

**The Assurance of the Inherent Grace
in Edward Taylor's "Gods Determinations"**

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要約

エドワード・テイラーの「聖定」に見る 「内在の恵」の確実性について

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エドワード・テイラーの詩、「聖定」はただ「カルヴィン主義を韻文に直しただけ」と文学史上酷評されているが、詳しく解釈してみると意外に精密な理論とバロック・イメージの美しさを持つ作品である。1987年マサチューセツ植民地の神学者、ソロモン・スタダートは幼児洗礼を受けたまま信仰告白していない市民も聖餐にあずからせて選挙権を与えることを提案した。テイラーはこれに反対して、一連の説教で「聖餐論」を公開して主張する。スタダートは何人も自分が救の途上にあるか否か、確信できないと考えるが、しかし聖餐にあずかる資格は信仰を持つことで、神が一度選び「内在の恵」を植付けた人は努力さえすれば、必ず信仰告白できる筈だと。

では「内在の恵」が与えられているか否かはどのように判断するのだろうか。

「聖定」は「マタイによる福音書」22章1-14節に従って神が人間をキリストの祝宴に招くために、空を飛ぶ宮殿を送る場面から始まる。この信じられない恵に人間は抵抗するが当然降服してしまい、教会に帰ってサタンの攻撃と戦わねばならない。サタンの理論は法律家のように鋭く、この作品の中で永遠の生命を賭けて戦う人間の姿を高貴にしている。人間にとって一番大きな困難は「蟻が太陽の光を跨いでいるように」人間の制限された存在を遙かに超えた神の内在の恵を信じることだ。信仰の恵はどんなに世間的で生ぬるい人間にも開かれる。キリストの牧者、テイラーは神が悪い人間に注がれる愛を見よと訴え、疑惑そのものも内在の恵の証拠としてひるまない。空飛ぶ宮殿のイメージは歴史の中で教会を形成するキリストの体の造型として秀逸であり、最後に疑った者も信じた者も全員が乗込んで、太陽なるキリストの周囲をめぐる場面はまさにニュートンの時代の産物である。

The content of Edward Taylor's "Gods Determinations" is well associated with that of his *Treatise Concerning the Lord's Supper*, which consists of eight sermons given in succession in 1693 at his own church in Westfield (GTLS xxiii-xxiv). These sermons are known to be a protest against Solomon Stoddard's book, *The Safety of Appearing at the Judgment, In the Righteousness of Christ : Opened Applied* 1687(xxi). As the population of New England Colonies increased, and the second and third generations of the church members grew up, the ratio in the congregations of those who never presented their written confessions to their churches in order to be church members augmented and caused a sense of social instability as well as theological uncertainty, since only church members had the right to vote for the election of the magistrates. Those who were baptized at their birth, but who had not confessed their faith yet were called "half-way covenanters," and Solomon Stoddard's idea that the Lord's Supper should be administered to whoever wanted to participate in it regardless of whether or not they were church members was received favorably as a practical compromise on hand (RHAP 160), while it provoked outspoken protests by many ministers such as Increase Mather (GTLS xxvi). Historically, Taylor's sermons are just one more voice on the side of Increase Mather in the long sustained controverey in which Increase and Cotton Mathers fought to strengthen the rule of church members whose written confessions were authorized in their churches. These church members were called "saints," who all confessed to have experienced the work of the Spirit of God starting a new birth in their mind. Norman S. Grabo edited Taylor's eight sermons in *Edward Taylor's Treatise Concerning the Lord's Supper* (1966). They are most eloquent, insisting that the Lord's Supper should be given only to the saints who experienced the work of the Spirit, termed as "Inherent Grace" particularly by Taylor and John Cotton (S 393). Grabo more highly esteems Taylor's arguments than that of Increase Mather, who was the president of Harvard College then. Yet the poem, "Gods Determinations," apparently written during the days of the controversy, is not so well appraised. George Sebouhian, for instance, summarized the criticism of the poem since 1961 down to 1981, considers "Gods Determinations" to be too preachy and inferior to the same poet's *Preparatory Meditations* (CMSG 239). Karl Keller Calls it "morbid."¹ Hence in this paper, I would like first to read carefully "Gods Determinations," trying to point out Taylor's marvellous witticism and imagery that are as gorgeous as *Preparatory Meditations* in their baroque conceit unique to the poet. The second problem is whether "Gods Determinations" has refuted successfully the crucial point of Solomon Stoddard's : that nobody can be assured of himself or herself elected to be the Spirit's vessel (GTLS xxvii). If Taylor fails in this test, he will be vulnerable to the general accusation of the intolerance of the Puritans.

First the title, "Gods Determinations," should take some explanations; for the Calvinistic sense in it is not self-evident today. It was in the *Commentaries to the Prophet Daniel* that Calvin insists that God determines anything as He wills. This corresponds to the famous passage of Calvin's *Institutio religionis Christianae* (3.21) that God sees past,

present and future together so that one's future is already known to God. That God knows already whether or not each of us will be saved is frightening enough, but this is not because God is ruthless, but because He is justice. Does He then after all let people commit their sins and leave them alone? Is He not after all the author of sins, if nothing is done without His will? Calvin replies :

this calumny is easily answered, as the method of God's action differs materially from that of men . . . Because God has nothing in common with him who sins in reference to sinfulness. Hence we see how these things which we may deem contrary to one another, are mutually accordant, since God by his own will governs all events in the world, and yet is not the author of sin. (*CPD* 1 : 298-299)

Calvin pushes his rational speculations of God faithfully and points out the immeasurable distance between God's reason and human reason. God governs everybody, but does not save everybody. Since so many people refuse to listen to the Gospel, if one presumes that God wills to save everybody, this will only disprove God's omnipotence. But how can one know his will about whether or not one will be saved or not? Calvin states, "He governs others [men, angels and evil spirits] by his Spirit, namely, his elect, who are afterwards regenerated by his Spirit, and they are so treated by him that his justice may truly shine forth in all their actions" (*CPD* 1 : 300). But one is elected when one is fallen because of the original sin, so that God's election is entirely without any merit on part of the elect to deserve the salvation. This is why in the Synod of Dortrecht (1619) Calvinists decided the famous five doctrines of their faith : total inability of man, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance of the saints (*RDP* 61-201).

