



4. September 2019 „Signs of the reign of God“

Lk 4:38-44

Leaving the synagogue he went to Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in the grip of a high fever and they asked him to do something for her. Standing over her he rebuked the fever and it left her. And she immediately got up and began to serve them. At sunset all those who had friends suffering from diseases of one kind or another brought them to him, and laying his hands on each he cured them. Devils too came out of many people, shouting, 'You are the Son of God.' But he warned them and would not allow them to speak because they knew that he was the Christ. When daylight came he left the house and made his way to a lonely place. The crowds went to look for him, and when they had caught up with him they wanted to prevent him leaving them, but he answered, 'I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns too, because that is what I was sent to do.' And he continued his proclamation in the synagogues of Judaea.

The presence of the Lord, how salutary it is for all men! Whether it is the mother-in-law of Peter or the sick, who were brought to the Lord, they were all healed! The kingdom of God was present among men. There was like signs of of paradise, when diseases did not exist and death did not come into the world; another empire is coming that is no longer threatened by decay and in which death rules.

Yes, the kingdom of God had come to people in Jesus, but it was not finished yet. There is still a way to go - for the Lord leading to Golgotha and entering into the glorious resurrection, and for the church that has been wandering through time to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth!

For the demons however comes the court! They, who were driven out of heaven and fell on the earth, they who now want to continue here their fight against God, they are threatened by final end.

"Have you come to destroy us!" (cf Mk 1:24) demons were calling. Today in the text they are shouting a confession: "You are the Son of God". But Jesus does not let them talk. He does not want a testimony of the demons who hate and fear him.

Instead, the Holy Spirit and the disciples should testify the Lord in love and in truth, and men has to listen to them and become convinced of the message. What the demons say always carries a different character, even if they have to tell the truth. They do not confess God in love and thus convey a false image of God. Therefore an advice: We should not be more than necessary deal with the devil and not subject to its negative fascination. This fascination can even come under religious pretexts: we think that we have to deal with the plans of the devil in order to fight him better. But this is an error.

Also, we should not be interested in special messages that may be heard from devils. We must never forget that even when a devil is forced to speak the truth, he says this as a devil and not as a loving child of God!

It is understandable that the people who have experienced so much healing and help from the Lord would like him to stay with them. But the Lord wants to fulfill his mission from the Father. The gospel of the kingdom of God must be proclaimed.

One can not stop Jesus, because it is - as later with the apostle Paul and as with all missionaries - the "*compulsion of love*" on him (cf 1 Kor: 9,16). All those can not dwell in this life and pitch their tents until the gospel has completed its course. They are obedient to the one who sent them and this is our Heavenly Father!

The proclamation of the gospel always has a certain urgency, which should not be confused with haste and false compulsion. The urgency consists on the one hand in the gift of piety, which wants to please the father and is in a hurry to fulfill his mission. It also consists in looking at the person whom the good news is to reach, so that he may be saved and spend his life in communion with God, and not remain in the darkness.

This was true for the time of Jesus, it has been true throughout the centuries, and is true today, when the second coming of Jesus approaches at the end of time.