the Israelites were instructed to fight fairly and with honor.²²

They were forbidden from attacking innocent people or destroying their property and crops, as this would be considered an act of cruelty. In Deuteronomy 20:19-20, God commands the Israelites to show mercy in times of war, even to their enemies. This command reminds believers that war should not be used as an excuse for aggression or unjust behavior. Similarly, Isaiah 1:17 says God desires justice and righteousness more than sacrifices and offerings. This suggests that believers should strive for justice and righteousness even during conflict. Finally, the Old Testament's teachings on war should serve as a reminder that violence should only be used as a last resort when all other options have been exhausted.

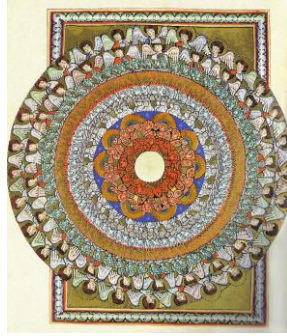
III. The teaching of peace in the New Testament

In the New Testament, the primary Greek word for "peace" is eirene, and it refers to rest and tranquility. A key focus of peace in the New Testament is the advent of Jesus Christ, as announced by the angels in Luke 2:14 "Peace on earth". Isaiah had predicted the Messiah would be the Prince of Peace²³, and Christ is called the Lord of peace in 2 Thessalonians 3:16. It is through Christ's work of justification that people can have peace with God, "therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"²⁴, and that peace will keep believers' hearts and minds

²² Deut 20:1-4.

²³ Is. 9:6.

²⁴ Rom. 5:1, NKJV.



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secure, “and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”.²⁵

The New Testament, particularly the teachings of Jesus, emphasizes peace, forgiveness, and love towards enemies.²⁶ However, the New Testament does not completely reject the concept of war. It recognizes the existence of war but urges believers to live in peace as much as possible. Christ used to say, “Peace on you”. On His sermon on the mountain, He referred to the peacemakers, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God”.²⁷ Peacemakers are people who bring peace to others, because they have it themselves. A person who lives with unresolved conflict on their own heart cannot bring peace to others. Conflict seems to follow some people around. The reason it follows them is that it lives in them. What fills someone will spill out from him when other people bump into him. No one can give what he does not have.

Christ is the prince of peace.²⁸ Through Christ God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.²⁹ In order to have peace, Christians must keep in the mind that Christ brought them reconciliation with one another and finally with God,

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace.³⁰

²⁵ Phil. 4:7, NKJV.

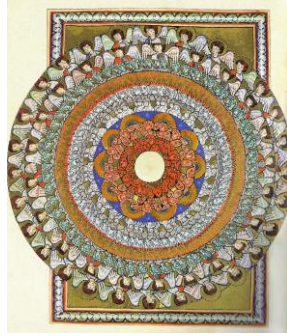
²⁶ WENGST, Klaus. *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ* (trans. J. Bowden). London: SCM Press, 1987, p. 29.

²⁷ Matt., 5:9.

²⁸ Is. 9:6.

²⁹ Col. 1:19-20.

³⁰ Eph. 2:13-15, NKJV.



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The peace of God in the New Testament can be described as a tranquil state of appreciation and faith when the believer trusts and puts into practice the commandments of God and the example Christ. It requires a mixture of humility and courage to experience God's peace, seeking beyond the logic abilities of our own knowledge. If God is peace, as Christians, we should live in His peace.

To sum up, in the New Testament peace is the gift which God through Christ offers us that comes through Him and in Him. God is the ultimate peacemaker, and we are invited to follow His example. This is not something easy. Peacemaking can be a very costly and very difficult business. The cross reveals the great cost Jesus endured to offer us this kind of peace. During the hostility and division created by our sin, Jesus offered His life – for us, for peace. Jesus gave His life, in the war and rebellion of our sin, at the cross. And through the power of His Resurrection, He destroys the power of the sin that separated man from God.

IV. The teaching of war in the New Testament

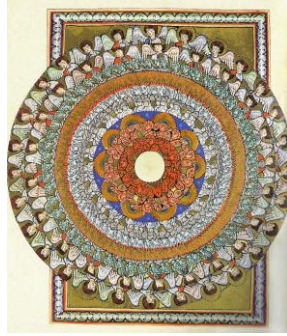
The war in the New Testament has to do with any sin and passion of human race. The war is the conflict of man with God, with himself and with the nature. Christ in His temptations show how a Christian can do a successful war against demons. Christ came to bring the sword, he said:

Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one's foes will be members of one's own household.³¹

First, we should explain that Jesus' sword was never a literal one. In fact, when Peter took up a sword to defend Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus rebuked him and told him to put away his sword, "...for all who draw the sword will die by the sword".³²

³¹ Matt. 10:34-36.

