

Meeting Evil with Mercy, An Anglican priest's bold answer to atrocity, Philip Pegler, Christian Alternative, Winchester UK and Washington USA, 2016, pp. xii + 172. ISBN: 978-1-78535-306-2

Reviewed by the Revd Neil Broadbent of the Sozein Trust, council member of the CFPSS.

*Meeting Evil with Mercy* is not only an excellent prescription for the evils of our present world, it may also be read as a 'How to' book on how spiritual growth really can and does happen in people of the twenty-first century.

Towards the end of his incarnate life Martin Israel spoke and wrote of the need for an increasing dialogue between the Christian and Buddhist understandings of our world. Mr Pegler's Buddhist background is the most helpful – I would say essential – contribution to promoting Martin's universalistic teachings. Along with all the Christian mystics, Martin knew that God is love, all love, absolute love and that He is endlessly working to love the hell out of His creation.

In *Meeting Evil with Mercy* the commonly held understanding of Good versus Evil, God vs. Satan is replaced with the more realistic view of 'good and evil together' (see Isaiah 45:7). The long term practice of praying attention to the present moment in silence, together with contemplative prayer, will show one the interplay of our own inner light and darkness. Not struggling against negative forces, but enfolding them in love and prayer will lead to right insight, understanding and their acceptance. Darkness may then be seen as a fertile medium for growth. We may discover that life is undivided, evil is sheer ignorance of natural law and that sin is divided consciousness.

Individually and collectively, we are to traverse the events of Holy Week and in that order. Only after crucifixion may resurrection happen. Or in Martin's own words from *About Death*, p.37: 'It is man's privilege to traverse the path of suffering to self-realization in Christ: through the crucifixion of our lower nature that same nature is finally resurrected in glory, and corruptible matter is transfigured in eternal spirit.'

*Meeting Evil with Mercy* is a profoundly important and practical book. It deserves to be read and studied by every preacher and by anyone interested in the interior life and life's vicissitudes.