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THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

The Lord Jesus Christ the good sower

With today's parable of the good sewer the Lord is speaking to His listeners, in a way analogous to the way God spoke in the Old Testament. There God presented Himself as someone who planted a vineyard and took care of it (see Isaiah 5:1 et. al. and Ps. 79:9 et. al.). Here the Lord Jesus likens Himself to a sewer who goes out to sew in his field. Speaking in this way He revealed the truth that He Himself is the only God, who spoke to His people in the Old Testament.

Calling Himself the sewer, He denotes that He always sews in the whole world the seed of His teaching in various ways. He teaches through the book of creation, through the conscience, with the wisdom which He grants to people, with His wondrous providence towards each person and with an infinite number of other ways.

With the phrase "he came out to sow" He is referring to His incarnation and His incarnate indwelling on the earth, in order to save men. He did not come to judge and to punish, but in order to take care of His field, which is us people, and to sow the word of piety. He sows the seed. The seed is not someone else's, but His own. The prophets were not teaching their own words, but God's words. So for this reason also they were saying: "Thus says the Lord". The Lord however offers His own word, because He is the pre-eternal God, who created the world.

He sews His word indiscriminately and abundantly to all of humanity. Even though He foreknows that they will not accept it, nor will every one make it fruitful, so that from His side He shows His mercy to the whole world. Speaking literally, it is truly impossible for the road to bear fruit, the stony ground and the earth which is full of thorns. When however it refers to people, everything is possible. The indifferent and hardhearted person who is full of cares is also able to be changed, to soften, to gratefully accept the word of the Lord, to repent and be saved. If in the end in that parable these three types of people did not change, this is not due to the sewer, but to their lack of repentance.

Retention, patience, fruit bearing

According to the parable, there are three portions of people who are lost. First are those who when they happen to hear the word of God, they do not retain it inside them, they show indifference and scorn towards it. Then are those who temporarily accept the word inside them, but after some temptation or affliction, they depart from the path of the Lord. Third is the case of those who keep the commandments of the Lord inside them in their whole life, but they do not allow them to bear fruit, because they scatter their mind and heart on cares, on wealth and on the enjoyments of the present life.

Those who are saved, the Lord notes, bear the opposite characteristics with the three previous categories of people. Specifically, He says that “they possess” the word and “bear fruit in patience”. In other words, they are not indifferent, but they retain within them the divine teachings, and are patient in the various trials and circumstances of life, in the end they bear the fruit of virtues, which are summarized in love with all one’s heart and mind toward God and one’s fellow man.

The lifebearing word of the Lord

The likening of the word of the Lord with the seed is not by chance. The seed whereas externally it seems like something unimportant and nothing-like, bears life within it. It increases in the land which receives it and is altered into a plant or even into a very tall tree. Similarly the words of the Gospel initially seem like simple moral commandments, similar to a lesser or greater degree with those which we encounter in various religions, philosophies, ideologies and cultures. However, the more the believer keeps them with diligence and much humility inside him, he knows their true nature. They come from the Almighty God and comprise the revelation of His being. With the keeping of the commandments of Christ currents of uncreated life begin springing forth within the believer, which characterize the unbegotten God. Gradually the believer comes out of the narrow boundaries of the individual, like a bird which hatches, and opens up to the vast dimensions of another form of being, of the Person. He is sanctified, deified, he sees and fits within him everyone and everything. Similar to God, and thus as God wanted him, when He created him.

So let us not scorn the word of God, because it is firm and strong and bears within it eternal life. Let us receive in the earth of our heart and let us cultivate it in the field of the Church with the means which the Holy Spirit grants us, so that it may bear fruit and become a tree, which while it will be elevated in the ground, simultaneously it will be planted in the spiritual heaven, granting to us fruits of life and of incorruption. Amen.

Archim. P. K.