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Resurrections in Donne's "A Hymne to God the Father" and "Hymne to God my God, in my sicknesse"

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Between 1620 and 1630 John Donne preached eleven sermons on the resurrection,[1] building on a threefold interpretation of resurrection in five of these sermons, including three Easter sermons. In this threefold interpretation the first conception is that of a resurrection from persecution or calamities, for a society or for an individual. The second conception is that of a resurrection from sin through grace in this life. The third conception is that of the resurrection to glory, the resurrection of the saved with a transfigured body, to dwell eternally in heaven. Donne emphasized that all three conceptions were rooted in the resurrection of Christ.

Examined in the light of Donne's sermons on resurrection, his "A Hymne to God the Father" and "Hymne to God my God, in my sicknesse,"[2] while making no clear reference to a resurrection from persecution or calamities, dramatize the second and third conceptions. They reveal an assurance of the resurrection of the soul from sin in this life and accept this spiritual resurrection as an "infallible seale" (as Donne calls it in one sermon) of the resurrection of the body to glory.[3] Donne's sermons on the resurrection provide an illuminating context for the spiritual experience of the speaker in these two hymns. Apparently written during Donne's grave illness in late 1623, both poems may be read as his poetic interpretation of his spiritual experience. They reveal successive aspects of the speaker's spiritual experience, but with the reverse of the order in which the poems are usually printed.

The conception of the spiritual resurrection from sin was derived from various passages in the New Testament, especially from the resurrection referred to in Revelations 20:6: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they

shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."[4] Although many early Christian commentators interpreted the "first resurrection" literally as the actual reign of Christ on earth with the glorified martyrs for a thousand years, Donne along with many Protestant writers followed Saint Augustine and the Geneva Bible in interpreting it as a spiritual resurrection in this life. In rejecting the literal interpretation, Saint Augustine objected to the "immoderate carnal banquets" and other material luxuries envisioned by the chiliasts or millenarians.[5] The marginal commentary in the Geneva Bible explains that the "first resurrection" is "to receiue Iesus Christ in true faith, and to rise from sinne in newenes of life."[6] Donne was thoroughly familiar with the Geneva Bible; he used it throughout his *Essays in Divinity* and quoted from it frequently in his sermons.[7]

In describing resurrections, in sermons both before and after the hymns of 1623, Donne makes use of the Christian tradition, but with creativity and flexibility. He follows Saint Augustine and others in interpreting various New Testament references to "the dead," including several in 1 Corinthians 15, as referring to the spiritually dead. In showing that the spiritual and bodily resurrections were linked since the time of the early Church, he refers to Tertullian's "elegant" statement that God gave us as earnest the Holy Spirit and we gave Heaven as earnest the body of Christ. After Tertullian, Donne says that "it grew indifferent" whether certain passages be accepted as referring to the spiritual or the bodily resurrection. Without naming them, Donne credits many ministers of the Reformed Church with giving a spiritual interpretation to Revelations 20:6.[8] In presenting these concepts, Donne moves freely, analyzing his texts, providing a wealth of illustration, and appealing forcefully to those addressed. He is frequently felicitous in linking the spiritual and bodily resurrections. He who has experienced the spiritual resurrection has "an infallible seale" of the bodily resurrection, "a fulnesse of glory in body, as well as in soule." Christ "mingles his Kingdomes . . . makes the Kingdome of Grace, and the Kingdome of Glory, all one."[9] We have "Glory in the end, and Grace in the way." Donne speaks of "the consolation which we receive whilest we are *In via*, here upon our way in this world, out of the contemplation of that Resurrection to glory, which we shall have *In Patria*, at home in heaven." The spiritual and bodily resurrections correspond to each other and provide arguments and evidence for each other.[10]

This assurance of the spiritual resurrection and the joy in the certainty of the physical resurrection appear to be at the heart of the spiritual

experience in Donne's "A Hymne to God the Father" and "Hymne to God my God, in my sicknesse." These two poems are closely related and reflect successive stages in the pattern of spiritual experience discussed repeatedly in the sermons. "A Hymne to God the Father" shows a hard-won resurrection from sin through Donne's faith and repentance and God's grace and glory. The "Hymne to God my God . . ." shows the joy in the spiritual resurrection as an "infallible seale" of the resurrection to glory.

