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THE LORD'S SERMONS

»John the Baptist's Sermon of Repentance«

St. Luke III, 2-20: "Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them. Exact no more than which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages. And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people. But Herod the tetrarch, being reprovved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison."

This chapter deals with a sermon of repentance John the Baptist preached on the Jordan to the crowds gathered around him. With this sermon he intended to prepare the Jews for the One the latchet of whose shoes, he said, he was not worthy to unloose.

The people listening to him asked him what they were supposed to do, - each one in his particular trade. And he told them to observe the law of love of their neighbour.

What John did and preached at that time, I have now been doing for a considerable time. I, too, admonish mankind to repent - in different ways - with words as well as through events. As then the advent of the actual teacher was announced and prepared, the same has been done already for quite a while in preparation of My next coming. As the Jews were thinking and acting then, they were not fit to properly accept and comprehend My teaching. And with the people of today, who are caught even deeper in the mire of selfishness, it is all the more urgent to awaken and warn them. There is not much time left now to consider what to do and where to turn. Just as for the sleeper the time of his dream-life passes with great speed and hours pass like minutes, thus time is now rushing past for him who, without thinking, lives only for the present. Therefore, the events, illnesses, looming social revolutions are all necessary to shake up mankind from its deep worldly sleep.

At that time John said that One would come "whose fan is in his hand and he will thoroughly purge his floor and gather the wheat, but burn the chaff". And now, when you have invented machines to clean the grain with the help of strong fans, I am replacing the winnowing-fan by speedier methods in order to achieve My purpose and separate those of good will from the indifferent and indolent ones. Already the wheel is spinning in My spiritual wind- and cornsiftingmill. Whirling, it stirs the masses, tossing away from it the easygoing, shelllike rabble, which indulges in the pleasures of the world deaf to all warnings. As then, John reproved even Herod, the Tet-rarch of Galilee, for the way he was living, so today public opinion is reproofing the ambitious plans of many a ruler. In the past, Herod had John imprisoned, and now, too, the rulers would like to check the tongues and cast out the thoughts from people's heads. But now - as it was then - these efforts are in vain. The Word, the spiritual carrier of My will, is far more powerful than weapons and force. As an immaterial being it passes over all barriers of the material world and dominates everything in the spirit, since I Myself am the Word.

Then the people listened to John's sermon, but when self-abnegation and sacrifice were demanded, they turned their backs on him, just as the rich ruler did with Me. And now the majority of people ridicule those to whom I give My teaching directly. They look down on them derisively, in their worldly wisdom considering themselves much wiser than those with the language of the heart.

Poor, erring children! There will come a time when all your intellectual stuff will be insufficient to give you comfort or peace. In the events that you will have to face, you will be standing between two worlds, blaming God and your fate as cruel, for the material world will be repelling you with scorn and the spiritual will not accept you.

John already foresaw this mental torment, when he endeavoured to awaken the Jewish people urging them to change their ways. And today, when nearly all the noble qualities of human nature have been buried and only egoism with all its characteristics is ruling, this warning-call is again sounded, supported by accidents and troubles in order to achieve by forceful means what so far could not be achieved gently with the majority of people.

At that time even I, as Jesus, submitted to the external baptism with water. Now you have to submit voluntarily to the invisible, spiritual baptism with My Spirit. Then the divine light appeared above My head in the form of a dove, thereby pointing to My descent and My former and future place of residence. Oh children, do your utmost now, so that the streams of light and grace from on high are not poured out on you in vain! Prove worthy of your descent and your future destiny! As the voice once proclaimed: "Thou art My beloved son, in thee I am well pleased", may now the same voice sound above your heads and in your hearts, assuring you that you are on the right path towards becoming My children.

At that time John said that he who had two coats should give one away, and he who had plenty to eat should share with a hungry one; also, that no one should demand more than is due to him if he has a

claim to something. All these examples point to one thing. Be generous, be just - the same as your Father in heaven. Give, so that also you may receive; forgive -that you, too, may be forgiven!

