

GOD AND SUFFERING :
A STUDY IN THE THEOLOGY
OF JÜRGEN MOLTMANN,

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ABSTRACT

Suffering will always remain one of the main challenges to the Christian faith since it calls into question the reality of God.

Moltmann does not shy away from this challenge and although he limits his response to moral and political suffering he confronts the problem recognizing the moral force of the arguments of protest atheism. His initial reaction, however, is to offer a thorough critique of classical theism which, in his opinion, creates more problems for the Christian faith than it resolves. A revolution in our understanding of God is necessary before theology can meaningfully address the question of suffering.

Taking the cross of Christ as his starting point Moltmann rebuilds his doctrine of God by asking how we are to understand the presence of God in the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. The cross is a statement about God before it is an assurance of salvation addressed to man.

Only by speaking in trinitarian terms can we make any sense of the cross-event. It is an inner-trinitarian event of suffering, abandonment and death in which the being of God is opened up to the history of the suffering of the world.

God is a suffering God. He is present in suffering and

suffering is present in God. In communion with him suffering man finds the divine solidarity and experiences, in turn, solidarity with God in his own suffering. This mutual solidarity in suffering thrusts man into practical actions designed to overcome suffering in the world.

The suffering God is the decisive Christian argument against suffering. However, Moltmann's perspective is not without problems. In replacing Greek with Hegelian metaphysics, he steps beyond the limits of scripture. At points he appears to dissolve God into history. If not guilty of patripassionism in the classical sense, he comes close to it. He has been labelled "tritheistic" and in some instances leaves the impression of an inhuman God.

Moltmann's suffering God is unable to sustain an adequate soteriology. Without a christology of pre-existence the incarnation and kenosis of the Son must be reinterpreted. God cannot, therefore, be said to be a God who has taken upon himself the suffering of humanity.

Despite its inadequacies Moltmann's thought has pointed the way forward for future discussion of the relation between God and suffering. He has highlighted the importance of history, the centrality of christology and the challenge of discipleship.

Much remains dark to the human mind, but he who is the Light of the world beckons us forward to think and walk in that Light.

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CHAPTER 1

THE NATURE AND PLACE OF SUFFERING IN MOLTMANN'S THEOLOGICAL PROGRAMME.

1. INTRODUCTION

The task of systematic theology is to reflect upon and coherently set forth the meaning and significance of the Christian faith. Responsible theological reflection, however, does not take place in a vacuum. It has both a text and a context. It endeavours to correlate the truth of the Word with the questions that people are asking.

Questions about the reality of God and the possibility of language about him, dominate the layman's and theologian's agendas. Whilst in some instances, linguistic analysis has precipitated many of these questions, the sheer magnitude and harsh reality of suffering in the world has posed an even greater challenge to the Christian faith and to belief in God in particular. As Jürgen Moltmann points out, the God-question with which humanity wrestles is only superficially the theoretical question about the possibility of conceiving the existence of God; "actual misery lies behind the question". (1) Moltmann writes:

It is in suffering that the whole question about God arises, for incomprehensible suffering calls the God of men and woman in question . . . For a God who lets the

innocent suffer and who permits senseless death is not worthy to be called God at all. (2)

Suffering shakes the very foundations of trust in God. Where God is conceived as being perfectly good and unlimitedly powerful, suffering calls not merely his goodness, justice and power into question, but also his existence. Elie Wiesel recalls his first night in Auschwitz: "Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust". (3)

Suffering is a defiant challenge to traditional belief in God and it provides a stern test for the Christian faith. In a memorable moment of theological vulnerability, Moltmann admits to his own bewilderment in the face of human suffering. He asks the question: "How is faith in God, how is being human possible after Auschwitz?", and his reply is as brief as it is painfully honest: "I don't know." (4)

11. THE NATURE OF THE SUFFERING UPPERMOST IN MOLTMAN'S THOUGHT.

A closer examination of Moltmann's understanding of suffering reveals more precisely the kind of suffering that he has in mind as he develops his thinking. The theodicy question:

. . .no longer has its old naturalistic form as in the earthquakes in Lisbon in 1775. It appears today in a political form as in the question of Auschwitz. (5)

What follows thereafter, is a discussion of the atrocities of moral suffering, to the virtual exclusion of the tragedies of natural suffering such as earthquakes, tornadoes and cancer. Moltmann writes:

The corresponding earthquakes of our time are not found in nature and physical evil but rather in history and in inhuman evil.(6)

Auschwitz and Vietnam have clearly made a deeper impression upon Moltmann than have the miseries of natural suffering. He argues that since man is now master of his world, the context of his questioning of God has changed. Theistic representations of the world have become outdated and consequently the problem of suffering has lost its cosmological form. Nowadays, the primary struggles of man in the world are political. The old inner struggles of justification before God have been overshadowed by the struggle for social and political justice.(7) As John de Gruchy points out, the focus of the problem has shifted from "the reformation quest for justification before an accusing God, to the justification of God before an accusing humanity".(8)

Moltmann does not say that the justification of man in his personhood is unimportant, he is arguing, rather, that the soul of man is no longer the primary focus of theological thought. According to Moltmann, the individualistic view of man has become "obsolete".(9) Whereas in the past, questions

about the pain of man's existence were answered in the gift of faith, today such questions cannot be answered independently of man's social, political and historical milieu. Moltmann concludes, therefore, that man cannot find identity in himself "without engaging his personhood in a battle for a just and human world".(10)

The theodicy question with which Moltmann wrestles is therefore essentially political. We are introduced here to what Moltmann labels his "political hermeneutic".(11) In his estimation, politics is "the inclusive horizon of the life of mankind".(12) Man's environment is inescapably political.

It is important, however, to clarify what Moltmann understands by the word "politics", for he is using it in its broadest sense. He writes:

. . . the field of politics designates the extensive field of constructive and destructive possibilities of the approbation and utilization of nature's powers as well as of human relationships . . . For man and nature, politics is becoming a common destiny.(13)

It is clear that Moltman regards politics as being the basic situation in which questions about God become meaningful. In fact, it is his contention that apart from the conflicts of the political world "we have no right to speak of God or with God".(14)

Such a limitation of the discussion to moral or political suffering is, inevitably, going to affect the solution that Moltmann offers. Simon Maimela has reminded us that a theologian's understanding of salvation is ultimately determined by what he perceives to be problematical with the human condition. He says that it is inevitable that when theologians disagree on the diagnosis of the human situation, they are going to be at variance when suggesting a remedy. (15)

Clearly, Moltmann views sin chiefly in its social context. There is little talk of personal sin and of the individual's guilt before a holy God. The dualism inherent in the human condition is to be explained less in terms of a split in the human soul, than it is to be put down to the conflict between oppressor and oppressed, exploiter and exploited. Hence Moltmann's exclusive concentration on political suffering. Peter Momose writes:

According to Moltmann, contemporary man's expectation of salvation can be summarized in a word: the search for the liberation of man and for the right answers of the world. (16)

Whilst it may be premature to start drawing conclusions, it is important, nevertheless, to point out that Moltmann's theological programme and his understanding of salvation, shaped as it is by his diagnosis of the human condition, is essentially that of a theology of liberation.

111. THE PLACE OF SUFFERING IN MOLTSMANN'S THEOLOGY

Moltmann is careful to stress that this approach which he advocates does not make political questions the central theme of theology. He does not want to dissolve Christianity into politics, nor lend support to systems and movements. He wants, rather, to identify the environment in which Christian theology should be articulated. For Germans and Jews it is Auschwitz, and: "For us who are white, rich and dominant it is the cry of the starving, oppressed and racially victimized masses." (17)

If, as Arther McGill maintains, a theological method "indicates where the theologian should be - or may be - what he should be looking at and pre-occupied with", (18) then there can be little doubt where Moltmann begins his theological pilgrimage. Suffering has been decisive in the shaping of his thinking. The question of suffering, albeit of a political nature, is an "absolute presupposition" (19) of his programme. He writes:

Suffering precedes the thinking of Christian theology . . . It is not possible to express God before the world without first and at the same time expressing the world before God. (20)

This placing of suffering in the foreground of theology is significant. Professor Sutherland has argued that theology

should "begin with the plain fact of suffering"(21) and then go on to establish what can be said theologically that is compatible with such a beginning. He is critical of a tendency amongst certain theologians to approach the problem of suffering with an already established "Procrustean"(22) theology. Sutherland sets out to reverse the direction of the discussion by starting with what is plain and incontrovertible. He recognizes that suffering is not the only possible starting point, but wants, like Moltmann, to show its decisive role in shaping theological method and to warn against the dangers of seeking to fit one's view of suffering into a preframed theology.

What we have written indicates clearly that theology is not a detached and theoretical undertaking. It is embedded in the anguish of human history. As Walter Kasper points out:

A theology that takes the human experience of suffering as its starting point starts not with a borderline phenomenon but with the centre and depth of human existence.(23)

Moltmann recognizes the fundamental challenge that suffering poses to faith in our time. It is, he says, "the open wound of life", (24) and he regards it as the real task of theology "to make it possible for us to survive, to go on living with this open wound". (25)

Moltmann's theology, therefore, is a theology in a specific

context, and any assessment of his work must bear this in mind. Writing in response to criticisms of his Theology of Hope, The Crucified God and The Church in the Power of the Spirit, Moltmann claims that he did not set out to write theological treatises. He writes:

They were written from their time and for their time and therefore are to be understood as theology in the context of contemporary life. They have therefore been correctly characterized as more pastoral and prophetic than professorial and systematic. (26)

As P.J.J. van Zyl has summed it up:

Die intensie van Moltmann is dus nie primêr om 'n dogmatiek te timmer nie. Primêr gaan dit vir hom om pastorale besinning met die oog op die verband: God, mens en lyding. (27)

FOOTNOTES

1. J. Moltmann, Hope and Planning, p. 32.
2. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 47.
3. E. Wiesel, Night, p. 45.
4. J. Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, p. 73.
5. J. Moltmann, Religion, Revolution and the Future,
p. 205.
6. J. Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, p. 72.
7. J. Moltmann, Hope and Planning, p. 51.
8. J. de Gruchy, Standing by God in His Hour of Grieving,
p. 7.
9. J. Moltmann, Religion, Revolution and the Future,
p. 206.
10. Ibid., p. 206.
11. Ibid., p. 98.
12. Ibid., p. 98.
13. J. Moltmann, Religion, Revolution and the Future, p. 218
14. J. Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, p. 102.
15. S. Maimela, The Atonement in the Context of Liberation
Theology. Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, 39,
p. 51.
16. P. Momose, Kreuzestheologie. Eine Auseinandersetzung mit
Jürgen Moltmann, quoted in J. O'Donnell, Trinity and
Temporality, p. 112,n.
17. J. Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, p. 72.

18. A. McGill, Suffering : A Test of Theological Method, p. 123.
19. J. Moltmann, Hope and Planning, p. 33.
20. Ibid., p. 35.
21. S. Sutherland, God, Jesus and Belief, p. 21.
22. Ibid., p. 25.
23. W. Kasper, The God of Jesus Christ, p. 160.
24. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 49.
25. Ibid., p. 49.
26. J. Moltmann, 'Antwort', in Diskussion über Jürgen Moltmanns Buch 'Der Gekreuzigte Gott', p. 167.
27. P.J.J. van Zyl, Pastorale Wispunte in die Kruisteologie van Jürgen Moltmann, p. 27.

CHAPTER 2

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE THEODICIES AND MOLTSMANN'S RESPONSE TO THEM.

I. MOLTSMANN'S FORMULATION OF THE THEODICY QUESTION.

For Moltmann the theodicy question stands at the centre of his theological programme. It is his conviction that "God and suffering belong together". (1) The question about God and the question about suffering are a joint question that cannot be answered independently of each other. Moltmann formulates the theodicy question thus:

If God is omnipotent why then do guiltless children suffer and die? If God is omnipotent, the misery of the earth proves he is not good, or he is good but then obviously not omnipotent. (2)

Theologians have made numerous attempts to try and resolve the above kind of question. Moltmann himself speaks of "positive" and "negative" theodicies, (3) and whilst he does not elaborate on them it would be helpful to highlight them briefly so as to give us some background against which Moltmann's own specific theological response can be seen.

II. POSITIVE THEODICIES: THE RESPONSE OF THEISM

Two main positive theodicies have dominated Christian theology. The one, defined broadly as the Augustinian-type,

argues that suffering represents the judgment of God upon human sin. The Irenaean-type theodicy, on the other hand, views suffering largely as an instrument in building character.

Like other attempts to reconcile God and suffering, the above two theodicies assume the perfect goodness and almighty power of God. They endeavour to show that evil and suffering are not inconsistent with belief in God.

a. THE AUGUSTINIAN-TYPE OF THEODICY.

The Augustinian-type of theodicy takes as its starting point the fall of man in Genesis 3, and traces-through the Old Testament and the eighth century prophets of Israel and Judah in particular - the link between the sins of the people and the calamities that befell them. The story of Job is probably the classic expression of this penal view of suffering.

The New Testament supports the belief that righteousness brings well-being while sin leads to unhappiness and suffering. Jesus himself was quite clear that sinful attitudes and actions bring painful results. However, he is careful to emphasise that not all suffering is to be regarded as punishment for sin.(4)

Both Augustine and Calvin regard human sin as the direct consequence of Adam's transgression. Both argue that we have inherited Adam's corrupt nature and are therefore born guilty. Thus God is not unrighteous in punishing human beings. Augustine writes : "What man doeth is sin; what he suffers punishment". (5) Even natural calamities that cause so much human suffering, occur according to Augustine, because we are "under just punishment". (6) Calvin argues in similar vein, maintaining that no matter how severe the suffering "we confess that we are worthy of them and have merited them by our crimes". (7)

In fairness to Calvin, however, it ought to be pointed out that in his discussion of providence he states clearly that whilst sin does bring punishment, it would be wrong to explain away all suffering in these terms. He acknowledges the sovereignty of God and concedes that God's purposes are often hidden:

Christ ascribes more sovereignty to the secret purposes of the Father in afflicting man, to require him to punish every individual according to his demerits. (8)

T.B. Kilpatrick has given us some helpful insights on the question of the relationship between suffering and human sin. He affirms the link between the two, maintaining that human beings bring about suffering through their disobedience to God. However, Kilpatrick stresses the very close relation

between man and nature. Such is the closeness that what happens on the human level, affects nature. He writes:

Nature stands so close to spirit that it thrills responsive to the breach that sin has wrought between the human spirit and the divine.(9)

Kilpatrick believes that all suffering is to be accounted for by reference to man's refusal to fulfil the purposes of God. He argues:

There is a suffering in nature ; and there is suffering in man as part of nature. And all suffering, in nature or in little children, is the exposition and illustration of that which, in self conscious and self determining man, is sin.(10)

Moltmann does not entirely reject the notion of suffering as a punishment for sin. He says: "Misery is the lot of anyone who sins against God".(11) However, Moltmann believes the misery is already inherent in the sin itself. He rejects the view that if there was no sin there would be no suffering. The experience of suffering goes beyond the experience of guilt. Suffering, he argues, has its roots in the limitation of created reality:

If creation in-the-beginning is open for the history of good and evil, then that initial creation is also a creation capable of suffering and capable of producing suffering.(12)

Clearly, Moltmann has serious reservations with the punishment of sin perspective. As an explanation for

suffering, he believes it has "very limited value".(13)

b. THE IRENAEAN-TYPE OF THEODICY.

