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TOWARDS A SPIRITUALITY OF PEACE¹

ABSTRACT

This article contributes towards designing a Spirituality of Peace within Spirituality as a discipline. It first analyses the increasing attention to violence and peace generally and within religious contexts specifically. It then critically evaluates some approaches that view violence and peace as moral issues and shows how these approaches inherently move towards a spiritual approach to peace. The article finally discusses work by Hauerwas and Levinas in order to prepare the way for an alternative, more complementary approach to violence and peace from the perspective of Spirituality as a discipline.

1. INTRODUCTION: A GLOBAL FOCUS ON VIOLENCE AND PEACE²

The twentieth century seems to have brought a turning point in views on violence³ and peace. Two world wars in a period of thirty years with massive acts

1 This article is an extensive reworking of part of my inaugural lecture at the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, on 12 September 2007. Other parts of this lecture have been developed in more detail and are currently in print elsewhere. I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues in the Departments of Old and New Testament for their ongoing participation and support in the study of Spirituality. Prof. Francois Tolmie, Acting Dean of the Faculty has played a major role in promoting the discipline at the Faculty, amongst others by establishing an Extraordinary Chair in Biblical Spirituality and accommodating postgraduate training in the field.

2 Both violence and peace will be discussed in this article. Violence, especially as it is exhibited in war, interestingly enough, seems to be a more popular research topic than peace. To some extent, this has been a matter of focus as researchers questioned the role of war and violence in societies. The neglect of peace is, however, often ideologically motivated. Van der Dennen (1978:61ff.), describes how, in their attempts to legitimise and glorify war, authors from many contexts actually argue that peace is undesirable since it is a sign of weakness and even an indication of social degeneration. His essay illustrates the disconcerting way in which violence and war have been defended for a long time in the history of Western civilisation as a positive, integral facet of human nature and society. It is therefore not too surprising that peace receive less attention than violence — also in traditional theological literature.

3 There are many definitions of violence, but here it is used to indicate coercive acts that harm others. Cf. for an interesting discussion and postmodern perspective on

of violence (e.g. at Hiroshima and Nagasaki), the nuclear race, the Cold War, continuing wars in countries like Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Middle East, the Balkan states and the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York with subsequent acts of terror, created feelings of despair about the increasingly devastating consequences of violence and war. The feelings of alarm were intensified because these violent events also happened in and were perpetrated by first world countries and thus took place within the context of open, rational and free societies (Levinas 1998:164; 191). The despair is further intensified by the development of sophisticated weapons with the ability to cause unprecedented massive destruction.

Attention to violence is evident on several practical levels. The media played a seminal role in sensitising global audiences to war and violence. Television audiences are confronted with the consequences of war in their homes — often in a most dramatic manner. New insights about violence are also being generated as victims share and report their experiences in various countries of the world. As a result of globalisation, minority groups meet, discuss, expose and respond meaningfully to war and violent crimes on various fronts and in many contexts. Also helpful to bring about greater sensitivity to the issues are contributions in the field of theology, both in the old and new world. Important movements from the third world, including liberation theology, black theology and feminist theology, documented the suffering from the perceived violence in the structural exploitation of marginalised groups. Recently, for example, some groups of women published a report in which they drew attention to their experiences of domestic, economic, political, military, social, cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual and religious forms of violence (Gnanadason, Kanyoro & McSpadden 2005).⁴ Their personal experiences, communicated mostly and effectively in narrative form, have a strong impact in so far as it anchors debates

defining violence, Ganzevoort (2004:5). “Violence” is preferred as term here rather than the more restrictive notion of “war”. There are many forms of violence that are just as bad as war. Here it is also assumed that the opposite of violence is not necessarily non-violence. “Peace” is a more comprehensive term for the situation that represents its opposite condition. For the rest, it must be kept in mind that the relationship between violence and peace has to be clarified, as O’Donovan (2003:1-3) spells out. Peace is, for example, not the “answer” to violence as a natural form of existence — as if violence and peace are two equally important motifs. Cf. further below, though the complexities of these terms cannot be described in detail in the restricted space of this article.

- 4 It is striking how seldom sexual and verbal violence are being researched. Cf. Ganzevoort (2004:5-14) for sexual violence as a hidden, but persistent form of violence in the church. The fact that such forms of violence are not that often discussed, indicates how violence too easily escapes proper attention and how often it hides itself from view. On sexual violence, cf. Rakoczy (2000).

and theoretical reflections in experiential realities.⁵ Ferris (2005:13) notes the character of this engagement with violence and peace,

After generations of silence, women's stories of their struggles for social change and for peace are beginning to be told. There are thousands of stories — of women in Northern Ireland protesting violence, of Palestinian and Israeli women trying to overcome barriers of distrust and enmity, of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, of Japanese women protesting racism and nuclearism, of South African women whose long history of non-violent resistance has been central to that country's struggle, of Nigerian women taking over the marketplace, to mention only a few.

But gradually the twentieth century also saw a growing interest in peace. Forums and institutions like the United Nations, awards like the Nobel Peace Prize and the non-violent programmes of Ghandi and Martin Luther King have become significant tools in conscientising the global village about the issue.

The development also takes place in Christianity as a world religion. Continuing the old tradition of small, but persistent peace groups within Christianity⁶ that claim a Biblical peace tradition as their basis,⁷ the peace movement gained ground in a broader ecumenical context in the twentieth century amongst others through the groundbreaking resolution of the World Council of Churches in 1948 that declared that war was against the will of God. The implications of such a decision can only be appreciated fully against the war culture that permeated Western European societies up to that time. The development reached an im-

5 On listening to stories in order to challenge the fear of others and to attain peace, cf. the intriguing remarks in Hauerwas (1983:144).

6 The early church was generally pacifist — this needs to be stressed. Cf. also the classic works by Bainton (1960) and Régamey (1966). The peace movement has deep roots in modernity. The most notable early example is Erasmus, the Dutch Renaissance scholar who campaigned extensively and vigorously against war. Other examples include the Anabaptist movements, the Mennonites, the Quakers and the non-violent movement of Martin Luther King jnr. Cf. the insightful remarks of Beck (2002), but also the historical overview of women's peace movements in Ferris (2005:11-13). In South Africa, Allan Boesak was an early and influential proponent of Martin Luther King's views during the apartheid struggle.

7 Peace was also a significant motif in Graeco-Roman antiquity despite the fact that it was first and foremost a time in which war was glorified and promoted as a natural way of life (cf. for many examples of the latter Van der Dennen 1978). Such peace functions, however, on a personal level. Festugière (1954:40), for example, noted how Plato emphasised that contemplation as a typical feature of personal religion is only possible where there is peace.

As Plato showed in the *Phaedo*, there can be no *theoria*, no contemplation, unless a man has composed himself in peace. This becomes a fundamental principle of all mystic doctrine.

portant stage when the Council, at its 8th Annual General Meeting, accepted a programme against violence and for peace called, *A decade to overcome violence* (2001-2010). The subtitle, *Churches for peace and reconciliation*, reveals the need to reflect on violence and, at the same time, also to promote peace (cf. Schreiter 2006:464-5; Enns 2002 and 2003). These practical factors, of which only a few can be mentioned here, nurtured the growing resistance against violence and promoted the quest for peace.

In addition to these practical approaches, there has been significant theory formation on violence and peace. The best known example is to be found in the just war theory that played such an important role in church and theology from the beginnings of Christianity and that sanctioned the use of violence by the state.⁸ This theory functioned in principle as a critique of war since it sought to oppose a warlike mentality and the senseless indulgence in violence by focussing on the question in what (mostly) exceptional circumstances war would be justified. In practice it did not prevent religious leaders from supporting violence and war that turned out to be immoral and unjustifiable. In recent times, this debate was intensified when, ironically, within anti-establishment contexts, contextual theologies like Liberation Theology and Black Theology reflected on the use of violence against powerful and exploitative colonial powers and in some cases also defended the use of violence.⁹ Over against this stands the alternative pacifist and/or non-violent traditions, represented by, amongst others, the much respected and hugely influential person of Yoder (e.g. 1972, 1984).¹⁰ The non-violent position of such theologians represents a fundamental break with the just war theory and strongly stimulated the debate about violence and peace. In these studies any form of violence is rejected and many arguments developed to defend such a comprehensive non-violence against sceptics.

A special example of a systematic and innovative reflection on violence, also from a religious point of view, is to be found in the influential work of Girard.¹¹ He

8 Cf. e.g. Van der Dennen (1978:63); Hauerwas (1983:114, 133-4); O'Donovan (2003) and the literature cited by them.

9 Cf. e.g. Tilhagali (1986) and the literature cited there.

10 Yoder has published extensively on non-violence. Cf. also Wink (1992; 2003) as another example.

11 For a more extensive evaluation of Girard, cf. Bailie (1997:5-6); Hamerton-Kelly (1985); McKenna (1985). The essays in McKenna (1985) specifically apply Girard's model of interpretation to Biblical texts, but cf. also Williams (1991) who focuses on the Hebrew Bible, but whose discussion of the parable of the prodigal son (1991:66-68) is a particularly interesting example of how Girard's theory can be applied to the understanding of the Bible. The strong influence of Girard is evident from the Colloquium on violence and religion and its journal, *Contagion*, founded in 1990 specifically to explore and develop his mimetic model (cf. their website: <http://www.uibk.ac.at/theol/cover/contagion/x1.html>).

pointed out the decisive role of violence in religion, human culture and history and the definitive end to it in the history of Jesus. Of special interest is his analytical theory about the origins of violence. Through his *mimesis* theory and scapegoat mechanism he argued that human beings, imitating the behaviour of others, act violently when they desire certain objects which others also want. Ultimately forgetting what they desire, they compete with those who rival them in their desires. They then become violent and wage war. A spirit of community only becomes possible when a group singles out a victim and direct their violence against it as the scapegoat. Violence thus is ambiguous, since it has both a destructive *and* unifying nature.