Though some critics have emphasized the sense of sin, fear, and irresolution in "A Hymne to God the Father,"[11] this poem, while it shows Donne's awareness of sin, is marked by his confidence that his sins are forgiven. These are sins which Donne has confessed and continues to confess and which God has forgiven and continues to forgive. In confessing his sins frankly and fully, "more" and "more," Donne expresses a repentance that is vital to the spiritual resurrection. Elsewhere, also, Donne writes of his belief in his own spiritual resurrection. In his poem "To Mr. Tilman after he had taken orders" (1619-20), Donne implies that he too, after taking orders, has experienced spiritual regeneration, felt "new feather'd with coelestiall love" (l. 22).[12] Moreover, Donne's *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, written at about the same time as "A Hymne to God the Father," expresses a similar pattern of sin and forgiveness. Addressing God, Donne sees his rising from his sickbed as "by thy *grace*, and *earnest*" of a "*resurrection* from *sinne*" and to "*everlasting glory.*" Donne speaks of "*those sinnes*, which I have *truely repented* and thou has *fully pardoned*" but he knows that he has to depend on "*to morrowes grace too.*"[13]

One of the closest parallels to the spiritual experience described in "A Hymne to God the Father" occurs in one of Donne's sermons of 1624. One passage is a public statement of the steps in sin and spiritual resurrection that are expressed privately in the hymn; in fact, it could serve as Donne's commentary on his hymn. In this sermon Donne speaks of sinning as "a sinking, a falling" ever lower, "from Originall into Actuall, into Habituall sins," but then proceeds to the great theme of the sermon: "sin is a death, and that needs a resurrection." Through the spiritual resurrection God raises one from the "death past," "present death," and "future death" of sin.[14] The same pattern appears in the "Hymne to God the Father." As Donne confesses and God forgives one kind of sin after another, he is raised from spiritual death. The hymn is structured to lead through the confession of sins to the assurance of the resurrection from sin and the consequent resurrection to glory. Donne

goes on to confess "more" sins after he feels those just related have been forgiven. The pattern of the poem leads from the forgiveness of original sin ("that sinne where I begunne"), of actual sin ("by which I wonne others to sinne"), of habitual sin (that he has "wallowd in, a score") and, finally, to the forgiveness of his "sinne of feare" that he will perish.

Donne may fear despair in envisioning death and damnation, but his experience with God's forgiveness and his faith in God's promise to Abraham (Genesis 22:16-17) assure him that, as expressed in the *Devotions*, he can depend on "*to morrowes grace too.*" He also knows that the "second death" of damnation has no power over one who "hath part in the first resurrection" (Revelations 20:6). At the conclusion of the poem the confrontation between man's sins and God's forgiveness is resolved as Donne's last sin is forgiven: "I have no more." God wants Donne and Donne understands this. He says, "When thou hast done" (not *if*), "having done that," and "Thou hast done." Donne's spiritual resurrection is already "perfected in the eyes of God"[15] through his faith in God's promise that includes Donne as a son of "God the Father."

Whether or not Donne was responsible for the title of this hymn, it is aptly addressed to "the Father." The fatherhood of God is closely related to the forgiveness of sin and the spiritual resurrection in Scripture and in Donne's thought in this poem. According to Saint Paul, those who have been raised from sin by the Spirit that raised Christ from the dead (those who have experienced a spiritual resurrection) have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father" (Romans 8:10-15). The Geneva Bible commentary on this passage concludes that "we consider not God now as a rigorous Lord, but as a moste mercifull Father." In the *Devotions* God as forgiving father addresses Donne's soul as "My Sonne."[16] God, in this hymn, is no longer the jealous lover of earlier poems, but is like the forgiving father of the parable of the prodigal son. Donne is like the son who "was dead, and is alive again" (Luke 15:32).