The Irenaean-type of theodicy arises from the recurring biblical emphasis that sufferings are disciplines intended by God to build faith and character. However, it is Irenaeus who presents a powerful understanding of the contribution suffering makes towards providing an environment in which man is able to grow towards the maturity that God wants for him. Irenaeus believes that man is not created perfect and that through the process of struggle his moral development takes place, leading ultimately to his perfection. Only by being involved in this struggle between good and evil can man learn to affirm the good and turn his back on evil. Irenaeus encourages man to accept the painful experiences of life with a teachable spirit, knowing that thereby God's purposes for his life will be fulfilled.(14)

In an articulate and contemporary expression of the Irenaean-type of theodicy, John Hick has argued that it is inconceivable that God would allow suffering to take place if he did not intend some greater good to arise out of it. Hick views evil and suffering chiefly from the role it plays in the development of moral personality. The world, he argues, is a "vale of soul-making", (15) and such a process of soul-making would not be possible in a world of comfort and ease.

In such an environment people would refrain from physical and mental toil. The demanding effort needed to push back the frontiers of ignorance would cease, and the end result would be, according to Hick, "a soft unchallenged race of men".(16)

The world, Hick believes, is a place where human personalities grow and mature. For such a process of soul-making to occur, pain and suffering are "a necessary feature".(17) God has, therefore, ordained a world which contains real evil as a:

. . . means to the creation of the infinite good of a kingdom of heaven within which his creatures will come as perfected persons to love and serve Him, through a process in which their own free insights and response have been an essential element.(18)

Consequently, Hick is able to say that even the most "haphazard and unjust distribution and the often destructive and dysteleological effect of suffering have a positive significance".(19)

Hick recognizes that there is a problem with suffering that is so intense that it far exceeds what is necessary for soul-making. To this he responds by pointing to the eternal destiny of human beings and the cruciality for a Christian theodicy of the doctrine of the life beyond the grave. Hence Hick argues:

A Christian theodicy must point forward to that final blessedness, and claim that this infinite future good will render worthwhile all the pain and travail and wickedness that has occurred on the way to it. (20)

Nowhere does Moltmann specifically engage Hick. However, in his reflections on suffering, Moltmann has been deeply impressed by the figure of Dostoyevsky's Ivan Karamazov in The Brothers Karamazov. Ivan is tormented by the suffering of innocent children and is led to reject the soul-making theodicy. He refuses to accept that the deaths of tortured children will ever be expiated in the joy of some future blessedness. The price is too high, and Ivan retorts: "I renounce higher harmony altogether . . . I don't want harmony . . . it is beyond our means to pay so much to enter it". (21)

Whilst Ivan's words are directed chiefly at the notion of heaven as a compensation for earthly suffering - an idea that Hick himself rejects - his words apply with equal force to Hick's contention that the final blessedness will render worthwhile all the pain endured in getting there. As Dorothy Soelle puts it: "No heaven can rectify Auschwitz". (22)

The Irenaean and Augustinian-types of theodicies are just two of the numerous attempts made by Christian theologians to reconcile the existence of God with the presence of evil and suffering. Hick has argued that the Irenaean approach accepts:

. . . . God's ultimate and omni-responsibility and seeks to show for what good and justifying reason he has created a universe in which evil was inevitable. (23)

Of the Augustinian theodicy, Hick observes that it seeks to:

....relieve the creator of responsibility for the existence of evil by placing that responsibility upon dependent beings who have wilfully misused their God-given freedom. (24)

c. MOLTMANN'S RESPONSE TO POSITIVE THEODICIES.

Moltmann remains entirely unconvinced by positive theodicies. A careful study of his writings uncovers some of his reasons for rejecting them.

Firstly, Moltmann believes the desire to explain suffering is itself "highly questionable". (25) He says the danger in all such explanations is that they lead people to justify their suffering, thus giving it a permanence that results in their losing all incentive to overcome it. (26)

Secondly, part of Moltmann's rejection of theodicies arises from his rejection of the cosmological, theistic world-view. Most positive theodicies assume that we are able to understand what goes on in the world with reference to a larger divine order where God is seen as the supreme architect of the universe. However the intellectual and scientific climate of our day no longer permits such an

assumption. Moltmann argues that man no longer:

. . . lives in the house of ordered being . . . the old cosmological-theistic world view which spoke of God in relationship to the cosmos of the natural world is antiquated and is experienced as mythical by man who has become master of his environment. (27)

Clearly, man no longer requires God in order to understand what he sees going on around him. To try, therefore, and present an understanding of suffering from a cosmological perspective presupposes an intellectual horizon which no longer exists. As Kenneth Surin observes:

In a world where the voice of God is no longer heard, the theodacist's words can strike no resonance. He shares the fate of his God, and he too can no longer be heard. (28)

Thirdly, Moltmann holds that those who believe in God are:

... not panlogical dialecticians in league with a friendly providence that they should know what all evil things are good for . . . Maidanek and Hiroshima find no soothing dialectical answers. (29)

Moltmann is not resorting here to the familiar tactic of seeking refuge in the category of mystery whenever thought reaches a logical impasse. He merely recognizes that at its innermost depths suffering is something that confounds the mind. The questions remain, says Moltmann citing Ernst Bloch, but the answers have disappeared. (30)

III. MOLTMANN'S CRITIQUE OF THEISM.

Moltmann's chief reservation about the possibility of a relevant theodicy is his contention that traditional faith simply cannot provide a common denominator for the atrocities of history. The metaphysical understanding of God that lies at the root of traditional theology serves only to provoke rather than resolve the theodicy question.

Surin makes an important observation when he reminds us:

It is certainly no exaggeration to say that virtually every contemporary discussion of the theodicy question is premissed implicitly or explicitly, on an understanding of God overwhelmingly constrained by the principles of seventeenth and eighteenth century philosophical theism. (31)

The Christian tradition, according to Moltmann, has been dominated by two forms of monotheism: God as "the supreme substance" and as "the absolute subject". (32) God as supreme substance is by definition immovable, immortal and impassable, whilst God as the absolute subject is "the archetype of the free reasonable sovereign person who has complete disposal over himself". (33)

In terms of these monotheistic understandings of God there is no room for distinctions within God. God cannot change. His divine being is determined by "its unity and indivisibility,

its lack of beginning and end, its immovability and immutability".(34) God is thus self-sufficient and consequently not affected by reality outside of himself.

Moltmann accuses Christian theology of failing to develop a consistent Christian concept of God. Right down to the present, Greek metaphysics have left a deeper impression on the formulation of the doctrine of God than has the history of the passion of Christ. The problem for theology arose, Moltmann argues, when it uncritically assumed "the axiom of apatheia"(35) as the basis of its understanding of God. Explaining the axiom of apatheia, Moltmann says: "In the physical sense apatheia means unchangeableness, in the psychological sense insensitivity, and in the ethical sense freedom".(36) This is in direct contrast to pathos which implies need, compulsion and dependency.

When applied to the divine being, the apatheia principle sought to ensure the self-sufficiency and perfection of God. Since freedom from suffering was regarded as the "irrelinquishable attribute of divine perfection and blessedness", (37) patristic theology clung to the apathy axiom, believing that it was God's incapacity for suffering that distinguished him from man who was subject to suffering, transience and death. Suffering is a mark of weakness and God must necessarily be above it.

As Moltmann points out, the principle of apatheia inevitably complicated the christological development of the early church. We might add that considerable tension arose in the Patristic doctrine of God when theologians tried to reconcile the immutability and impassability of God with belief in a real incarnation of God in Christ and in the real sufferings of Christ. Since God cannot suffer and die, it was not possible to identify him with the suffering and death of Jesus. Consequently, it was argued that the eternal Son of God could only have suffered according to the flesh, that is, in his human nature, whilst the divine nature remained untouched. There was, thus, no recognition of the suffering of Christ as divine. The consequent two-natures christology of Nicea and Chalcedon was an unsuccessful attempt to circumvent the problems created by the apatheia axiom.

A lively group of dissenters known as "Theopaschites" argued in return that: "One of the Trinity has been crucified".(38) They claimed that God can suffer and that he did so in the divine nature of Christ. They refused to separate the divine and human natures of Jesus and accused their more orthodox opponents of Nestorianism.

However, at the 5th Ecumenical Council of Constantinople held in A.D.533 the theopaschites were condemned, and an anathema was pronounced on all who did not profess that, as J.J.F.Durand puts it:

Die na die vlees gekruisigde Here Jesus Christus is die waaragtige God en die Here van die Heerlikheid en een van die heilige Drieëenheid. (39)

Earlier in the history of the church the Fathers had been faced with the heresy of the Patripassions who argued that since Christ was God he must be identical with the Father. Thus, when Christ suffered and died on the cross, it was also the Father who suffered and died.

Adrio König allows for another theoretical form of patripassionism whereby the suffering and death of Jesus could have caused suffering to the Father. However, König does not pursue this idea since the New Testament does not address itself to how the death of the Son affected the Father. (40)

One might add that there were certain theologians like Cyril who spoke in paradoxical terms about the Logos having "suffered impassably" (41) and Gregory of Nazianzus who referred to "the suffering of him who could not suffer". (42) However, these phrases were interpreted as meaning that the Logos, though aware of the suffering of his human nature, was unaffected by them.

The clear teaching therefore of the early church, was that Christ, in his divine nature, was immortal, unchangeable and incapable of suffering, although in his human nature he

suffered and died on the cross. His human flesh was the medium passionis. In this way, the impassability of God was preserved and once again the axiom of apatheia was seen to prevail.

Another casualty of the Greek metaphysical understanding of God is the basic truth, "God is love." According to Moltmann, a love that remains unaffected by the beloved is unworthy of the name love. Theism, whilst not denying God's love for the world, understands his love as a one-way relationship in which God exercises an active benevolence whilst remaining unmoved by what he loves.

It is Moltmann's contention that the theistic understanding of God thinks of God at man's expense as an all-powerful perfect and infinite being, and "where such a super authority is in control there is no room for freedom, not even the freedom of the children of God".(43) The God of theism, the monotheistic God, is thus "a lonely world ruler and world possessor", (44) a God who cannot suffer and die in order to bring suffering humanity under his protection. Moltmann concludes:

A god who is incapable of suffering is a being who cannot be involved. Suffering and injustice do not affect him. And because he is so completely insensitive he cannot be affected or shaken by anything. He cannot weep for he has no tears. But the one who cannot suffer

cannot lover either. So he is a loveless being. (45)

In fairness to Moltmann, he does see some merit in certain aspects of theism. He concedes that God is unchangeable, provided it is understood that he is not changeable as creatures are changeable. However, if to be unchangeable means that God "could not in the freedom of his love open himself to the changeable history of his creation" (46) then, Moltmann argues, the attributes of God's unchangeableness must be rejected. Similarly, Moltmann accepts that God cannot suffer like creatures who are exposed to illness, pain and death. However, if to be incapable of suffering means that "in the freedom of his love God would not be receptive to suffering over the contradiction of man and the self destruction of his creation", (47) then the notion of God's impassability must be refuted. Likewise, if God's perfection means that "he did not in the craving of his love want his creation to be necessary to his perfection" (48) then that must be rejected as well.

Clearly, however, Moltmann regards classical theism as saying something different. The God of theism is, in his view, "the inhuman God, a God without Jesus" (49) and he considers it "indispensable for the liberated believer" (50) that he does away with such an understanding of God.

a. AN ASSESSMENT OF MOLTSMANN'S CRITIQUE.

Moltmann's critique of theism, whilst an important pillar in his overall argument, is not the first attempt to show the corrupting influence of Greek metaphysics upon the development of the doctrine of God. The most notable proponent of this view was Harnack who sought to show how, through a process of hellenization, the living God of Israel, the God and Father of Jesus Christ, was transformed into a timeless, immutable, impassable and transcendent God of Greek philosophy. (51)

Whilst the hellenization theory has been largely discounted, even by contemporary critics of classical theism, Moltmann suggests that Christian theology abdicated to Greek metaphysics. He says that as far as the doctrine of God was concerned, Christian theology "adopted the metaphysical tradition of Greek philosophy ... as its own foundation". (52)

It is true that ideas from pagan sources were introduced in order to make Christianity more coherent. Walter Kasper admits that in respect of God's impassability in particular, the teaching of the Fathers betrayed the influence more of Greek philosophy than the testimony of the Bible. However, Kasper hastens to add:

It is not the case as is often claimed that the fathers simply took over the apatheia-axiom and thus abridged the Bible's testimony regarding the living God of history. (53)

Support for this viewpoint comes from G.L. Prestige who goes a step further when he points out that no idea was ever imported without undergoing substantial modification. He says: "The idea was cut to fit the Christian faith, not the faith trimmed to square with the imported conception". (54)

A number of evangelical scholars have recently called for a re-examination of classical theism. Winifried Corduan argues that there has been "widespread misunderstanding" (55) about classical metaphysical categories. He illustrates his contention with reference to the Thomist notion of God as Pure Act devoid of all potency. Corduan explains that whilst this was interpreted by some to mean that God is incapable of interaction, in reality, it meant that God does not need to change in order to interact. (56)

Another evangelical scholar, Richard Muller, states categorically:

The ontology of classical theism does not hypothesize a static and immobile God, but a God active in relation to the world and active in himself. (57)

In a review article of Moltmann's "The Crucified God", Carl Braaten accuses Moltmann of "overstatement". (58) Whilst his

criticism applies chiefly to Moltmann's persistence in identifying theologia crucis as the key signature of all Christian theology, it is an equally valid criticism when applied to Moltmann's critique of theism.

In attacking the theistic understanding of the impassability of God, we contend that Moltmann has given too much away. Traditional metaphysics have been too readily dismissed. Whilst recognizing the intention behind Moltmann's critique, namely to free the theology of revelation from the strictures placed upon it by the definitions of natural theology, we assert with J.I. Packer that "it is minor modification, not abandonment of traditional theism that we need". (59)

Nevertheless, given Moltmann's description of the God of theism, it is not difficult to understand his belief that far from answering any questions about suffering, the God of theism merely heightens the issue. A theology that does not speak of God's involvement in history and imprisons him in static inactivity is not consistent with the biblical witness. The arguments against such a divine being outweigh the arguments for him. As Moltmann puts it: "The theism of an almighty and kindly God comes to an end on the rock of suffering". (60)

IV. NEGATIVE THEODICIES: THE REPOSE OF PROTEST ATHEISM.

J.J. O'Donnell has written:

Given the concept of God elaborated by the classical theistic tradition, it was inevitable that we should end up in the cul-de-sac of contemporary atheism. (61)

To the extent that Moltmann rejects the God of theism, he has a great deal of sympathy for the arguments of protest atheism that renounce God in the name of suffering humanity. It is Moltmann's contention, following Georg Buchner, that suffering is "the rock of atheism". (62) Metaphysical atheism, like metaphysical theology, takes the world as a mirror of the deity. However, unlike theology, it does not arrive at a First Cause or an unmoved Mover, but instead finds, as Moltmann puts it, "a capricious demon, a blind destiny, a damning law or an annihilating nothingness". (63) For people seeking to understand the world, belief in the devil is much more likely than belief in God.

However, it is the protest atheism of Albert Camus and Dostoyevsky's Ivan Karamazov that has struck a particular chord with Moltmann.

In the Brothers Karamazov, Ivan has to come to terms with the suffering of innocent children. He comes to the conclusion that it is not God he cannot believe in, so much as God's

world. If one has to accept this world as God's world then Ivan prefers to hand his admission ticket back to God and withdraw from it altogether. Ivan says: "It is not God that I don't accept . . . only I must respectfully return Him my ticket".(64) Ivan is less atheistic than he is anti-theistic and in many ways he anticipates the position of Albert Camus.

