

19. June 2022

“Your love is better than life”

Ps 62:2-9

*O God, you are my God, for you I long; *
for you my soul is thirsting.
My body pines for you *
like a dry, weary land without water.*

*So I gaze on you in the sanctuary *
to see your strength and your glory.
For your love is better than life, *
my lips will speak your praise.*

*So I will bless you all my life, *
in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet, *
my mouth shall praise you with joy.*

*On my bed I remember you. /
On you I muse through the night
for you have been my help; *
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings to you; /
your right hand holds me fast.*

The soul has a deep thirst for God, for in Him is its true home. This remains true even if man does not consciously perceive it and attaches his heart to the passing things of this world. Then the soul is not only destitute, homeless; it falls into the clutches of thieves and robbers. He remains in a prison, he knows not the green pastures, he knows not where to find his rest, and he simply wanders. It is a desolate state, on which God has mercy again and again, for He created man in His image and never abandons him.

In today's psalm we hear the voice of a soul that has awakened to love. It longs for God and seeks him, for it clearly feels that when God is absent, it is like *"a dry, weary land without water"* and produces no fruit. Feeling the dryness within, he cries out even more to God and seeks him.

Thus, we are also shown here the way to escape from the inner desolation that can greatly affect our lives: it is the praise of God, which lifts us up to Him and frees the soul from its despondency. Immersing ourselves in God, calling on His name and penetrating into His love frees us from our chains. Now the soul can breathe again and does not wither. It is more and more awakened and the spirit of understanding lets it know that *"the love of God is better than life"*.

Indeed, it is so: better to occupy the last place in the Kingdom of God than to be someone in the kingdom of vanities; better to die in the grace of God than to spend a life far from Him. The soul knows this well, but it is very easily seduced. When it is lifted up to God, on the other hand, it is satisfied with "a banquet".

"Are any of you sad? Let him pray" (Jas 5:13) - the Apostle James advises us.

It is important not to leave the soul at the mercy of a disordered sadness, for this state of mind darkens it and robs it of its strength, both naturally and spiritually. The desert fathers speak of "tristitia", and even relate it to a demonic influence on the soul.

We must not give place to laziness and disordered sadness, i.e. sadness that is present in the feelings but has no real reason. By having recourse to God and specifically invoking the Holy Spirit, what drags us down can be stopped and the soul can be lifted up again. It then experiences that the right hand of the Lord is supporting it.