At the conclusion of the hymn, without waiting for an answer, Donne assumes that God will "Sweare by thy selfe" that at his death "Thy Sunne/ Shall shine as it shines now, and heretofore." God's swearing by himself to Abraham (Genesis 22:16) is interpreted in Hebrews 6:13-20 as an immutable commitment to the "heirs of promise."[17] Donne's hope in this promise, described as the "anchor of the soul" (Hebrews 6:18), may go back to the time of his ordination and may be reflected in his seal of Christ upon an anchor.[18] In the hymn Donne confidently expects confirmation of his inclusion as a son in the promise. Similarly, in a sermon of 1622 on Romans 8:16 ("The Spirit itself beareth witness with

our spirit, that we are the children of God"), Donne asserts that he was "by a spirituall engrafting, transmigration, and transplantation" one of those within the promise to Abraham who were children of God, "heires of glory, and heires of the eternity of heaven."[19]

Donne's desire that at his death "Thy Sunne / Shall shine" is illuminated by a passage in a sermon of 1619. Christ brings salvation near as "Saviour of the World, . . . Saviour of that body." Then when God closes your eyes, Donne says, "*Ecce salvator tuus venit*, behold then a new light, thy saviours hand shall open thine eyes, and in his light shalt thou see light," see that in God's eyes you are like a Colossus, "with one foot in the grave but with one foot in heaven."[20] The Son's shining will be an assurance of Donne's resurrection to glory, of which the spiritual resurrection was indeed "an infallible seale." God "hast done" and has Donne, body and soul. Izaak Walton wrote of this hymn as "expressing the great joy that then possest his [Donne's] soul in the Assurance of Gods favour to him when he Composed it" and also as bringing Donne "thoughts of joy" when he heard it sung.[21] Walton's account, though it may be questioned, becomes credible if Donne is writing in this hymn of a spiritual resurrection, of the "Angelicall comfort" in forgiveness that he described in a sermon of 1621/2.[22]

Although in editions of Donne's poems the "Hymne to God my God . . ." customarily precedes "A Hymne to God the Father," the pattern of the spiritual experience suggests reading and interpreting these poems in the reverse order. These two poems are bound together by their titles and relation to music, by rhyme and approximate rhyme, and by imagery. "A Hymne to God the Father" is an earthly hymn, reviewing Donne's life in the past and up to the time of his anticipated death; according to Walton, it was sung by the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral.[23] The "Hymne to God my God . . ." is the tuning and preparation for a heavenly hymn and looks ahead to death and a future "for evermore" and to the singing of heavenly hymns with the "Quire of Saints." Commenting on the genres represented in these poems, Barbara Kiefer Lewalski sees "A Hymne to God the Father" as related to the anthem or congregational hymn, but argues that the title "Hymne" to the poem addressed to "God my God" is "a deliberate misnomer." The poem is "an occasional meditation-cum-sermon, which provides the tuning necessary for the singing of true hymns, a genre onne now identifies with the sublime praises of the choir of saints, and will not attempt to sing on earth."[24]

Both the pattern in the rhyme and the pattern in the imagery of these two poems seem to begin with "A Hymne to God the Father." This hymn

depends throughout its three stanzas on two rhymes, introduced in the first two lines by "begunne" and "before." Two rhyme words occur in both hymns; the original sin "done before" in the hymn to "the Father" is matched by thinking "now before" entering heaven in the hymn to "God my God," and a "doore" to sin is matched by the "dore" to "that Holy roome." In addition, the key rhyme on "more" appears in the last line of the hymn to "the Father" in "I have no more" and reappears in the second line of "Hymne to God my God . . ." in "thy Quire of Saints for evermore." The important "done" rhyme in "A Hymne to God the Father" is suggested in the approximate rhyme introduced by "growne" in the second stanza and "Crowne" in the final stanza of "Hymne to God my God. . . ." However, the third stanza of the poem to "God my God" has "none," "one," and "Resurrection," so that "Re-sur-rec-tion" rhymes with "done" (Donne) of the hymn to "the Father." The "done" rhyme reappears in exact rhyme only in this stanza, and "Resurrection" appears at approximately the center of the poem.