In The Plague, Camus describes a child's agonizing struggle with death. The doctor working on the child comments:

It might be better if people do not believe in God and fight with all their power against death without lifting their eyes to heaven where he is silent.(65)

Such statements represent what Camus calls, a "metaphysical rebellion . . . the movement by which man protests against his condition and against the whole of creation".(66) Camus goes on:

The metaphysical rebel is therefore not definitely an atheist . . . but he is inevitably a blasphemer. Quite simply he blasphemes primarily in the name of order, denouncing God as the father of death and as the supreme outrage.(67)

After all, adds Camus, "the revolt must be directed towards someone".(68)

a. MOLTMANN'S CRITIQUE OF PROTEST ATHEISM.

Moltmann is clearly impressed by the arguments put forward by the metaphysical rebels. He regards their protest as being well-founded insofar as they are attacking the theistic view of God as an insensitive and unmoved being incapable of suffering. Following Ernst Bloch, Moltmann calls such unbelief "atheism for God's sake". (69)

However, despite his sympathy for protest atheists, Moltmann has serious reservations about what they propose as their alternative to the God whom they have denounced. Moltmann argues that if theism thought of God at man's expense, so now in turn protest atheism "thinks of man at God's expense as a powerful and perfect, infinite and creative being". (71) All the attributes that had previously been ascribed to God have merely been transferred to man. Man has now been divinized. He sits on the throne once occupied by God. "Man is finally man's God". (71)

In Moltmann's estimation, this is nothing more than a "reversed form of theism". (72) It is equally unable to offer anything by way of explanation of suffering or the relieving of pain. Thus, Moltmann is led to conclude: "The atheism for which this world is all there is runs aground on the rock of suffering too". (73)

FOOTNOTES

1. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 49.
2. J. Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, p. 50.
3. J. Moltmann, Hope and Planning, p. 33.
4. John 9 : 1 - 7.
5. Augustine, Confessions, VII, p. 3. quoted in S.P. Schilling, God and Human Anguish. p. 129.
6. Augustine, City of God, XI, p. 22. quoted in S.P. Schilling, God and Human Anguish, p. 129.
7. J. Calvin, Forms of Prayer for the Church, p. 106.
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8. J. Calvin, Institutes of Christian Religion, 1, quoted
in S.P. Schilling, God and Human Anguish, p. 131.
9. T.B. Kilpatrick, "Suffering" Hastings Dictionary of the Bible quoted in S.P. Schilling, God and Human Anguish,
p. 134.
10. Ibid., p. 135.
11. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 50.
12. Ibid., p. 50.
13. Ibid., p. 52.
14. S.P. Schilling, God and Human Anguish, p. 149.
15. J. Hick, Evil and the God of Love, p. 201.
16. Ibid., p. 344.
17. Ibid., p. 389.
18. Ibid., p. 399.
19. Ibid., p. 389.

20. Ibid., p. 376.
21. F. Dostoyevski, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 287.
22. D. Soelle, Suffering, p. 149.
23. J. Hick, Evil and the God of Love, p. 236.
24. Ibid., p. 236.
25. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 52.
26. Ibid., p. 52.
27. J. Moltmann, Religion, Revolution and the Future, p. 204.
28. K. Surin, Theodicy? Harvard Theological Review, 76, p. 229.
29. J. Moltmann, Religion, Revolution and the Future, p. 168.
30. J. Moltmann, Hope and Planning, p. 33.
31. K. Surin, Theology and the Problem of Evil, p. 4.
32. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 10.
33. Ibid., p. 15.
34. J. Moltmann, The Crucified God, p. 214.
35. J. Moltmann, The Future of Creation, p. 68.
36. Ibid., p. 67.
37. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 22.
38. A. Grillmeier, Christ in CHristian Tradition, p. 521.
39. J. Durand, Kruisteologie en die Lydende God, p. 2.
40. A. König, The Idea of "The Crucified God". Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, 41, p. 55.

41. A. Grillmeier, Christ in Christian Tradition, p. 367.
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43. J. Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, p. 50.
44. J. Moltmann, Unpublished lecture notes, quoted in J. O'Donnell, Trinity and Temporality, p. 110.
45. J. Moltmann, The Crucified God, p. 222.
46. J. Moltmann, The Future of Creation, p. 93.
47. Ibid., p. 93.
48. Ibid., p. 93.
49. J. Moltmann, The Crucified God, p. 251.
50. Ibid., p. 251.
51. R. Muller, Incarnation, Immutability and the Case for Classical Theism, Westminster Theological Journal, 45, p. 24.
52. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 22.
53. W. Kasper, The God of Jesus Christ, p. 170.
54. G.L. Prestige, God in Patristic Thought, p. 14.
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56. Ibid., p. 360.
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58. C. Braaten, A Trinitarian Theology of the Cross,

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59. J. Packer, What do we mean when we say "God"?
Christianity Today, 30, p. 76.
60. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 49.
61. J. O'Donnell, Trinity and Temporality, p. 17.
62. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 48.
63. J. Moltmann, The Crucified God, p. 220.
64. F. Dostoyevski, The Brothers Karamazov, p. 249.
65. A. Camus, The Plague, p. 221.
66. A. Camus, The Rebel, p. 23.
67. Ibid., p. 24.
68. Ibid., p. 30.
69. J. Moltmann, The Crucified God, p. 252.
70. Ibid., p. 251.
71. Ibid., p. 251.
72. Ibid., p. 251.
73. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 48.



CHAPTER 3

MOLTMANN'S DOCTRINE OF GOD AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN SUFFERING

I. THE CROSS AS THE BASIS OF MAN'S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

Having emphatically rejected the attempts of both theism and atheism to resolve the theodicy question, Moltmann begins his search for a way through the impasse that has been created. In his view what is required is nothing short of a "revolution in the concept of God"(1) and for such a radical rethink to take place we must return to the historical event of the death of Jesus. According to Moltmann, the cross presents theology with a choice:

Jesus' God-forsaken death is for Christians either the end of every theology or else the beginning of a theology that is specifically Christian.(2)

Moltmann chooses the latter option for he believes that with the message of the cross something new and strange has entered the metaphysical world. With the cross a "fundamental change"(3) in the orders of being of metaphysical thought has taken place - "God is revealed in the cross of Christ who was abandoned by God"(4) and faith must now understand God in the light of the suffering and death of Jesus.

Moltmann claims that earlier Protestant theology was onesided in its understanding of the cross. He says that it viewed the death of Jesus more in terms of the expiation of human sin and failed to ask the crucial question: "What does the death of Jesus mean for God himself?"(5)

According to Moltmann, the death of Jesus is first and foremost a statement about God before it is an assurance about salvation addressed to man.(6) He cites the comment of Karl Barth that: "The crucified Christ is the image of the invisible God", (7) and then adds:

When the crucified Jesus is called the image of the invisible God the meaning is that this is God, and God is like this. (8)

Clearly for Moltmann, the essence of Christianity is not simply belief in God but rather faith in the crucified Jesus. In his view Christology is the corner-stone of all theology; it is the crucified Christ who is "the foundation and measure of Christian theology as a whole"(9)

a. The Influence of Martin Luther.

An important factor in the development of Moltmann's theologia crucis has been the influence of Martin Luther. Of Luther and the church that bears his name, it has been rightly said that he "gloried in the cross".(10)

von Loewenich(11) has identified five main features of Luther's theologia crucis:

1. The theology of the cross as a theology of revelation stands in sharp antithesis to speculation.
2. God's revelation is an indirect, concealed revelation.
3. God's revelation is recognized in suffering.
4. This knowledge of God who is hidden in his revelation is a matter of faith.
5. God is particularly known through suffering.

A glance at the above points gives us a good idea as to the impact that Luther has had on the development of Moltmann's own theology. For both theologians the cross occupies the central position in their respective theologies. Luther declares: Crux sola est nostra theologia - "the cross alone is our theology", (12) whilst such has been Moltmann's own emphasis on the cross, that his theology has been labelled "a revelational fundamentalism". (13) Moltmann rejects speculation as to the nature of God, arguing that the knowledge of God is achieved "not by the guiding thread of analogies from earth to heaven but on the contrary through contradiction sorrow and suffering", (14) more particularly, in the event of the cross.

Such a dialectical understanding of revelation is also evident in Luther who, according to von Loewenich, asserts that "in the things we regard as the counterpart of the

divine, God has become visible".(15) Luther speaks of God who can be recognized only "under the opposite form"(16) -an idea which Moltmann has taken up in his own ambiguous use of the phrase "revelation in the opposite".(17)

However, Luther's influence on Moltmann goes far deeper than the use of certain key ideas. It is particularly significant that the revival of interest in Luther's theologia crucis occurred in the wake of the carnage of the First World War and gained renewed impetus after the horrors of the Second War. This was the time when Moltmann, together with others of his generation, returned home from the P.O.W. camps "shattered and broken".(18) It was a time when, as he puts it: "A theology which did not speak in terms of the abandoned and crucified one would not have got through to us then".(19) Into this environment Luther's theologia crucis spoke with particular power, since as Alister McGrath has pointed out:

It was a theology which addressed the question which could not be ignored: is God really there, amidst the devastation and dereliction of civilization? Luther's proclamation of the hidden presence of God in the dereliction of Calvary, and of the Christ who was forsaken on the cross struck a deep chord of sympathy in those who felt themselves abandoned by God and unable to discern his presence.(20)

All this is not to say that Moltmann remains uncritical of

Luther's theologia crucis. He maintains that Luther restricts his application of the theologia crucis to the reform of the Church and, in the process, fails to carry it through as a social criticism which, in Luther's case, ought to have been against feudal society in the Peasant Wars. In this respect, what Luther neglected to do, Moltmann intends to complete. (21)

b. CRITICISM OF THE EXCLUSIVITY OF THE THEOLOGIA CRUCIS.

Such an exclusive concentration on the cross as the basis of the revolution in the understanding of God has inevitably drawn criticism from different quarters.

Whilst welcoming Moltmann's call that theology should take seriously once more the theology of the cross, Carl Braaten charges Moltmann with reducing the multiplicity of New Testament confessions and theologies to a theology of the cross. Such an overworking of the motif of the cross, he argues, represents a reduction of Christian theology. The theology of Luke-Acts would, for example, have to become deuterocanonical and "a canon briefer than Marcion's" (22) would result. Braaten says that Moltmann suffers from the occupational hazard of systematic theologians, namely, "the tyranny of the single category". (23) He concludes: "The theology of the cross does not provide theology with all its epistemological presuppositions its faith contents and its

ethical implications".(24)

Writing in similar vein, David Scott argues that the death of Jesus is not the only point of departure for understanding God's creative relation to the world. Reminding us of Irenaeus' insistence upon the unity of God as creator and redeemer, Scott holds that an adequate theology requires that we recognize both Jesus and creation as sources for the knowledge of the Fatherhood of God. He points out that an ethical system based solely on the theology of the cross would be "truncated ethics, an ethics relevant only to the oppressed", (25) and while such an ethic of protest and liberation may be important, it is not enough. For those wrestling with medical, sexual and ecological issues, an ethics of affirmation and responsibility flowing from an understanding of God as creator is equally relevant. Hence, in Scott's estimation: "The ethics of protest must be balanced by an ethics of affirmation; God the creator is as important for ethics as the crucified Son".(26)

The best way of replying to Braaten and Scott is to examine more closely the reasons why Moltmann has chosen the cross specifically as the only adequate ground for faith today.

Firstly, as we noted in Chapter 1, the immediate context of Moltmann's thinking is the suffering of mankind. It is important that we remind ourselves again of this context. James Richmond has warned recently of the dangers of

"dehistoricization"(27) whereby a theologian's work is studied in isolation from its historical setting. Whilst Richmond has the study of Karl Barth particularly in mind, the warning applies also to the study of Moltmann. By disregarding the immediate context of his thinking we lose the urgency and thrust of his distinctive emphasis.

Secondly, and following on the above, living as he is in the post-Auschwitz era where men and women are more aware of the absence of God than his living presence, Moltmann is concerned to establish where, how and through what, God is de facto and "with certainty"(28) to be known. In the face of human suffering he is searching for the distinctive Christian understanding of God; that which gives Christian theology its specific identity and, at the same time, its relevance for suffering humanity. Hence his emphasis on the event of the cross. In this historical event the questions of identity and relevance, text and context come together. As O'Donnell has pointed out, since God's relationship with the world is mediated through history, if there is any answer to the cries of unredeemed humanity then it must lie in history.(29) Consequently, for Moltmann, the person who wants to say who God is must "tell the passion story of Christ as the story of God".(30)

This, however, does not mean that Moltmann excludes other

confessions, theological emphases, and even the possibility of the natural knowledge of God, as Braaten and Scott have implied. The Theology of Hope with its emphasis on the resurrection is evidence of Moltmann's acknowledgment of other perspectives. He also affirms the possibility of the natural knowledge of God, but questions the reality of such knowledge insofar as man misuses this natural knowledge for his own self-exaltation and divinization. (31)

The point that Moltmann wants to make is that the cross is the one sure place where God is to be found, and theology must, therefore, proceed from this reality and then go on to investigate the possibilities of the natural knowledge of God. The cross is not simply a single chapter in theology, but the "key signature" (32) of all Christian theology. In this slice of history we receive what Alister McGrath has termed the "definitive knowledge of God". (33)

Having satisfied ourselves as to the central place occupied by the theologia crucis in Moltmann's thinking, we turn to a more serious criticism levelled by Adrio König who has accused Moltmann of failing to integrate sufficiently the different New Testament emphases.

König asks how it is possible for a theologian to argue, on the one hand, the significance of the resurrection to the

virtual exclusion of the cross - as Moltmann has done in Theology of Hope, and then in his next argument, to argue the significance of the cross with minimal reference to the resurrection - as Moltmann has done in The Crucified God. König reminds us that in the preaching of the New Testament the cross and the resurrection are "onlosmaaklik aanmekaar verbonde". (34)

Moltmann is at pains to stress that the cross and resurrection must be seen together. He says the theology of the cross is simply the reverse side of the theology of hope. "There is no true theology of hope which is not first of all a theology of the cross". (35)

However, in spite of his protestations, we contend that it is not sufficient for Moltmann simply to make a statement about the inseparability of the cross and the resurrection. He must endeavour to establish his point showing precisely how and why the two are to be taken together. This Moltmann fails to do, and consequently König's criticism must stand.

A third reason for Moltmann's concentration on the cross arises out of his epistemology, more specifically, his use of the dialectical principle of knowledge. In terms of this principle, following the philosopher Schelling: "Every being can be revealed only in its opposite - love in hatred, unity in strife". (36) According to Moltmann, when applied to

Christian theology this dialectical principle means that God is revealed as God "in his opposite - in godlessness and God-forsakenness", (37) more specifically: "God is revealed in the contradiction of a God-forsaken Christ". (38)

What exactly Moltmann means by the phrase "revelation in opposite" is not absolutely clear. Richard Bauckham has pointed out that if God is the opposite of what reveals him then it is hard to understand how any revelation can take place. Highlighting Moltmann's statement that God is "love with all his being", (39) Bauckham asks how love can only be revealed in hate. It cannot possibly mean that hatred is the revelation of the love of God, though logically such an inference could be made. In Bauckham's estimation what Moltmann intended to say was that love is revealed "in the context of hatred"; (40) love comes into its own only when it is tested in the encounter with hatred. Thus, Moltmann can write:

Love is revealed in hatred and peace in conflict. Thus the place where the question of identity can meaningfully be asked is the situation of the crisis of identity ... A man's mettle is tried only in the front line, not back at base. (41)

Bauckham's clarification notwithstanding, Moltmann's dialectical epistemology lacks precision. However, the point he wants to make is clear: the distinctive Christian understanding of God is derived from the cross. At the centre

of theology lies christology and at the heart of christology stands the cross of Christ. It is the crucified Christ who gives Christian theology its content and its Sitz im Leben, that is, its situation in life, namely, to be amongst those who suffer; who live under the cross; the godless and godforsaken.