³² Matt. 26:52, NKJV.



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Those, who reject God and the only way of salvation through Jesus, will find themselves perpetually at war with God.³³ But those who come to Him in repentance will find themselves at peace with God. Because of Christ's sacrifice, we are restored to a relationship of peace with God.³⁴ In Peter's epistle Peter write, "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul".³⁵ The ultimate issue in that verse is that the human soul is in danger of being destroyed. A war is being waged against the soul in this world. If the war is successful, the soul is lost.

In the book of the Revelation, there is the reference of the most important war. Still, it is inevitable that there will be conflict between good and evil, the Christ and the antichrist, the light and the darkness, the children of God –believers- and the children of the devil -those who refuse Christ. Conflict must arise between the two groups, and this can and does happen within a family in which some are believers and others are not. We should seek to be at peace with all men but should never forget that Jesus warned we will be hated for His sake. Because those who reject Him hate Him, they will hate His followers as well.³⁶

To sum up, war in the New Testament has to do with the struggle of believers against the sin and against those who are against Christ's ethics. These attacks by Satan and his forces demand that believers engage in warfare against him.³⁷ God's people must live distinctly from the mindset and lifestyle of this age.³⁸ People who refuse to place

³³ "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me", Jn 14:6.

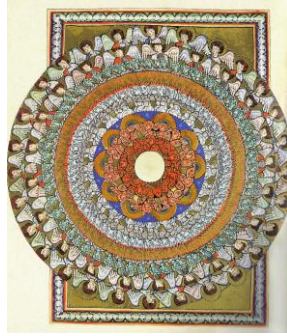
³⁴ Rom. 5:1.

³⁵ 1 Pet.2:11-12, NKJV.

³⁶ Jn 15:18.

³⁷ Eph 6:11-18.

³⁸ Rom 12:1-2.



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themselves in a position of enmity with the world are positioning themselves as enemies of God.³⁹ Those who love the world demonstrate that they do not love the Father.⁴⁰

The reason the New Testament urges such a strong distinction from the world is that the world is seeking to fulfill the mission of Satan against the Christian church. The church today is engaged in a war that has endured since Genesis 3. Satan has so infiltrated popular culture and the power structures of our society that believers often fail to recognize the world. Satan engages in many methods to oppose God's church, and he has been effective in using deceit with humans since his conversation with Eve in Eden. Many professing Christians today, though, err on the side of folly, as Eve did, and they ignore the signs that many of the seemingly innocent aspects of our culture may be part of the intelligent and cunning plans of the devil, the one in whose power the whole world lays.⁴¹

V. War and Peace in *spiritual sense* of Christian Theology

War and Peace in Christian theology have to do with the sin and the attempt of a Christian to purify himself and keep clean his Christian society, the Church.⁴² Christ became our peace.⁴³ While we were enemies with God, Christ pacified us and reconciled us to God. Christ with His incarnation brought peace. God made sure to restore peace to man with the coming of His Son to earth. God himself took the initiative through the incarnation of Christ and reconciled with man through the redemptive work of Christ. The second gift of peace was not a mere agreement, but an earth-shattering event: the union of the human with the Divine entity. John Chrysostom underlines

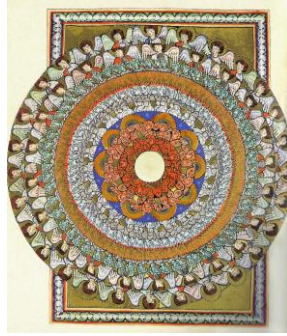
³⁹ James 4:4.

⁴⁰ 1 Jn 2:15-16.

⁴¹ 1 Jn 5:19.

⁴² BOYD, Gregory A. *God at War: The Bible & Spiritual Conflict*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997, p. 59.

⁴³ Eph. 2: 14.



