



61st Year

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THE IGNORANCE OF DIVINE JUSTICE

The sense of justice is common to all people. However the unified rendering of justice is not unified. From the extreme retaliation of the old law, “an eye for an eye”, up to the just exhortation of the Precious Forerunner, “he who has two robes let him give to him who does not have”, there were many ways of distributing justice. And from the justice of God up to the justice of men there are many differences. In all cases people have “zeal”, intense interest for the implementation of justice, just as the compatriots of Christ the Israelites had “the zeal of God” as regards the justice of the law of Moses, not however “with knowledge”. In other words they were not able or they didn’t want to understand the divine justice which Christ made firm.

The justice of retaliations

Both the law of Moses as also the other old laws of the other nations had made firm the rendering of justice in the method of retaliations. For example adultery was punished by stoning and impiety towards God reached to martyrly death. In no case however, was the person who was performing such actions justified, much more so him who forbore such punishments. And this because people, as the Ap. Paul writes, were ignorant of divine justice and did not want to set up their rendering of justice in a human opinion, “seeking to set their own justice”. And instead of satisfying the sense of justice, much more so the will of God, the opposition and enmity between men was eternalized. The motives of such actions rather come “from argumentation and wanting to rule rather than from ignorance” writes Saint John Chrysostom. The motive of love didn’t exist.

Divine justice from faith

Christ said “learn righteousness ye who dwell upon the earth”, in other words, that people should learn that true justice which really justifies, saves and sanctifies man is the will of the true God, as He expressed it through His loving heart. In His high priestly prayer to His Father Jesus presents the understanding of divine justice:

1) In the faith that Christ came to the earth sent by God, as He said to his disciples: “and you have believed that I came from God” (Jn. 16:27). Consequently whatever He did, the teaching, the

miracles, the venerable passion, the Crucifixional sacrifice, the Resurrection, he did move by love, to justify man from sin. No human action, no matter how honorable and majestic it is, did not have nor does it have the power to wipe sin out.

The annihilation of sin is a divine right. For this reason the Apostle writes: "For the end of the law is Christ unto righteousness to every believer" (Rom. 10:4). The aim of the law of the Old Testament but also its completion was Christ, where whoever believed in Him would be justified, would be saved, even if he was indebted with a multitude of sins. There isn't an analogy of justification and works, but an analogy of faith and salvation. The phrase of Christ: "your faith has saved you" tears down every sense of human justice.

2) To the event of the ascent of Christ after His Resurrection, to heaven and His return to God the Father from where he came forth. This comprises the finishing touch of divine justice. His words in His high priestly Prayer are characteristic: "While concerning righteousness, that I am going to my Father". Because as He Himself stresses, the judgment, the rendering of justice will occur with the presence of the Holy Spirit, whom He will send: "and He (the Comforter) having come censures the world concerning sin and concerning righteousness and concerning judgement". In other words, He made firm the justice in the Church which He grants through the mysteries (sacraments), the remission of sins and eternal life, but He also judges whoever doesn't accept it. The sin, which the Lord condemned on the Cross for whoever believed in Him and He justified them, will be censured, if it continues existing from the people who did not believe. While the judgement of him who inspired sin, in other words, of the devil, already with the presence of Jesus has already taken place. It's a matter of time, which He will appoint in order for the last justice will be rendered during the Second Coming.

For this reason also, the Ap. Paul writes that one does not need to say in his heart who is able to ascend to heaven to find the true justice of God. And again to say who is able to descend to the earth to render it (Rom. 10:6-7). These things were done by the Son and Word of God, who condescended as God, he came to the earth and received flesh and bones, he became a man in order to justify us with His Blood. And he made firm this justice when he ascended again to heaven and sat at the right of his Father, as great High Priest. The power of faith in the person of Christ makes us partakers of His justice.

Divine justice comprises a gift to man

It is unjust for contemporary man to be deprived of this great gift of Christ. Probably he has many existential obstacles in order to span the door of faith. The approach however becomes easy if there exists sincere interest for one to believe. Because, as the Ap. Paul writes, the word of faith that Jesus is the Lord and God, who (defeated death) and resurrected, he has the power to justify and save whoever confesses him with his lips and believes him in his heart (see Rom. 10:8-9). Justification in God becomes easy when there is an eagerness for salvation because, as Saint John Chrysostom writes: "in your mind and tongue lies your justification". Running or agony are not necessary but a struggle of faith without agony. The agony of justification and salvation of all people the Sun of Righteousness, Christ forbore upon the Cross. From us eagerness and persistence are needed in the spiritual struggle which our Lord appointed.

Archim. Ch. N.