John MacQuarrie has summed up the issue that is at stake. He writes:

Where we go wrong is that we bring along some ready-made idea of God, wherever we may have learned it, and then try to make Jesus Christ fit in with that idea of God ... But if we take the idea of a revelation of God in Christ seriously, then we must be willing to have our understanding of God corrected and even revolutionized by what we learn in Jesus Christ. (42)

II. THE SUFFERING OF THE CROSS AS THE SUFFERING OF GOD: THE TASK OF CHRISTOLOGY

Having established the priority of christology over theology, Moltmann turns to the task of building his doctrine of God from the event of the cross. He maintains that: "The Christ-event on the cross is a God-event". (43) In his view the origin of christology lies in what took place between Jesus and his God. Consequently, the question of christology is not a matter of trying to reconcile the divine and human nature of Jesus. Moltmann rejects such an approach. The one person of Jesus Christ is not a matter of two metaphysically

different natures. The humanity and divinity of Jesus are not alternatives and to view them thus is to divide the unity of Christ. Moltmann is content to affirm with Luther: "Faith says of Christ not only that God is in him, but also that Christ is God himself".(44)

For Moltmann the real task of christology is, however, to understand the presence of God in the suffering and death of Jesus. It is the question of how God himself is involved in the history of Christ's passion. In other words, by wrestling with the passion of Christ on the cross, more particularly, by plumbing the depths of Christ's cry of dereliction: "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?",(45) Moltmann believes we gain insights into the true Christian understanding of God thereby avoiding the snares of metaphysical theism and the pitfalls of protest atheism. If it can be shown that in the suffering of Christ we have to do with the suffering God; that God himself is a suffering participant in human history; that God is in suffering and suffering is in God, then, in Moltmann's view, protest atheism would be less inclined to criticize God. In that event the cross of Christ would become "the Christian theodicy - a self-justification of God".(46)

We have made reference to the "suffering" and "passion" of Christ. The two words represent the depth of God's experience

of human history. As Douglas Meeks has reminded us, taken in their biblical sense they are to be understood in an active way and must not be interpreted to imply passivity. The words suggest more than simply "to be acted upon." They mean "to be affected and transformed" by other lives, as well as the power to go outside of oneself and affect the other. (47)

Turning to the passion of Christ, Moltmann considers the God-forsaken cry of Jesus: "My God, why has thou forsaken me?" For Jesus the crucifixion meant nothing less than "god-forsakenness, judgment, curse, exclusion from the promised life, reprobation and damnation". (48) Consequently, the cry issues from the depths of estrangement from his God, whom he had called "Abba", whose nearness he had proclaimed, and whose Son he knew himself to be. The torment of Jesus is heightened because of the profound intimacy Jesus had always known with his Father. As Moltmann says: "No one can be more abandoned by God than he who so dared to live, to speak and to work in God and from God". (49)

The cry of Jesus therefore, is not simply a happening between an abandoned man and a silent God, but is something that took place between Jesus and his Father. Here God forsakes God. God is divided from God to the utmost degree of "enmity" (50) A rupture tears through God himself. (51) Following Martin Luther, Moltmann writes:

What happened on the cross was a happening between God and God; there God disputes with God; there God cries out to God; there God dies in God ... But if God is acting in himself, then he is also suffering his own action in himself. (52)

This idea of deus contra deum or, God against God, is a bold thought. However, Moltmann surprisingly finds support for the idea from within the Jewish tradition. He cites the Jewish thinker, Frans Rosenzweig who teaches that the Jewish understanding of the Shekinah implies "a divorce which takes place in God himself. God cuts himself off from God". (53)

a. THE SUFFERING OF GOD AND THE NECESSITY OF TRINITARIAN LANGUAGE

Moltmann clearly understands the event of the cross as a God event, hence he speaks of the "crucified God" (54) and that "God himself died". (55) He recognizes, however, that such language has a strong theopaschite ring about it, and whilst he believes the terminology may be valid as a general metaphor, he insists that it must not be taken too literally. A more differentiated manner of speaking is required than is suggested by a phrase like "the death of God". (56)

In Moltmann's view, therefore, the only adequate way of speaking of the event of the cross is by abandoning the simple concept of God and making trinitarian distinctions

within God himself. If the cross is something that takes place between Jesus and his Father then it is necessary for us to speak in trinitarian terms of the Son and the Father and the Spirit. In fact, Moltmann argues that when we speak of God we do not mean another nature or heavenly person, we refer instead to an "event", "the event of the love of the Son and the grief of the Father from which the Spirit who opens up the future and creates life derives".(57) Thus, there is no such thing as a personal God, rather there are "persons in God": (58) the Son, the Father and Spirit.

Moltmann is arguing that God constitutes himself as Trinity in the event of the cross. The experience of the cross makes him who he is. The Trinity is not something that exists eternally in itself, but is something which only fully constitutes itself in the sacrifice and abandonment of the cross. Moltmann writes: "God constitutes his existence in this love-event".(59)

By using trinitarian language Moltmann is able to speak in terms of "death in God"(60) rather than the "death of God". By differentiating between the different members of the Trinity, he is also able to speak precisely about the Father's involvement in the death of Jesus.

b. THE SUFFERING OF THE CROSS AS THE SUFFERING OF THE SON

The key idea that he uses in his analysis of what transpired between the Father and the Son is the Greek word, paradidonai meaning to deliver up, to cast out.

He insists that we must not water down paradidonai to rid it of its harshness. When we speak of the Father "delivering up" the Son we mean nothing less than that the Father forsook and abandoned his Son. Moltmann maintains: "The Son dies from the Father's curse. He is the forsaken God. The Son suffers death in dereliction".(61) Put in its most acute form, Moltmann citing Popkes says: "The first person of the Trinity casts out and annihilates the second A theology of the cross cannot be expressed more radically than it is here".(62)

However, Moltmann stresses that there is more to the cross than the Father who delivered up his Son and the Son who was forsaken by the Father. There is a corresponding paradidonai on the part of Jesus. Moltmann points out that according to the synoptic accounts of the passion story, Jesus "consciously and willingly"(63) walked the way of the cross and was not overtaken by death as an evil and unfortunate fate.

Wolfhart Pannenberg would disagree with this assertion. He argues that the passion and death of Jesus "remain something that happened to him and are not to be understood as his own action". (64) However, Moltmann is insistent. Besides being the abandoned Son, according to Galations 2:20 Jesus also "gave himself for me" and to that extent was the subject of his action and not simply a mere object who is acted upon.

His suffering and death was "a passio activa, a path of suffering that he entered quite deliberately, a dying that he consciously affirmed". (65)

There is thus in the double paradidonai of the Father and the Son on the cross a profound dialectic. On the one hand the cross divides Jesus and his Father as deeply as is possible, to the point where the relationship breaks off. On the other hand there is an inner conformity of will, "a community of wills", (66) such that at the very point where the Father and the Son are furthest divided from one another they are most deeply one, through their mutual surrender.

The decisive link in this "community in separation and separation in community", (67) as Moltmann calls it, is the Holy Spirit who binds the Father and the Son together. The Spirit is the "unifying God" (68) and just as he unites the Son to the Father so he unites both humanity and creation with the Son and the Father. The Spirit is thus, in the

widest sense, "the bond of fellowship and power of unification". (69)

c. THE SUFFERING OF THE CROSS AS THE SUFFERING OF THE FATHER

In our discussion of the event of the cross as something that takes place between the Father and the Son we have noted how the being of God is present in the passion of Jesus. The Father abandoned his Son, thus Jesus is the God-forsaken Son. That much theologians have had no difficulty in asserting. von Balthazar has also affirmed the trinitarian character of the event of the cross. Like Moltmann, he emphasizes the mutual surrender of the Father and the Son. However, he does not ask, what for Moltmann is the heart of the matter, namely: "How much is God affected by Jesus' death?" (70)

Here Moltmann is moving in contentious theological waters. He is trying to formulate an understanding of God not previously acknowledged either in patristic or modern theology. Having rejected the axiom of apatheia and holding fast to trinitarian theology, Moltmann maintains that it was not only the Son who suffered on the cross. In the event of the cross the Father himself experienced suffering in his own being. It was not the same suffering as the Son since the Father and the Son experienced the cross in different ways. The Son is abandoned by his Father and handed over to death, but, as

Hunsinger puts it: "If God does not spare even his Son then neither does he spare himself".(71) The Father thus suffers the death of his Son. Here, as Moltmann maintains:

"The grief of the Father is just as important as the death of the Son. The Fatherlessness of the Son is matched by the Sonlessness of the the Father".(72)

As he puts it elsewhere " the Son does not merely lose his sonship. The Father loses his fatherhood as well".(73)

By asserting such a corresponding suffering of the Father, Moltmann arrives at the point where he is able to assert that not only is God in suffering, but suffering is also in God. He writes:

To recognize God in the cross of Christ . . . means to recognize the cross, in extricable suffering, death and hopeless rejection in God. (74)

Whether Moltmann manages to steer clear of patripassionism and theopaschitism is a question we shall return to later, suffice it to say that he has been accused of both. Bauckham labels Moltmann's view "boldly theopaschite", (75) whilst Braaten implies that Moltmann cannot finally escape the label of patripassionism. (76)

d. THE SUFFERING OF HUMANITY AS THE SUFFERING OF GOD.

Having established that suffering is in God, Moltmann is intent on pressing this assertion to its logical conclusion. He argues that the event of the cross, that is the Trinity, which he calls the "history of God", (77) is a history of abandonment and death, and since human history itself is characterized by suffering, then the event of the cross can be described as "the history of history". (78) Into this history of history "world history" (79) has been taken up. Arguing that the Trinity is not a closed circle of perfect being in heaven, but is "open to man, open to the world and open to time ", (80) Moltmann maintains that the trinitarian being of God is opened to include within itself all "the depths and abysses" (81) of human history. He writes:

All human history however much determined by guilt and death, is taken up into this history of God, i.e. into the Trinity and integrated into the future of the history of God. There is no suffering which in this history of God is not God's suffering; no death which has not been God's death in the history on Golgotha. (82)

Thus, for Moltmann, not only is God in Auschwitz, Auschwitz is also in God. (83)

However, Moltmann presses his argument even further. Since the Trinity is the event of the cross that is open to history, all suffering and death is not only taken into the

being of God, it is actually made part of the future of God, what Moltmann terms, "the trinitarian process of God". (84)

What Moltmann is suggesting is that not only is the Trinity constituted by the event of the cross, but the whole history of human suffering must, in the light of the cross, be seen as constitutive of God's reality. Roger Olson interprets Moltmann as saying that the trinitarian life of God changes in accordance with the changes in human history. (85)

That this is Moltmann's intention becomes clearer when we consider his understanding of the relationship between the economic and immanent Trinity, that is God for us and God in himself. Traditionally this distinction was preserved in order to uphold God's transcendence over history and thus his divine freedom and the grace character of salvation. Hence, it was argued, the immanent Trinity, that is God as he is in himself, is the ground of the economic Trinity, that is God as he is for us in history.

However, Moltmann has serious misgivings about this way of speaking. In his view such a distinction introduces "contradiction" (86) into the being of God, such that "the God who loves the world does not correspond to the God that suffices for himself". (87) It suggests that the immanent Trinity stands above and beyond salvation history as an eternal, ideal being. Thus, the traditional interpretation of

the economic and immanent Trinity succeeds only in separating God from his creation and we are left with the language of speculation when wanting to speak of him.

Moltmann wants to reverse the order of speaking by insisting that the economic Trinity is the ground of the immanent Trinity. He insists that we can say nothing about God outside of God's own history. There is only one divine Trinity and one divine history of salvation, and this triune God "is in himself as he appears in salvation history".(88) Thus, the economic Trinity is prior to the immanent Trinity; it reveals the immanent Trinity and has a retroactive effect upon the immanent Trinity. Just as "the pain of the cross determines the inner life of the triune God from eternity to eternity", (89) so God's relationship with the world has a retroactive effect on his relationship to himself. It is, says Moltmann, "a mutual relationship".(90) He writes:

Just as God goes out of himself through what he does, giving his world his own impress, so his world puts its impress on God too, through its reactions, its aberrations and its own initiative.(91)

In terms of Moltmann's thinking, therefore, the pain, suffering and death of human history have become determinative of God's eternal being, and will continue to be so until the history of salvation is completed and perfected when the dead are raised and death itself is annihilated; when those in despair will be healed and all rule and

authority is abolished. Then the Son will hand over the Kingdom to the Father and God's sorrow will be turned to joy. The economic Trinity will be raised and transcended in the immanent Trinity and God will be "all in all".(92) Moltmann concludes:

This will be the sign of the completion of the trinitarian history of God and the end of world history, the overcoming of the history of man's sorrow and the fulfillment of his history of hope.(93)

However, up until that point in time, when speaking of the Trinity "we can only tell, relate but not sum up".(94)

Summarizing Moltmann's thinking on this aspect of the incorporation of the negative dimensions of history into the eternal being of God, Scott writes:

The identification between God's inner trinitarian life and the history of human suffering is so radical that Moltmann wants to emphasize that in the cross God freely made human suffering and death his own and thus he wills to come to his own divine perfection only in and through suffering.(95)

Such a conclusion is, to say the least, startling, since it appears to compromise God's transcendence by imprisoning him in history. However, we will return to this and other critical issues in our next chapter.

III. THE SUFFERING OF GOD AND THE SUFFERING OF
HUMANITY: FROM THEORY TO PRAXIS.

We must turn to a more pressing concern, namely, how does Moltmann's particular understanding of the relationship between God and suffering help those who are caught up in actual suffering? What does the recognition of the crucified Christ mean for martyrs in prison or the countless millions who sigh under chains of oppression?

We need not go over again the ground that we have already covered, suffice it to highlight Moltmann's contention that the Trinity is, in the light of the suffering of the cross, an eschatological process open for all humanity. Quoting Adrienne von Speyr, Moltmann says: "The relationship of the divine persons to one another is so wide that it has room for the whole world".(96) In searching love the Holy Spirit gathers our human history into the Triune being of God, such that we are able to say not only that God is in suffering, but suffering is in God. Man "is taken up without limitations and conditions into the life and suffering, death and resurrection of God".(97) In the suffering of God, therefore, the suffering, forsakenness and anxieties of every man and woman find a place.

a. THE SUFFERING GOD: DIVINE SYMPATHY AND THE SYMPATHY OF MAN.

