

4. July 2020

“The promises of God”

Amos 9, 11-15

On that Day, I shall rebuild the tottering hut of David, make good the gaps in it, restore its ruins and rebuild it as it was in the days of old, 12 for them to be master of what is left of Edom and of all the nations once called mine -Yahweh declares, and he will perform it. The days are coming- declares Yahweh- when the ploughman will tread on the heels of the reaper, and the treader of grapes on the heels of the sower of seed, and the mountains will run with new wine and the hills all flow with it. I shall restore the fortunes of my people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them, they will plant vineyards and drink their wine, they will lay out gardens and eat their produce. And I shall plant them in their own soil and they will never be uprooted again from the country which I have given them, declares Yahweh, your God.

The promises of God give hope to believers and they show us the real intentions of God! These are always directed towards the good, an expression of his recognizable fatherly love! It becomes more difficult to recognize this love when it shows itself as admonishing and educating, and when a punitive judgment is announced through the prophets! But the same love of God is always at work, but unfortunately all too often it has to do with the sinful and unhealed situation of man and take the appropriate measures!

Today, however, the joy resounds when God can give gifts to his children, when he wants them to experience the fullness of life to gladden their hearts! But often they are still promises, like those that we will live in eternity in everlasting joy with God!

Some political ideologies use this language and believe they can promise a kind of paradise on earth, and people are blinded by this! But we will not experience a paradise state before the end of times, because human sin with its consequences will only be completely overcome with God!

These promises keep us upright, not only in the above mentioned sense, because we recognize God's love more radiantly, but also because we remember that all darkness will pass away!

This also applies to daily life!

Not infrequently heavy clouds come up and we cannot recognize the next step! Sometimes it may look as if everything will not go on or even get worse and worse! But the word that a music group used in one of their songs is true: "In the end all will turn to the light and the darkness will have gone away"!

But God's promises are not only a consolation and an expression of His good will, but they are also given to us as an object of faith to be grasped! God has said it, it will happen, we can live to it, we hold on to it: the light will come after darkness, the day after night, the joys after sorrow!

Furthermore, we should remember that the coming of better or even brighter times involves our participation, because peace or war are not simply positive developments or doom that would happen independently of us human beings. They are in the negative case the fruit of sin and in the positive case the fruit of the right relationship with God!

"Seek peace and pursue it" (Ps 34,14)

That is why we are called to help, day after day, to lay the foundations for a better time! The promises which the prophet Amos makes for Israel, after much talk of all the evil consequences of apostasy, should lift us up! The good time will come, evil will never triumph, even if it appears omnipotent and leaves traces of desolation: The ruined hut will be rebuilt, the cracks will be repaired, the ruins will be rebuilt!

Then *"the mountains will run with new wine"*.

Through our daily struggle to conform to the will of the Lord, we prepare the way for what is to come.

Finally, we can also interpret the above text inwardly: The Lord strengthens our souls, heals them, so that they too can subdue the "rest of Edom" and all the nations - which means the subjugation of our inner enemies! Then our destiny will be turned around and we will live in the grace of God, that is, the Spirit of God will overflow in us like the full vineyards, and we will be planted in the heart of God and never again be uprooted!