

26. November 2022

Come, Lord Jesus, Maranatha

Rev 22:1-7

Then the angel showed me the river of life, rising from the throne of God and of the Lamb and flowing crystal-clear. Down the middle of the city street, on either bank of the river were the trees of life, which bear twelve crops of fruit in a year, one in each month, and the leaves of which are the cure for the nations. The curse of destruction will be abolished. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city; his servants will worship him, they will see him face to face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. And night will be abolished; they will not need lamplight or sunlight, because the Lord God will be shining on them. They will reign for ever and ever. The angel said to me, 'All that you have written is sure and will come true: the Lord God who inspires the prophets has sent his angel to reveal to his servants what is soon to take place. I am coming soon!' Blessed are those who keep the prophetic message of this book.

It is neither evil, nor misery, nor destruction that have the last word, but God alone.

We are heading towards a marvelous future, which we can already foresee, if we persevere in faith. God did not call His creation into existence and then annihilate it or allow it to be destroyed. Everything will be transfigured through the path of suffering. We will receive in the Resurrection a glorious, transfigured body, which will no longer be transitory nor, therefore, subject to suffering and death. Our future life will be so wonderful that, in view of the glory that awaits us, we should journey with patience and perseverance in this "valley of tears," enduring in the Lord the sufferings of this life (cf. Rom 8:18).

Today's text gives us a glimpse of this glorious future.

From the throne of God emanates the water of life... They are the rivers of His grace, which vivify and heal everything they touch. No one will be separated from God. There will be no more obstacles hindering the love of God from penetrating everything and

everyone. There will no longer be a shadow to obscure the light. We men and women will awaken to our eternal vocation, which is to serve God and contemplate His face.

This is what awaits us, and, thanks to our faith, we can already glimpse it in our earthly life. It is thus evident why it is so essential to live in this hope. The Lord will return, and with each passing day, His glorious coming draws nearer. The longer we wait for Him, the more grace will strengthen us!

At the beginning of this series of meditations on Revelation, we mentioned that there is a special promise related to reading and listening to this book. At the beginning of the first chapter it is written: *"Blessed is anyone who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed those who hear them, if they treasure the content, because the Time is near"* (Rev 1:3). Today, in the final words of the text, we hear: *"Blessed are those who keep the prophetic message of this book"*.

Our task is to keep alive the hope in the Lord's Return and in the life of the world to come, both within ourselves and in the witness we give to others. This is not a "cheap consolation", as some consider it to be! On the contrary, living with our gaze fixed on eternity and our hope firm in the Lord who is coming, enlivens all our strength to carry out our mission in this world, with God's grace. Hope in the future world helps us not to sink in the current of the times and lose our orientation.

With this day's meditation, we close this liturgical year to enter, starting tomorrow, into the new one.

And we would like to close this little "tour" of the Apocalypse by singing as the last chapter of this prophetic book suggests: *"The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come'. And whoever hears, let him say, 'Come'"* (Rev 21:17). May the Lord make His fire burn in our hearts, so that we may await His Return and He may find us working in His vineyard as good laborers!

NOTE: The video of this Harpa Dei song can be found at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4ufdzLvXVU>