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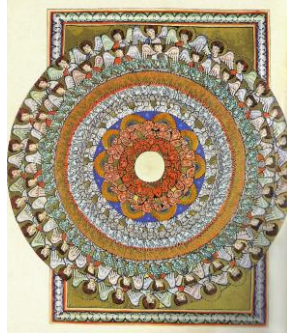
“The peace of God” which He [has given to] men, [surpasses and transcends] all understanding. For who could have expected, who could have hoped, that such good things would have come? They exceed all man’s understanding, not his speech alone. For His enemies, for those who hated Him, for those who determined to turn themselves away, for these, he refused not to deliver up His Only Begotten Son, that He might make peace with us. His peace then, i.e. the reconciliation, the love of God, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts.⁴⁴

Our Lady Theotokos expressed the free acceptance by humanity of this second gift of God's peace. Finally, peace came to the world with the union of divine and human nature in the person of Christ and was completed with His sacrifice on the Cross and Resurrection. The union of earth and heaven was made by Christ “through the blood of his Cross”.⁴⁵ That is why peace never fails. The work of settlement and peace with God is the work of the Church. Peace is offered to people through the Church. Baptism is the Sacrament of communion with God. We become children of God, children of peace and obtain the peace in Christ.

As Christians, we should put on our armor to stand against the enemy’s schemes. We need a more careful study of Scripture that allows us to transcend the biases of our own limited worldviews. That will give us a clearer understanding of what the Bible does teach about the powers of darkness. In fact, a Christian destroys Satan’s domain not through combat but by sharing about Jesus with others and standing firm in doing good and obeying His will. Which is our armor? Living the life of Church and taking part in the holy Sacraments, we manage to create a spiritual wall against the forces of the Satan. The sacraments are outward signs of interior grace that Christ gives to us. That grace bolsters our hearts to live a life close to Jesus. At their core, the sacraments are encounters with Jesus.

⁴⁴ CHRYSOSTOM, John. [*Homily 14 on Philippians*](#) (translated by John A. Broadus). From *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, Vol. 13.* edited by PHILIP SCHAFF. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1889. Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight.

⁴⁵ Col. 1:20.



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Christians take the first weapon against the spiritual war with their baptism on the name of Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. As Christians, the nature of our souls changed when we encountered God's grace in our Baptism; we became part of God's family. Then, from the holy confession and holy Eucharist, Christians can strengthen themselves in their struggling of passions.

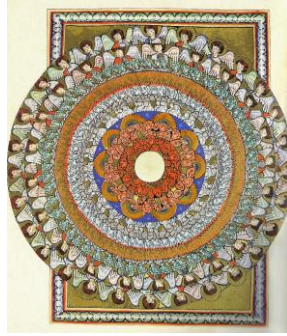
Church Fathers underline that our weapon against the war of passions is the prayer besides the sacramental life.⁴⁶ St Bishop Nikolaj (Velimirovic) in his prayer to the Most-Holy Theotokos asks to bring him the inner peace from the war of passions:

Waves of passion disturb my spirit; great sadness and anguish have overwhelmed my soul. Embalm my soul with Thy Son's peace, O Most Holy One, and by His Grace drive away every doubt and despair. Calm the storm of my sins that, like a fiery worm, burn me, and quench its flame. Fill my heart with joy, O Most Pure One, and disperse the fog of my iniquities before me, for it confuses me. Illumine me with the light of Thy Son. Helpless is my soul, and everything is cumbersome, even prayer. Here I am, cold as a stone, my lips whispering prayers, while my heart remains immovable, for it is smothered in anguish. Melt the ice which envelops my soul and warm my heart with Thy love.⁴⁷

Besides all these above the journey of spiritual combat of each Christian continues with arming himself with the powerful disciplines of fasting and almsgiving. Both practices are used as transformative tools in our spiritual growth. Fasting is a way of imitating Christ's forty-day fast in the wilderness, where He faced the devil's temptations and emerged victorious. By partaking in fasting, we not only follow Christ's example but also attain a deeper purity of heart. Fasting involves restraining not only our bodies through abstinence from food and drink but also our souls through the suppression of passions and desires.

⁴⁶ BOUNDS, Edward McKendree. *Prayer & Spiritual Warfare: Receiving Answers to Your Prayers*. New Kensington: Whitaker House, 1984, p. 96.

⁴⁷ VELIMIROVIC, Nikolaj. "[Orthodox Prayer against Passions, Torments, Despair and Distress: Prayer to the MostHoly Theotokos](#)". In: [The Saint Gregory Palamas Outreach](#).



