

8. July 2020

“God is the home of our heart”

Hos 10,1-3.7-8.12

Israel was a luxuriant vine yielding plenty of fruit. The more his fruit increased, the more altars he built; the richer his land became, the richer he made the sacred pillars. Theirs is a divided heart; now they will have to pay for it. He himself will hack down their altars and wreck their sacred pillars. Then they will say, 'We have no king because we have not feared Yahweh, but what could the king do for us?' Samaria has had her day. Her king is like a straw drifting on the water. The high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, will be destroyed; thorns and thistles will grow over their altars. Then they will say to the mountains, 'Cover us!' and to the hills, 'Fall on us!' Sow saving justice for yourselves, reap a harvest of faithful love; break up your fallow ground: it is time to seek out Yahweh until he comes to rain saving justice down on you.

Again it is about the apostate people, whose heart has turned away from the Lord. They have been seduced by the rich and abundant harvests and all the treasures that the Lord has put into nature for the people and gave them His blessing.

Indeed, the wealth in earthly things is a danger to people if they do not handle it properly. It creates a false sense of security, a feeling of a special quality of life, which can quickly lead to a situation where God is put behind. Do not hang your heart on wealth, the Holy Scriptures admonish us (*cf. Ps 62,10*).

The earthly beauty of things and also of persons can also confuse our senses. Instead of understanding beauty as a gift of God and thanking the Lord for it, it becomes a own theme for us. With reference to the appearance or also the reputation of the person, vanity may then arise, which puts too much emphasis on the creature or also on one's own or other persons.

There is a very important gift of the Holy Spirit - the gift of science - which makes us realize that creatures, whoever they are, are nothing in themselves. The efficacy of this gift teaches us to draw everything from the goodness and beauty of God and in this way not to bind our hearts to the transitory goods of all kinds in a disorderly way.

It is about our heart, which should not be divided, as the text corrects the people of Israel. In fact, it is a great paradox on the one hand to ask for and receive everything from God, but then to forget the giver of the gifts, to take things for oneself and in the worst case even to engage in idolatry with them! God calls it: to worship the work of one's own hands (*cf. Ps 115,4*).

But there is always the possibility of repentance, which the Lord also offers today in the text: "Sow saving justice for yourselves, reap a harvest of faithful love; break up your fallow ground: it is time to seek out Yahweh until he comes to rain saving justice down on you."

It is thanks to the infinite mercy of God that man is always given a new opportunity to leave his sinful and confused life and turn to the Lord. With the help of God he then learns to turn his heart away from all that does not please God, to free it from its previous bondage and the chains that are connected with it.

With the sincere devotion to God, conversion occurs. This must now be carried out day by day until our heart belongs completely to God, because God is the home of our heart.

The one who still seeks his home in creation and in other people has not understood this. The love of other people is a wonderful gift, but it cannot be our home. This is already taught to us by death, which we experience alone and which means the final return home for the believer.