Especially radical is the way in which he links violence with religion. Human culture, according to him, is permeated with violence that ultimately stems from archaic religions. Girard (2005:21) thus observes,

Religion invariably strives to subdue violence, to keep it from running wild. Paradoxically, the religious and moral authorities in a community attempt to instil non-violence, as an active force into daily life and as a mediating force into ritual life, through the application of violence.

Violence thus enables community, gives rise to human culture and forms part of the very essence of religion and religious practices.

In addition to these developments on the level of theory formation, another significant aspect of contemporary reflection on violence must be mentioned briefly. This development has to do with the Bible as object of theological study and as formative document of the church. Recent research increasingly investigated the many, even extreme examples of violence in Biblical texts.¹² This includes passages that refer to Israel's wars against its neighbours and reports on ethnic cleansings with indiscriminate killings of men, women and children (e.g. Deut. 2:34-5), such a disconcerting description as in Judges 9 of a gang rape by the Benjaminites and the infamous remark in Psalm 137:9 with the call to violence ("Happy is he who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks"). In the New Testament the examples include the death of Christ, the persecution of the church, the scenes of judgment in Revelation, structural violence (slavery, the inequality of women) and strong verbal violence (e.g. Mt. 23). These examples and passages are being debated intensely especially because of their *Wirkungsgeschichte*. They have strongly influenced the history of Christianity¹³ when they were used, for example, to legitimate violence

12 For the complexity of the war texts in the Hebrew Bible, cf. e.g. Niditch (1993) who distinguishes seven war ideologies in ancient Israel. Cf. also Collins (2003) whose essay is a good example of the interest in violence that was elicited by the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York.

13 Cf. the discussion and examples in Van der Dennen (1978, and, more extensively 1995).

against slaves and women, to defend the crusades, to promote anti-Semitism and to support colonialism.¹⁴ It has become a challenge to a growing number of theologians to evaluate and respond to these Biblical examples of violence adequately and to understand them properly.

These introductory remarks provide the framework within which the following remarks on a Spirituality¹⁵ of peace should be understood. They show that violence is more than incidental warfare, strife and crime and is in fact a multi-faceted phenomenon with various covert forms that permeate societies as a whole, including religion. It is also and especially prevalent even in the foundational documents of Christianity. These global developments challenge the church and theology to reflect on the nature of violence as an inextricable part of human culture and a disturbing dimension of human nature. In line with this, the nature of peace needs to be reconsidered and what its relationship with violence is.

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- 14 Colonial powers often legitimised their violence against indigenous peoples in the name of the Bible and Christianity. Niditch (1993:3-4) reports on how Hebrew Scriptures were used in sermons to justify war against Native Americans in New England and wars against the Saracens. She concludes,

The particular violence of the Hebrew Scriptures has inspired violence, has served as a model of and model for persecution, subjugation, and extermination for millennia beyond its own reality. This alone makes study of the war traditions of the Hebrew Scriptures a critical and important task.

For similar examples, cf. Green & Baker (2000:19) and for modern forms of violence based on Biblical texts, cf. Pippin (2005:141-2) and Rossing (2004:115-22).

- 15 Though the nature of spirituality is widely debated, one of the helpful definitions (and the one assumed in this article) is provided by Waaijman (2006b), who explains spirituality in terms of the divine-human relationship that is transformative in nature and that encompasses a process. Waaijman's definition is based on a phenomenological approach (influenced by Husserl and Levinas). His understanding of spirituality avoids a too subjective reading of spirituality that focuses mostly or exclusively on the ambiguous notion of experience. His approach also helps to account for the relational aspect of both the divine and the human. For other definitions and literature, cf. Kourie (2006: esp. 22-6). The understanding of spirituality is also clarified by comparing it with systematic theology, as was done by Schneiders (2006). She distinguishes (2006:202), a.o., between spirituality as the study of lived experience of faith and compares it with theology as the study of formulated tradition. Whilst theology illuminates and is illuminated by the lived experience of faith itself, she finds that the two should be distinguished carefully. Cf. also Waaijman (2002:308-9) about the relationship of spirituality with theology.

2. VIOLENCE AND MORALITY

On a general level, and especially in a religious context, the problem of violence and peace is mostly treated as a moral issue. In recent years churches in South Africa, for example, often responded to the intense emotions about the country's endemic culture of violence by characterising it as a moral issue.¹⁶ At one of many consultations on this issue, 35 South African churches on October 2006 responded to violence with a resolution to bring crime statistics to the attention of church members and to request them to report crime to the police. They also undertook to pray for and actively support victims of crime. In many other such statements, the struggle against violent crime has also been linked with the formation of moral values. On 3 February 2007, for example, the Dutch Reformed Church noted in a media statement that one of its projects against violence and crime entailed the formation of moral values of society and individuals. ("Die bou aan morele waardes van die samelewing en individue, deur gesonde gesinne en gemeenskappe.")¹⁷

The involvement of churches in moral formation makes sense because violence and crime are indeed moral issues and symptoms of moral decay. Moral formation is also a major theme in Biblical texts where it is regarded as a key function of the church. In some cases, as for example in the Pastoral Epistles, moral formation is so important that it is regarded by some as the key to their meaning. These letters call on the faithful to seek a sober lifestyle, to avoid extravagance and drunkenness, to be honest, to discipline children, to be faithful in marriage and to reject various forms of violence (cf. e.g. 1 Tim. 3). Some scholars negatively evaluated the Pastorals' moral pronouncements as the bourgeois ethics of a domesticated Christianity. Thus Dibelius (1931:3) argued that they reflect a process of the church's *Verweltlichung* that adapted Christianity's original and radical contra-cultural message to the norms of civil society. According to him, respectable societal norms were taken over and prescribed to Christians. Verhey (1984, 129) also thought that the ethic of the Pastorals is "pedestrian and prosaic," adding that it

16 It is interesting to note how the churches explain crime in terms of "violence" and how strong the feelings are. An official announcement in a church journal begins with the following graphic remark about crime as an expression of violence:

Everyone is fed up with violence. Everyone is angry, frustrated and even ready to take matters in their own hands. Everyone is directly and even indirectly affected by crime.

Cf. http://www.ngkerk.org.za/nuus_artikel.asp?nid=1443&katid=42&posisie=2&sinid=22 (26 June 2007).

17 Cf. http://www.ngkerk.org.za/nuus_artikel.asp?nid=1047&status=0&sinid=22. This statement also remarks that the church wishes to actively ("visibly") protest against violence and crime ("Die NG Kerk is moeg vir die toenemende misdaad en geweld in die land en wil sigbaar daarteen protesteer").

... is settling into the world The ethic is moderate, not heroic. The key to "godliness" and to the ethic of the Pastorals is moderation and sober good sense, avoiding enthusiastic foolishness.¹⁸

This allegedly "pedestrian" or moralising ethic, however, can be described differently when the letter is read in terms of the social context that is narrated in it. According to this narrative world, the context and lifestyle of the addressees are characterised by violence (cf. e.g. Tit. 1 and 3:3, but esp. 1 Tim. 1:9-11). Family, religious and societal structures are to such an extent under threat that there is little room for the gospel to be proclaimed and heard (cf. 1 Tim. 4:16). In such an extreme situation church members have to display proper moral behaviour to help heal society's moral fabric and to create space where the church can live and work meaningfully. Without this moral lifestyle, there is no meaningful existence and religious practice is under threat.¹⁹ In other words, in the Pastoral Epistles the church is not required to adapt to worldly morality, but is in fact required to help restore the moral fabric of a society that is under severe threat of disintegration. In this destructive situation, the church becomes an instrument of healing by displaying a spiritual and moral presence.

Especially noteworthy in this connection and for the purposes of this article is that the Pastorals focus not merely on moral qualifications (cf. e.g. 1 Tim. 3:1-5 in comparison with Acts 6:3). The moral instructions in them are intricately linked with spiritual qualities. In some cases these qualities are even specifically foregrounded, as is clear from 1 Timothy 1:5 where, at the beginning of the letter, the author refers to a pure heart, good conscience and a sincere faith as the aim of the instructions of Timothy.²⁰ An interesting combination of

18 Recently Hays (1996:69) also commented rather negatively that the Pastorals contain loose, unconnected blocks of confessional traditions and moral instruction. He observed (1996:71) that there is scant ethical argumentation in 1 Timothy with little attempt made to offer theological justification for its norms. Such interpretations of the Pastorals as moralising texts had as consequence the almost universal denial of their Pauline authorship. There is, however, an interesting reversal of this position in recent scholarship. Cf. e.g. Johnson (1999:429-31).

19 Neglecting the care of widows and of the own household is a denial of faith and makes one worse than an unbeliever (1 Tim. 4:5-7). Believers who are idle and busybodies, setting a bad example, also give an opponent reason to criticise the church (1 Tim. 5:14; cf. 2:8). An *episkopos* must not be violent and aggressive in order to be an example and able to teach others (Tit. 1:7-9). Believers should not follow the Cretans in being liars, *evil brutes* and lazy gluttons (Tit. 1:12). The key pronouncement is given in Tit. 1:16: Some claim they know God, but their deeds contradict their claims. The questionable and immoral actions of some believers within a society characterised by decay, contradict the gospel and provide opponents with ammunition to denounce the church. The gospel's power is compromised and threatened in an immoral, violent setting.