Moltmann believes that suffering men and women experience solidarity with Christ in his own suffering. He says suffering is overcome by suffering and wounds are healed by wounds.(98) Moltmann uses Bonhoeffer's words: "Only a suffering God can help"(99) to reinforce his argument; he also cites A.N. Whitehead when he speaks of Jesus as "the fellow-sufferer who understands".(100) Moltmann goes on:

Throughout history men have again and again been able to recognize themselves in this crucified one. They have given up their illusions about themselves and discovered in his wounds their wounds and in his abandonment their abandonment.(101)

A good illustration of Moltmann's point is found in the testimony of the well-known padre of the First World War, G.A. Studdert Kennedy. Moltmann is greatly taken with Kennedy's writings, in particular his book The Hardest Part. Following Kennedy, Moltmann says that what stood the test in the killing fields of Flanders - and even went so far as to create faith in the midst of such hells - was "the discovery of the crucified God".(102)

The key ideas that Moltmann uses to deepen his understanding of the divine solidarity are the Johannine and Pauline concepts of mutual abiding and being "in Christ". By these

terms Moltmann means "life in communion with Christ", (103) which at the same time is "full life in the trinitarian situation of God". (104) Moltmann calls this experience a "realistic divinization (theosis)" (105) and concludes:

Therefore in communion with Christ it can be truly said that men live in God and from God, "that they live, move and have their being". (106)

Moltmann uses another example. For the imprisoned believer in Christ, the cell becomes the very place of mystical experience. There the believer suffers with Christ and the deeper he goes in the fellowship of sufferings, the surer he becomes of Christ's presence. He experiences:

God in the cell, God in the interrogation
God in the torture, God in body's agony
God in that spiritual derangement which
is the dark night of the soul - all this
is the mystic experience of the martyr. (107)

As Moltmann says: "Taking part in Christ's visible suffering in the worlds, the believer shares in Christ's invisible glory". (108)

There is also, however, another dimension to this divine solidarity. Moltmann rejects any understanding of communion with Christ in terms of a world transcending "a - historical unio mystica". (109) Arguing that sympathy has a dialogical structure, Moltmann maintains that divine solidarity with suffering men and women draws them in turn into a "historical

unio sympatheticus".(110) Divine sympathy finds its response in the sympathy of man. Since the suffering of the world is the suffering of God, not only do suffering men and women experience the solidarity of the suffering God, they also discover solidarity with the suffering of God. Man enters into the full situation of God and becomes homo sympatheticus.(111) He begins to love with God's love, he is angry with God's anger, he suffers with God's suffering, and the more he is drawn into the suffering of God, the more he experiences solidarity with the suffering of the earth.

As Bonhoeffer wrote: "Christians stand by God in his hour of grieving".(112) Moltmann concludes:

The community of Christ always leads
us deeper into suffering with humanity
. . . . Love makes suffering of the
others unbearable for one who suffers.(113)

Here Moltmann is beginning the task of spelling out the consequences of his understanding of the suffering God, that is the theology of the cross, for man's socio political milieu.

b. THE SUFFERING GOD AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD.

For Moltmann the theologia crucis must provide the basis of all social criticism. He says: "Truth must be practicable"(114); the theologia crucis only remains a theologia crucis

theologia crucis in the context of critical and liberating practise. He writes:

Unless it contains initiative for the transformation of the world, it becomes a myth of the existing world (115)

Moltmann argues forcefully for the church's involvement on behalf of those who suffer. According to his fifth thesis in his 1968 lecture entitled "God in Revolution":

The church is not a heavenly arbiter in the world's strifes. In the present struggles for freedom and justice, Christians must side with the humanity of the oppressed. (116)

Such a conclusion is not simply an arbitrary decision in favour of the suffering. In his book, The Church in the Power of the Spirit, Moltmann asks where the true church is to be found. He replies by citing the Latin proposition: ubi Christus - ibi ecclesia : where Christ is, there is the Church. (117) Moltmann, goes on to point out that in the New Testament there are given to us two promises of Christ's presence, firstly, in the Word, Sacrament and community of the faithful, and secondly, in the "least of the brethren" as spoken of in Matthew 25.

Moltmann says the issue in Matthew 25 is the Judge of the world who is present in concealed form in the poor. The question for the church, therefore, is not how people outside

the church respond to the church, but how the church responds to the presence of Christ in those who are "outside" : the hungry, thirsty, sick, naked and imprisoned, namely those who suffer.(118)

Christ's solidarity with the suffering of humanity thus lays upon the church an imperative. If, as Moltmann believes, ubi Christus - ibi ecclesia, then the church must side with the "damned of the earth"(119) and it must join in "concrete historical identification with projects directed towards overcoming human misery and enslavement".(120)

In this respect Moltmann does not rule out the use of violence as a means of resisting oppression and helping those who are oppressed. Acknowledging the sinfulness of killing Moltmann nevertheless affirms that love for those who suffer and a desire to put an end to evil can compel people to resort to violence. Such a love, however, "cannot be approved, but can be answered for".(121)

In the final analysis, however, Moltmann believes that the ultimate alleviation of suffering, both divine and human, will be overcome when the history of the passion of the world is completed at the resurrection of the dead, when the murdered and the gassed, the broken and abused are raised and glorified in the joy of God. This will mark God's self-deliverance from his sufferings;(122) the culmination of the

gathering of creation through the Spirit under Christ into God. All will partake of the inner-trinitarian life of God and all will become the joy of the Father's blissful love.

For Moltmann, therefore, the goal of history that Christians look toward is an eschatological panentheism in which God will be in everything and everything will be in God. As Moltmann puts it:

This is the eternal feast of heaven and earth. This is the dance of the redeemed. This is "the laughter of the universe". (123)

In the meantime, says Moltmann, Christian faith is alive "in the steadfastness of hope". (124)

IV. THE SUFFERING GOD AS THE CHRISTIAN THEODICY

What we have attempted to present in this chapter is how Moltmann understands the relationship between God and suffering. In the face of protest atheism's denial of God, and a metaphysical theology that, in Moltmann's opinion, separates God from his creation, Moltmann has tried to show that the proper Christian understanding of God points to a God who has entered history, has taken into himself the burden of history and is inconceivable apart from history.

The theology of the passion of God that Moltmann has

developed recognizes both God's self-subjection to suffering and God's eschatological self-deliverance from suffering. As Moltmann writes:

Between these two movements lies the history of the profound fellowship between God and man in compassionate suffering with one another, and in passionate love for one another. (125)

Hunsinger has summed up Moltmann's essential point:

The intention of Moltmann's theology of the crucified Christ is thus to show how the particularity of the cross achieves a universal significance as it joins the suffering of God to the suffering of the world and the suffering of the world to the suffering of God. (126)

In Moltmann's understanding of the cross we have his response to the theodicy question. If his earlier theology of the resurrection was an attempt to respond to the theodicy question from the angle of God's justice and power, (127) then in his theology of the cross he has taken, what Hunsinger has termed, a "dialectical turn". (128) He now faces the question of suffering from the perspective of God's powerlessness and love.

The cross reveals who and where God is. In it we are confronted by the concrete suffering of God. Thus, if God himself has tasted suffering and death then he no longer stands as the accused. Suffering is no longer an argument

against God, rather, God is an argument against suffering. As Hunsinger puts it : "The crucified humanity of God on the cross now becomes the Christian theodicy." (129) Moltmann concludes:

The cross of Christ then becomes the Christian theodicy - a self-justification of God in which judgement and damnation are taken up by God himself, so that man may live. (130)

FOOTNOTES

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5. J. Moltmann, The Future of Creation, p. 62.
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11. Ibid., p. 22.
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39. Ibid., p. 205.
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42. J. Macquarrie, The Humility of God, p. 60.
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44. J. Moltmann, The Future of Creation, p. 65.
45. Gospel of Mark 15:34.
46. J. Moltmann, Hope and Planning, p. 43.

47. D. Meeks, The Open Church, p. 16.
48. J. Moltmann, Theology of Hope, p. 211.
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50. J. Moltmann, The Crucified God, p. 152.
51. J. Moltmann, The Experiment Hope, p. 80.
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CHAPTER 4

GOD AND SUFFERING: AN EVALUATION OF MOLTSMANN'S THEODICY

Having given an account of Moltmann's thinking on the relation between God and suffering, we turn our attention to the important task of evaluating his "revolution"(1) in the understanding of God. The suffering God is his specific response to the contradictions inherent in talk of God and suffering. However, such an understanding is not without problems, and in this chapter we will ask six critical questions which, we believe, will highlight some of the deficiencies in Moltmann's perspective, namely:

1. In rejecting classical theism has Moltmann merely replaced one unacceptable metaphysic with another that is equally unacceptable?
11. In relating God and suffering has Moltmann compromised the Christian understanding of the transcendence of God?
111. In seeking to reconcile God and suffering, is Moltmann guilty of patripassionism, theopaschitism, or both, and if so, in what sense can we properly speak of the suffering and death of God?

IV. Is Moltmann's God even more inhuman than the God of classical theism that he so vehemently renounces?

V. Is Moltmann guilty of tritheism?

VI. Is there any salvation in Moltmann's "suffering God"?

1. IN REJECTING CLASSICAL THEISM HAS MOLTMAN MERELY
REPLACED ONE UNACCEPTABLE METAPHYSIC WITH ANOTHER
THAT IS EQUALLY UNACCEPTABLE?

We noted in chapter 2 how Moltmann sets out to expose the deficiencies of classical theism. Whilst we agreed with his contention that the doctrinal development of the early church in general, and its doctrine of God in particular, was impeded by an uncritical acceptance of the Greek metaphysical category of apatheia, we disagreed as to the extent of the compromise between Christianity and Greek metaphysics. Moltmann's call for a wholesale rejection of classical theism we found to be excessive, and we considered Packer's suggestion of "minor modifications"(2) a more realistic assessment.

One of the dangers in theology - especially in its attempt to think and speak about God - is a tendency towards one-sidedness. If in the early church, and in later scholastic theology, the pendulum swung in the direction of separating

God and the world, then in Moltmann's theology the pendulum has swung to the other extreme.

So concerned is Moltmann to show God's commitment to, and involvement with the world, that at points it seems almost as if God has been dissolved into history. In place of what Moltmann perceives to be an a-historical God, imprisoned in a static and immobile Greek, or Aristotelelian ontology, Moltmann has tried to develop a dynamic understanding of God, in terms of which God both affects and is affected by history. Indeed, Hunsinger claims that Moltmann's entire theology is:

. . . an attempt to move away from a theology of being to a theology of act, from static categories and spatial metaphors to dynamic categories and temporal metaphors. (3)

It is not surprising, therefore, that Moltmann has turned to the philosophy of G.W.F. Hegel to provide him with the necessary philosophical tools with which to develop his own ideas.

Corduan has described Hegel's philosophy as "a philosophy of and in process". (4) An important feature of his thinking is his understanding of the historicity of God, in terms of which God is known to man through history and is actually involved in history. According to Hegel, God himself has a

history and reveals himself in that history. He is, consequently, not a supreme being above and beyond man and the world. He is rather a self-developing God in the process of coming to himself, absorbing all the wretchedness of history, but at the same time encompassing it with good. His purpose is to arrive at a unity of the finite and the infinite, or as Küng puts it, "a vital unity of all being in God". (5)

Whilst God (or the "Absolute Spirit", as Hegel prefers to call him) in his final expression is essentially a-temporal, the dynamic development leading up to that stage presents us with God (Father, Son and Spirit) in the realm of temporal, or historical becoming. (6)

Hegel emphasizes God's relation to history to the point where he claims: "Without the world, God is not God" (7); a statement in sharp contrast to those theologians of transcendence who express their teaching in the two-fold formulae: "The world minus God = 0; God minus the world = God". (8)

In place of an abstract theodicy unrelated to history, Hegel sets out to be historical as he develops his own comprehensive dynamic philosophy of history. Küng has labelled his thinking, "a mighty historical theodicy", (9) which, at the same time, is meant to be "a comprehensive

divine historiody (justification of history)".(10) Küng goes on:

The negative aspects of reality - sin suffering and death - are not trivialized by a supratemporal abstract theodicy but depicted by a theology of the death of God in concrete justification of God and man as overcome painfully and victoriously by God himself in history."(11)

In order to combat classical theism, Moltmann has galvanized the insights of Hegel and endeavoured to refine, integrate and apply them in the development of his own thinking. There is certainly nothing wrong, in and of itself, with using Hegel or any other philosophical thinking for that matter. As Corduan reminds us, a systematic theology cannot help being influenced by one or more philosophical viewpoints.(12) However, Donald Bloesch has added an important rider. Arguing that a reformed and purified evangelical theology will not discount the role of philosophy, Bloesch maintains "it will sub-ordinate philosophy to the Word of God rather than vice versa".(13)

The question is, therefore, in using Hegel has Moltmann done precisely what Bloesch warned us against, namely, subordinated the Word of God to philosophy?

Moltmann is working with a Hegelian ontology, and whilst it must be acknowledged that Hegel's thought has the power to

liberate theology from many static categories, as well as deepen our insights into the scriptures, Moltmann has used Hegel to step across the boundaries of scripture into the realm of speculation. For instance, he argues that God was in Auschwitz - a truth that can, with justification, be inferred from scripture. However, as we have seen, Moltmann goes a step further, arguing on the basis of Hegel's incorporation of the negative elements into the divine life, that Auschwitz is in God. This is clearly a Hegelian and not a scriptural conclusion.

It is our contention, that if, as Moltmann claims, the Church Fathers were guilty of selling out to Greek metaphysics, then Moltmann in turn is as guilty of succumbing to Hegelian metaphysics. In rejecting Greek metaphysical thinking he has merely replaced Aristotle with Hegel.

If philosophy is to be subordinate to scripture, it will not press beyond the limits of scripture, but will rest in the vital task of providing the necessary tools with which to extract and amplify new truths from the Word of God. A servant cannot be greater than his master.

There is another important question which we should consider. Is it necessary to use Hegel in this instance?

We answered this question in part in Chapter 2, when we

highlighted the views of a number of theologians who claim that classical theism has been too readily dismissed, and that, in actual fact, there is no warrant to put away classical metaphysics and adopt Hegel's philosophical framework. (14)

Doubtless the debate will continue, but it is our contention that Moltmann could have formulated an understanding of God that does justice both to the best insights of classical theism and Moltmann's own particular perspective, without recourse to Hegel. The possible solution lies in a more thorough application of the dialectical principle.

Daniel Migliore labels Moltmann a "master dialectician, (15) something we have already noticed in regard to his epistemology and the dialectic between cross and resurrection - to mention just two examples. What is surprising, therefore, is that Moltmann has not carried this dialectic through to his doctrine of God, more specifically to the attributes of God. Macquarrie has reminded us that there is a dialectic built into the very idea of God. He says:

Whatever may be said about him it seems we are bound to correct it by saying something of opposite tendency. (16)

For instance, in terms of this dialectical understanding, God is both immanent and transcendent, passable and impassable,

eternal and temporal, one and many.

"Dialectical theism,"(17) as Macquarrie has termed this perspective, is, we believe, the key to resolving the two seemingly irreconcilable viewpoints and of restoring the balance in Moltmann's thought. To overlook it is to be led into unbalanced and one-sided thinking. One of the fundamental requirements of theological reflection is to be able to hold opposites in tension. As Macquarrie points out: "A God understood and neatly packaged in philosophical concepts would not be God."(18)

Thus, in responding to the problems apparent in Moltmann's theology, as he has tried to set out the relation between God and suffering, we propose to apply the principles of dialectical theism.