These poems are also bound together by the imagery of a journey through earthly life to everlasting life. Donne "begunne" with original sin, has run and continues to run through actual sin, wandered from the way in wallowing in habitual sin, and finally was fearful that he would stop his journey altogether and "perish on the shore." But with God's forgiveness and promise, his journey continues. The end of "A Hymne to God the Father" leads to the beginning of the "the Hymne to God my God . . .": "Thou hast done" (Donne), and "I am comming. . . ." No longer afraid of perishing on the shore, Donne is ready for the voyage. The journey through straits from West to East leads to the Resurrection. He is so close that he feels that he is "at the dore" of "that Holy Roome." From its first line the "Hymne to God my God . . ." reflects not only the confidence, but the joy of one who has experienced the spiritual resurrection and knows that this is positive assurance of his physical resurrection. The nearer death seems, the greater is the joy. But this joy and anticipation are possible only because of Donne's repentance and God's forgiveness in accordance with his promise essed in "A Hymne to God the Father." The two poems comprise the quest that leads out of "my home" (l. 16) in the earthly paradise and finally back to "my home" forever in "that Holy Roome."

Two critics have given particular attention to Donne's interpretation of the resurrection in the "Hymne to God my God. . . ." Kathryn Kremen views Donne as still seeking the spiritual resurrection, as "in the other divine poems concerning penance." Donne preaches his "sermon" (the

poem) on his "text" (his sick body) to his soul. "Donne speaks of his present sickness as physical death and of his future health as the spiritual resurrection"[25] From a different perspective, Clay Hunt views the hymn as "the last in that long series of Debates between the Body and the Soul." Donne "would be quit of the body." Hunt does not refer to the spiritual resurrection, but notes, "It is significant, I believe, that the 'resurrection' to which Donne looks in this poem does not include the resurrection of the body, but the resurrection of the soul in heaven."[26] Other critics have either not mentioned or not defined the resurrection in this poem; Louis Martz, for example, in his analysis has spoken only of the concept of redemption in the poem.[27]

However, examining the "Hymne to God my God . . ." in relation to Donne's sermons reveals that the speaker has experienced the spiritual resurrection and moves with unswerving confidence toward the resurrection of the body to glory. In his Easter sermon of 1624 Donne speaks of a "holy confidence."[28] Such confidence is, indeed, exhibited throughout this poem: "Since I am comming to that Holy roome," "death doth touch the Resurrection," and "that he may raise the Lord throws down." The joy in approaching death through suffering would not be possible without the spiritual resurrection: "I joy, that in these straits, I see my West." As in a sermon of 1626, Donne both recognizes the "present Resurrection" from sin and anticipates the bodily resurrection "*In Via*" as he wonders which of the proposed sites of the earthly paradise best represents his "*patria*."[29] This is a journey through the straits of death to the resurrection to glory "for evermore." For Donne, "the Resurrection" is more than salvation. Not only is he saved from eternal damnation, with his sins forgiven, but he eagerly envisions the whole man, body and soul, as living joyfully in the divine presence for eternity. The anticipation of the glory of the physical resurrection suffuses the whole poem. The body is essential to Donne's view of the resurrection to glory and of heaven. Very explicitly, he states: "I am not received into heaven, if my body be left out."[30] He rejoices that it will be the same body, though transfigured. In fact, Christ's transfiguration provides the best idea of the resurrected body. The glorified body will have physical attributes, so after the resurrection man can worship God in different positions. The body will also be characterized by brightness, nimbleness, and subtlety.[31]