20 Cf. also in general 1 Timothy 3 and 4.

morality and spirituality is found in the first practical instruction in 1 Timothy at the start of the letter's main contents (1 Tim. 2:1). It contains a request to pray for the authorities, "so that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness."²¹ Note how the two terms that qualify the notion of life (... ἡρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον) evoke the violent world that is reflected in the text.²² Thus important early Christian traditions move beyond a mere moralistic treatment of violence and peace. They illuminate an intricate connection between morality and spirituality. Thus morality is not the only perspective from which the violent context of the Pastorals is addressed.

This confirms the close link between spirituality and morality. Spirituality as the ongoing transformational divine-human relationship is generally understood to have also a moral character and outcome, whilst, at the same time, a moral lifestyle legitimises spirituality as authentic (e.g. Mt. 25:31-46). Spirituality without a moral lifestyle is regarded as destructive and violent in Biblical texts where, for example, in Matthew 7:15-23 those who do not bear good fruit like a good tree, are described as false prophets in sheep's clothing who are actually ferocious wolves.²³ Contemporary authors in spirituality further stress that key motifs like transformation, conformation and praxis prevent spirituality from remaining focussed on interiority by requiring changes in exterior relationships. Waaajman (2002:565-6) comments, for example, on conformation as "a process in which a person appropriates for himself (herself) a selected model of transformation in behavior, thinking and willing, remembering, feeling and focus." An example of this is conformity to *Torah* which "offers ideas, patterns of conduct, motivations and perspectives which can be interiorized by the reader."²⁴ There is, therefore, a key link between spirituality and morality.

Biblical material therefore already suggests that the struggle against violence is more than merely promoting "moral values."²⁵ Whoever wishes to re-

21 The terms "morality" and "spirituality" are contemporary constructs that need to be clarified to avoid anachronistic readings. Such constructs must be used circumspectly to classify Biblical material.

22 Cf. below where it will be indicated that peace and violence are expressed in various ways with different words and motifs.

23 This image that suggests the violent nature of an inauthentic spirituality would be in line with other images in the Gospels — primarily with the violent rejection by the spiritual leaders of God's people of Jesus through his crucifixion.

24 Cf. also his interesting discussion of the mystical writing, *Sefer Yetzira*, as example of conformity to *Torah*. This text would confirm the close link between spirituality and morality.

25 Note the comment by Barnes (2005:405) in response to Küng's observation about the need for peace between religions before there can be peace between nations:

[I]t is impossible to extract some agreed minimum of ethical values from the world's religions without doing violence to the delicate patterns of human meaning that sustain them.

flect on morality is often confronted by the seminal role of spirituality in moral formation. This, in turn, prepares the ground for a more foundational approach to violence and peace that is grounded in spirituality.

There is, however, more to be said about the role and function of morality than that it should remain integrated in a spiritual framework. Whilst the precise relationship between spirituality and ethics is not always spelled out clearly in Biblical material, it displays a certain order in which spirituality has precedence. Spirituality thus reflects a divine touch that motivates and inspires a process of transformation and conformation which encompasses and includes a moral lifestyle. In his discussion of this relationship, Spohn (2005:269-70) observes,

[T]he Christian moral life is founded on spirituality, the experience of God in Christ Christian discipleship flows from a present experience of being claimed, healed and sent by the Spirit of God sustained by a community of faith. That believers are loved by God is not simply a fact or a theory but an experience that calls for a response.²⁶

God's mysterious engagement with someone triggers a process that has moral implications and an explicit moral nature. The experience of faith

... provides both the content of Christian ethics (its values and patterns of action) and also its motivation (the affective dynamics that move humans to become disciples and act accordingly) (Spohn 2005:270).

Spohn's remarks rightfully underline that spirituality is not only linked with morality, but morality is *grounded* in a foundational aspect of spirituality, namely the divine initiative in transformation. It is also a process that implies the transformation of humanity to reflect the image of God. Both the origins and destiny of the process is linked to the divine.

These remarks reveal that morality has a limited function in handling issues like violence and peace. Just as the obedience to laws fits into the wider context of a culture of law and order, the formation of moral values is mostly driven by a deeper set of spiritual values and convictions. This specific point is illustrated by the history of the twentieth century in which devastating world wars were waged by first world countries claiming a moral high ground, often in the

26 This remark should, however, not be regarded too facilely as meaning that the "response" of a moral lifestyle follows on a spiritual "transformation." The link is more intricate than that. The traditional distinction between "indicative" — salvation as the new life in Christ — and "imperative" as the new lifestyle or "obedience" in Christ — is a theological construct imposed on Biblical texts that is presently under reconsideration. Cf. the programmatic remarks in Zimmermann (2007). In fact, the phenomenon of spirituality is in itself a challenge to this understanding.

name of Christianity. They provide a good example of the failure of morality to prevent murderous violence and wars.²⁷

The link of morality with spirituality is often challenged because it is sometimes thought that morality provides more common ground between concerned parties than religious or spirituality perspectives. But against such a position it must be pointed out that morality can also be sectarian and divisive, as the controversial, sometimes even violent debates about moral issues like abortion, embryo and stem cell research, capital punishment and genetic engineering prove. And religion and spirituality, in contrast, are not necessarily divisive in terms of moral issues, as some tend to think. Spirituality can actually generate equally (if not more) effective moral behaviour. Recent research on secular forms of spirituality provides some tantalising suggestions in this regard. This research, for example, points to primordial forms of spirituality that transcend traditional social and ethnic boundaries. These forms exist long before they are formalised in later forms of spirituality (e.g. Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, Islamic spiritualities) and contribute in important ways to moral formation. This spirituality is described as “original” or “primordial” because it relates to the origins of human beings and societies (cf. Waaijman 2003a:1) and exists prior or beyond all institutionalised forms of spirituality.

A good example of such primordial spirituality is wisdom spirituality, found widely in Biblical times in Ancient Near Eastern societies from the tenth century on. In this popular form of spirituality, wisdom teachers addressed a varied audience of courtiers, civil servants, farmers, artisans, and merchants on civil and societal issues. Teachers used proverbs, parables and didactic poems which students understood to be laws and truths of many generations. Students were motivated to reflect about these so that they could discover the truth and depth behind them and acquire a wisdom qualified by respect, reverence, awe and sensitivity. It was a contemplative wisdom that undergirded the ethical behaviour of many groups from very different contexts over a long period of time. Such wisdom was also found within an Israelite context and left its traces in Hebrew Scriptures also in terms of violence and peace. Psalm 34:11-14, for example, describes the happy person as the one who respectfully leaves evil

27 Cf. similarly Volf (1996:202-7) who argues that even the appeal to justice in ethics rests on fragile grounds since examples show how often evil actions are claimed to take place in the name of justice. The matter is more complicated than this, as is illustrated by Levinas' response to Heidegger's embrace of Nazism. Levinas rejected any philosophy that relativised ethics or relegated it to a secondary position as was the case with Heidegger (cf. e.g. Critchley 2002:9, 13). Ethics for him had a privileged position. It will be shown below, however, that Levinas' ethics is determined by spirituality. Ethics in itself guarantees nothing. What counts is how one delineates the nature and function of ethics.

behind, do good, “seeks peace and pursues it.” Waaijman (2003a:4) observes about the wisdom spirituality in such texts,

The central value was the good: the virtuous, the pleasing, the enjoyable all wrapped up together. The good was experienced by Israel quite simply as a force, as something which determined life, something experienced daily as effective, that is as something present, about which there need be as little discussion as about light and darkness.

Wisdom spirituality as a primordial spirituality once again illustrates the interface between spirituality and morality, how ethical behaviour is founded in human existence and how it also encompasses peace. It is a form of lay spirituality that helps one to understand what motivates and inspires people to abandon violence, to pursue peace and to live a moral life. And it shows how such a movement lacks divisiveness. It can transcend traditional divisions and barriers.

There is, finally, another reason why spirituality is decisive in the struggle against violence and for peace and why it needs to complement morality as an answer to violence. This has to do with the nature of morality. Morality, it is often argued, has to be justified (Critchley 2002:28). In some way or other, an audience must be informed why moral action is necessary and desirable. In some cases, as Critchley points out, scholars in ethics refuse to motivate morality. Morality is simply presented as necessary because of its universal character, its consequences and conventions. But even here the question will remain why such moral demands are compelling. Such motivation is especially desirable in the case of moral instructions regarding violence and peace. It is on this level that spirituality can play an important role since it could provide the motivation for and the characterisation of moral instructions.²⁸

These remarks prepare the way for a comprehensive approach to the issue of violence and peace. Such an approach would take into account moral as well as other foundational perspectives such as spiritual formation and insight from the strongly growing field of spirituality.

3. VIOLENCE, PEACE AND SPIRITUALITY

Now that it has been indicated that violence and peace may best be approached from both the perspectives of morality and spirituality, the potential contribution of spirituality to the struggle for peace needs further clarification. Spirituality was defined earlier on in this article as the unfolding and transformative divine-human relationship. The transformative touch of the divine brings

28 This will become clear below where Levinas' contribution to the debate about war and peace is discussed.

humanity to become integrated people with a whole and mature lifestyle. This healing overcomes brokenness, violence and division so that people nurture fulfilling, peaceable relationships. The role of violence and peace in this context must be discussed in more detail now.