the Spirit, the "Inherent Grace" works within the elect most efficaciously and sanctifies the person in covenant "unto union and communion with Christ and his members in a way of regeneration and salvation," as Donald Stanford commentates referring to John Cotton (*S* 393). Hence the work of the Spirit never falls away from the elect but perseveres with him till the end. It is here the reasoning of Solomon Stoddard falls entirely different from that of Taylor. Since everybody is totally depraved in the beginning, and the fact of being elect is shown in the course of time as the good fruit of the good tree (Luke 6 : 44), half-way covenanters may be on their way to the salvation. Consequently this raises the question of why the New England churches should not take them into the communion of the Lord's Supper instead of forcing them to write their confessions to their embarrassment (*GTLS* xxi), or of waiting for them to write them. Stoddard, who had later Jonathan Edwards for a grandson, was such an able politician in the early New England theocracy that he was called "The Pope of the Connecticut Valley" (xix), was searching for something feasible to unify the New England churches more solidly. Taylor, on the contrary, believes that this "Inherent Grace" is sure to be known to people. In the dialogue of Justice and Mercy, "Gods Determinations," Mercy declares:

I will not onely from his Sin him free,
But fill him with Inherent grace also.

Though none are Sav'd that wickedness imbrace,
Yet none are Damn'd that have Inherent Grace. (G 38)

The mercy that gives this Inherent Grace comes unconditioned though and none can deliberately invites it at whatever cost. Was Taylor just honestly aristocratic, as Grabo states (*GTLS xxxi-xxxii*) ?

The biblical evidence that Taylor bases his objection against Stoddard is sure and clear. The poet starts his argument in *Treatise Concerning the Lord's Supper* with the exegesis of Jesus' parable, Matthew 22 : 12, as well as in "Gods Determinations." When God the King invited all His guests for the banquet to celebrate His Son's wedding, He saw one guest who was not wearing his wedding garment : " *And he said unto him, 'Friend! How comest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?' And he is speechless*" (*TLS* 1). However smartly compromising Stoddard was, the words of God are different from his. The wedding feast of the King for his Son means the Lord's Supper and nothing else (12). The bride means one's soul(17). He calls there the worst people, for good citizens who are running for their trade, keeping their farms in order, all decline the invitation. The only requirement to attend this most inconceivable wedding is to be prepared with the wedding garment, which means the "sanctifying work of the spirit upon soul" (29), symbolized with the image of the "fine linen, pure and white" (Rev. 19 : 14) which is given to the host of heaven, and which is made white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7 : 14). One does not need any skill or talent, for it is God's work to prepare the white garment. As Grabo interprets Taylor's best-known poem, it is God's "huswifery" of spinning and weaving figuratively to continue His work of Spirit (*GTLS x-xi*). All one should do is to give some attention to the work of the Spirit, the Inherent Grace, for in brief, "The wedden garment is that whereby a person is evangelically prepared for fellowship with God in all gospel ordinances" (*TLS* 35).

Taylor especially focuses his argument on one clear idea that the Lord's Supper is no "converting ordinance" (68). One cannot go to the wedding feast in order to acquire the garment. One must have already owned it like the cautious and good virgins who have prepared their oil in Matthew 25 : 1-13. Stoddard's argument, "It may be a Converting Ordinance, though there be neither promise nor example" in scripture (*GTLS xxx*), is his weakest, suggesting Roman Catholicism, for it was the learned schoolmen who defended eloquently that the sacrament is "means of giving the first grace [of conversion], *ex opere operato*" (*TLS* 117). Moreover, Stoddard's error is very serious, for the guest who is not wearing his wedding garment is thrown into the darkness outside. The Lord's Supper is not merely a feast but a divine judgment (108).

What then in particular should a saint who participates in the Lord's Supper be prepared for himself? Taylor writes clearly,

The Lord's Supper requires, as necessary to its celebration, the exercise of such instruments, as no unconverted person can in his unregeneracy attain unto, as:

A discerning eye to discern spiritual things. It is the faculty of the unworthy not to discern the body of Christ herein. (75)

The other two instruments one would prepare for the Lord's Supper are, "A receiving

hand. . . that shall also receive therewith the thing signified thereby" (75-76) and "A concoctive power, or faculty" (76) of these "spiritual dainties to be applied as spiritual food" (76). In other words, one must be regenerated as a new man to wear Christ (Ephesians 4 : 24).

It is not the Lord's Supper but meditations that empirically gave Taylor himself such new faculties. Particularly in Meditation 1.16, the poet who asks to open his spiritual eye in prayer, sees in his vision how the divine sight spills on eye over him :

What are thou, Lord, this Ball of Glory bright?
A Bundle of Celestiall Beams up boound
In Graces band fixt in Heavens topmost height
Pouring thy goldlen Beams thence, Circling round
Which shew thy Glory, and thy glories Way
And ery Whrer will make Celestiall Day. (S 29)

Such eyesight for the regenerated is compared in Meditation 2.9 to Moses' eye to see God face to face on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 24 : 7-18).

Modern readers at once protest that Taylor requires too much for ordinary people if one must have a great prophet's experience to participate in the Lord's Supper. Contemporaries of Taylor did not consider meditation to be an elite's practice. Louis Martz refers to Richard Baxter's treatise in discussing Taylor's *Preparatory Meditations*. Baxter's *Saints Everlasting Rest* (1650) appeared with ten editions in the years 1650-1670 and proves that Puritans undertook the "Diligent Practice of that Excellen unknown Duty of *Heavenly Meditation*" (MS xxiv-xxv). It will amaze present-day Christians to see that Baxter meant "active Christians" to be meditating Christians (SER 13.4). It was not merely John Milton or Peter Sterry, the Platonist and Cromwell's chaplain (MS xxv), who reached heaven before their death and tasted the joy of it. When John Calvin argued that the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper are merely signs in his *Institutio* 4.14, he expected his contemporary readers to envision exactly, in whatever way possible for each, the body of Christ in glory. Taylor was a good logician, and very properly quotes from Calvin to claim that signs presume what they signify, that the signs of Christ's body must exist together with Christ's body in meditation :

For the sign and the thing signified must go together in its celebration. If they be torn assunder, there is but a shell and not the kernel of the sacrament. He that can not receive both receives neither. "I suffer not Christ to be maimed," saith calvin. (TLS 86)

The quotation here is taken from Calvin's *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians* (GTLS 233). Edward Taylor organized his miniature church-commonwealth in 1679 within the fortification of a frontier town of Westfield, so he did not expect his audience to be as educated as the congregation of John Shepard's at Cambridge (EET 36-37). Fortunately the age of Renaissance allowed a New England country minister to speak to mankind in general just as well as did a blind poet in London, John Milton. This is why Taylor's sermons given at the meeting house of a frontier log-cabin are as authentic as Donne's sermons.