Donne's sermons further illuminate his conception of the resurrection in "Hymne to God my God. . . ." They deal persistently with what happens to the faithful after death; the soul goes immediately to heaven

while the body lies dead until the transformed body is reunited with the soul after the Last Judgment. Donne consistently distinguishes between the fate of the soul and of the body and speaks repeatedly of "the Resurrection" as the raising of the reunited soul and body.[32] In only one sermon (Easter 1624), the one on which Hunt depends for his interpretation of the poem, does Donne refer to the soul's entry into heaven as a resurrection. He states that "though the soul cannot be said properly to have a resurrection," yet the state of the soul in heaven "is by very good Expositors called a Resurrection." But this interpretation is cited only as one of four non-literal interpretations of Revelations 20:6 (the "first resurrection") developed by earlier commentators. Indeed, later in the same sermon Donne argues that the soul is resurrected from a state of deprivation when it rejoins the body.[33]

In early 1623 or before, in preaching of the resurrection of the body to glory, Donne is positive, insistent, and eloquent. Even heaven cannot have a "consummate perfection, till it have bodies too," and when separated from the body, "this soule is the less perfect for this separation."[34] Donne links man, Christ, and the physical resurrection. He anticipates saying to Christ: "I am of the same stuffe as you, Body and body, Flesh and flesh. . . ." "If the flesh of man were not to be saved," says Donne, "the Author of salvation would never have taken the flesh of man upon him."[35]

Donne's vision of the resurrection both in the sermons and in the "Hymne" itself indicates strongly that "the Resurrection" toward which he journeys, "the Resurrection" so joyfully anticipated, is not the state of the soul in heaven for a limited time, but the resurrection of the body to glory "for evermore." This is the basis of his identifying himself with Christ throughout the poem. As Christ rose in the body, so Donne will rise in the body. In Donne's vision "death doth touch the Resurrection" (l. 15) as surely and as immediately as Christ's kingdoms of grace and glory "are one" (l. 14). Indeed, in Donne's view, death and the physical resurrection "are one." The body to be raised is like an arrow just shot toward its target, the resurrection. In the sermons and in the "Hymne to God my God . . . ," "the Resurrection" is viewed from the perspective of the whole man, the reunited soul and body. Donne is both dramatic and explicit: ". . . he that has come to death, is come to the Resurrection, because he hath not another step to make, another foote to goe, another minute to count, till he be at the Resurrection." "The first thing that we shall doe after this death, is to rise againe."[36] The dying man passes immediately from physical suffering to physical resurrection.

Donne's desire to "tune the instrument here at the dore" shows the first stanza as revealing the harmony between crucifixion and resurrection, God's throwing down and raising up, which is found throughout the rest of the poem. The tuning is probably an allusion to Christ's sinews, stretched as a harp or psaltery at his crucifixion. This idea is derived chiefly from Psalm 57 (A.V.), known for centuries as the Easter Psalm, even in the Reformed Church. *The Book of Common Prayer* designates it as proper for Easter.[37] In the key lines "Awake up, my glory; awake psaltery and harp" (57:8) God was seen as making divine music through the crucifixion of Christ, but also as calling Christ to his escape from the cross and to his resurrection. As Cassiodorus wrote in the sixth century, "the harp" means the glorious Passion which with stretched sinews and counted bones sounded forth his [Christ's] bitter suffering as in a spiritual song.[38] As Donne identifies himself with Christ, he harmonizes the music of "stretched sinews," of physical suffering, with the music of glorified bodies praising God. Donne's perception of the close relationship between these is reflected in his confident statement: "All that we shall say, and sing in heaven, will be of his Passion, accomplished at Jerusalem. . . ."[39] He realizes that it is "*Christs* Crosse" coming after "*Adams* Tree" that has made possible his own spiritual resurrection and his confidence in the resurrection to glory.