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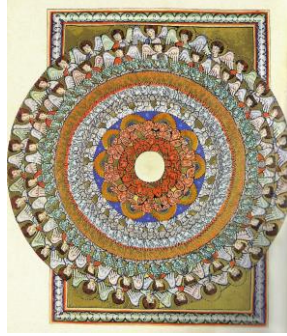
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On the other hand, almsgiving, inextricably linked with fasting, embodies the essence of love for our neighbor, reflecting the very nature of God's mercy. The act of giving selflessly to those in need shows our humility and reminds us of God's grace in our lives. Saint John Chrysostom profoundly encourages us to extend our fasting beyond food and drinks, prompting us to fast from slander, gossip, and any form of harm toward others. By embracing both fasting and almsgiving, we equip ourselves with the strength to overcome the spiritual battles that come our way.⁴⁸

As Christians we should know that this spiritual warfare must be conducted not with physical weapons, but with prayers, meditation on the Word of God, good deeds and good thoughts. Only in this way is the Christian able to withstand the works of the Devil, all the while invoking the help of Jesus Christ.⁴⁹ The Christian man transcends the traps of Devil, the spiritual warfare with the help of God; because God descended to the intimacy of man to elevate him, and Augustine expresses it using this eloquent and vigorous antithesis by which the humility, which is high, low to the arrogance that is down. Therefore, the transcendence of the Christian man is not given only through ascetic practices or moral precepts, but it is an exchange of being: the eternal appears in time for the temporal man to enter into eternity; the infinite fill the finite to elevate

⁴⁸ CHRYSOSTOM, John. *On Fasting and Almsgiving*, PG 48, 1059-1062. Abbreviations: PG: *Patrologia Graeca. Cursus Completus*, publ. J. P. MIGNE, Paris 1857-1912.

⁴⁹ Stephen M. Meawad underlines in his dissertation: *Spiritual Struggle and Gregory of Nyssa's Theory of Perpetual Ascent: An Orthodox Christian Virtue Ethic* that "...Spiritual struggle requires a consistent, focused dedication to a certain holistic way of life. Virtue ethics does the same in that it takes actions seriously but locates them within a wider purview of the person. This purview or way of being is certainly manifested through actions, but the source of the actions is a determination to struggle for the sake of progress in life with and toward Jesus Christ. Similarly, virtue ethics gives priority to the formation of agents of character and virtue. The emphasis on character formation, again, is held against theories that place more emphasis on what to do and what not to do, given a set of circumstances." – MEAWAD, Stephen M. [*Spiritual Struggle and Gregory of Nyssa's Theory of Perpetual Ascent: An Orthodox Christian Virtue Ethic*](#). Duquesne University, Doctoral dissertation, 2019, p. 5.



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it; the transcendent is made immanent to man so that the man transcends everything created.⁵⁰

Every Christian who wants to become member of the Kingdom of God, he must conquer his inward peace⁵¹ and to make a war against Satan and his forces. These forces have to do with the growth of human passions. When Christians manage to conquer the peace of God within them and the soul is convinced that God is indeed their Father, who governs creation, and that they are children of this Almighty God, who sustains creation, they have no danger, and they fear nothing. When Christians have inner peace, they are at peace with God and at peace with other people. It is undoubted that one of the most powerful marks of a believer is transcendent peace. This world offers Christians no reason to be peaceful. It offers them no reason to be without stress, burdens, cares, and total frustration. But Christians serve a God who offers them peace during any circumstance, “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”.⁵²

Basil of Caesarea comments on the Lord’s farewell gift of peace to His disciples, he adds “I cannot persuade myself that without love to others, and without, as far as rests with me, peace ableness towards all, I can be called a worthy servant of Jesus Christ”.⁵³

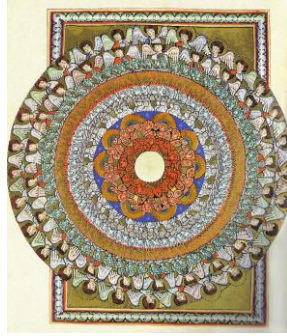
In Christianity, if the believer lives near God and sees Him, after God’s revelation to man, the latter will be happy, peaceful and calm for everything. The real love for God and for the other people gives happiness and peace to believers. The love of God is the

⁵⁰ SPIRITO SANTO, L. C., Bruno do. “[Reflections on an aspect of Christian humanism. The immanence of God and transcendence of man in the Confessions of Saint Augustine](#)”. In: *Humanist Information and Culture*, no. 56.

