

15. December 2021

I am the Lord and there is no other

Isa 45:6b-8.18.21b-25

I am the Lord, and there is no other, I form the light and I create the darkness, I make well-being, and I create disaster, I, the Lord, do all these things. Rain down, you heavens, from above, and let the clouds pour down saving justice, let the earth open up and blossom with salvation, and let justice sprout with it; I, the Lord, have created it! For thus says the Lord, the Creator of the heavens -- he is God, who shaped the earth and made it, who set it firm; he did not create it to be chaos, he formed it to be lived in: I am the Lord, and there is no other. Speak up, present your case, let them put their heads together! Who foretold this in the past, who revealed it long ago? Was it not I, the Lord? There is no other god except me, no saving God, no Saviour except me! Turn to me and you will be saved, all you ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is no other. By my own self I swear it; what comes from my mouth is saving justice, it is an irrevocable word: All shall bend the knee to me, by me every tongue shall swear, saying, 'In the Lord alone are saving justice and strength,' until all those who used to rage at him come to him in shame. In the Lord the whole race of Israel finds justice and glory.

The Lord tells us again the plain and simple truth: *"I am the Lord, and there is no other."* A truth with far-reaching consequences, for it rules out idolatry and any form of man-worship.

"There is no other God except me, no saving God, no Saviour except me!"

Only the Triune God is the true God! Just as He communicated this to the people of Israel, the whole world must learn this truth, so that any deception and blindness caused by the powers of darkness may be overcome. Perhaps we have lost a little courage to proclaim this truth in all clarity; perhaps we feel that it would be presumptuous to transmit it with this exclusivity, as it has been entrusted to our holy Church. Perhaps we fear to offend others in their understanding of religion. However, the Son of God also speaks to us with this same clarity in the Gospel: *"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me"*. (Jn 14:6)

This God who communicates to us the very truthful words that in Him alone "are saving justice and strength", is a Father full of love; and in no way is He a tyrant who seeks to claim power for Himself. Only the truth sets us free! (Jn 8:32) The One who removes the blindfold from our eyes simply wants us to see; the One who awakens us from dreams and illusions, wants the best for us; the One who teaches us to leave behind the disordered pleasures of our life, truly loves us.

When we experience an authentic encounter with God, salvation comes to us. That is why it is so important that we get to know the Lord even more deeply, so that we can invite people to bend their knees before Him in love. If we bow the knee to the true God, we will not bow the knee to those to whom such reverence is not due.

We know how God, our Father, wants to save His people and all the nations of the earth. He has made it known to us! He wants to do it through His Son Jesus Christ!

We are now entering the final stage of Advent, which prepares us for the approaching Feast of the Nativity of the Saviour. We know how far God's love has come down to us, communicating itself to us in such a way that we can understand it on the level of our human experience. What joy is experienced in a family as it looks forward to the birth of a new child! And once the child is born, how happy the parents and siblings are, and they want to present the newborn to their other relatives and acquaintances!

Now we will celebrate the Birth of the divine Child, who brings joy not only to our immediate surroundings, but to all people. All are invited to receive grace upon grace from His fullness! (Jn 1:16) He has come to offer the world the peace of God; the true peace that only He can give (cf. Jn 14:27).

This message has been entrusted to all of us. That is why we cannot allow the joy of the Birth of the Son of God to be overshadowed by the present tribulation; by the anti-Christian shadows that want to darken the whole world. God always speaks His Word of salvation in the midst of darkness, to enlighten it. The darker it becomes around us, the more the light of the Lord shines, and the more these words of His apply: *'In the Lord alone are saving justice and strength.'*

Let us give the Lord the joy of allowing ourselves to be graced by Him. Let us not allow our personal darkness or other kinds of darkness to prevent us from looking forward to Christmas happily. Rather, let us celebrate it this year with even greater devotion and tenderness. The fact that Mary and Joseph found only a humble manger for the birth of the Son of God did not diminish the joy of being his earthly parents.

We do not help anyone if we allow ourselves to be disturbed! On the contrary: people - though they may not even know it - are waiting for God. Let us not forget this: even more important than any gift we can give someone is the gift of faith, the message that God has visited His people and that even those who had rebelled against Him can come to the Child of Bethlehem. The Lord is ready to forgive everyone, if only they will turn to Him. This is the witness that people need from us, for without God there will be no true peace and no true joy.

With the birth of the Son of God, the words of the Prophet Isaiah were fulfilled: *"O Rain down, you heavens, from above, and let the clouds pour down saving justice, let the earth open up and*

blossom with salvation, and let justice sprout with it; I, the Lord, have created it." (Isa 45:8) This says the Lord, the Creator of the heavens, he who is God, the shaper of the earth, its maker; he who has made it firm, he did not create it empty, but made it to be inhabited: "I am the Lord, and there is no other. There is no other God besides me."