3.1 The traditional perspective in Spirituality on violence and peace

In recent times, the study of spirituality has opened the way for a reappraisal of the peace motif and a revaluation of its impact on the Bible and Christianity. Peace has not always been a dominant theme in the field of Spirituality, as is evident from a list of Spirituality themes that Waaijman (2002:830-842) provided recently when he analysed reference works (e.g. *Dictionnaire de la vie spirituelle*) and contemporary professional journals of Spirituality²⁹ to determine how they standardised scientific language in Spirituality. But in a changing scenario, he found that recent journals published articles on certain themes that had not appeared in reference works. Among these themes were discussions and research on peace/reconciliation with articles such as “A little more peace,” “The foundations of peace,” “The struggle for peace,” “Justice, love and peace,” “Light, comfort and peace,” “Peace achieved by weapons,” “Peace of heart,” “Conflict” and “Seek peace and pursue it.”³⁰

This empirical survey suggests that even where the importance of peace has been acknowledged, it is not always studied in depth in the discipline of Spirituality. This is confirmed by a glance at the subject index of Waaijman's magisterial work itself. The index lists (2002:966) “Spirituality of Peace” as one of six spiritualities.³¹ But there are only three short, indirect references to it in the book. The same is true of *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirit-*

29 Waaijman (2002:832) surveyed three spirituality journals, i.e., *La vie spirituelle*, *The Way* and *Speling*.

30 The point here is not so much that violence and peace have been absent previously, but that they were not a major field of research within Spirituality and that they were studied in terms of other topics. Waaijman (2002:837) lists a number of articles on violence (significantly, mostly in *Speling*) such as “The violent element in Christianity,” “Processing violence,” “Anger and violence” and “Breaking the curse of criminality.” He places these articles under the heading: “Sin and penance *in the context of contemporary culture*.” It is interesting that violence is often discussed in more detail than and separately from peace.

31 They are: Spirituality of kings, marriage, martyrs, peace, future and Middle Ages. It is necessary to keep these other spiritualities in mind in order to reiterate that spirituality has various forms, since the intention, also in this article, is not to claim that spirituality is per definition exclusively about a spirituality of peace. It should be added, though, that it may well be one of the more urgent forms of spirituality for our times.

uality which has only three articles on peace, non-violence and Quaker spirituality (cf. Sheldrake 2005), but nothing on a Spirituality of Peace.³² Similarly *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality* (Holder 2005) has one reference to peace as pacifism (2005:18-9) and between religions (2005:405). The most extensive discussion on peace in this work is the remarks of Schneiders on Dorothy Day's pacifism (2005:18-9).³³ These standard works thus seem to suggest that peace is a relatively undeveloped theme in Spirituality as a discipline.³⁴

The role of peace within traditional spirituality is illustrated well by remarks of the Dutch theologian Aalders (1969:9) who commented as follows about the life in peace:

De bedoeling van de kerkelijke spiritualiteit is vóór alles het vinden en behoeven van de ware innerlijke vrede. Het is vol diepe zin, dat boven de poort van elke benedictijner klooster het woordje Pax is aangebracht. Maar ook de meer afgeleide vorme van spiritualiteit, zoals die bijvoorbeeld in die kerken der reformatie tot ontwikkeling zijn gekomen, waren uiteindelijk gericht op "een leven in vrede met God."³⁵

This general description of spirituality is confirmed by records of individual mystical experiences. An example of the importance of peace is found in Pascal's description of his mystical experience on 23 November 1654 in his *Mémorial*,

32 It does not contain information on the Mennonites. At the same time, the articles on "Jesus and spirituality" and "Pauline spirituality" do not contain a single reference to peace. There is no article on Luke's spirituality in which peace is so prominent. I have two articles on peace in Paul and Luke from a spirituality point of view in print.

33 She refers to Day's "pacifist spirituality." Especially helpful for reflecting on the nature of a spirituality of peace are her observations that Day's pacifism is studied in spirituality as

... the existential encounter with the Beatitudes that shaped the unique faith experience and lived discipleship of this particular woman and both challenged and expanded our understanding of Christian faith and life.

What is said here in terms of Day, is equally valid for other thinkers on peace like Paul, Luke, the Mennonites, the Quakers, Desmond Tutu, etc.

34 One could, for example, argue that recent religiously motivated violence brought the need for reflection on peace to the fore. Religious violence has been with us for many centuries, but then without it being a major topic of discussion. The crusades are one obvious example. Cf. on this the interesting article by Clack & Clack (2008).

35 Translated as:

The intention of spirituality in the church is especially to find and retain true inner peace. Significantly the word "peace" is inscribed above each entrance to a Benedictine monastery. But also the more derivative forms of spirituality, as they developed, for example, in the churches of the Reformation, were focussed on a life in peace with God.

The year of grace 1654, Monday 23 November ... from more or less ten thirty at night until about twelve thirty, fire, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob (Ex. 3:6 vv.; Mt. 22:32 vv.). Not the God of philosophers and learned people. *Certainty, certainty. Peace.* God of Jesus Christ. Deum meum et Deum vestrum (Joh. 20:17). "Your God will be my God" (Rut. 1:16). (Secondary italics.)

In this description peace is the outcome of the mystical experience.³⁶ Pascal's description intensifies this inner experience by combining it with peace and repeating the motif of certainty. The mystical experience thus reflects intense personal feelings of security and peace.

Except for these earlier examples, more material exist, for example, in the peace church traditions and in writings of well known spirituality authors such as Ignatius of Loyola, Catherine of Siena, Thomas Merton, Evelyn Underhill, Dorothy Day,³⁷ Dorothy Soelle³⁸ and Hans Küng.³⁹

These examples,⁴⁰ however, provide a first clue why peace remained on the periphery of the study of spirituality. Experience of peace can easily be understood individually, as is indicated by Alders' reference to "inner" peace and in Pascal's link of peace with certainty. Peace may then be regarded by some as representing a moment in the lives of individuals that, though good, has more to do with emotional feelings or moods. Such an understanding could reduce the notion of "experience," which is otherwise an important focus of

36 Pascal's description reflects aspects that are intrinsic to spirituality. The mystical experience flows from an encounter and a relationship with the divine, i.e., in his words, the awesome, non-philosophical God of fire. It is transformative since it brings inner certainty and peace.

37 Schneiders (2005:19) refers to the dissertation of Krupa (*Dorothy Day and the spirituality of non-violence*) which was unavailable to me. Its title suggests that it provides the type of research that should be done within a spirituality of peace. Note, however, that even in this case, the focus is on "non-violence" and not on peace.

38 Of special importance for this article are the short reflections of Soelle (1986:381-391) on a spirituality of peace.

39 Küng is one of the theologians who wrote about spirituality of peace, but not from the perspective of Spirituality as a discipline. For his contribution, cf. Küng (1997), and also Perpiñan (s.a.)

40 Cf. Hans (1999:29-42) for other examples of experience that explicitly refers to peace. Referring to Hillesum as example, he (1999:34) distinguishes five elements: 1. The moment of conversion with its recognition of a divine reality and the need for change; 2. The process of purification with its abandonment of the harmful and the cultivation of a new person; 3. The contemplative phase with a changed and intensified perception and joyful experience of the Absolute; 4. The dark night of the soul with its desperation and also its ultimate purification; 5. The mystical unification, the ecstatic experience of harmony, peace and joy.

spirituality, to an emotional event.⁴¹ Especially problematic to some scholars in this regard is that such inner or emotional experiences of peace escape verification and cannot be studied objectively.⁴²

The neglect of peace is, secondly, a result of how theologians generally relegated peace to the fringes of theological thought because of ideological reasons. The reasons appear to be theological — that is, eschatological. Peace was associated mainly with a past paradise and with a condition that will only be fully re-established in the future. Comprehensive peace as the final outcome of history remains an ideal for which the faithful, at the most, are striving while they face the hard realities and violence of their present situation. Biblical interpreters who argue that Jesus' instructions on non-violence in the Sermon on the Mount and his message of peace should not be read literally would, for example, be an illustration of this understanding of peace.⁴³ Such a theological perspective on peace must have made its influence felt in spirituality.

Closely related to this insight, is, thirdly, that peace has been approached (as is in practical politics) by some in terms of what is realistic. Since peace is difficult to implement in the "real" world, believers are required to display a sober realism and avoid utopian peace ideals. This approach has only been questioned towards the end of the previous century when contextual theologians began resisting it, arguing that the inefficacy of the church to transform contemporary societies structurally and visibly in the present restricts the gospel's transformative power. Liberation theologians further unmasked the covert violence

41 For a phenomenological discussion of experience and the place of mood or emotion in it, cf. Waaijman (2002:536-9 and 936-7). Of four experiential attitudes (2002:537), only one has directly to do with emotion or mood. Cf. also the helpful overview in Hans (1999:29-42) of various perspectives on the meaning of religious experience. Schneiders (2005:19) uses terms like "existential encounter" and "lived discipleship" that are helpful to fill in the notion of experience and avoid understanding experience merely in an emotional sense.

42 Johnson (1998:12-13) similarly evaluates the scholarly neglect of religious experience in Biblical scholarship. Researchers primarily investigated "theological ideas or social institutions" because they found the language of religious experience as being "too elusive to serve the cause of historical reconstruction." Scholars were embarrassed by the religious experiences they found in the Bible and tried to explain them as mere by-products next to its (more important) theological contents (1998:20; 24-5). Of special relevance to peace are his remarks about the difficulties that are involved in the study of religious experiences (Johnson 1998:53-60). Cf. similar remarks by Perrin (2007:174) on verifying faith experiences, with a discussion of the dramatic accounts of early Christian martyrs as example.