11. IN SEEKING TO EXPLAIN GOD'S RELATION TO THE SUFFERING OF THE WORLD, HAS MOLTSMANN COMPROMISED GOD'S TRANSCENDENCE?

In our previous chapter we noted how Moltmann has done away with the traditional distinction between the immanent and economic Trinity. In his estimation, such a distinction implies a contradiction in God and effectively separates God from the world. Thus, Moltmann is emphatic when he writes:

The nature of God does not stand behind the appearance of history and appearance in history as

eternal ideal being : it is that
history itself. (19)

Such a radical identification of God and the world inevitably raises the question about God's prior actuality in himself. At face value it would seem as if Moltmann has imprisoned God in history, to the point where God's transcendence has been compromised.

In fairness to Moltmann, however, it should be pointed out that he does not entirely dismiss the distinction between the immanent and economic Trinity. The economic Trinity is the trinitarian life as it is located in history. The immanent Trinity is the unified God of the eschaton. One could say that, for Moltmann, the immanent Trinity is the goal of history. He writes:

When everything is "in God" and God is all in all, then the economic Trinity is raised into and transcended in the immanent Trinity. (20)

According to Olson, Moltmann is seeking to redefine the problem of immanence and transcendence in temporal and historical terms. He holds that in terms of Moltmann's thinking, God's immanence would be "the historical stages in the process of his kingdom's fulfillment", (21) whilst God's transcendence would be that future kingdom of glory in which the historical stages are completed, fulfilled and united. However, as Olson comments:

Although Moltmann does not wish it, one seems forced to picture the scheme as a linear one with a temporal process culminating teleologically in a future state which is entirely determined by the process's cumulative history. (22)

It would appear, therefore, that for Moltmann, historical events have become determinative of the being of God. As Olson points out, in terms of Moltmann's thinking the immanent Trinity is a "passive product of an historical process". (23) Clearly, God needs history in order to come to himself.

Whether Moltmann intends to say these things is a matter of debate, but there can be little doubt that he opens himself to fierce criticism.

Moltmann has endeavoured to respond to the criticisms about God needing history, by suggesting that his critics have misunderstood the meaning of divine freedom. He holds that when we speak of God needing the world, we do not suggest that God has a lack within himself, or that such a need arises out of a deficiency of being in God. Moltmann maintains that God is free from external compulsion. "Out of the superabundance of his creative fulness" (24) God chooses not to come to himself apart from the historical process.

Whether this is an adequate response to the issue is questionable. The lingering impression remains that, in

wanting to emphasize the openness of the trinitarian life for man, Moltmann has left us with "a Trinity so open as to be threatened with a loss of transcendence by being dependent upon the contingencies of history". (25)

Clearly, in Moltmann's understanding of the relation between immanence and transcendence, the pendulum has swung dramatically in favour of immanence. If the teaching of classical theism tended towards a monarchical view of God that effectively separated God from suffering humanity, then Moltmann has gone to the other extreme in presenting a historical God who has been absorbed by and is indistinguishable from history.

In what sense, therefore, can we properly speak of the transcendence and immanence of God? In terms of dialectical theism we must hold the two together, not in some position of compromise that fails to do justice to either, but rather affirming that, in some respects, God is both wholly transcendent and wholly immanent.

By transcendence we mean that there is between God and creation, or God and suffering humanity, as Kierkegaard put it, an "infinite qualitative distinction", (26) in terms of which God is prior to and other than his creation. Taken on its own, however, transcendence would imply that the relation between God and the world is essentially

asymmetrical, i.e. the world needs God, but God has no need of the world; God affects the world, but the world does not affect God. Hence the importance of the dialectical understanding of God, for it reminds us that immanence must be held in tension with transcendence.

Thus, immanence suggests a far more organic, or symmetrical relation between God and suffering humanity. It emphasizes the fact that whilst God is prior to creation, he is nevertheless dynamically and intimately involved in and with the world, in people as well as events.

111. IS MOLTMANN GUILTY OF PATRIPASSIONISM, THEOPASCHITISM
OR BOTH?

Before considering the question specifically, it would be helpful to remind ourselves that Moltmann is not the first theologian to address the subject of divine passability and to develop an understanding of the suffering God. In words that have proved farsighted, H.M. Relton wrote in 1917:

There are many indications that the doctrine of the suffering God is going to play a very prominent part in the theology of the age in which we live. (27)

A number of theologians have tackled the question, among them Karl Barth, James Cone and the Japanese theologian Kazoh Kitamori. However, Durand claims that it was Karl Barth who

was largely responsible for the "totale omwentelling"(28) of our contemporary understanding of God. Barth works through and applies his fundamental conviction that we can only speak about God from the perspective of Jesus Christ. He speaks consistently of "God in Christ". Thus, since Christ is vere Deus, the history of Jesus is the history of God himself. Likewise the obedience of Christ is the obedience of God, the self surrender of Christ the self surrender of God, and the suffering of Christ the suffering of God.(29)

What this means is that God the Father does not stand above or outside of the suffering of Jesus, but himself suffers in the cross. Barth goes so far as to claim that there is "a particula veri in the teaching of the early patripassions".(30) He qualifies this comment by adding that the suffering experienced by the Father was not the actual pain of crucifixion, as if the Father had died, but the suffering of the man Jesus which the Father had taken to himself. In this "fatherly fellow-suffering", (31) as Barth puts it, we have the depths of the mystery of the humiliation of the cross.

Apart from Barth, with whom Moltmann shares a methodological affinity by virtue of their mutual emphasis on the crucified Christ, Moltmann has not learned a great deal from mainstream theologians. This is not to say, however, that he has developed his perspective in isolation from other theologians

and thinkers. He acknowledges his debt to a number of men from lesser-known traditions who have begun their theological quests from the perspective of the divine pathos.

We have already noted the influence of the Jewish thinker Rosenzweig. However, it is the Jewish theologian Abraham Heschel who has made a particular impact on Moltmann. From his study of the Old Testament prophets, Heschel develops a theology of the divine pathos. He argues:

In order to conceive of God not as an onlooker but as a participant, to conceive of man not as an idea in the mind of God but as a concern, the category of divine pathos is an indispensable implication. (32)

To speak of God's pathos is to understand the historical nature of God whereby he enters into relationship with creation, his people and history, suffering with them and being wounded in his love because of their sins.

Heschel speaks of a corresponding pathos in man whereby he enters into God's own pathos and becomes homo sympatheticus, (33) a term which Moltmann himself has used throughout his writings to express the idea of man's solidarity with the suffering of God.

Remaining within the Jewish tradition, Moltmann has been especially impressed by the kabbalistic doctrine of the

Shekinah, in terms of which God is said to descend and dwell amongst his people Israel. Through his Shekinah, God is present to Israel. He suffers with Israel, goes into exile with them and experiences their torments of death. Thus, Israel's suffering is God's suffering, and Israel's deliverance, God's deliverance. (34)

From within the Anglican tradition, Moltmann has been impressed by theologians like C.E. Rolt and the ever-popular Studdert Kennedy, who argue that Golgotha is the inescapable revelation of the divine nature. In terms of Golgotha, the sovereignty of God is defined as the almighty power of suffering love. (35)

Two further thinkers warrant brief mention. The Spanish mystic, Miguel de Unamuno, teaches the doctrine of the infinite pain, or sorrow of God, in terms of which God is seen as participating in the world's pain, suffering in all who suffer. (36) The Russian Orthodox philosopher of religion, Nicolas Berdyaev, speaks of human history as a tragedy and of how, in the depths of the divine life, there is a "tragic passion". (37)

All the above theologians and thinkers have brought insights that have helped Moltmann to deepen his own perspective. Each of them has a profound understanding of God's involvement with, and participation in, the suffering of the world. In

addition, they have reinforced the move away from the doctrine of divine impassability, built as it is upon the axiom of apatheia.

Moltmann is thus not the only theologian to have approached the issue of the suffering God, but he has given it its clearest and most radical expression.

However, the question inevitably arises as to whether, in his presentation of the suffering God, Moltmann is guilty of patripassionism, theopaschitism, or both.

In considering this, it ought to be borne in mind that as Moltmann has dispensed with the two-natures christology he finds himself up against the charge of theopaschitism. Bauckham claims that Moltmann is "boldly theopaschite", (38) whilst Durand labels him "the most radical theopaschite thinker of today". (39) Certainly, as one reads Moltmann's works there are phrases that he uses which have an ominous theopaschite ring about them. Adapting Luther's understanding of the communicatio idiomatum, in terms of which the human experiences of Christ are ascribed also to God, Moltmann is able to speak about "the crucified God" (40) and "the death of God". (41)

These and other phrases have been criticized by König, who argues that this "reslose identifikasie" (42) of God and Jesus

does not correspond to the "onderskeidende spreekwyse"(43) of the New Testament when it refers to God the Father and the Son of God.

From this writer's perspective it would appear, however, that König has misunderstood Moltmann's use of such phrases. Moltmann freely admits that the language he uses is "theopaschite talk".(44) However, he is careful to qualify his remark. He says that such theopaschite language is only valid as a "general metaphor", (45) and consequently, it must not be pressed too literally, since on closer inspection "it will not hold".(46)

Moltmann insists, and König has obviously overlooked this point, that we must make more of a differentiation than is suggested by the phrase "the death of God". In his view, the key to resolving the issue is to employ trinitarian language when speaking about the event of the cross. Moltmann urges us to speak of the relationship of the Son, the Father, and the Spirit, precisely at the point where "God" might be expected to be used. Thus the New Testament speaks about God by "proclaiming in narrative the relationships of the Father, the Son and the Spirit".(47) Consequently, in Moltmann's view, the death of Jesus, far from suggesting the death of God, may more properly be regarded as "death in God".(48)

Whilst it is true, therefore, that Moltmann has introduced death into the being of God, he nevertheless believes that in making this distinction between metaphysical and trinitarian language he has circumvented the accusation of theopaschitism.

However, when we turn to the charge of patripassionism we find Moltmann on less certain ground. His argument has been that in the event of the cross the Son suffered and died. The Father also suffered the death of his Fatherhood. Yet in his discussion on the doctrine of the Filioque, Moltmann is careful to emphasize that the Father is never the Father without the Son. (49) If we press this statement to its logical end, we arrive at the startling conclusion that when the Son died, not only did the Father lose his Fatherhood, the Father simply ceased to exist.

Even by Moltmann's radical standards he would not want to say the above. However, when we overstep the boundaries of scripture, as Moltmann has done, it is difficult to know where the limit of speculative thought lies. To throw off the restraints of scripture is to throw caution to the wind, and the end result is invariably heresy.

In fairness to Moltmann, he is not satisfied with traditional answers. He is a bold theological thinker. In seeking to

understand how God can be said to suffer, he is walking through a theological minefield, but some would argue that it is better that a few mines explode, than that we remain securely behind our sterile creeds.

Aware of Moltmann's concerns, we ask how we might properly speak of the suffering and death of God. After all, as Braaten points out: "The idea that God cannot participate in human suffering and death is a heresy worse than patripassionism." (50)

Given all the question-marks over Moltmann's view, it is not surprising that König has called for an entirely different approach to the issue of the suffering God. Reminding us that modern theology has, on the whole, tended to view the relationship between God and suffering primarily from a christological perspective, König argues that we must move away from this perspective. (51) He maintains that the Bible makes a clear distinction between God and Christ. Christ occupies a unique position as mediator between God and man. As G.C. Berkouwer says (in the context of Barth's theology) to affirm "the subjectivity of God in the whole of Christ's suffering", (52) and to make "God Himself" (53) the subject of the suffering, is to obscure this mediatorial role.

König concludes that in respect of the suffering of God, we

cannot move from christology (vere deus) to the doctrine of God. (54) From a New Testament angle one cannot simply ascribe to God all the experiences of Christ.

This is a point that Leonardo Boff also tries to make, though his language is less restrained than that of König. Boff argues that in terms of Moltmann's logic, when we say that Jesus smiled, that he took nourishment, that he digested what he ingested, and that he experienced ordinary human biological needs, we immediately "transfer these physiological needs into trinitarian problems". (55) The end result, according to Boff, is a trinitarian and christological faith transformed into a "chapter pasted together from an ancient mythology and modern pornography". (56)

Boff's comments are harsh and excessive and, like König, he ignores Moltmann's crucial distinction between metaphysical and trinitarian speech about God. Nevertheless, his essential point is that when faith professes "Jesus is God", it has said all there is to say and silence alone is adequate. "We cannot go on with constructs upon the reality enunciated." (57)

This is an important point since it reminds us that we must keep within the confines of scripture. As König cautions us, scripture sets definite limits to the proclamation of the

impenetrable mystery of the incarnation and the cross. (58) He holds that when discussing the question of the suffering of God, we must also listen to the witness of the prophets and the apostles. We are less interested in what God can and cannot do, than we are in coming to grips with God as he is revealed in biblical history.

Our contention here is that we must extend the basis of our discussion of the suffering God to include the testimony of the entire scripture, and in particular the anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament. Whilst we would agree with Kasper when he writes:

The cross is the utmost that is possible to God in his self surrendering love; it is "that than which a greater cannot be thought; it is the insurpassable self definition of God. (59)

we would nevertheless, maintain that the cross is not the exclusive point of reference for our understanding of the suffering God. God's revelation may reach its climax in the Christ-event, but it is still built on what went before. Jesus Christ may be the cornerstone of our knowledge of God, but there is also the foundation laid by the prophets and apostles.

We would hold, therefore, that Moltmann has not paid sufficient attention to the Old Testament's setting forth of

the suffering God. Whilst his theology is notable in other respects for stressing the normativity of Old Testament theology for interpreting the New, we would agree with Bauckham when, in commenting on Moltmann, he says:

If the cross is not to be understood by reference to a concept of God imparted from elsewhere, it must nevertheless presuppose the God of the Old Testament. (60)

In the Old Testament, God is spoken of in anthropomorphic terms, that is, he is represented as experiencing human emotions. Such language is aimed at accomodating our human understanding. This is not to deny that these emotions are real. If they are merely metaphorical, then as Vincent Tymms points out, "the only God left to us will be the infinite iceberg of metaphysics". (61)

König argues that since man is made in the image of God, in principle it is permissible to speak about him in anthropomorphic terms. When we do so, "as the Bible does", (62) then we speak of him "correctly and reliably". (63) Thus the God of Israel is depicted as a loving husband or father, full of steadfast love towards his people. Of his relationship with his people it is properly said: "In all their afflictions he was afflicted . . . in his love and in his pity he redeemed us". (64) König reminds us that the Afrikaans word for "pity" is "medelye", meaning compassion;

literally, to suffer with. (65)

Other examples could be given to support our argument, suffice it to say that if we accept the Bible's way of speaking about God, then we must accept the fact that he can suffer. If God is love, then that love is open to the suffering which such a relationship of love can bring. As Moltmann says: "The theology of the divine passion is founded on the Biblical truth, 'God is love' " (66)

We would sum up by saying that the Old Testament lays the foundation for the New Testament's understanding of the suffering God. In terms of the Old Testament, God reveals himself as a passionate God intimately involved with history, and experiencing the pain and frustration of suffering humanity. This God is the same God and Father of Jesus Christ. In Christ, and in the event of the cross in particular: "God's self-renouncing love is embodied with ultimate radicalness". (67)

However, in relating the suffering of Christ to God, we must, as Moltmann insists, employ trinitarian language. A clear distinction must be drawn between the suffering of Jesus and the suffering of the Father, since as Moltmann points out, they are not the same. Similarly, when we say that Jesus died, we are not permitted to speak of the death of God. As König says: "This is simply a revelational boundary that must not be exceeded". (68)

Doubtless, many questions will persist, as ultimately we can come up against the mystery of the Trinity. A significant difference between the biblical witness to the suffering God and Moltmann's own perspective, is that whereas the Bible sets out the fact of God's suffering, Moltmann wants to go beyond these statements and analyse the intimacies of the inner trinitarian life, about which the Bible says nothing.