Do not be deceived by the world and the things it has to offer. A time is coming when you will have to leave everything behind and keep only those values which you have gained for your inner being and which neither pestilence nor war, neither affliction nor death can take away from you.

Let be those who consider themselves very clever with their pseudo-wisdom! Their time of triumph will only be short. Follow My advice, My warning. I do not call you a generation of vipers as John in his sermon of repentance did, but I call you My children whom I once created in My image and want to restore once more to this image. Originally the outer appearance corresponded to that of the spirit; today there still remains externally a faint likeness with the long vanished paradisaic beauty, but the soul, as the temple and seat of My divine spark, has become but a caricature. My order does not allow this discord to remain, and the inner man must once more be brought into harmony with the outer. Even if you are no longer able to change the outer shell on which passions have left their mark, do make at least every effort to shape the inner, spiritual man once more according to his archetype, for there does not exist a more beautiful, or a greater and more spiritual image in all of creation. It is that image as a copy of which every being has been created to a greater or lesser extent. And of this image you, as the highest expression of all material and spiritual creation, bear within you that form, that archetype, which not only wishes to be your Creator and Lord, but also your Father. He could lay down for you laws with inexorable severity through the power of His will and either reward you or punish you relentlessly and devastatingly but, instead of punishment, He has only forgiveness, mercy and love for you.

In those days a forerunner was needed who could prepare mankind for My coming. Today it is I Myself Who extends to you the hand of peace in order to guide you in all the troubles which will be descending upon mankind due to its obstinacy. Do not push away this hand, because you will not find a stronger one. Every human arm is too short, only Mine suffices for all distances and is able to reach the one asking for help, even beyond those spaces where the last star is shining and the realm of spirits begins. Even there this hand is available to guide and draw towards Me the one who has love.

Heed the voice that - as once the voice in the wilderness - is now calling to you in the wilderness of worldly activities: "Do not forget Him Who reigns above the stars, but also wants to dwell in every man's heart!" John preached in the wilderness. He did this because the wilderness which is barren of vegetative life would not distract his listeners. Now I am preaching to you in the wilderness of the spiritual life which, because of the arrogance of human intellect, has become barren of all that revives the heart. Thus I, like John, am endeavouring to plant the spiritual flower of love in the midst of sand and rock which, not drawing nourishment from the soil, obtains its nourishment only from above. And now, on the ground of a speculative world of the intellect made barren through egoism, in the wilderness of the divine spiritual life barren of deeper thought, I once more call out to you:

"Awake! Go into the depths of your being in order to find the source of never-ending joy, comfort and love as the fundamental principle of all created and animated things. Recognize Him again Who, through gardens full of flowers, through shady forests and on lofty mountains and up to the most distant universal sun, is always the same, never changes and - since He has created everything - expects of His created beings only the one thing that a mother, a father expect of their child as a first sign of kinship - love."

Whilst your weak worldly rulers try to enforce your respect for them through many laws, I set you as free beings into creation. You may choose freely between love or hatred, life or death, light or darkness. At this stage everyone is still free to choose, but the time when a decision must be made is coming closer and closer.

Just as once the warning-call sounded before My coming, now My second call is sounding, so that the events may not take you by surprise while asleep, but that you may face fully conscious and with a calm heart the events meant only for those who could not be awakened by more gentle means.

Whilst your hearts are receptive for the soft harmonies of love, trumpets must be sounded for others as is mentioned by My beloved disciple John, when angels will be pouring out the vials of wrath upon those who are hard of hearing and who, notwithstanding all warnings, do not listen to My words of love.

I have already repeatedly proclaimed that bad times will be coming. I once more repeat: Bad times are ahead of you. Make already now every effort to change for the better so that in the knowledge of this you have a shield against all the bitter events. Actually, they are bitter only for those who, used to the honey of a worldly material life of pleasure, do not regard the bitter remedy as a medicine, but as a destructive poison.

This is the meaning of that sermon of repentance for you and for the coming times. Who has ears, let him hear! Amen

Gottfried Mayerhofer: The Lord's Sermons (page: 11 - 14)