43 Cf. Hays (1996:320-3) on Niebuhr's "impossible ideal" interpretation of Mt. 5:38-48 and contrast with that his own reading of it as directly normative. On Niebuhr's position, cf. Hauerwas (1983:135-146) and further below.

and coercion against marginalised groups and powerless countries. They protested that the church sanctioned such coercion through its proclamation of a future paradise of peace for the poor and oppressed. This sanctioned present injustices and violence against them and mislead them to accept their oppression as nothing in comparison with a heavenly paradise awaiting believers. For contextual theologians peace could not be reduced to a future state. The church's ongoing task is to pursue it here and now. In this way, the notion of peace is broadened to affect and characterise not only individuals and their inner experiences, but also societal structures (Waaigman 2002:278).⁴⁴ Contextual theologians often wrote about spirituality, stressing the need to link faith experienced not only with the individual, but also with communities. Two developments were important to them: the need to live peace and not only talk about it, and the need not to reduce peace to inner experiences.

There is, fourthly, another reason for the peripheral place of peace in spirituality. In Western thinking, peace was almost exclusively associated with the end of war. War and violence were, in tandem with this, regarded by some as a normal, acceptable part of human culture and even religion. In some cases violence was considered an indication of strength and manliness, with the inevitable result that peace was less important, if not inferior.

Finally, for some the issues of violence and peace are often associated with a moral life rather than with spirituality (cf. further below).⁴⁵

3.2 Recent scholarly reflections on peace and spirituality

Some recent developments within theology and, especially within Biblical scholarship offer important contributions to spirituality and specifically challenge scholars to reflect on violence and peace from the perspective of spirituality.⁴⁶ Two researchers now deserve special discussion here because of their explicit references to and relevance for spirituality. Their writings offer clear options for developing a spirituality of peace.

44 Sobrino (1988) strikingly formulates the title of one of his own publications as *Spirituality of liberation. Toward political holiness*. Cf. also Dorr (1984) whose volume is titled "Spirituality and justice" and now also Rakoczy (2006).

45 Some reflection is still needed why there is no Spirituality of Peace within Spirituality as a discipline. It may be because research on the discipline is still new or that the possibility of Spirituality sub-disciplines in terms of such topics as peace has not been discussed extensively.

46 These contributions would include, for example, the more theological reflections of Volf (1996) on identity, otherness and reconciliation with their challenging insights on violence and peace and their extensive discussions with other thinkers. War and violence have been the topic of significant writings in the twentieth century, mostly, as

3.2.1 Hauerwas

The American ethicist, Hauerwas, is known for his perspective on peace as a primary characteristic of the church and as the heart of the gospel. In the context of this article, he is important because of the way in which he related his reflections on the moral life to spirituality — even if he did so in a rather indirect manner and without accounting for contemporary theoretical reflections within the discipline of Spirituality.

In his primer on Christian ethics with the telling title *The peaceable kingdom*, Hauerwas (1983:135) evaluated two early twentieth century publications of the Niebuhr brothers on non-violence which he regarded as minor classics that remain acutely relevant in our time. Whilst H. Richard Niebuhr represented a position of “meaningful” helplessness in the face of violence, leaning towards pacifism, Reinhold Niebuhr argued that one should use “the forces of nature and history ethically to direct coercion in order that violence may be avoided.” For Hauerwas (1983:135) the debate between these two brothers illustrates the problem of any non-violent position. It creates the uneasy feeling that we are required “to sit on the sidelines in an irresponsible manner and as a result breed self-righteousness or callousness in the face of the world’s endless wars and rumors of wars” (Hauerwas 1983:135).⁴⁷ His own discussion with the Niebuhrs cannot be pursued in any detail here, but its implications for understanding peace in theology and spirituality are evident when Hauerwas (1983:138) analyses positions of both Niebuhrs in terms of the spirituality that undergirds them. He (1983:141) points out that the realistic and relatively coercive position of Reinhold Niebuhr requires an “extraordinary spiritual discipline” since it implies employing “a lesser evil in the hopes of achieving a relative good.” On the other hand, H. Richard Niebuhr’s non-violent, pacifist position means Christians must require a peaceableness for their helplessness before violence. It is on this point that Hauerwas explicitly introduces spirituality when he refers to its traditional form. He (1983:138) points to the spiritual discipline

was pointed out earlier on, because of the world wars. The 9/11 attack in New York in 2001 and the subsequent terrorist onslaughts in major Western cities, intensified the discussion and stimulated a growing body of research. For an example of such recent research, responding to the attacks in New York, cf. Collins (2003), which he delivered as presidential address to the Society of Biblical Literature not long after the attacks. He ascribes the violence to fundamentalism and certainty. His thoughts show parallels with post-modern attacks on grand narratives which totalise incommensurable language games (the small narratives) and give rise to violence and terror (cf. Lyotard 1984:81). Cf. for a post-modern reflection on the violent nature of Christianity, Volf (1996:286ff.) and his extensive debate with Deleuze.

47 Cf. Levinas (1982:14), where Cohen, in his translator’s introduction, addresses the same question and notes (with comments) Levinas’ response to it. Levinas will be discussed in more detail in the following part.

that is required to sustain a commitment to this peaceability. In the patient fight for justice, sustained by the spiritual disciplines of patience and honesty, one should not be too easily disappointed or triumphant. To remain hopeful in the face of violence has nothing to do with a passive disposition, but rather requires a patience that reflects a spiritual discipline. This

... spiritual discipline ... is grounded, as all spiritual disciplines are, in the expectation that by being so formed we will be in a position to better hear God's word for our particular lives (Hauerwas 1983:138).

With remarks like these, Hauerwas (1983:149) moves the discussion of ethics to a reflection on spirituality. But he also brings spirituality specifically as a topic to the fore. He evaluates traditional spirituality from a Protestant point of view, describing it as an indication of pious behaviour that is often regarded as something that "has little to do with, or is positively distracting from, the important issue of moral life." Spirituality is, in Catholic contexts, associated more with prayer, meditation and self-denial "that have no immediate connection with issues of peace and justice." He nevertheless wishes (1983:149) to develop his moral reflections in terms of spirituality.

Yet every ethic ... involves recommendations about the means by which our lives should come to embody what is said to be the good and the true. To avoid spirituality is to risk an abstractness that belies the seriousness of our claims.

Hauerwas' statement that spirituality has little to do with moral life is not fair to many spirituality authors. He may have monastic spirituality in mind when he wrote thus. Various spirituality authors have criticised such one-sided interiority as escapist. Yet Hauerwas correctly suggests that spirituality is about concreteness (i.e. "faith experienced") and therefore about the practical embodiment of faith ("the good and the true") and a life in accordance with the Word of God. In this sense he correctly understands that morality is to be regarded as part of the "embodiment" of faith.

For the Christian life is more a *recognition and training of our senses and passions* than a matter of choices and decisions. By displaying some of the sense and passion of that life, we may all be better able to see *how to live it*.⁴⁸ But I am still acutely aware that such a way of life *does not come easily*.

48 Schreiter (2006:464) observes something similar about non-violence when he states,

Those promoting non-violent action note that a spirituality of non-violence has to be more than a set of ideas to which one assents. It must grow out of patterns of non-violent discipline and living.

Of more importance here is how he links the embodiment of faith with violence when he continues these remarks,

None of us knows the depth of our violence. As I have tried to suggest, the very idea of renouncing all possibilities of violence from our lives frightens us, for it seems to entail the *surrender* of all control over our lives — indeed it seems to suggest that we give up the very thing that allows us to have a self at all (Hauerwas 1983:149, secondary italics).

These remarks of Hauerwas about surrendering of control and about views of the self are particularly insightful within the context of spirituality. Peace is learnt and acquired within a relationship with God and follows on the divine initiative: Peace comes by surrendering to transcendent claims. To attain peace, means to listen to the Word of God. At the same time, one has to remain grounded in a relationship with God by nurturing it in patience. This would imply giving up what we would otherwise regard “as the very thing that allows us to have a self at all.” With this, Hauerwas points towards spirituality as a process. “It is a way of life that does not come easily,” as is observed in the above mentioned quotation. This process implies renunciation of the self with its fears and hidden violence. Spirituality is then a process in which one let go of the inner inclination to violence. One has to grow patiently into acquiring a habit of peace. One is transformed into a peaceable person through a painful growing in surrendering one’s fears and anxieties.

This process takes place as one develops the right relationship to others. Intriguing in this regard is Hauerwas’ discussion of the relationship with the “stranger” who is outside the inner circle of loved ones. Once again Hauerwas wants to develop spirituality beyond an unbalanced interiority and to relate it concretely to the stranger as the other. He thus integrates individual spirituality into a communal framework.⁴⁹ A peaceable lifestyle knows no boundaries since it is not restricted to members of one’s group. It is first and foremost about the other.

On the surface, Hauerwas argues in this regard, we seem to strive for peace by creating an intimate bond with those close to us. But there is clear self-

He also stresses a non-violent lifestyle, but contrasts this more with a rational approach than with moral choices and decisions to which Hauerwas refers. He has in mind traditional theology’s lack of commitment to peace as a divine wish and as a command for the present. This insight is so significant because it integrates peace within a set of relationships, which is also important for spirituality in general.

49 This is significant since violence is often the result of communal identity, which tends to distinguish between the “we” and the “other.” Cf. Ganzevoort (2004:5-14). He points to sexual violence within religious groups against asylum seekers, homosexuals and lesbians as indicative of the violence against strangers. Homophobia is a form of sexual violence against the sexual stranger.

deception at work here. Whilst we claim to live in peace with them, we are distrustful of others, of strangers who do not share our intimate sphere of existence (Hauerwas 1983:13-4; Schlabach 2002). This distrust is the breeding ground for violence. When we meet strangers and experience them as questioning our illusion of a peaceful existence, we tend to lash out against them. They threaten our feelings of being loved. The preservation of order to protect one's own interests is thus mistaken as a longing for peace. We need to question a false peace that is restricted only to our intimate circle of loved ones and realise that peace need to be extended also and especially to the stranger. One can let go of fears and respond meaningfully to them when they are recognised and accepted as a reality. This recognition is therefore part of the process of becoming peaceable.

