

6. December 2023

Fulfilment of the promise

Isa 25:6-10a

“On this mountain, for all peoples, Yahweh Sabaoth is preparing a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wines, of succulent food, of well-strained wines. On this mountain, he has destroyed the veil which used to veil all peoples, the pall enveloping all nations; he has destroyed death for ever. Lord Yahweh has wiped away the tears from every cheek; he has taken his people's shame away everywhere on earth, for Yahweh has spoken. And on that day, it will be said, 'Look, this is our God, in him we put our hope that he should save us, this is Yahweh, we put our hope in him. Let us exult and rejoice since he has saved us.' For Yahweh's hand will rest on this mountain, and Moab will be trodden under his feet as straw is trodden into the dung-heap”.

By His coming into the world and through all the works of salvation, the Lord has torn the veil that covered all peoples and the mantle that enveloped the nations. The light of the Gospel has reached to the ends of the earth, and the Holy Spirit has led many to the knowledge of the truth. In principle, access to God is open to all men. Everyone can come to Jesus and, through Him, to the Father. God fulfilled His promises by sending His Son, and this "hour of grace" is still valid! The way of salvation is offered to everyone!

In contrast to this, we have the reality that many peoples no longer appreciate the "hour of grace", that apostasy is increasing, that there are still many peoples - for example on the continent of Asia - to whom the message of the Gospel has not yet really reached... In other religions the knowledge of God often remains in the shadows, and the people of Israel are still covered by that veil which prevents many Jews from recognising the Lord.

The promise has not yet been entirely fulfilled! There is still something pending, which we can look forward to. Only rarely can we see clearly how and in what way God will fulfil His promises in full. Some things are only understood as soon as they happen. But how can we stand firm in the faith that what has been foretold will actually happen, thus doing our part to bring about the fulfilment of the promises? It is not merely passive waiting, but cooperating in the Lord's work.

It is the Holy Spirit who leads men to the knowledge of the truth (cf. Jn 16:13); it is He who remembers all that Jesus said and did (cf. Jn 14:26). It was the Holy Spirit who descended upon the Apostles, enabling them to understand the Scriptures and to proclaim

them with authority. It was the Holy Spirit who convicted the hearers in their innermost being, giving them the light to recognise Jesus as Lord (cf. 1 Cor 12:3).

This means that the key to the complete fulfilment of the promise is the Holy Spirit, who brings the work of salvation to completion.

If this is so, what can we, as cooperators with the Holy Spirit, do on our part to bring about the fulfilment of the wonderful promises, so that humanity "may rejoice and be glad in its salvation"?

On the one hand, we must allow ourselves to be led by the Holy Spirit. If we allow Him to lay aside all that hinders His working in us, then our words and deeds will become more and more supernatural. Then they will also be more effective and bring more light into this world.

But can we also move the Holy Spirit to make haste, so that the promises may be fulfilled to the full as soon as possible?

Sacred Scripture suggests that we can...Our persevering prayer, our persistent knocking at God's door, our unwavering prayer, transcends even to the Lord. Let us recall only the first miracle of Jesus, at Cana in Galilee (cf. Jn 2:1-11)! We can say that it happened thanks to the intercession of the Virgin Mary. In the context of today's meditation, we would say that Mary moved her Son to perform that miracle and to "anticipate" His hour.

Could she not also move the Holy Spirit, her Divine Spouse, to do everything promptly? I believe that it is worth asking Our Lady with all our hearts... She will be more than pleased with this request!