The danger of speaking of the suffering God as a reaction against a remote and monarchical God who is enthroned above the suffering of the world, is that we put in his place a "puny godling" (69) who, as Macquarrie says, is nothing more than "the helpless victim of a world that has got completely out of control". (70)

Here dialectical theism offers a balancing view. Instead of merely substituting passability for impassability, we must recognize that God unites both of these characteristics in himself. God suffers, and to that extent he is passable. However, whilst he experiences the world's pain, he is never overwhelmed by it, and is to that extent, impassable. Whilst, therefore, God stands in solidarity with his people in their suffering, he is no less the God of providence and judgement. As Macquarrie sums it up:

God is passable and impassable.
Without his passability, his
sharing in our affection, there
could be no bond of sympathy

between him and us. Without his impassability, his power to absorb and overcome and transform, there could be no final faith in God.(71)

IV. IS MOLTSMANN'S GOD EVEN MORE INHUMAN THAN THE GOD OF THEISM THAT HE HAS SO VEHEMENTLY RENOUNCED ?

Boff has been particularly scathing in his criticism of Moltmann's understanding of God. Picking up on Moltmann's emphasis on the Father who delivers up, or sacrifices his Son, Boff maintains that in terms of Moltmann's thinking, it is the Father alone - and not any historical adversary - that is the sole cause of Jesus suffering. The Father does what Abraham did not do; he kills his Son. According to Boff, to view the cross in this way is to say that "the Father is Jesus' murderer".(72) Boff goes on:

The divine wrath is unslaked by a vengeance wreaked on God's other daughters and sons, Jesus' sisters and brothers. It must have the first-born Son. Filicide is promoted to the rank of the sacred theological.(73)

Such a view of God is, in Boff's opinion, tyrannical and absurd.

A similar, though less polemical view, has been expressed by Dorothy Soelle, who claims that Moltmann is fascinated by what she terms "the brutality of his God".(74) Highlighting Moltmann's view that it was the will of the Father not to

spare his Son, Soelle concludes that Moltmann's God is nothing short of an "executioner".(75)

Naturally these are serious accusations and we have to ask whether Moltmann's revolution in his concept of God has backfired, and as happens in so many revolutions, whether the revolution has devoured its own. Certainly, in terms of the way Boff and Soelle have understood Moltmann's concept of God, God remains as much a threat to man as anything that classical theism could present.

However, in seeking to respond to these criticisms it is important that we recall Moltmann's argument that it was not simply the Father who delivered his Son over to death, but the Son who also "gave himself for me". In other words, the cross was something that Jesus deliberately accepted and consciously affirmed. In this idea of the mutual surrender and the conformity of will between the will of the Father and the will of the Son, we go a long way to answering the rather one-sided understanding of the sacrifice of the cross that is evident in both Boff's and Soelle's interpretation of Moltmann.

Having said that, it is clear, however, that at times Moltmann uses extravagant language. To speak of the Father "annihilating"(76) the Son creates the distinct picture of a

God of crushing power. This is the very concept of God that Moltmann so strenuously opposes, yet he himself has fallen headlong into the same theological pit. In terms of this perspective little stands in the way of complete atheism.

V. IS MOLTSMANN GUILTY OF TRITHEISM ?

One of Moltmann's main concerns has been to show how traditional theology has been guilty of fundamental theological error that has played into the hands of protest atheism. One such error has been an understanding of God that is essentially monotheistic as distinct from trinitarian.

According to Moltmann, inherent in monotheism is a hierarchical and monarchical view of God that succeeds only in separating God from the world's suffering. Surprisingly, Moltmann includes theologians of the stature of Karl Barth and Karl Rahner in his indictment of Christian monotheism. He regards Barth's theology as a "monotheistic conception of the doctrine of the Trinity". (77) Both Barth and Rahner reflect an insipient modalism that is essentially an oppressive form of monarchism. Moltmann's own understanding of God is strongly trinitarian, and it is one of the strengths of his theology that he has forced Western theology to re-examine its view of God, and to ask whether it is sufficiently trinitarian.

However, in his presentation of God in terms of the relationship between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, we find statements which have a decided tritheistic ring about them. Moltmann begins his trinitarian doctrine of God with the givenness of the three persons, making their unity the problem to be resolved. He speaks of the three divine persons of the Trinity as "three divine subjects"(78) who work together in the trinitarian history of the kingdom. Whereas traditional theology teaches that in God there is only one centre of consciousness and will, Moltmann implies that there are three. What is more, their unity is not a numerical unity, but rather "lies in their fellowship and not in the identity of a single subject".(79) As O'Donnell points out, in terms of Moltmann's understanding of the Trinity, the ontological unity of one substance has been replaced by a volitional unity of three subjects.(80)

Here we are confronted by the spectre of tritheism, an accusation that Moltmann vigorously denies. Against this charge he points out that his critics are working with an individualistic view of personhood. Moltmann wants to move away from such individualism by advocating a social interpretation of "person", whereby the "I" is to be understood in the light of the "Thou". In other words, being a person means "existing-in-relationship", (81) or, as John McMurray puts it: "The unit of the personal is not the 'I'

but the 'You and I'". (83) Thus, person and community are correlative terms.

Arguing in this way, Moltmann arrives at his social understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. However, the tritheism label still hangs heavily over him. Not to be put off, Moltmann addresses the problem of how the three persons of the Trinity are to be considered one. He starts his explanation by appealing to the doctrine of the perichoresis, in terms of which the persons of the Trinity, by virtue of their eternal love, live and dwell in one another to such an extent that they are one. Moltmann writes:

The Father exists in the Son, the Son in the Father, and both of them in the Spirit, just as the Spirit exists in both the Father and the Son. (83)

It is, says Moltmann, a "process of most perfect and intense empathy". (84)

By using the perichoresis, Moltmann believes he avoids both tritheism and modalism; the threeness and the unity of divine persons are linked together in such a way that the threeness is not reduced to the unity, nor the unity dissolved in the threeness.

To the accusation that the social analogy of the Trinity is

tritheistic, Brian Hebblethwaite has argued that to view it in this way is to misunderstand the purpose of the social analogy. Hebblethwaite writes:

The social analogy is an analogy. It invites us to consider the possibility that the infinite richness and complexity of the one God embraces the fulness of love given and love received within the infinite being of the source of all things. We are concerned here with the logic of infinity, and the analogy has to be qualified precisely at the point where the spectre of tritheism looms. (85)

VI. IS THERE ANY SALVATION IN MOLTSMANN'S "SUFFERING GOD?"

As one studies Moltmann's understanding of God the question inevitably arises as to whether the God he believes in is, in reality, a God of salvation. Does the suffering God make any real difference to those who suffer?

Significantly, Moltmann insists that we must abandon all the traditional theories of salvation, (86) and in his major work on the cross there is no dialogue or comparison with the classical theologians of the church such as Irenaeus, Athanasius and Anselm, to name only a few who have shaped the church's doctrine of salvation.

In his book on the doctrine of the Trinity, Moltmann acknowledges the dogmatic tradition, however his interest in

the tradition is not primarily soteriological. He is more concerned about the significance of the incarnation of the Son and the kenosis of God in the event of the cross, as expressions of the inner-life of God. Thus, to the question Cur Deus homo ?, Moltmann relegates to a secondary position the traditional response about it being necessary because of man's sin and his need of reconciliation with God. (87) In his view, christology is more than the presupposition of soteriology. The cross is first and foremost a statement about God, before it is an assurance of salvation addressed to man. (88) Consequently, the incarnation and the kenosis of God that reach their climax in the event of the cross, are less divine acts directed outwards at the salvation of mankind, than they are part of the "inner relations of the Trinity". (89)

Such a conclusion seems questionable since the Christian's concern is not with God in himself but with God-for-us, the God of Jesus Christ, who is a God of human beings.

In a veiled reference to Moltmann, Küng says that to view the sufferings of Jesus as an "inner trinitarian (eternal) history of suffering of a crucified God, enacted dialectically between God and God, God against God" (90) offers little comfort for suffering humanity. Such an approach, in Küng's estimation, is like "lecturing about the chemistry of foodstuffs to starving people". (91)

We would add that a theoretical reconciliation between God and suffering is not enough. Before the theoretical question about how we are to reconcile God and suffering can be answered, if indeed it can be answered, a more fundamental and practical question needs to be asked, namely: What does God do to overcome evil and suffering? It is our contention that the only way we can reconcile belief in God with the harsh realities of suffering, is if the God we believe in is a God of salvation.

The above is not to suggest that in Moltmann's theology there is a soteriological vacuum. Surin speaks of Moltmann's "unrelenting emphasis on the salvific significance of the cross of Christ". (92) However, it does force us to look again and ask what exactly Moltmann understands by the word "salvation".

a. MOLTMANN'S "SUBJECTIVE" VIEW OF SALVATION

We have seen how Moltmann, following Whitehead and Bonhoeffer, asserts that the suffering God does make a difference to those who suffer. He is the fellow-sufferer who understands. To illustrate this, Moltmann relates the moving incident told by Elie Wiesel in his book about Auschwitz. Two Jewish men and a child are hanged. The men die quickly, but the boy lingers on in a slow and agonizing death. The question is asked: "Where is God? Where is he?", and a voice

within Wiesel answers: "Where is God? . . . he hangs there from the gallows".(93)

There can be little doubt that there is a strong message of comfort in Wiesel's response, and that countless men and women have found strength and endurance in their suffering as they have discovered the truth of God's own suffering with his people. As Schilling puts it, the knowledge that God himself is involved and suffers with us is "the most profound of all responses to human anguish".(94) Surin maintains: "The only credible theology after Auschwitz is one that makes God an inmate of the place", (95) or, as Bonhoeffer writes: "Only a suffering God can help".(96)

Without decrying the above, the question still persists as to what God has done about evil and suffering, since, to put it bluntly, it is little consolation to know that God is as much a helpless victim of evil as the sufferer. The spectre of Macquarrie's "puny godling"(97) hangs ominously over such a description of God. Such a God is worthy of sympathy but not of adoration.

König draws an analogy with a beggar walking helplessly along the road. If someone joins him and becomes a beggar himself, and they walk together, it may mean a great deal to the beggar but it does not solve his problem. König goes on to explain that the gospel not only tells us of a God who has

drawn near to mankind, but also a God who has done something about evil, suffering and death. (98)

b. MOLTMANN'S "OBJECTIVE" VIEW OF SALVATION

In response to this line of argument it is important to point out that Moltmann has a clear understanding of God having done something about the suffering of the world. He holds that whilst it is good to say that God is the fellow-sufferer who understands, it is nevertheless "not sufficient". (99) The cross is more than an illustration of divine sympathy. It is an objective act of divine solidarity with the godless and godforsaken. In the incarnation God not only enters into the finitude of men and women, he enters into the situation of their sin and God-forsakenness. He accepts the pain and makes it his own, allowing it to shape his trinitarian life. Thus all disaster, absolute death, and damnation, are now in God; (100) not only is God in Auschwitz, Auschwitz is also in God. (101)

Moltmann maintains that it is "in community with this God" (102) that the spiritual pain of suffering is healed. The believer is brought into solidarity with Christ's fate and enters into a relationship of gratitude, freed from fear. The pain of God-forsakenness is healed and he experiences what Moltmann calls "infinite joy" (103) and "eternal salvation". (104)

We would be in agreement with Moltmann when he says that God is in Auschwitz, however, to speak of Auschwitz as being in God is decidedly problematical. Apart from not knowing if this assertion is true, by making evil and suffering part of the divine nature, Moltmann has effectively ontologized them. Surin argues that if evil and suffering are to be located in God, and they remain what they are, then they must also be said to have retained their potency. (105) Niewiadowski goes so far as to claim that under the guise of the identification of the Son with alienated and suffering humanity, Moltmann has, in effect, glorified evil. (106)

That these are valid inferences that could be drawn from Moltmann's perspective is reinforced when we consider his comment about God's "eschatological self-deliverance" (107) from his sufferings. Such language suggests that suffering has a certain status or power over God, that he is not complete within himself and that he cannot, or perhaps will not, come to himself without the history of human suffering.

It may appear a startling and even an outrageous comment to make, but after reading Moltmann one could argue that not only is mankind in need of redemption; God himself requires it as well. Certainly, it is hard to conceive how fellowship with this God can be "infinite joy" and "eternal salvation", as Moltmann claims.

We would contend that what is missing in Moltmann's theology is the clear note of the victory and reign of God. The Christian message is not simply about God's identification with sinful and suffering humanity, it is about his victory over the forces that would destroy humanity. The Son is more than the victim on the cross, he is also the risen Lord, the Christus Victor. The once-for-all event of the cross was followed by resurrection. Defeat was turned into triumph, and humiliation into exaltation. Christ now reigns at the righthand of the Father and is not "vir ewig vasgenael aan die kruis", (108) which Konig maintains is the inescapable conclusion of Moltmann's trinitarian interpretation of the cross.

Doubtless some will object that we have overlooked Moltmann's emphasis on the resurrection. He considers the cross and the resurrection to be inseparable. He writes: "Without the resurrection the cross is quite simply a tragedy and nothing more". (109) The resurrection is God's contradiction of suffering and death, the sign of God's protest against suffering and the sign of hope for a godforsaken mankind. (110)

Moltmann's emphasis notwithstanding, Scott has argued that he fails to convincingly integrate the two. He holds that Christian faith requires more than asserting faith-claims, it has to try and understand how these faith-claims are

plausible. In Scott's estimation Moltmann has failed to balance the affirmation of God's compassion with the affirmation of the power of God's grace. (111)

Again, in fairness to Moltmann, we must remind ourselves that he set out to redefine the power of God in terms of the doctrine of the kenosis or self-emptying. Determined to oppose every understanding of God that defines him as absolute and dominative power, Moltmann has argued that the nucleus of everything that Christian theology says about God is to be found in the Christ-event. As we noted in Chapter 2, when the crucified Jesus is called "the image of the invisible God, the meaning is that this is God and God is like this." (112) Moltmann goes on:

God is not greater than he is in this humiliation. God is not more glorious than he is in this self-surrender. God is not more powerful than he is in this helplessness. (113)

Clearly for Moltmann the "helplessness" of God as reflected in Jesus Christ is, in reality, an expression of his power. Here is the scandal of the cross, which, at the same time, is also its glory.

c. DOES MOLTMANN HAVE A DEFECTIVE CHRISTOLOGY?

Three further problem areas in Moltmann's understanding of

salvation need to be highlighted.

We would contend, firstly, that Moltmann has a defective christology. Whilst he has been careful to point out that christology is more than the presupposition of soteriology we find it necessary to remind him that christology remains nonetheless, just such a presupposition. The doctrine of salvation is inseparable from the saviour. Soteriology and christology are inextricably bound together.

On the surface of things, Moltmann's christology is traditional. He uses the Chalcedonian categories of the humanity and divinity of Jesus (114) and speaks unashamedly of the "incarnation of the Son" (115) and the "kenosis of God", (116) all of which would suggest a traditional view of christology.

However, as we study Moltmann's theology more closely we become increasingly uneasy about certain statements that he makes and their implications for his christology and soteriology. For example, it would appear as if Moltmann does not believe in the pre-existence of Christ. He says the divine Trinity should not be conceived of as a "closed circle of perfect being in heaven", (117) and that the Trinity is "no self-contained group in heaven". (118) The Trinity is constituted in the event of the cross. As Zimany points out,

Jesus, whom Moltmann designates "Son", "suddenly becomes"(119) the second person of the Trinity. Clearly, Moltmann has no place for the christology of pre-existence. His main concern is to establish how we are to understand the presence of God in the suffering and death of Jesus.