We attain true peace also when we mark the false peace that we often create and defend. This relationship with the other and the stranger is integrated by Hauerwas in a spiritual framework. We nurture such a relationship only when we are hospitable to God who is our ultimate stranger and challenger of our self-images. Christians must be formed by a particular spirituality that is aware of God's relational character and that will ingrain in them such habits of peace to others. Our false peace contrasts starkly with God's peace which is dangerous because it challenges the deceptive and corrupt nature of our societal institutions and teaches us a lifestyle that does not come easily.

Hauerwas' position does not offer a consistent, comprehensive perspective on peace from the perspective of spirituality and his remarks about an unbalanced focus on interiority are certainly not valid for many authors in spirituality. But his views do confirm, though, the arguments about the limited role of morality in the quest for peace that were raised in the previous section of this article and the need for a more comprehensive approach. Reflections about violence and peace shift one towards spirituality, beyond mere moral considerations. At stake is a lifestyle based on an understanding of God in God's relationship with us and the need to become like God in our own relationships with others.

At the same time, his remarks about the Niebuhr brothers point to the complexities of the issues of violence and peace. Taking recourse to spirituality in order to reflect on moral issues, does not mean that one will uncover "the" answer to the problem of violence. This is evident when Hauerwas shows how the spirituality underlying Reinhold Niebuhr's position actually is relevant for the other, opposing one of H. Richard Niebuhr. In this sense, he helpfully underlines that the issue will be about the *kind* of spirituality that is involved in addressing the issue of violence. Thus one arrives at a position where one understands that not morality or spirituality offers the answers. What is needed is a spirituality of peace that will debate the nature and legitimacy of spiritual perspectives on violence and peace. At the outset then, one should realise that a spirituality of peace will be expressed in various forms. That will promote an

openness that creates a space for better understanding. It also honours the integrity of those who think otherwise. Those who pursue other avenues to oppose violence and promote peace should not be patronised or demonised. When Hauerwas carefully weighs different points of view, he sets an example of assuming the integrity of participants in the debate. *How* we reflect on and struggle for peace is as important as what we say about peace.

3.2.2 Levinas

Of special interest for the discussion of violence and peace, is the work of Levinas, the French philosopher of ethics. Though his work is first and foremost philosophical and ethical in nature, it is of special interest for a spirituality of peace.

Though Levinas is a major figure in philosophy, he is also a religious, mystical and Biblical thinker.⁵⁰ Nemo (Levinas 1982:x) describes him as “without doubt the sole moralist of contemporary thought,” but then adds that the essential thesis of his works is that “ethics is first philosophy, starting from which the other branches of metaphysics take their meaning.” It is of special relevance for this article that Levinas had a close relationship with Biblical material. Levinas (1982:23) writes that the great philosophical texts and their focus on interpretation are “closer to the Bible than opposed to it, even if the concreteness of Biblical themes was not immediately reflected in the philosophical pages.” For him (1982:24) “every philosophical thought rests on pre-philosophical experiences.” His reading of the Bible belongs to such “founding” experiences. The Bible “thus played an essential role ... in addressing all mankind.” His Biblical interpretation is, furthermore, mystical in nature.

Levinas’ philosophy is known especially for its phenomenology of the face and its ethics of responsibility, but he was particularly interested in how these two facets reflect and apply metaphysics. He often wrote about transcendence and God, even if not from a theological point of view. Practically this means that he speaks about God exclusively from the perspective of human experience (Baers 2003:866). The point, however, is that his ethics fits into a larger religious and spiritual framework, even if he is involved in it from a philosophical perspective.

There is, however, another facet of his thought that deserves special mention. Levinas wrote specifically and extensively on violence and peace from an ethical point of view and thus from the foundational and religious insights that he integrated in his ethics. He is, par excellence, the philosopher who argued

50 For his contribution to Biblical hermeneutics, cf. Waaijman (2003b) and for his indebtedness to mystical thinking, cf. Waaijman (2003c:149-50). For Levinas as a Jewish thinker, cf. Levy (1997:246-7) who points out that Levinas distinguished between his philosophical and Jewish writings.

that violence, even in extreme forms like the use of nuclear power, is to be countered with moral force. His is the often quoted observation that, despite the fact that violence is stronger than moral force, moral force offers the better solution (Cohen 1985:14). So radical is his position on non-violence that, Cohen, in his translator's introduction to Levinas' *Ethics and infinity*, asks (1985:14) almost the identical question of Levinas' ethics than the above mentioned question of Hauerwas about the uneasiness one feels in the light of Niebuhr's non-violent position, "Does Levinas' philosophy, then, come down to the escapist lament of slavery, failure, cowardice and inability? Is it rationalization?"

Levinas is an important thinker about non-violence. The link of his ethics with metaphysical, religious and mystical reflections makes him even more relevant for a spirituality of peace. This now needs further clarification.

3.2.2.1 Violent existence

Levinas' radical position about violence is further evident when he argues that traditional notions of peace exclude or question morality. In the very first remarks of his foundational work, *Totality and infinity*, he approaches the existential war-like condition of humanity from the perspective of morality. Asking whether we are not duped by morality, he comments (1961:21) as follows on being or existence as something that reveals itself as war. "War does not only affect it as the most patent fact, but as the very patency, or the truth, of the real." Planning war and winning at all costs, as for example in politics, is regarded as the "very exercise of reason." The human condition is therefore willingly experienced and even conceptualised in terms of war, which leads to the suspension of morality.

For him the consequences of violence are comprehensive. It affects the human condition in its totality. Violence is not merely a matter of physical attacks or injury, and it is not only destructive to its victims. It affects each and every one that is involved in violent actions, but especially also the perpetrators of violence. Ultimately violence makes itself felt on the very being of people, since it

... does not consist so much in injuring and annihilating persons as in interrupting their continuity, making them *betray* not only commitments but *their own substance*, making them carry out actions that will destroy every possibility for action. Not only modern war but every war employs arms that turn against those who wield them. It establishes an order from which no one can keep his distance; nothing henceforth is exterior. War does not manifest exteriority and the other as other; it *destroys the identity of the same* (Levinas 1961:21; Secondary italics).

Violence begins where individuals and groups want to manipulate the world in which they exist and in which they want to control others to their advantage. Unconsciously their violent actions reflect the working of totalitarian forces. They,

in their egocentric attitude, regard others as extensions of themselves. In this way people are drawn into a system that gives meaning to their existence. "The meaning of individuals (invisible outside of this totality) is derived from the totality" (Levinas 1961:21). In other words, perpetrators of violence regard others and their inner humanity in terms of their position in or value for their own ideology. For Levinas the destructive nature of Western thought is rooted in an egocentric attitude. It lacks a genuine, authentic relationship with others because it finds its strength in power systems that control people and nature (Wild 1969:17). Total control and conquest is what counts, not the otherness or the individuality of the others. The present existence of people is characterised by tyranny and violence and thus lacks an ethical nature.

Already at this stage it is evident that Levinas' remarks want to promote the uniqueness and otherness of people. What counts, is "exteriority", that there is someone outside myself. Power, ideas, actions and any forms of exploitation stand in the way of recognising the individuality of and experiencing an authentic relationship with the other person as a person in own right who has an integrity of her/his own. For Levinas the conquest of the other through violence has no place in authentic relationships. So destructive and endemic is violence that the greatest challenge is how it should be countered without being violent or using violence (Cohen 1985:14; but cf. also further below in the conclusion).

3.2.2.2 Peace as a primordial condition

Having analysed the notion of violence and its role in autonomous Western thought, Levinas also investigates the notion of peace. And, similar to Hauerwas' critique of a false notion of peace, he also deconstructs a popular traditional interpretation of peace as a condition that replaces war or is inaugurated with the cessation of war. For Levinas (1961:22), peace should not be understood merely as a future possibility (Kosky 2001:40-41). He reformulates peace as a primordial condition of humanity. It is here, that Levinas' programme and the reason for his book become evident. One can encounter others "in the mode of violence, hate and disdain," but primary to this and presupposed in all human relationships is a face to face relationship that is peaceful in nature. Violence does not restore "to the alienated beings their lost identity." To restore someone's lost identity, "a primordial and original relation with being is needed."⁵¹ Levinas (1998:166) explains the nature of this peace in more detail as,

51 Cf. Levinas (1982:89) where he explains that though there are other hateful, violent encounters between people, the ethical and responsible relationship with the Other is primary. Being is not, as Heidegger stated, neutral.

There is a commandment in the appearance of the face, as if a master spoke to me. However, at the same time, the face of the Other is destitute; it is the poor for whom I can do all and to whom I owe all.

Not the peace of pure security and non-aggression, which guarantees everyone their position in being, but the peace that is already that non-in-difference itself. The peace in which non-in-difference must be understood not as the neutrality of some disaffected curiosity, but the “for-the-other” of responsibility. Response — a first language; *primordial goodness* which hatred, in its attentions, *already presupposes* (Secondary italics).

At the end of *Totality and infinity*, he (2002:306) confirms this radical⁵² new perspective on peace, and concludes,

Peace therefore cannot be identified with the end of combats that cease for want of combatants, by the defeat of some and the victory of others, that is, with cemeteries or future universal empires. *Peace must be my peace, in a relation that starts from an I and goes to the other, in desire and goodness, where the I maintains itself and exists without egoism* (Secondary italics).