⁵¹ Matt. 22: 37-40, 50.

⁵² Phil. 4:7 *New King James Version*.

⁵³ ST. BASIL OF CAESAREA. [Letter 203: To the bishops of the sea coast](#), 1 (transl. by Blomfield Jackson). *From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 8 (ed. by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace). Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1895 (revised and edited for *New Advent* by Kevin Knight).



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sure foundation of our faith in Him. His love gives us the absolute assurance that we are never alone or without help. We have the spiritual weapons to fight against the Satan. God's love for us is unfailing, it never stops, and it is eternal. God's love is the reason we are alive. The more we become rooted and grounded in God's love, the more we will become happy, fruitful and fulfilled and peaceful:

Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.⁵⁴

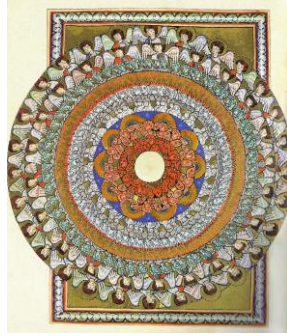
As a conclusion, we should observe that for an Orthodox Christian the goal is the peace in God, which comes from the unity with God. This peace derives because of our spiritual warfare against evil, against our passions, against Satan. Without the help and the grace of God our self-efforts to conquer inner peace are all in vain. Whatever, we seek through our own will is temporary. In the end it does not satisfy. Our souls seek more, something that is beyond our own will. True and lasting peace only comes from God. It comes when we are in touch with what is divine and above our human will. This unity with God brings us lasting life-giving warmth, peace, inner cheerfulness, and an unbothered conscience.⁵⁵

Conclusions

Peace and war are important issues in the Bible and in Christian tradition. These two words have to do with physical and spiritual enemies. In this paper we dealt with the spiritual meanings of peace and war. Man was created by God to live in peace with Him and with other people and with the whole nature. The fall of the first people destroy

⁵⁴ Eph. 3:17-19 (*New King James Version*). ARNOLD, Clinton E. *Ephesians: Power and Magic. The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of its Historical Setting*, SNTSMS 63. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 65, 118.

⁵⁵ ARNOLD, Clinton E. *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002, p. 57.



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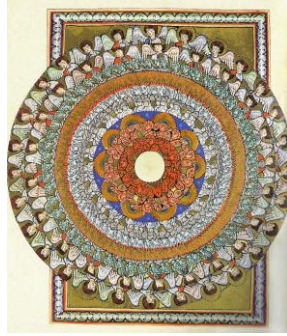
this peaceful way of living of people. War makes his appearance between God and man. As a result of man's hostility to God, man does not have peace with the other people and the nature, too.

The incarnation of the second person of Triune God, His transcendence, His passions, His crucifixion and His resurrection give man the opportunity to be united with God again and brings peace in his life. In patristic tradition, spiritual peace had to do with the warfare of passions. Christianity is governed by the principle to engage in the right relationship with God, as a means of attaining internal tranquility. In Christianity, the practice of prayer acts as a path to inner peace.

Christian spirituality can be understood as the way in which Christian individuals or groups experience or practice the presence of God. Dowd out that spirituality is not merely an intimate encounter with the divine Other, but an intimate relationship with the personal God who is always and only faithful to his covenant love.⁵⁶ As a conclusion, we should keep in our mind that spiritual warfare is part of the Christian life. The Psalm 144:1 says, "Praise be to the Lord, my Rock. Who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle" and in Exodus 15:3 says, "The Lord is a mighty warrior; the Lord is his name".

We are living on earth in enemy territory, and, therefore, we experience spiritual warfare. We must always be on the alert. The enemy comes in like a flood, trying to fill us with doubt, fear, and discouragement. He tries to bring division in our relationships. But our God always has victory when we trust in Him and walk in His peace. If we want to be healers and helpers in battle, we must be clad in His armor. We must have a strategy to rescue those taken hostage or left wounded on the battlefield. We must understand the seriousness of war and only through our participation of the sacramental life of Church; we can defend the spiritual war against Satan and to conquer the peace of Christ's Kingdom.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ DOWD, S. E. "Spirituality and the Bible". In: *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 29 (1994): 37-44, esp. 39.
⁵⁷ ERICKSON, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007, p. 17.



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