However, it is important that Donne adds new elements, not in the Easter Psalm, when he determines to tune himself as the instrument, for "I shall be made thy Musique" (l. 3). Donne's tuning, like Christ's crucifixion, is part of a harmony that unites God and man, death, and resurrection, the soul and the body, terrestrial and celestial music. Though Donne perceives himself as tuning himself, it is God who has thrown him down into his suffering and death as a way of raising him up. Donne's idea of tuning himself may also owe something to the interpretation in which the harp refers to Christ as man in his suffering and the psaltery, with its higher registry, to Christ as the redeeming Son,[40] as at the conclusion of "A Hymne to God the Father." Donne, too, is part flesh and part soul, and as harp and psaltery are blended in harmony, so Donne will share Christ's earthly crown of thorns and also his celestial "other Crowne" of glory. Through his tuning and his identification with Christ, he mounts from an earthly perception to a heavenly perception.

If Donne has experienced the spiritual resurrection, we may ask, why does he need to "tune the Instrument" and why does he need to preach "my Sermon to my owne" soul. To tune the instrument is partly God's will and partly Donne's will, his voluntary acceptance of God's will. It is

his understanding, through suffering and death, of the harmony between the human and the divine perception of suffering and death, resurrection and glorification. He tunes the instrument in the confidence that he will be "for evermore" a part of the celestial harmony that represents the divine order in the universe. The line "And what I must doe then, thinke here before" (l. 12) parallels the contrast between the "here" and "there" (l. 12) in the sonnet "At the round earths imagin'd corners,"[41] but now Donne, though "here," is ready for the "there" and "then" of the hereafter. To tune the instrument is to "thinke now" and to understand and accept the harmony between the human and the divine. Both the "Hymne" and the sermon embody this harmony, though from different perspectives. The poem is addressed to God, and the sermon is addressed "to my owne" soul. In tuning himself, in accepting suffering and preparing for death, Donne composes the poem and chooses the text on which, he prays, he may deliver the sermon to himself. The text ("that he may raise the Lord throws down") grows directly out of Donne's identifying himself with Christ's suffering and resurrection. The text is chosen by Donne, but reveals God's will. The poet's tuning of himself creates an inner harmony in which the preacher and the auditor are the same. Understanding and acceptance become one.

At the conclusion of the poem Donne envisions himself as participating with Christ in the resurrection to glory and in the divine harmony. The notion of Christ's blood embracing Donne's soul suggests a close, loving, and purifying relationship that is both physical and spiritual. The reference to Christ's blood also suggests "his thornes" and "purple" robe, but also "his other Crowne" and the purple robe of royalty. Through Christ's blood Donne is completely identified with Christ; Donne prays to be "in his purple wrapp'd" and to be given "his other Crowne." These are Christ's; they are real and a part of the resurrection to glory. Donne's words in a sermon, in which the images closely parallel those in the poem, show again how closely in Donne's vision "death doth touch the Resurrection." He says, "The Resurrection then, being the Coronation of man, his Death, and lying down in the grave, is his enthroning, his sitting down in that chayre, where he is to receive that Crowne."[42]

Before his illness of 1623 Donne had explained in a sermon: "As *Adam* was made to enjoy an immortality in his body," after man has sinned and created death "God takes death, and makes it a means of glorifying of his body, in heaven."[43] This is God's harmony, which Donne summarizes as the text of his sermon to his own soul and

expresses in the last line of the hymn: "Therefore that he may raise the Lord throws down." Donne himself participates in God's harmony of throwing down and raising up as in suffering he joyfully tunes the instrument which will be part of the celestial music after the resurrection to glory.

Donne's resurrection sermons, "A Hymne to God the Father," and "Hymne to God my God, in my sicknesse," together with passages from his *Devotions upon Emergent Occasion*, reveal a remarkable unity. Christian doctrine and spiritual experience fuse. The sermons and the poems are suffused with the fervor of Donne's belief in the spiritual resurrection and the resurrection to glory. This unity is reflected in "Hymne to God my God . . . ," in which the theme of the poem and the sermon preached to "mine owne" soul are the same; moreover, the "Hymne," which expresses Donne's spiritual tuning, is the fulfillment of the spiritual resurrection described publicly in the sermons and privately in "A Hymne to God the Father," and again publicly, if Walton is correct, when the hymn was "often sung to the *Organ* by the *Choristers* of St. *Pauls* Church,"[44]