From these remarks it is clear that Levinas' thought is, other than autonomous Western thought, *heteronymous* in nature, focussed on the other rather than the self. Life is not about the narcissistic existence of the individual that fits other people into the system of her or his desires (De Schrijver 2004:s.p.). Such a lifestyle only generates violence. Life is about inner peace that reaches out in peace to the other. Levinas' phenomenology of the face requires more attention because it motivates this further.

3.2.2.3 The phenomenology of the face

Levinas famously introduces the notions of the “face” and the Other to explain this in more detail.⁵³ Interpersonal relations are about people encountering each other face to face. As one encounters the Other, one stands before their naked, defenceless, vulnerable face, before they put on a mask through poses (Levinas 1985:86). Instead of the egocentric attitude that regards the other as an ex-

52 Levinas importantly integrates the contents of his book in this framework of war and peace. His description of Western philosophy in terms of this question is one of his enduring contributions to modern thinking. His contribution is further significant because it represents his experiential realities, that is, his exposure to the holocaust in general and, amongst others, the issue of Heidegger's embrace of Nazism in particular that he found so disturbing. It is striking how often he comments on this. Cf. e.g. Levinas (1982:41) where he remarks that Heidegger has never been exculpated in his eyes from his participation in National-Socialism. There are many other such references to this aspect of Heidegger's life in his works.

53 He uses the French *autrui* (Other) as opposed to *autre* (other) to emphasise his particular reading of the other and the special meaning of this image. Cf. Levinas (1969:24). Wild (1969:14) provides a good discussion of this notion in Levinas.

tension of the self, that manipulates and uses the Other, existence in this encounter implies a being for the Other. This different relationship rests on the conviction that people are each and everyone an individual with an own integrity. They cannot be reduced to a mirror image of oneself. The Other, one has to know, lives in a completely different world and is totally different from me. He or she may be a complete stranger that conceals worlds of meaning from me. I must allow the Other to exist intact. The Other is inexhaustible, infinite and comes to me from outside my own world. He or she escapes every attempt to integrate them in my world or to comprehend them. Only when I encounter the Other as individual and allow him or her to be what they are, I am acting ethically.

In the face to face relationship, the knowledge of the individuation of the Other brings about an ethical order characterised by an infinite responsibility for them. This responsibility is incumbent on me, not a matter of intentionality and not dependent on reciprocity. It demands my unconditional attention and ethical action. The naked face of the other interrupts and disturbs one's own interests. This is what spirituality is about, even if it is expressed in philosophical terminology. Levinas (1985:97) notes, expressing the transformative power of the relational in terms of the Other (the transcendent) and the human,

To say: here I am (*me voici*). To do something for the Other. To give. To be human spirit, that's it. The incarnation of human subjectivity guarantees spirituality.

The responsibility furthermore entails a praxis. Wild (1969:16) comments on how Levinas' other-orientated mode focuses on the Other in their radical otherness. It means

... less interest in *conceptual constructions* and a greater readiness to listen and learn from *experience*. It will *not* think of *knowing*, in the sense of gathering, as the primary aim of man from which action will follow as a matter of course, but rather of action and of the achievement of justice and peace as *prior to speaking and thinking* (Secondary italics).

This lack of interest in "conceptual constructions" and the priority of action to thinking/speaking, reminds one of Hauerwas' remark, quoted above, about the need to embody morality and not merely making decisions and choices. The living of peace, the habit of being peaceable predates intellectuality.

But, the relationship with the Other also has a radically transformative nature. One refrains from changing the Other, but is changed by the Other.

It is only by *allowing* the existence of otherness to *change* us that we can be said to have a truly ethical relationship. That which is outside us, and that which we acknowledge as strange, *takes us beyond ourselves. Beyond our common sense. The Other transforms the one who sees the Other* (Jones, Parker & Ten Bosch 2005:76; Secondary italics).

Levinas' philosophical ethics as explained in *Totality and infinity* is carefully framed by a perspective on peace that speaks of a total transformation.⁵⁴ By rejecting all attempts to use the Other to promote one's own interest, Levinas conceptualises existence as being ultimately about peaceability, that is, about goodness, friendship and hospitality to the Other (Levinas 1961:304-5; 1969:203). I must treat the Other generously (Wild 1969:14-160; Jones, Parker and Ten Bos 2005:75-8). The Other arouses my goodness and invokes or even puts to question my freedom (Levinas 1969:200, 213). In this way peace is conceptually developed as everything that is beneficial to the Other and that is disruptive of the pursuit of my own interests.

In his later works, Levinas underlines this orientation to the other very strongly. Thus Veling (2002:s.p.) notes how he speaks in his later works of our being persecuted, even held hostage by the Other. It happens "against my will, persecutes me by entirely dominating me." This drive to act responsibly toward the Other counters violence so that "the march of historical being (is held) in check" (Cohen 1985:15). So, ultimately, the ethical relationship with the Other also transforms history and society. In allowing myself to be transformed by the Other, violence is countered and totalitarian forces resisted.

3.2.2.4 Peace as a trace of the transcendent

The notion of the face has a special quality to it because it also relates to Levinas' understanding of the divine and because it in a special way represents a mystical dimension in his work. When someone accepts responsibility for and nurtures a peaceful relationship with the Other, it is a testimony to the voice of the Other that commands "from beyond." The face comes to us from beyond not as from another world. This "beyond" rather suggests the transcendent or the radical infinite Other. It is the mystical alterity of the Other that evokes directly the transcendence of God.⁵⁵ For Levinas this is Revelation, or God.

54 Cf. further Levinas (1961:21-22; 222-5); Critchley (2002:23-5). On Levinas' views on violence, cf. Altez (2007:52-70). On Levinas' understanding of God and the implications of God's transcendence and holiness, cf. Levy (1997:250). Peperzak (1996) explains Levinas view of the powerlessness of God against human violence and God's imperceptible, extreme humble presence in the world (cf. 1 Kings 19:11-12). Also insightful is Veling (2002).

55 De Schrijver (2004:s.p.) formulates it as,

Ja, het is alsof achter dit gelaat de roep van de Andere (Jahweh) hoorbaar wordt, zodat mijn ethisch handelen meteen ook een religieuze betekenis krijgt. In de sfeer van het religieuze is er trouwens geen scheiding tussen het private beleven en het publieke handelen.

(It is indeed as if behind this countenance the Other [Yahweh] becomes audible, so that my ethical action is given a religious meaning. In this religious sphere there is also no division between private experience and public action.)

The notion of God is developed to some extent when he speaks of God and moots his other famous notion of the “trace,” God as the Most High

... commands our attention toward the widow, the orphan, the stranger and the beggar ... This is the transcendence of God that can never be scaled, the height of the Other that rises above us — demanding our attention, commanding our response, requiring our love (Veling 2002:s.p.).

The human Other evokes the transcendent God — but not in a symbolic way. The face is not a symbolic reference to God because that would mean that God would no longer be transcendent. The face is rather a trace of God, indicating that God is no longer there, despite having been present. God left a trace and is now absent — just like the Other escapes any of our attempts to grasp him or her. Levinas refers as illustration to Exodus 33 in which Moses’ request to see God’s glory is refused and he only gets to see God’s back after God passed by. With this reference Levinas reflects mystical thought that was used already by well-known spirituality authors like Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius the Areopagite.⁵⁶

There is, finally, more to Levinas’ mysticism than this mystical notion of God. For Levinas mystical experience is possible through the Other. “Only in the responsibility for the Other and because of the inspiration that the Other gives, can someone receive the mystical experience” (Baers 2003:869).

These remarks reveal why Levinas’ insights are so useful for a spirituality of peace. He thinks of peace in terms of a binding, committed relationship with the Other. It is not a theoretical, academic issue about decisions, choices, ideas and debates. A non-committed discussion of peace is impossible for Levinas. This is even more so since the Other has a transcendent dimension — the other is not only the other person, but it is also the Most High.⁵⁷ By facing the Other, I receive an experience beyond myself from the outside. I encounter

Cf. also Baers (2003:871).

This would explain the role of the Bible in Levinas’ thought. The Bible is for him an important text to reflect on the meaning of ethics. The ethical incontestably dominates the whole Bible. Biblical texts do not signify through their “dogmatic tale of their supernatural or sacred origin” (Levinas 1985:115). They find meaning by illuminating the expression of the face of the Other as the vulnerable for whom one has a moral responsibility (Levinas 1985:95).

56 Levinas’ work has been described by Waaijman (2003a:1013) as a mystical text. Cf. also Baers (2003:869).

57 Veling (2002:s.p.) draws attention to Levinas’ desire to reintroduce the notion of transcendence after the postmodern era in which it had no place. But he wishes to do so “without bringing God too quickly and too readily into the ambit of our understanding and our grasp.”

the infinite which cannot be domesticated into a harmonious world of rest and repose (Levinas 1969:33; Veling 2005:s.p.).⁵⁸

The Other haunts ontological existence and keeps us awake, keeps us vulnerable and exposed to the revelation of God ("Stay awake! Because you never know when the time will come" — Mark 13:33) (Veling 2005:s.p.).

The divine nature and origins of peace is hereby made clear. This is clearer when Levinas points to an important trend in spirituality that moves away from identifying peace with an inner experience — something that was clear in some of Hauerwas' observations as well (discussed above). The experience of the Most High as the Other is not quite the same as the peace that was sought in a traditional mystical context of prayer and contemplation. Such an interior spirituality is for Levinas too focussed on the self. Our identity is not to be found in our relationship with ourselves and in reflection on our being. Spirituality cannot reduce God to an inner experience, to a theme for reflection, something that can be understood (Veling 2005:s.p.). There is, rather, an inextricable and necessary link with the Other, and, thus, with relationships, especially with the marginalised, the widow, the poor and the orphan. Peace is thus displaying goodness towards those who are mostly denied any benevolence and are often the objects of violent exploitation. The face with which one is faced, represents God's identification with the other so that one encounters God in facing the fragile, different Other.