Actually “Gods Determinations” are a series of poems telling how to be assured in the Inherent Grace to the congregation who anxiously suffer in the obscure borderline territory of faith and doubt, and not to intellectual elites. The Christian paradox in Jesus’ parable (Luke 18 : 9–14) is utilized exemplarily : that a repenting publican’s prayer was more acceptable to God than an arrogant Pharisee’s. A man’s fallen situation and his predicaments are compared to a castle that was besieged and taken. Despite his royal origin, man lost his estate, now being confounded, ashamed and bewildered, sitting under hedge-rows and wandering on the highways, crippled and footsore. It is only by those lost people that the King’s messengers are heard (G 43. “Man’s Perplexity When Call’d to an Account”). This presumption exactly agrees with the parable of Matthew 22 : 10. The successful, worldly and decadent people had all declined the invitation to the King’s Son’s wedding feast.

Taylor’s wit to let the King prepare a flying coach for the crippled guests hardly seems to be appreciated. The King not only prepared a royal feast but also a transportation, a “Royal Coach” to carry them in across the sky :

A Royal Coach whose scarlet Canopy
 O’re silver Pillars, doth expanded ly :
 All bottomed with purest gold refin’de,
 And inside, o’re with lovely Love all lin’ de.
 Which Coach indeed you may exactly spy
 All mankind splits in a Dic [h] otomy.
 For all ride to the feast that favour finde,
 The rest do slite the Call, and stay behinde.

(G 44. “Gods Selecting Love in the Decree”)

Whoever is familiar to Edward Taylor’s image of gold and silver in his *Preparatory Meditations* can hardly make a mistake in taking this gold and silver coach for the church as the body of Christ.² Does the church as the body of Christ fly in the air as the bird of paradise in George Herbert’s “Prayer”? The conceit is certainly startling, but in Meditation 2.92, Christ’s coach actually appears, shining like a palace in splendour :

What is thy Humane Coach thy Soule rides in,
 Bathing in Bright, Heart ravishing glory all
 In Gods Celestial splendent Palace trim,
 Full of it’s Fulgient Glory of that hall?
 And wilt thou from this glorious Palace come
 Again to us on earth, where Sinners throng? (lines 7–12)

Christ Incarnated in body and existing on earth still as the church is represented in this refulgent image of a coach-like palace. Though he is certainly the carrier of redeemed sinners to heaven, present-day readers must take time to appreciate this static image unique in the baroque poetry right after the Metaphysical tradition passed away. Being in the post-Romantic days, we are accustomed to images including life and motions. On the contrary, Taylor’s sea is in the “Preface” to “Gods Determinations,”

Like a Quilt Ball within a silver Box. . . . (G 31)

In order to appreciate this simile, one must forget the perpetually resounding, undulating mass of water of oceans, dry up the abundance of colored life that lives underneath the gray, softly gleaming surface of the northern seas. It is almost an intellectual exercise to accept the image of Christ's coach, royal and shining, fit only for kings, but we are all kings as the objects of Christ's love.³ Being unable to esteem oneself so high, most of the people who gathered round the coach in a market place declined to take it, "For hearing of the price, and wanting pay" (G 45). The price is, of course, everything that one has, as we learn the price of the kingdom of heaven in Jesus' parable (Matt. 13 : 45-46). Taylor is not concerned at all with those who entered the Coach immediately. Few must be those who dared, for most of the people ran away and resisted such incredible grace. The title of the poem, "The Frowardness of the Elect in the Work of Conversion," is of course, a quiet irony that Taylor inherited from his beloved master, George Herbert.⁴

Before this shining coach appears, Taylor lets Justice and Mercy discuss in a long dialogue, which suggests very nicely what kind of people are elected. As man is lost, exposed to God's anger from above and Satan's fire from below (G. "The Effects of Man's Apostacy"), Mercy (Christ) at once offers himself to bear the burden of man's sin. Justice's sentence is that the offer is accepted at the maximum cost of Mercy :

Nay, on thy shoulders bare must beare the Smart
 Which makes the Stoutest Angell buckling cry ;
 Nay, makes thy Soule to Cry through grieffe of heart,
 ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHT[H] ANI,
 If this thou wilt, come then, and do not spare. . . .

(G 37. "A Dialogue between Justice and Mercy")

When this is agreed, Justice warns that man will never miss repeating his sins. Mercy answers that man will "better grow when he is at the worst" (37). The natural grace, man's gift given through nature, is not forfeited because of the original fall, so that mercy will certainly make a proud man abuse the grace, walking on dirty crutches after his leg is broken. The humble also abuse the mercy and cry that justice is never done. Hence Justice will scourge the soul with moral laws,

Lest that the Soule in Sin securely ly,
 And do neglect Free Grace, I'll step[p] ing in,
 Convince him by the Morall Law, wherby
 Ile'st se[e] in what a pickle he is in,
 For all he hath, for nothing stan it shall,
 If of the Law one hair breadth short it fall. (G 40)

Mercy responds that he will extend his hand to help when any such people will be startled and cry, "help, help, with tears" (G 41). Here again is repeated the Christian paradox that whoever is punished most severely is the one most favored, and that the most afflicted are the most blessed. To be elect is no enviable situation, but to share Christ's suffering because of mercy. As God's reason is far too infinite for the finite human reason to measure, so incomprehensible are His Mercy and Justice.