We would contend, however, that a christology of the cross without a christology of pre-existence calls into question the Christian doctrine of salvation. Without the pre-existence of Christ, both the incarnation and the kenosis of Christ must be reinterpreted. The self-emptying would then no longer be that of the pre-existent Christ, but only that of the earthly Jesus. Similarly, the incarnation would be relegated to the incarnation of an idea and not that of Jesus Christ who from eternity existed in the essential form of God, who emptied himself to the extent of suffering and death on the cross.

Further we would maintain with Kasper when he writes:

Only the idea of pre-existence could guarantee that in the earthly life and in the cross and in the resurrection of Jesus, God himself was involved and that in Jesus Christ God was revealing himself definitively and eschatologically. (120)

Central to the Christian faith is the belief that in Jesus Christ, God has acted decisively in history to bring

salvation to mankind. Fundamental to this assertion is the reality of the incarnation; that he who belongs to the eternal being of God has come amongst us.

Without the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ, we have no guarantee of God's solidarity with suffering humanity. Without the incarnation of the pre-existent Christ, we could not believe that God has taken upon himself humanity's pain. Without the incarnation we would not know of the value that God places on history.

Some might argue that we have misunderstood Moltmann. That possibility cannot be excluded. Certainly, much of Moltmann's terminology has an orthodox ring about it. Following Luther's communicatio idiomatum he says that Jesus is God. However we would ask what such an assertion means without a christology of pre-existence. It cannot mean the same as the church has taught from the days of Chalcedon in A.D. 451. Jonker, who labels Moltmann's christology as "speculative" (121), concludes: "Ons is hier egter ver van die voorstellingswêreld van Chalcedon verwyder". (122)

In the absence of a christology of pre-existence we are left without a proper salvation, since as Faus has reminds us:

If Jesus is not God then we have in him no possibility for salvation. The

enigma of history goes on and absolute choices are a hubris for which man will pay dearly. (123)

d. DOES MOLTSMANN HAVE A ONE-SIDED VIEW OF GOD ?

We would argue that another reason for the inability of Moltmann's suffering God to sustain an adequate soteriology relates to a one-sided view of God.

Whilst his emphasis on God as a God of passionate love is important, Moltmann has concentrated on it at the expense of other biblical descriptions of God. Thus, God is a merciful Father but not Lord. (124) He is a God of suffering and a God of hope, but any notion of him being a God of judgment and a God of holiness is entirely absent. Consequently, Moltmann's view of God is lopsided and his understanding of salvation shows the same imbalance. The suffering God may be a source of great consolation, but on its own, whilst it may generate passion, it lacks moral authority since it does not address itself to the root problem of the human condition, which is sin. Ruth Page comments that in terms of Moltmann's view of salvation, "humanity seems to require perfecting in fellowship rather than saving from sin". (125)

e. MOLTMANN'S NEGLECT OF THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH.

As we noted earlier, in developing his theologia crucis, Moltmann fails to interact with the traditional teachings of the church. Braaten has reminded us that the interpretation of the cross swings between the poles of Christian identity in New Testament terms and theological relevance in contemporary terms. He adds, however, that there is a third partner in the dialogue, "the history of the tradition"(126) and that Moltmann has overlooked this vital dimension. Braaten goes on to ask:

By what methodological right can a theologian insert his own theory into the history of theology without verifying its legitimacy for the church through a critical discussion with the mainstream of that church's tradition? (127)

We would agree with this criticism of Braaten. By rejecting the dogmatic tradition Moltmann has deprived himself of the all-important process of testing and refining his own perspective in the light of the strengths and weaknesses in the teachings of the Fathers of the Church.

In the final analysis, however, we must recall Moltmann's words at the outset of this thesis, namely, that he did not set out to write systematic theological treatises. His concern all along has been pastoral and prophetic.(128) Moltmann believes: "The new criterion of theology and faith

is to be found in praxis."(129) He insists that truth must be "practicable".(130)

This probably explains Moltmann's refusal to engage the traditional theories of salvation. However, whilst practical action and reflection on how to overcome oppression in the world is crucial the danger is that theology will be reduced to praxiology.

The basis of the discussion about God and suffering must be extended to speak not simply of a loving God actively involved in the struggle for justice in the world, but also of a holy God who calls on all men everywhere to repent. This is the source of moral power in the practical overcoming of suffering in the world. As P.T.Forsyth has reminded us: "We must rise beyond social righteousness and universal justice to the holiness of an infinite God".(131)

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CHAPTER 5

GOD AND SUFFERING : PROPOSALS AND CONCLUSION

1. PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

The question of suffering will always baffle the mind and perplex the heart of man. It is the bone in the throat of humanity.

The experience of suffering is for most an experience of profound darkness. However, into this darkness Christian theology seeks to cast some light. Theologians do not claim to have the complete light, but they do claim to discern some light shining out of the mysterious depths. It is this light that compels them to go on seeking.

Christian theology, as McGill has reminded us, is "the voice of man's actual existence in movement from darkness towards the light". (1) The answers that it gives will be provisional but on the basis of our study of Jürgen Moltmann's perspective we would suggest 3 vital considerations for any future discussion of the relation between God and suffering.

a. THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY

Man does not live in a vacuum. His existence is historical

and he defines himself historically. History is, thus, a fundamental category in his experience and therefore, in any discussion of the plight of man.

If there is any answer to the cries of suffering humanity then it must be found in history. Speculative and theoretical answers make little impact and amount to nothing more than "metaphysical chatter".(2) Such answers indicate a failure to grasp the depths of human anguish and the extent of the brokenness of humanity. As we commented earlier, it is like "lecturing about the chemistry of foodstuffs to starving people".(3)

Any approach, therefore, to the vexed question of the relation between God and suffering must begin by affirming that God and history are not irreconcilable opposites, but that they belong together.

This Moltmann has succeeded in doing. His theodicy is a powerful statement of a God who has entered the historical process and who has taken upon himself the anguish of humanity.

Ironically, our chief problem with Moltmann is his exaggerated emphasis on history. At times it appears as if he has dissolved God into history and that God himself needs history in order to come to himself.

Moltmann's failings notwithstanding, he has reminded us that to speak of God and history, and consequently, of God and human suffering, is not an exercise in abstract thought, but rather something that the Christian faith compels us to do.

Christianity is a faith grounded in history. Apart from history we know nothing about God. When the church professes faith in God it speaks of him in a historical sense. He is the God revealed in his dealings with Israel and he is pre-eminently the God and Father of the historical person of Jesus Christ. As O'Donnell maintains:

The Christian faith stands or falls
with the fact that God has entered
history and become historical. (4)

The question about God and the question of Christ are thus brought firmly into the sphere of history and placed within the framework of the brokenness of mankind and his need of salvation. The Nicene Creed, after confessing God the Father almighty, qualifies this assertion with the article about Jesus Christ being his only Son. This, in turn, is qualified with an explanation of the Christ-event; "who for us men and our salvation came down to earth". (5)

Faith in God, therefore, is inseparable from faith in Jesus, and faith in Jesus is inseparable from the question of the unredeemed nature of life around us. Since God's relationship

with suffering humanity is mediated through history, and history itself is the arena in which God's purposes of salvation are fulfilled, we would conclude that when the Christian faith addresses the issue of God and suffering, it does not speculate, it narrates. The Christian faith does not offer theoretical solutions to the problem of God and suffering, it tells a story. It is not a history within God, as Moltmann would have us believe, but rather a story of God and man.

The Christian story is about God's self-humiliation which is perfected and completed in the passion and death of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God. The key to understanding the story is the doctrine of kenosis, and the story is summed up in the doctrine of the economic Trinity.

b. THE CENTRALITY OF CHRISTOLOGY

What we have written above implies that the question of suffering must be viewed in the light of Jesus Christ.

As we noted in Chapter 1 the question of God and the question of suffering are a "joint question".(6) It has been Moltmann's contention that both questions can only be given a christological answer, and more particularly, can be only answered by a theology of the cross.

Jesus Christ is the definitive, though not the exclusive basis of man's knowledge of God. As Kasper tells us: "The good to which God orders everything has, according to the Bible, a concrete name : Jesus Christ". (7)

The story of Jesus that reaches its climax in the cross is the story of God's self-humiliation. It is told to us in the gospel narratives, but is summarized in Philippians 2:6 - 11, which is as concise a statement of the Christian response to suffering as theology could ever hope to offer.

J.B. Lightfoot has given us a particularly beautiful paraphrase of this passage. He writes:

Though existing before the worlds in the eternal Godhead, yet he did not cling with avidity to the prerogatives of His divine majesty, did not ambitiously display His equality with God; but divested himself of the glories of heaven, and took upon Him the nature of a servant, assuming the likeness of men. Nor was this all. Having thus appeared among men in the fashion of a man, He humbled himself yet more, and carried out His obedience even to dying. Nor did He die by a common death: He was crucified as the lowest male-factor is crucified. But as was His humility, so also was His exaltation. God raised Him to a preeminent height, and gave him a title and a dignity far above all dignities and titles else. For to the name and majesty of Jesus all created things in heaven and earth and hell shall pay homage on bended knee: and every tongue

with praise and thanksgiving shall declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, and in and for Him shall glorify God the Father. (8)

If, as we have maintained, the question of suffering can only be given a christological response, then we would define this christology more closely as a kenotic christology that points beyond itself to a christology of exaltation.

Philippians 2 proclaims God's solidarity with suffering humanity. It tells of the pre-existent Christ who, being equal with God, entered history and tasted of the pain, suffering and death of humanity.

His suffering is not that of a fateful subjection but the voluntary laying open of himself to mankind. It is, as Moltmann has put it, "the suffering of passionate love".(9) Jesus suffered not out of deficiency of being but from that love which is "the superabundance and overflowing of his being".(10)

God is thus not the God of apatheia but the God who in the kenosis and incarnation has shown himself to be a God of sympathy. Kasper insists that this sym-pathetic God revealed in Jesus Christ is "the definitive answer to the question of theodicy".(11)

We would concur with this assessment provided that it be

understood that kenosis does not have the final word. Whilst the kenosis may be "realized on the cross", (12) Philippians tells us that pain and death give way to resurrection and exaltation. This is more than God's protest against suffering and death (13) it is also God's victory over the forces that would destroy humanity.

Thus the eschatological transformation and transfiguration of the world is heralded through the Spirit of God, who, according to Kasper, is "the power that brings the world to it's eschatological transfiguration and reconciliation". (14)

It has been one of the great strengths of Moltmann's theology that it has established the priority of christology over theology and has identified christology as the crucial area in any future theological enquiry.

c. THE CHALLENGE OF DISCIPLESHIP

A third consideration in any discussion about God and suffering is the challenge of discipleship. In the final analysis suffering is not there to be understood but to be combatted.

John MacKay of Princeton speaks of the "Balcony approach" (15) to truth as distinct from "Truth from the Road". (16)

According to the "Balcony approach", the philosopher or theologian is primarily a spectator of life. He is less concerned about challenging and changing things than he is about understanding things. He believes that thought is able to pierce to the core of reality and unlock its secrets, and his motto is the Cartesian: cogito ergo sum; I think therefore I am. (17)

The "Truth from the Road" perspective on the other hand, is vastly different. The "Road" is the symbol of a first-hand experience of reality where reflection issues in decision and action. The man on the road, when faced with the challenge of existence, asks himself the question: What must I do? and his motto is the Kierkegardian: Pugno ergo sum; I struggle therefore I am. (18)

We would add that theological reflection on God and suffering that does not lead to greater commitment to God's saving purposes for mankind, is suspect. Such armchair theology is, in Moltmann's estimation, nothing more than "a myth of the existing world". (19) Truth must be practicable. "It must contain initiative for the transformation of the world." (20)

Herein lies the challenge of Christian discipleship. Whilst the suffering God is a source of great strength and consolation to those who suffer, at the end of the day it is the practice of the church that remains its strongest weapon.

The church must seek to live out the truth of the compassionate God and she does so as she freely chooses suffering that she could otherwise have avoided.

Ziegenaus has reminded us that voluntary suffering has always been understood as a necessary part of the Christian witness.

Citing Kierkegaard, Ziegenaus writes:

To suffer patiently is not specifically Christian at all - but freely to choose the suffering which one could have avoided, freely to choose it in the interest of the good cause - this is Christian. (21)

We would add that such suffering finds its clearest expression in the Christian gospel of the suffering God and receives its most convincing confirmation in Christian discipleship. This is what it means truly to "live the truth of Jesus". (22)

11. CONCLUSION

The theology of Jurgen Moltmann is a theology of and for the twentieth century. It is a theology that has emerged from the upheaval and pain of humanity and it is addressed to suffering man in his quest for liberation. It is thus a theology "from the Road" and whilst Moltmann may have wandered periodically into Hegelian alleyways, it is only to return to the road with what he perceives to be a message of

hope for the suffering and the oppressed.

Moltmann's response to suffering is an impressive justification of God built as it is around the suffering of the passionate God. His main thesis has been that:

. . . Christian faith lives from the suffering of a great passion and is itself the passion for life which is prepared for suffering. (23)

For all the strengths and weaknesses of Moltmann's perspective regarding God and suffering, his theology is a reminder of the provisional nature of the answers that theology can offer. Much remains dark to our mortal eyes and hidden from our finite minds, but Christian theology must rise to face the challenge in the knowledge that he who is the Light of the world beckons us forward to think and walk in that Light.

Lest we imagine that thought alone is sufficient, it is timely to recall Martin Luther's words as to the qualifications of a true theologian:

Living, or rather dying and being damned make a theologian, not understanding reading or speculating. (24)

These words are supremely true of the Christian believer as he addresses the agonizing question of suffering.

FOOTNOTES

1. A. Mc Gill, Suffering : A Test of Theological Method, p. 122.
2. D. MacKinnon, Borderlands of Theology and Other Essays, p. 91.
3. H. Küng, On Being a Christian, p. 429.
4. J. O'Donnell, The Doctrine of the Trinity in Recent German Theology. Heythrop Journal 23, p. 167.
5. Nicene Creed, Presbyterian Church Hymnary, p. 798.
6. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 49.
7. W. Kasper, The God of Jesus Christ, p. 163.
8. J.B. Lightfoot, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, p. 110. quoted in Being and Truth, Kee (ed.) p. 349.
9. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 23.
10. Ibid., p. 23.
11. W. Kasper, The God of Jesus Christ, p. 197.
12. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 119.
13. J. Moltmann, Experiences of God, p. 31.
14. W. Kasper, The God of Jesus Christ, p. 197.
15. J. MacKay, Preface to Christian Theology, p. 30.
16. Ibid., p. 44.
17. Ibid., p. 32.
18. Ibid., p. 47.
19. J. Moltmann, Religion, Revolution and the Future, p. 138.

20. Ibid., p. 138.
21. A. Ziegenaus, Christ's pre-existence and human suffering. Theology Digest, 31, p. 251.
22. J. Moltmann, Religion, Revolution and the Future, p. 140.
23. J. Moltmann, The Trinity and the Kingdom of God, p. 23.
24. M. Luther, D.M. Luther's Werke, 5. 163. 28 - 29. quoted in A. Mc Grath. Luther's Theology of the Cross, p. 152.

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