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Notes

[1] All references to Donne's sermons are to *The Sermons of John Donne*, ed. George R. Potter and Evelyn M. Simpson, 10 vols. (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1953-1962). The resurrection is the chief subject of the following sermons: Vol. 3, No. 4 (1620); Vol. 4, Nos. 1, 2, 14 (1621-1623); Vol. 6, Nos. 2, 7, 13 (1624-1625); Vol. 7, Nos. 3, 15 (1626-1627); Vol. 8, No. 9 (1628); and Vol. 9, No. 8 (1630).

[2] *The Complete Poetry of John Donne*, ed. John T. Shawcross (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1968), pp. 390-92. Shawcross dates "A Hymne to God the Father" c. December 1623 and "Hymne to God my God, in my sicknesse" c. December 1623 (or March 1631, Izaak Walton's date). Subsequent references to Donne's poetry are to this edition.

[3] *Sermons* 4:60. William R. Mueller mentions Donne's conception of the spiritual resurrection and explains his conception of the bodily resurrection, though he does not discuss these in relation to Donne's life or poetry (*John Donne: Preacher* [Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1962], pp. 200-07). The bodily resurrection, but not the spiritual resurrection, is dealt with by Itrat Husain (*The Dogmatic and Mystical Theology of John Donne* [London: Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1938], pp. 70-74).

[4] References to the Bible are to the Authorized Version.

[5] For Saint Augustine's influential discussion of Revelations 20:1-6, see *The City of God*, trans. and ed. Marcus Dods, 2 vols. (New York: Hafner, 1948), xx, 6-7, 2:353-59. Like Saint Augustine, Donne rejected the literal interpretation of the "first resurrection" in favor of the spiritual interpretation. See *Sermons* 4:77. He also followed Saint Augustine in interpreting the dead who shall hear the voice of the Son of God (John 5:25-29) to mean the spiritually dead (*Sermons*, 6:262-79). Other passages interpreted by Saint Augustine or others as referring to the Spiritual resurrection include Matthew 8:22, Romans 8:9-15, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, Philippians 3:20-21, and Colossians 3:1-2.

[6] The Geneva Bible: a facsimile of the 1650 edition (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1969). See also Heinrich Bullinger, *A Hundred Sermons*, Nos. 77 and 78.

[7] "Donne's Soruces," *Sermons* 10:324-28.

[8] *Sermons*, 3:116, 125; 6:68.

[9] *Sermons*, 4:60, 73.

[10] *Sermons*, 7:95.

[11] Kester Svendsen writes that Donne recognizes that he "could have acted upon the grace earlier" and fears that he may perish "unless he makes a proper end through the grace of the Son of God" ("Donne's 'A Hymne to God the Father,'" *Explicator* 2 [1944], Item 62). Wilbur Sanders finds a religious emotion born of both love and terror, but "deep irresolution." Donne, he says, shows a "fear of relationship (relationship even with God . . .)" and "an impulse to evade and defy God." "One can only speculate where Walton located the 'great joy' in the poem" (*John Donne's Poetry* [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1971], pp. 45, 142-43). David J. Leigh elaborates on Donne's concern with sin and relates this to his punning on "more" and the name of Donne's wife Ann More ("Donne's 'Hymne to God the Father': New Dimensions," *Studies in Philology* 75 [1978], 84-92).

[12] Complete Poetry, pp. 385-86.

[13] *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, ed. Anthony Raspa (Montreal: McGill-Queens Univ. Press, 1975), pp. 114-15, 127.

[14] *Sermons*, 6:69-71.

[15] *Sermons*, 4:76-77. See also 4:73-74.

[16] *Devotions*, p. 126.

[17] Helen Gardner has pointed out the relevance of Genesis 22:16 and Hebrew 6:13-19 to the conclusion to "A Hymne to God the Father" (*The Divine Poems* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952], p. 111).