With no attention to the bewilderment of the elect, torn between Justice and Mercy,

the latter calls to any humble man,

My Dove, come hither linger not, nor stay,
Though thou among the pots hast lain, behold
Thy Wings with Silver Colours I'll o'relay ;
And lay thy feather o're with yellow gold. (G 42)

So the resplendent palace of silver and gold flying in the air grows, transformed out of a humble believer, called "My Dove." A dove symbolizes chastity and a beloved one referring to Canticle 2 : 14. A dove also means Christ as the peace-maker, intermediating between God and man. Taylor contemplates how the humanity of Christ covers the humanity of a humble man in Meditation 2.30 :

Christ as a Turtle Dove, puts out his Wings.
Lay all on me, I will saith hee. Conway
Away thy fault, and answer for thy sin. (lines 13–15)

Christ the Dove spread his wings over a man like the Spirit over the primal darkness in Genesis 1 : 2 that hatched the heaven and earth. It is a new temple of the Spirit that the dove-like wings hatch under the warm breast. This union of man's soul with Christ is the wedding which is celebrated in the Lord's Supper. Interpreting Hebrew 10 : 5, "A Body hast thou prepared mee," in his *Christographia* I, Taylor argues that Christ's body was created as the singular body of the perfect human nature with "the Highest Possibility of Excellency, and perfection that their [the materials'] nature would admit of" (C 14). Hence it is our duty to contemplate on what glory God has advanced human nature to, and what great mercy of God it is for the elect to be unified with this glorious body of Christ, for Christ the shining example is peculiarly imitable (26–33), in his suffering and his charity.

Another peculiar, paradoxical blessedness of the elect is to be tempted by Satan. The battlefield of the Spirit is again far too subtle for man to be mixed in. In consequence man is forever to repeat Eve's failure, though Christ now stands for help. The fugitives from the Mercy's bright coach soon fall in ranks fighting in desperate resistance with the only possible result that they are surrendering one rank after another. Satan rages at them for their conversion :

You're the first Van that fell ; you're Traitors, Foes ;
And Unto such, Grace will not trust repose.
You Second Rank are Cowards ; if Christ Come
With you to fight his field, you'll from him run.
You third are feeble-hearted ; if Christ's Crown
Must stand or fall by you, you'll fling it down.
You last did last the longest : but being ta'ne,
Are Prisoner made, and Jayle Birds must remain. (G 48)

Satan is characteristically contradicting himself. The third rank are attacked for both their feebleness and their having endured the battle longest. After this the behaviors of the three different ranks widely vary : the first rank appeal directly to Christ, confessing that they ran away just because of the weakness of flesh. They were born pure in heart

so that they can see God (Matt. 5 : 8). They ask Christ, "If thou still suspect us, come and search" (G 50) and receive Christ's assurance : ⁵

His [Satan's] murdering Canons which so roare,
And Engins though as many more,

Shoot only aire : no Bullets fly. (G 51. "Christs Reply" [I])

While the other two ranks have to suffer from their inability to find Christ, the converts belonging to the first rank have their spiritual eyes open, though after long, insistent accusations of Satan against them.

If readers today are disgusted with so much of Satan's participation in Taylor's dramatization of soul's growth and union with Christ, it will suffice to point out that temptation is directed only to those who are worthy of being tempted in the enemy's view. Ask C. S. Lewis, who wrote *The Last Battle ; A Story for Children* (1956). When Satan speaks with reason, pretending authenticity like a lawyer, when the distinction of God's voice and Satan's voice comes to be obscured, it is exactly the time that the greatest danger is threatening, but that the victory will be most glorious. Satan speaks his biblical language :

Is Mercy impudent? or Justice blind?

I am to make restraint on the Design'd.

The North must make before the South proves Kind ;

The Law must break before the Gospell binde.

(G 54, "First Satan Assault against those that first Came up
to Mercy terms")

The adversary takes for his advantage the quickness of conversion in the first rank, urging them to think that they are brainless, not knowing that Mercy and Justice are in conflict. The faithful converts in the first rank are frank and straightforward in answer:

The Gospell did the Law prevent : my heart

Is therefor drest from Sin : and did not smart. (54)

Satan replies at once that the new converts are presumptuous, showing no virtue of humbleness :

A likely thing! Oh shame! presume on Grace!

Here's Sin in Grain : it hath a Double Face.

Come, Come with mee. I'll shew your Outs and Inns,

Your Inside and your out : your Holy things. (54)

The worst for soul is that Satan is right. Turning our natural eye inside, soul can nothing but himself,

trudging hard, though secretly

Upon the feet of your Affection mute,

And hankering after all forbidden fruite.

(G 55, "The Accusation of the Inward Man")

In social behaviors, the outward aspect of soul is no more honorable, as Satan ridicules :

Why did thy Tongue detract from any one,

Whisper such tales thou wouldst not have be known?

When thou was got in such a merry vane,
How far didst thou exceed the golden mean?

(G 57. "The Outward Man accused")

Satan the accuser is invariably an excellent critic in touching the sore spots of soul's inside and outside, within the conscience and in every act, for there "You and I Embrace!" (56). A faithful man behaves himself exactly as Satan would behave.

Yet soul in the first rank keeps good sense to stop listening to Satan for groaning to Christ. The dreadful enemy comes and "injures thy rich Grace" (G 60. "The Souls Groan to Christ for Succour") :

Those Graces which thy Grace enwrought in mee,
He makes as nothing but a path of Sins ;
He maketh Grace no grace, but Crueltie ;
Is Graces Honey Comb, and a Comb of Stings?
This makes me ready leave thy Grace and run,
Which if I do, I finde I am undone. (60)

It takes time for soul to detect how Satan's art changes the sweet honey comb of grace into stings from the world, for the successful people respected in the world reason exactly as Satan does. Christ's second reply assures that these stings and arrows soul must suffer, when he serves Christ, are indispensable for sanctifying soul :

But still look for Temptations Deep,
Whilst that thy noble Sparke doth keep
Within a Mudwald Cote.
These White Frosts and the Showers that fall
Are but to whiten thee withall,
Not rot the Web they smote.

If in the fire where God is tri'de,
Thy Soul is put, and purfi'de,
Will thou lament thy loss?
If silver-like this fire refine
Thy Soul and make it brighter Shine :

Will thou bewaile the Dross? (G 64. "Christ's Reply" [II])

The second stanza in this quotation tells us how the earthly feathers of a common dove will undertake the transformation into a palace of gold and silver.

