

## **NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

(Luke 19: 41-47)

(*Poem* Vol. 5, pp. 394,402-3, 449; *Gospel* Vol. 9, pp. 355-6, 365-6, 423)

**(*Maria says: The Gospel of today, the ninth Sunday after Pentecost, is illustrated to me.*)**

From a hill near Jerusalem, Jesus looks at the town stretched at His feet. It is not a very high hill. [...]; but it is sufficient for the eye to dominate the extent of houses and streets, that go up and down the small ground elevations forming Jerusalem. If one refers to the lowest level of the town, this hill is certainly much higher than Calvary, but it is closer to the walls than the latter. It really begins just outside the walls and rises steeply on their side, whereas on the other side it descends gently towards a very green country that stretches eastwards. At least I think it is eastwards, if I am judging rightly according to sunlight.

Jesus and His apostles are sitting under a group of trees, in the shade. They are resting after a long walk. Then Jesus stands up, He leaves the clearing where they were sitting and He goes towards the hillock and stops just at its edge. His tall person stands out clearly in the empty space around Him. He looks even taller as He stands upright, all alone. His arms are folded across His chest, on His blue mantle, and He looks around very seriously.

The apostles watch Him. But they leave Him alone, they neither move nor speak. They must think that He has moved aside to pray. But Jesus is not praying. After looking for a long time at the town, at each district, at each hillock, at each detail, at times letting His eyes dwell upon this or that point, at times watching less insistently, Jesus begins to weep without sobbing or making any noise. Tears fill His eyes, then gush forth and stream down His cheeks and fall... Silent very sad tears. The tears of a man who knows that he must weep, all alone, without hoping to be consoled or understood by anybody. Tears brought about by grief that cannot be cancelled and must be suffered absolutely.

Because of his position, John's brother is the first to notice those tears and he tells the others, who look at one another and are seized with astonishment.

'None of us has done anything wrong' says one, and another: 'The crowds did not insult us either. Among them nobody was hostile to Him'. 'Why is He weeping, then?' asks the oldest of them all.

Peter and John stand up together and they approach the Master. They think that the only thing to be done is to make Him feel that they love Him and ask Him what the matter is with Him. 'Master, are You weeping?' asks John laying his fair-haired head on the shoulder of Jesus, Who is taller than he is by a neck and a head. And Peter, laying his hand round Jesus' waist, almost embracing Him to draw Him to himself, says to Him: 'What is grieving You, Jesus? Tell us who love You.'

Jesus rests His cheek on John's fair-haired head and opening out His arms, He passes His arm round Peter's shoulder. The three of them are thus embraced to one another in such a loving posture. But tears continue to drop.

John feels them run down through his hair and he asks once again: 'Why are You weeping, Master? Are we perhaps the cause of Your sorrow?'

The other apostles have gathered round the loving group and are anxiously awaiting a reply. 'No' says Jesus. 'You are not. You are My friends and friendship, when it is sincere, is a balm and a smile, never tears. I would like you to remain My friends for ever. Even now that we shall enter into the corruption, that ferments and contaminates those who are not resolutely willing to remain honest.'

'Where are we going, Master? Are we not going to Jerusalem? The crowds have already greeted You joyfully. Do You want to disappoint them? Are we going to Samaria to work some miracle? Just now that Passover is close at hand?' The questions are asked by several of the apostles at the same time.

Jesus raises His hands imposing silence and then with His right one He points to the town. A wide gesture like that of a man sowing seeds ahead of himself. And He says: 'That is the Corruption. We are going into Jerusalem. We are going there. And only the Most High knows

how I would like to sanctify the town taking there the Holiness that comes from Heaven. I would like to resanctify it, as it should be the Holy City. But I shall not be able to do anything for it. It is corrupt, and will remain corrupt. And the streams of holiness that gush from the living Temple, and will gush even more in the next few days to the extent of leaving it lifeless, will not be sufficient to redeem it. Samaria and the heathen world will come to the Holy One. The temples of the true God will be erected on the false temples. The hearts of the Gentiles will worship the Christ. But this people, this town will always be hostile to Him, and their hatred will lead them to the greatest sin. That must happen. But woe to those who will be the instruments of that crime. Woe!...' Jesus stares at Judas, who is almost in front of Him. 'That will never happen to us. We are Your apostles and we believe in You, and we are ready to die for You.' Judas lies shamelessly and meets Jesus' eye without embarrassment. The others join in protesting.