Like the sensibilities of liberation theology, Levinas wants to keep the human neighbour between myself and God, such that we cannot too readily approach the invisible God without first encountering the height of our neighbour (Veling 2005:s.p.).

Derrida (2000:478), in his funeral oration for Levinas, recalled a remark of Levinas that he was not so much interested only in ethics, as was often thought, but in the "holy, the holiness of the holy" (Critchley 2002:13). Holiness, Levinas explained (1985:117), is found where the Bible ruptures being, that is, where it questions our warlike existence and insists on relating ethically with the Other.

Once again, matters are not that simple. The above mentioned observations are part of philosophical debates that represent Levinas' attempt to reflect on the transcendent "from below." They belong more to the philosophical than to the religious sphere. Levinas did not reject or question inner religious experiences, although he criticised experiences that remained on the level of

58 Bergo (2008:*ad loc.*) wrote about Levinas' notion of responsibility that it is found in his philosophy and in his exegesis of Talmudic passages. On the one hand it reflects consistent humanistic thinking, but on the other hand there is an experience of a power greater than a person.

the interior (cf. Waaijman 2004:120). He did so through some hermeneutical comments about prayer, the Bible and language. Prayer is a relationship with and attitude towards God. Waaijman (2002:120) thus explains his view,

Mijn betrekking tot de taal, het schrift, de Schrift is mijn betrekking tot God, mijn *à-Dieu* zelf, mijn gebed. Mijn betrokkenheid op het aan-gene-zijde is mijn tot-God. "In die Thora nadert u degene die u (*à titre personnel*) aanspreekt." De Schrift "leidt naar de persoonlijke aanwezigheid, naar het persoonlijke, dat in zijn oorspronkelijke zuiverheid wellich slechts kan verschijnen doorheen deze tekst. Een weten dat leidt tot een relatie met een perzoon, tot een relatie die niet meer een weten is ..." Vóór alle weten is Schriftlezing godsbetrokkenheid, of liever: een weten, dat leidt tot godsbetrokkenheid, tot gebed. God bestaat niet in uitspraken-over, maar in die ontvangst van zijn Aanspraak, een betrekking die bestaat in antwoord-zijn.

For Levinas prayer is characterised by alteriority and a response to God who is revealed in the Other. Simon (2003:45–59) also noted that the way in which Levinas portrayed prayer both as a relation of human to the divine and to others. For Levinas prayer "requires a particular embodied attentiveness within which one becomes self-present to, and responsive toward an existence beyond oneself, signaling problems of answerability and address."

But Levinas also emphasised (1985:118) that his philosophical insights about the Other and the face, found in the Bible as well, are not identical to religion. Religion offers consolation that philosophy cannot always offer. "A humanity which can do without these consolations perhaps may not be worthy of them." Levinas thus allowed space for other forms of religious experiences.

Levinas' work has an integrity of its own and fits into contemporary philosophical discourses. As such its differences with traditional spirituality must be kept in mind and an easy transfer should be avoided. To a lesser extent this is also true of Hauerwas, who is more focussed on ethics than spirituality. Both of them nevertheless provide helpful insights for questions raised by violence and peace and contribute meaningfully to a Spirituality of Peace. In conclusion, some of these will be summarised.

4. CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A SPIRITUALITY OF PEACE

A Spirituality of Peace can benefit in more than one way from the insights of Hauerwas and Levinas. Some of these can only be spelled out briefly and in a preliminary fashion here.

First of all, both these authors illuminate a foundational aspect of spirituality. Peace as gift to humanity has a transcendent, divine quality. Peace as characteristic of the divine-human relationship is not a matter of choice, but one is "elected" to

experience peace, to make peace and to be at peace (Levinas), or, peace comes to those who listen carefully to and hear the Word of God (Hauerwas).

But the divine character of peace implies furthermore that it reflects God's nature. Our peace reflects God who is peace. God is the One who comes to humanity as the stranger, widow or orphan (Hauerwas). Or, alternatively God comes to us as the Other (Levinas). In acting benevolently outside one's own sphere of interest, one becomes like God.⁵⁹ With this, the true destiny of humanity is revealed: to be fully human is to be peaceable to the one who is different, just like God is and like God acts. These facets remind one of the importance of the notion of the image of God in spirituality. Spirituality is about the divine-human relational process in which humanity is liberated from the grip of coercive power relations to reflect God's peaceable image. The seminal motif of the image of God⁶⁰ conveys the basic anthropological conviction in Biblical texts that humanity was made in the likeness of God and finds its true fulfilment in a harmonious relationship with God.

Of special significance is the manner in which human relationships are defined in terms of divine peace. The relationship with the other should not be misunderstood as merely the outcome or consequence of the divine-human relationship. Levinas' remarks about transcendence reveal an intricate connectedness between the divine and the human: to act humanely towards the stranger and the completely different one, is to experience God, the Transcendent. In relating to the Other, in recognising the stranger, one is transformed. A spirituality of peace can benefit in a special way from this special insight in the intimate relationship between the divine and the human.

Closely linked to this is the way in which human existence obtains special dimensions. Humanity should not be regarded as essentially warlike in character. Humanity has other options and can exist differently. Schreiter (2006:464) therefore correctly refers to a strand of spirituality as

59 An example of this is provided in the insightful remarks of Waaijman (2002:432-3) when he discusses the notion of God as liberator from the perspective of Egyptian and Canaanite spirituality. Miriam's song is a parody on the Egyptian religious god-conception that legitimates military might at the cost of peace. The same is true of Elijah's opposition to Baalism that underwrites royal power. All these insights implicitly points towards peace as a seminal aspect of God's character and of the divine-human relationship.

60 Waaijman (2002:446):

Spiritual authors who draw on biblical traditions express the divine-human relation in just this one sentence: man has been created after God's image and unto his likeness (Gen. 1:26). This *Imago-Dei* motif, which is solidly rooted in the faith of Israel, verbalizes the ways in which God and man are reciprocally related.

... the ontology of peace, that is, a belief that relations among persons, societies and the earth itself were intended to be peaceful and non-coercive. Competition, violence and war are aberrations, not a primordial state of nature.

In this sense Levinas correctly rejected totalitarian, autonomous Western thought with its inherent dynamics towards violence as an aberration.

If peace is inherent quality of humanity's existence, it nevertheless does not imply that all people should act the same. To be human does mean to desire goodness for the Other rather than for oneself, to be peaceful in confirming and appreciating the Other in their humanity and, also, in their otherness. All people thus have to be benevolent. Acting benevolently ironically also implies allowing the Other to be different. This means more than tolerating people for what they are. To be peaceable is to confirm and appreciate differences. The otherness of the Other even can be celebrated as infinite. In this sense the two authors reflect the focus in spirituality on respect for the humanity of others (cf. also Barnes 2005:401-7).

Wanting to change the Other to become like oneself expresses itself in subtle forms of violence. An example would be the paternalistic reinterpretation of the Other as the same as oneself, or the colonising of non-religious people by regarding them as believers or when the God of other religions are considered to be manifestations of one's own God (Ganzevoort 2004:5-14). One will have to understand that the Other will always remain different. Only then will peace be possible.

At the same time both these thinkers stress that peace is relational and therefore reflects experiential realities. Peace is a lived experience. It is about experiencing authentic relationships with the other, abandoning self-interest and giving up false peace that promotes an insider mentality.⁶¹ Peace is further not about promoting certain ideals and bringing people to think the same. Relationships that are violent and destructive are inauthentic and have to change. Violence has no place in relationships.

Both authors consistently focus on transformation — also a key motif in spirituality. The transformation encompasses healing, goodness (Levinas) or inner spiritual qualities of patience (Hauerwas). Especially intriguing from the perspective of spirituality, is that one would need to allow oneself to be transformed by the Other — as Levinas spells out. Peace is therefore excludes being possessive and regarding the Other as an extension of myself.⁶²

61 The discussion of Barnes (2005:406) which refers to exclusivism as a possible virtue helpfully points out that tolerating and celebrating the other does not mean that one has to deny the formative role of one's own faith experience. Levinas overcomes the tension between inclusivism and exclusivism by showing how the Other does not eliminate oneself, but transforms one.

62 Cf. especially the illuminating essay of Simon (2003).

Finally, both authors illuminate a further aspect of spirituality, namely, that peace involves a process. They both stress the fragility of peace and underline the need for patience. In the case of Hauerwas patience is developed through spiritual discipline and for Levinas the fragility of peace demands patience. The process can be demanding: For Levinas (1986:14) patience does not depend on the response of the Other. Whilst one has to be peaceable and patient, one cannot ask the same from the other. And, furthermore, the lifelong quest for peace is demanding since it means respecting the integrity of the Other by not patronising the Other. As was remarked above, the *how* of the quest for peace is as important as its contents and aims. Violence should be countered without being violent or using violence (Cohen 1985:14) — and this includes violence on the level of conducting debates.

With these remarks some preparatory work has been done for a fuller design of a Spirituality of Peace. In a violent world in which violence is a pervasive presence and has been tolerated and glorified in many overt and covert forms, the quest for peace is a special challenge. But it is a quest that finds its strength through the formation of a moral lifestyle within the context of spirituality. Fortunately some helpful and profound insights and experiences are available as beacons on this spiritual journey.

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Spirituality	Spiritualiteit
Peace	Vrede
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Hauerwas	Hauerwas
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