The affliction of soul ends in the poem that follows, "An Extasy of Joy let in by this Reply returnd in Admiration." The spiritual eye of soul is opened and reveals what is radiant beyond the limits of our bodily sight. Soul asks :

Who swaddle up the suns bright rayes
Can in a Flesh Flies Wing?

Can any Ant stand on the Earth and spit
Another out to peer with this?

Or Drink the Ocean up, and yet
Its belly empty is?

Thou may'st this World as easily up hide
Under the Blackness of thy naile :
As scape Sins Gulph without a Guide :
Or Hell without a bale.

If all the Earthy Mass were rambd in Sacks,
And saddled on an Emmets small,
Its Lord were light unto those packs
Which Sins do bring on all

But sure this burden'd Emmet moves no wing.
Nay, nay, Compar'd with thee, it flies.
Yet man is eased his weight of Sin :
From hell to Heaven doth rise. (G 67)

A fly swaddling over the whole bundle of sunbeam, an ant spitting another world, and an emmet burdened with the massive earth are all figures of speech to present the miraculous power of God's creating a new man and his new eyes, being unified with Christ. These images are intellectual than aesthetic, and one needs metaphysical talent rather than imagination to appreciate them. The temptations of Satan blow only the infernal flame in order to separate the poison of Adam's apple from man's blood, for Taylor writes:

None can this coare [of Adam's apple] remove, Poison expell :
He, if his Blood ben' it Clarifie'de
Within Christs veans [veins] must fry in Hell,
Till God be satisfi'de. (66)

Even when man's blood has to be burnt in hell, it is contained within Christ's veins ; a sure protection is provided even at the worst of temptations.

Together the second and third ranks of converts are accused by Satan. The repetition of Satan's raving sounds dull for careless readers, and Taylor's closeness to Satan may even evoke suspicion against the poet, as C. S. Lewis was suspected as a curious professor very familiar to the devils of his creation, *Screwtape* and *Wormwood*, when he published *Screwtape Letters* (1942). Yet the horrid knowledge about Satan is acquired with or without any particular desire for it whenever one devotes oneself to an intermediary prayer for one's family, friends or neighbors, for however small a Christian one may be, a type of Christ fighting against Satan cannot but appear in this kind of prayer. Jesus, too, was accused as the chief of the evil spirits (Luke 11 : 14-15). Being a minister of a church and well versed in the miserable knowledge about Satan, Taylor subtly differentiates Satan's attack on the second rank and that on the third rank, with the result that we can surmise why the former surrendered to God before the latter did. Unlike the first rank of converts, the second rank deliberately refused to accept mercy.

Satan accuses them, "When Grace did sound her parle, you stopt the Eare". . . ("The Second Ranke Accused," G 68). The third rank of converts lament their having lost the sense of sinfulness (G 73), on the other hand. This is the peculiar result of one's having committed sins deliberately and resisted the warning of conscience. Knowing how the second rank are afraid of possible punishment to come for their having rejected the mercy of God, Satan beat them with the memories of famous biblical characters who once owned the mercy of God but lost it :

Did mercy better Cain, or make him thrive,
When he pronounc'd himself a Fugitive :
What Benefit had Esau who did weep,
And in Repenting, tears did scald his Cheeks?
Or what King Ahab, that he softly went?
Or what poore Judas that he did repent? (68)

As usual Satan tells half-truths and half-lies. It is true that Esau could never recover his right as Isaac's first born after he had sold it to Jacob, but Esau's descendants made a powerful nation called Edomites (Genesis 27 : 37-40, 36 : 1-5). When Cain was driven to the wilderness because of his fratricide, God marked on Cain's brow, lest he should be killed (4 : 12-16). King Ahab had repented certainly before he was killed in the battlefield. This did not change his miserable death, but God promised to Elijah, "Have you seen how Ahab humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days ; but in his son's days I will bring the evil upon his house" (RSV, I Kings 21 : 28-29). Keeping his promise, God waited till his death for reducing the territory of Israel (II Kings 10 : 32-33). Judas hanged himself, but only after he refused to listen to the warning of Jesus (Matt. 26 : 21-25). Yet Satan's sly half-truth sufficiently threatens the audience :

Doth Mercys Sun through Peaces lattice clear
Shine in thy Soule? Then what's that Uproare then?
Look well about you, try before you trust :
Though Grace is Gracious ; Justice still is just.
If so it be with you, say what you can,
You are not Saints, or I no Sinner am. (G 69)

In brief, Satan is doing his best not to let the converts of the second rank accept Jesus' redemption. His eloguence is even admirable.

With the third rank, Satan's work is made easier, for the converts of the third rank were born weak and worldly, though their characters were no fault of their own. Satan can just ridicule them to the face :

I see thy secret thoughts : and such they bee,
That Wish there was no God, or I was Hee ;
Or that there was no Holiness, unless
Those sins thou'rt given to, were Holiness.
Or that there was no Hell, except for those
Who stand for Holiness, and sin oppose :

Or that there was no heaven t'enter in,
Except for those Who pass their Lives in Sin.

(G 72. "The Third Rank accused")

How well Satan knew the worldliness which consists of obdurate scepticism and weakness. Arid and tasteless as the world is, non-religious people find it rather cosy and safe, and have learned for many years to live therein, being cleverly compromised with evil, and sensible enough to avoid real crimes. Satan, the ruler of the world of "actuality," looks far more merciful in teaching how to avoid embarrassment while God of Mercy forces embarrassing confession of sins, and holiness seems to be of bad taste. Russell Baker in his excellent autobiography recalls that his methodist grandfather went bankrupt because he believed that insurance is a kind of gambling (GU 30-31). For worldly people such religious fancy may jeopardize their business. Unlike our age that applauds worldly success, the worldly-wise people in the Puritan Society carefully had to conceal their thoughts. It is very comforting that Taylor counted such most worldly members of his congregation as serious Christians, and searched their own way of finding the new birth in the body of Christ.