[18] Gardner concludes that Donne used the seal from the time of his ordination in 1615 until his death (Appendix G, "Donne's Latin Poem to Herbert and Herbert's Reply," *Divine Poems*, pp. 139-41).

[19] *Sermons*, 5:70, 75.

[20] *Sermons*, 2:266-67.

[21] *Lives* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1956), pp. 61-62.

[22] *Sermons*, 4:60.

[23] *Lives*, p. 62.

[24] *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1979), pp. 263, 281-82.

[25] *The Imagination of the Resurrection: The Poetic Continuity of a Religious Motif in Donne, Blake, and Yeats* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell Univ. Press, 1972), pp. 111-13.

[26] *Donne's Poetry: Essays in Literary Analysis* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1954), pp. 116-17. Since Hunt's essay remains the most thorough analysis of the poem, I think it is important to offer a revision to his view that "the Resurrection" in the poem refers only to that of the soul.

[27] *The Poem of the Mind: Essays in Poetry, English and American* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1960), p. 42. Discussing Donne's conceptions of death from a different approach, John Carey refers to both hymns briefly. He sees a conflict between Donne's belief in the total physical resurrection and his belief in the flux of matter. He says that in the "Hymne to God my God . . . ," lines 13-15, Donne's "desperate reasoning shows us an imaginative ideal being grasped in the teeth of conflicting evidence" (*John Donne: Life, Mind, and Art* [New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1981], pp. 199, 223).

[28] *Sermons*, 6:74.

[29] *Sermons*, 7:95. In another sermon of the same year (1626), Donne says "if thou have repented before, and setled thy selfe in a religious course before . . . God shall give thee a glorious Resurrection, yea an Ascension into Heaven before thy death, and thou shalt see thy selfe in possession of his eternall Kingdome, before thy bodily eyes be shut" (7:214). This parallels the experience described in "Hymne to God my God . . ." and suggests that this passage in the sermon may reflect Donne's close encounter with death three years earlier. In this passage and in his description of the steps in the spiritual resurrection from sin in a sermon of 1624 (6:69-71), Donne seems to be reworking descriptions of the spiritual resurrection given in the "Hymnes" of 1623.

[30] *Sermons*, 7:103.

[31] *Sermons*, 3:118-21, 6:73. See also 6:165-66.

[32] See Helen Gardner, Appendix A, "Donne's Views on the State of the Soul After Death," in Donne, *The Divine Poems* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), pp. 114-17.

[33] *Sermons*, 6:64, 75.

[34] *Sermons*, 4:47, 358.

[35] *Sermons*, 4:46, 61.

[36] *Sermons*, 6:272-73.

[37] *The Book of Common Prayer 1559: The Elizabethan Prayer Book*, ed. John E. Booty. Published for the Folger Shakespeare Library (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1976), p. 14.

[38] See the discussion of Psalm 57 in F. P. Pickering, *Literature and Art in the Middle Ages* (Coral Gables, FL: Univ. of Miami Press, 1970), pp. 285-301 and Fig. 29b. Cassiodorus is quoted from Pickering, p. 292. Also, Conrad Hilberry has considered Donne's tuning the instrument as an allusion to the crucified Christ as harp and therefore not a "pleasant exercise" but a sounding of the "Resurrectin-out-of-agony motif" ("The First Stanza of Donne's 'Hymne to God my God, in my Sicknesse,'" *Notes and Queries*, n.s. 4 [1957], 336-37). Rosemond Tuve had pointed to the occurrence of this motif in George Herbert's "Easter" (*A Reading of George Herbert* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1952), pp. 144-47).

[39] *Sermons*, 3:122.

[40] Pickering, pp. 291-92. As one of several sources, Pickering cites Saint Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, in *Patrologiae Latinae*, ed. J. P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844-80), 36:671-72.

[41] *Complete Poetry*, pp. 340-41.

[42] *Sermons*, 6:72.

[43] *Sermons*, 6:72.

[44] *Lives*, p. 62.