

25 November 2020

## “The Victors over the Beast”

*Rev 15:1-4*

*And I saw in heaven another sign, great and wonderful: seven angels were bringing the seven plagues that are the last of all, because they exhaust the anger of God. I seemed to be looking at a sea of crystal suffused with fire, and standing by the lake of glass, those who had fought against the beast and won, and against his statue and the number which is his name. They all had harps from God, and they were singing the hymn of Moses, the servant of God, and the hymn of the Lamb: How great and wonderful are all your works, Lord God Almighty; upright and true are all your ways, King of nations. Who does not revere and glorify your name, O Lord? For you alone are holy, and all nations will come and adore you for the many acts of saving justice you have shown.*

They exist, the victors over the beast, over that anti-God power that wants to rise above everything and take its place in the hearts of men, which belongs only to God. They did not worship the image of the beast to which they were to be forced. They are those who have remained faithful to God in the great trials and have not bowed to Satan and his followers. They are the conquerors, the martyrs, the confessors, the faithful.

The Apocalypse does not hide from us the great struggle into which we Christians are engaged. Seductions of all kinds are approaching us, and they are becoming more and more global in our times. But where the darkness tries to reach out to the children of light, there the grace of God is also powerful. These victors over the beast could resist in the grace of God, not by their own strength. This is why it is so important that we trust in the grace of the Lord all the more in the present time. There, where all external certainties are dwindling, whether in the confused world or in the wavering ship of the Church, we are invited to sing the song of Moses with the conquerors:

*“Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak,  
and let the earth hear the words of my mouth.  
May my teaching drop as the rain,  
my speech distill as the dew,  
like gentle rain upon the tender grass,  
and like showers upon the herb.*

*For I will proclaim the name of the Lord;  
ascribe greatness to our God!  
The Rock, his work is perfect,  
for all his ways are justice.  
A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,  
just and upright is he.” (Deut 32:1-4)*

The praise of God is a powerful weapon against the temptation to hopelessness which can easily strike you if you spend too much time on worrying news or let your soul be clouded by the long succession of negative events. This should be seen as a temptation, because the Spirit of God will always find a way out! It is good, especially in those moments that seem hopeless, to remember the victors and thus the testimony that God has guided them through all their afflictions. The danger of clouding the soul by accumulating negative news is that we try to find natural ways out for the soul infected by sadness. They can distract, but they cannot overcome the darkness. Conscious attention to the Lord, reciting a psalm, singing a hymn of praise, invoking the Holy Spirit are what allow the Lord to let light fall into the soul again!

Let us also listen to the harps of God (Harpa Dei), the song in honour of the Lamb, because it is the Lord who saves people and strengthens the victors!

In these turbulent times we should gather spiritual treasures (*cf. Mt 6:20*) or, in other words, increase the oil supply (*cf. Mt 25:4*). The Apocalypse strongly reminds us that the times of persecution are increasing, and those who do not close their eyes and ears can already see this. We must not overlook the fact that there will not only be attacks on the Christian faith from outside, which are relatively easy to identify. More dangerous are the softening of faith and morals, which can weaken us from within and can also manipulate us in various ways with their messages.

That is why we need something like an “inner cell of the encounter with God” within us, into which we can withdraw and where we can open neither ear nor heart to the Antichrist-messages. There, in this cell, there should be many songs of praise, holy words, various prayers, which we can always rely on. It is good if we collect all this in the times when it is still possible. There may come other times when it becomes more difficult.

But all this should not be done out of fear, but with the spirit of Christian prudence and trust in God. Then we will be ready to triumph in the Lord!