Why can they not trust grace and rely on mercy? The second and third ranks condole each other's predicaments :

Second

But if you saw

Those ugly Crawling Sin that do us know,
You'd Change your minde. You mourn and pray, we see :
We would not for a Word you were as wee.

Third

Repent! and Pray! Aye, so the Traytor Cast
Cries, *Good my Lord!* yea, when his Doom is past.
You erre through your Abundant Charity. (G 73. "A

Threnodially Dialogue between The Second and Third Ranks")

The converts in the third rank almost resemble the caged ex-believer in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (PP 66-67), whose repentance is denied by God, because he has despised the Spirit of grace. The second rank can lament and cry still, asking in despair, "Would you fain aspire/ Out of the Frying Pan into the Fire?" (74). It is a good thing for the two kinds of cowards in the second and third ranks to join their voices :

On the Pacific Ocean forth we trust.

Necessity lies on's ; we care not stay :

If drown we must, we'l drown in Mercy's Sea! (77)

Together, the third rank were given their voices, for Christ rules their will, as seen in his first reply to the first rank :

I am a Captain to your Will ;

You found me Gracious, so shall still,

Whilst that my Will is your Design. (G 51. "Christ's Reply" [I])

Whether or not Calvinists' claim that God's predestination never limits the freedom of will (RDP 205-206) is convincing, Taylor's third rank enjoys a better privilege than

Bunyan's ex-believer, for man's having lost the will to be saved is not questioned once God elected the man.

As the second and third ranks appeal to a saint's help, the hope of salvations stirs the saint's mind : "Methinks I[the saint] finde there dart/ Some pleasant Hope of you within my heart" (G 80 "The Preface to the Soul's Search"). In a rather tedious process, the saint explains step by step to the second and third ranks the way of God to man, almost like a psychiatrist's session today. The saint's counselling can no more make poetry than a psychiatrist's session. Nevertheless, some of Taylor's similes and arguments spark :

Saint

What ambling work within a Ring is here?

What Circular Disputes of Satan Geer?

To prove thee Graceless, he thy sins persues ;

To prove thee sinfull, doth thy Grace accuse.

Why dost thou then believe the tempter so?

He seels by helping thee thy Overthrow. (G 85 "The Sopuls

Doubts touching its Sins Answerd")

Soul is afflicted by the strangeness of God, being used to the familiar despotic rule of the king of this world. "If you will fall down and worship me" (Matt. 4 : 9), he whispers, whether or not man recognizes the voice. Being aware of the tempter, people are quickly adjusting to appease him, smartly and recklessly.

Hence comes the primal and pertinacious doubt which Calvinism evokes within man, and which makes one of the most important themes of this poem. Can one be assured of whether one is elect? Some of our church members are sure of their Inherent Grace, while others are perpetually doubting. Can we ask for any assurance if it is expected for us to believe and be saved by faith only? Soul inquires of Saint the very reason of their restlessness :

Soul How can I trust you? You do not know

Whether I have a Grain of Grace or no.

Saint You think you might have more : you shall have so,

But if you'd all at once, you could not grow.

And if you could not grow, you'd grieving fall :

All would not then Content you, had you all. (G 87. "Doubt

from the Want of Grace Answered")

The saint is admirably unperturbed at the wracking doubt of the soul. So far as any soul feels a stir of doubt of God, even in the midst of his worldiness, there exists a hope for the Inherent Grace to appear. Man's weak whim, pretension and air only serve to bring out the sureness and potency of God's Inherent Grace to him, which is assured at every temptation.

The latter half of "Gods Determinations" is written for the second and third ranks of the converts, who are helpless victims of Satan's sophistication, incapable of neither conviction nor straight denial of faith. While they seek desperately any assurance of

their Inherent Grace, the saint warns them about the adversary's wiles :

Nay, though the Faith be true, he [Satan] acts so sly,
As to raise doubts : and then it must not do :
Unless Assurance do it Certify :
Which if it do, it dou[b] ts of it also.
Faith is without Assurance shuffled out,
And if Assurance be, that's still a doubt.

But should the Soule assured once, once Doubt,
Then his Assurance no Assurance is :
Assurance doth assure the Soul right out :
Leaves not a single Doubt to do amiss,
But Satan still will seeke to pick an hole
In thy Assurance to unsure thy Soul.

Should any Soule once an Assurance get
Into his hands, soon Satans Pick-Lock key
With Sinful Wards Unlocks his Cabinet
To Steal the Jewell in it, thence away. (G 94. "Some of Satans
Sophistry")

It is Satan's way "to say and straight unsay," as Angel Gabriel detects (*PL* 5.947) in *Paradise Lost*. He first makes religion a moral duty, and calls it hypocrisy if one tries to practice it faithfully (G 91. "Doubts from Satans Temptations Answered"). But God has his own way to assure His elect, even though they can never be as sophisticated as Angel Gabriel. All these afflicted wanderings, hesitations and stragglings in the future will show a lovely pattern of God's design, once committed to memory :

His Wildred state will wane away, and hence
These Crooked Passages will soon appeare :
The Curious needlework of Providence,
Embroidered with golden spangles Cleare.

(G 98. "Difficulties arising from Uncharitable Carriages of
Christians")

Nothing that has existed within God's hand from the beginning will appear on the earth, and nothing that man is involved in on his way to salvation will end without grace. Taylor in his conclusion of the intricate dialogue of Soul and Saint displays the most hopeful example of the Puritans' faith.

The long and laborious session of the Puritans' seventeenth-century psychiatry results in the second and third ranks finding their spiritual senses of their new body and perceiving Christ's new garden through fragrance,

Whence Come these Spicy Gales? Shall we abuse
Such aweet perfumes with putrid noses?
Who did in this Diffisive Aire Diffuse

Such Aromatick fumes or Posies?

These Spirits are with Graces sweetly splic'te ;

What Good Comes in them? Oh! they Come from Christ! (G 99 "The

Effect of this Discourse upon the second and third Ranks)

Spices are interpreted to be "Cloudy Pillars of Perfume" by Taylor himself. These Pillars of clouds once led Israelites across the wilderness (Exodus 13 : 22), being taken for a type of Christ by exegetes later. In this poem the sweet fragrance comes from Christ's Coach, and the weakest can be "lapt up in all perfumes," to the air (G 999), to be unified with Christ's body.

The wilderness they moved in as emigrants is now turned to be a lovely garden⁶ in which no honey is lacking,

Thou [Christ] has pluckt out our Stings ; and by degrees

Hast of us, lately Wasps, made Lady Bees. (G 101. "Our Insufficiency

to Praise God suitably for his Marcy")

These souls like lady-bees are enjoying "Christ[']s Curious Garden fenced in/With Solid Walls of Discipline" (G 102. "The Soule Seeking Church-Fellowship." They find themselves to be flowers, which symbolize the greatest joy of the wedding" between the soul and Christ" (TLS 17), for the soul

trims the same with Graces rife

To be the Lambs espoused Wife.

Yea like a Bride all Gloriously arraide

It is arrai'de, whose dayly ware

Is an Imbrodery with Grace in laide. . . . (G 102)

Taylor fills a part of his *Meditations* with the image of the beloved's garden from Cantic 5 : 1. Christ's garden "Of all Delightfull Beauteous flowers and sweet," was first provided to Adam, and now styled by Christ as a "Garden-Church" (Meditation 2. 83. 2-6). In this garden souls can gather the myrrh for "killing putrid vermin Sins" (Meditation 84.31), and wine flows as Christ says, "My friends, drink, drink abundantly" (2. 86. 18). To the amazement of a reader, the choicest flowers

most richly sweet

Are Disciplinde

With Artificiall Angells meet.

An heap of Pearls is precious. . . . (G 106 "The Glory of and Grace

in the Church set out")

The figure of angels in pearls, with their association of the Gospel (Matt. 13 : 45), make another of Taylor's baroque images with their rare dignity of static, allegorical beauty.

Given the tongues and ears of Christ's body, souls can sing in the choir of angels, though they are frightened at first :

But should these Praises on string'd Instruments

Be sweetly tun'de? I finde

I nonplust am, for no Consents [consonant]

I ever minds. (G 107)

Thomas Johnson finds "consents" to be a pun with two senses : "harmony" and "agreement" between God and man (G 193). Taylor also enjoys his divine arithmetics : though each pious man is like an atom, having a world in each, the number of these atom worlds is numberless ; hence "Each Tongue would tune a World of Praise, we guess, /Whose songs in number would be numberless" (G 101). "Our Insufficiency to Praise God suitably for his Mercy").

Taylor concludes the whole group of poems in "Gods Determinations" with the one often anthologized, "The Joy of Church Fellowship rightly attended." His image of Christ's Coach encircling round the earth puzzles the reader unless he reads the whole sequence of the poems entirely. As we have proved, it is Christ's body, visible only to saints who are unified with Christ. Taylor's opening line is very surrealistic :

In Heaven soaring up, I dropt an Eare
On Earth : and oh! sweet Melody!
And listening, found it was the Saints who were
Encroacht for Heaven that sang for joy
For in Christs Coach they sweetly bing
As they to Glory ride therein. (G 109)

The wit of the poet obviously refers to Pythagoras' music of sphere, but also to the poet's supernatural sense in Christ's body. Presuming that this coach is tied to Christ the Sun by a string, we very much suspect that the poet was conscious of Newton's *Principiae Naturalis Philosophia Mathematica* (1686), though the editors of *Norton Anthology of American Literature* (1989) surmised the year of the composition to be c 1685 (NAAL 1 : 188). New England Puritans were so sensitive to the budding natural science that in the year the Royal Society was founded (1660), the son of John Winthrop joined it. Taylor's pun in the word, "string," delights us in the stanza :

And if a string do slip by Chance, they soon
Do screw it up again : whereby
Tey set it in a more melodious Tune
And a Divine Harmony, (G 109)

with the two meanings : the string of a musical instrument and the string of love that binds the coach to Christ the Sun. If the string also means the Newtonian gravitation, how thrillingly new the image must be. Riding this palacial coach of Christ any weakest Christian will be grandly assured of his salvation, for in the coach the church members admire all the beauty and good of Christ daily and nightly.

These saints bound to Christ the Sun, riding in Christ's Coach, encircle with the earth, waiting for the second coming of Christ, while the earth also goes round the sun. They are not separated from the earth, but simply enjoying all the good that Christ can endow them with. Taylor never forgets those who were not born in the Christendom, but notes them as they are walking to the right direction :

Some few not in ; and some whose Time and Place
Block up this Coaches way, do goe
As Travellers afoot : and so trace

The Road that gives them right thereto. . . . (G 109)

Taylor was a rare saint who was ever concerned with the salvation of pagans in the seventeenth century, when once Turks besieged Vienna, riding northward across the steppe of Russia. Bunyan of course paid to pagans no attention except as a menace lying dead already (*PP* 112) at the exit of the valley of the shadow of Death in his *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Now that any attack of Puritanism enables one to pretend scholarship, to read "Gods Determinations" seriously makes an experience. C. S. Lewis lets his singularly intelligent devil, Screwtape, find "Puritanical" to be a very convenient word to ridicule anything pious in defiance of conscience (*SL* 30). Away from the long-established fashion that "Puritanism" connotes "hypocrisy," "Gods Determinations" is a work with greatness in Taylor's startling baroque images, in his acuteness of logic and mostly in the pureness of his faith. As a literary work, one can point out some obvious defects: the lines are too crowded with words; placed on the tradition of a morality play,⁷ the characterization is not interesting enough, so that the work is merely Calvinism in verse. Nevertheless, no careful reader can remain unimpressed at the genuine nobleness of these poems. Belonging to the reputedly intolerant race of the Puritan divines, Taylor did not denounce the lukewarm people in faith, but found their way of salvation with an exhausting counseling.

This is much unlike Jonathan Edwards, a grand son of Solomon Stoddard, who from the pulpit openly attacked such constituents of his congregation. "Gods Determinations" reminds us of many good qualities of Puritanism as a root of America. Taylor was before anything a good and faithful shepherd, but also a good poet, as this interpretive study hopefully has proved. If we follow C. S. Lewis, to restore the honor of Puritans, we may start from reading Taylor's poems.

Notes

1. Karl Keller, in his otherwise excellent work, *the Example of Edward Taylor*, wrote about "Gods Determinations" that this work of Taylor's shows "one example. . . that went into what Hawthorne, Melville, and Emily Dickinson were to identify as the very grain of the American character: the creating of a morbid, hope-filled self-consciousness, an alert and anxious attention to spiritual nuance, a life-dominating watchfulness, a spiritualized masochism." *EET* 138. It is strange that no reader of our own days seemed to enjoy the marvellously optimistic happy ending in this work.
2. For the meaning of gold and silver in Taylor's *Meditations*, see the paper of the present author, "Edward Taylor's Meditation of the Body of Christ," *Kobe College Studies* 37.3 (1991): 37-48.
3. See how Milton compared Adam and Eve to Jupiter and Juno (*PL* 4.499-500), and had angels serve to protect them. Adam was created to govern the rest of God's creations (7.510) as the Lord of the world, except for that one little, easy prohibition (4.426-432). It is this royal status of Adam that Christ recovered through his sacrifice.
4. Louis Martz discusses Herbert's influence on Taylor in *MS* xiv-xv. Thomas H. Johnson found in his study of Taylor's library, a copy of Herbert's *Temple*. See *P* 202-220.
5. Taylor was as bold as Milton in putting his words in Christ's mouth and in Satan's mouth.

Milton let God Almighty speak to and dialogue with God the Son in *PL* 3.80–343. In comparison of this with Dante's *Paradiso*, where the Italian poet can gaze at the eternal light of God only one single moment (33.94–96), we realize that both Taylor and Milton lived in the Age of Reformation, when people believed that God speaks straight to individual believers.

6. It is rather amazing that Taylor never used the gloomy images of the wilderness that Hawthorne utilized in *The Scarlet Letter* or in "The Young Goodman Brown." The dark forest in which Hester and Dimmesdale meet like two disembodied ghosts remind the reader of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, "For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God" (*RSV* 8 : 19). The forest itself bewails there, "creaked with a blast that was passing through it. The boughs were tossing heavily above their heads ; while one solemn old tree groaned dolefully to another, as if telling the sad story of the pair. . . ." *The Scarlet Letter, NAAL* 1 : 1266. Wild nature never groaned like this to Taylor, who was a good naturalist. Not only he held in his library, Johann Schroeder's *Cosmographie, Pharmacopeia Medico-Chymica*, and Culperer's *A Physicall Directory*, but also he tried a poem on a set of monstrous bones discovered at New York in 1705, "The Great Bones of Claverack." See Lawrence Lan Sluder, "God in the Background : Edward Taylor as Naturalist," *GB* 266. In this poem, nature plays music, however rugged her organs are :

Sweet musicks for our Eares produce alive
By all her Bagpipes, Virginalls and Harps
The wing'd musicians of the Woods imparts,
Yea, and harsh notes from rugged Organs roar,
Displaying to us also natures Store. (*GB* 268)

Sluder states that Taylor's description of the bones is academical and accurate, and that the poet concludes the wonders of nature can be verified by reason (*GB* 270). In observing the divine power of reason working behind nature, he was one century ahead, standing equal to the eighteenth century deists like Joseph Addison. It is also a problem of our future study that Taylor seldom refers to Pauline epistles. The conflict of law and grace hardly seems to have troubled the reformer in the wilderness.

7. The medieval tradition in Edward Taylor's poems will make another interesting field of study. From George Herbert Taylor inherited Christian typology, a kind of the medieval pieties. In the form, "Gods Determinations" can be an oratorio seen among Andrew Marvell's works. Nathalia Wright, However, studies this group of poems in the tradition of the medieval morality plays, imagining Satan to appear in a red robe. See "The Morality Tradition in the Poetry of Edward Taylor," *American Literature*, 18 (1946) :1–17.

Abbreviations

- C** Edward Taylor, *Edward Taylor's Christographia*, ed. Norman S. Grabo (New Haven : Yale UP, 1962)
- CMSG** George Sebouhian, "Conversoin Morphology and the Structure of Gods Determinations," *Early American Literature*, 16 (1981–1982) : 226–240
- CPD** John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Daniel*, trans. Thomas Meyeres, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich. : Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1948)
- EET** Karl Keller, *The Example of Edward Taylor* (Amherst, Mass. The U of Massachusetts P, 1975)
- G** Edward Taylor, "Gods Determinations Touching His Elect and the Elect Combat in their Conviction, and Coming Up to God in Christ : Together with the Comfortable Effects

- Thereof, *The Poetical Works of Edward Taylor*, ed. Thomas H. Johnson (New York : Rockland, 1939), pp. 29–109
- GB Lawrence Lan Sluder, "God in the Background : Edward Taylor as a Naturalist," *Early American Literature*, 7(1972–1973) : 265–271
- GTLS Norman D. Grabo, "Introduction," and "Explanatory Note," *Edward Taylor's Treatise Concerning the Lord's Supper*, ed. Norman S. Grabo (East Lansing, Mich. : Michigan State UP, 1966)
- GU Russell Baker, *Growing Up* (New York : Signet Book, 1992)
- MS Louis L. Martz, "A Forward," *The Poems of Edward Taylor* (New Haven : Yale UP, 1960)
- NAAL Nina Baym et al, *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 3d ed. (New York, Norton, 1989)
- P Edward Taylor, *The Poetical Works of Edward Taylor*, ed. Thomas H. Johnson (New York: Rockland, 1939)
- PL John Milton, *Paradise Lost, The Portable Milton* (London : Penguin, 1977)
- PP John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress* (New York : American Tract Society, [n. d.])
- RDP Loraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, 6th ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich. : Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1948)
- RHAP Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven : Yale UP, 1972)
- RSV *The Bible, Revised Standard Version*, 1973
- S Donald Stanford, *The Poems of Edward Taylor* (New Haven : Yale UP, 1960)
- SER Richard Baxter, *The Saints' Everlasting Rest, The Practicl Works of Richard Baxter : Select Treatises* (Grand Rapids, Mich. : Baker Book House, 1981)
- SL C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (1942 ; New York : Bantham Books, 1982)
- TLS Edward Taylor, *Edward Taylor's Treatise Concerning the Lord's Supper*, ed. Norman S. Grabo (East Lansing, Mich. : Michigan Stat UP, 1966)

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