Jesus replies to all of them, avoiding to reply to Judas directly.

'Would to Heaven that you may be so. But you are still very weak, and temptation may make you like those who hate Me. Pray fervently and watch diligently over yourselves. Satan is aware that he is about to be defeated and he wants to avenge himself by tearing you away from Me. Satan is around us all. He is around Me to prevent Me from doing the will of My Father and from fulfilling My mission. And he is around you to make you his servants. Be vigilant. Within those walls Satan will take those who are not strong. He will take him whose curse will be the fact that he was elected, because he made use of his election for a human purpose. I chose you for the Kingdom of Heaven, not for that of the world. Bear that in mind. And you, o city, that want your ruin and over which I am shedding tears, be aware that your Christ is praying for your redemption. Oh! if at least in this hour still left to you, you came to Him Who would be your peace! If in this hour you understood the Love passing through you and you divested yourself of the hatred that makes you blind and insane, and cruel against yourself and your welfare! But the day will come when you will remember this hour! But it will be too late to weep and repent! The Love will have passed and disappeared from your streets, and the Hatred that you preferred will remain. And Hatred will be on you and on your children. Because one has what one wanted, and hatred is paid with hatred. And then it will not be the hatred of the strong against the defenceless, but it will be hatred against hatred, thus war and death. Surrounded by trenches and armed men, you will languish before being destroyed, and you will see your children killed by weapons and famine, and the survivors taken prisoners and derided, and you will ask for mercy, but will never find it, because you refused to acknowledge your Salvation. I am weeping, My friends, because I have the heart of a man, and the ruin of My fatherland makes Me shed tears. But it is just that this takes place because within those walls corruption exceeds all limits and draws the punishment of God. Woe betide the citizens who bring about the ruin of their fatherland! Woe betide the leaders who are the main cause of it! Woe betide those who should be saints to guide the others to be honest and instead they desecrate the House of their ministry and themselves! Come. My action will be of no avail. But let us make the Light shine once again in the Darkness!'

And Jesus goes down followed by His apostles. He walks fast along the road with a serious countenance, I would say, almost looking sullen. He speaks no more. He goes into a little house at the foot of the hill, and I see nothing else.

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**(Jesus says:)** 'Oh! Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Jerusalem, you that stone those who have been sent to you and kill your prophets! How often have I longed to gather your children, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you refused! Now listen, Jerusalem! Now listen, you who hate Me and hate everything that comes from God. Now listen, you who love Me and who will be carried away by the punishment laid aside for the persecutors of the Messengers of God. And you also listen to Me, you who do not belong to this people, but who listen to Me just the same, listen and learn Who He is Who is speaking to you and foretells without having to study the flight, the warbling of birds, or celestial phenomena, or the viscera of sacrificed animals, or the fire and smoke of holocausts, because all the future is the present for Him Who is speaking to you. "This House of yours will be left desolate to you. And I say to you, says the

Lord, that you shall not see Me any more until you also say: 'Blessings on Him Who comes in the name of the Lord'.'

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They are at the gates of the enclosure of the Temple. Jesus dismounts from the little donkey that is taken into custody by a man from Bethphage.

It is necessary to bear in mind that Jesus did not stop at the first gate of the Temple, but He went round the enclosure, and He stopped only at the northern side, near the Antonia. That is where He dismounted and went into the Temple, as if He wished to let people see that He was not hiding from the ruling powers, feeling that He had always behaved in an innocent way. The first court of the Temple shows the usual uproar of moneychangers and vendors of doves, sparrows and lambs, with the only difference that the vendors have been left alone, because everybody has gone to see Jesus. And Jesus enters, solemn in His purple garment, and He looks around at the market and at a group of Pharisees and scribes, who are watching Him from a porch.

His eyes are flashing with anger. He rushes to the centre of the court. An unexpected leap that looks like a flight. The flight of a flame, because His garment is as bright as a flame in the sunshine flooding the court. And in His voice as powerful as thunder He says: 'Away from the house of My Father! This is no place for usury or markets. It is written: "My house will be called the house of prayer". So why have you turned into a robbers'den this house, in which the Name of the Lord is invoked? Go away! Leave My House clean. That it may not happen to you, that instead of using ropes, I may strike you with the thunderbolts of heavenly wrath. Go away! Get out, you thieves, swindlers, lewd people, murderers, impious persons, idolaters of the worst idolatry, that of one's proud ego, corrupters and liars. Out! Get out! Or the Most High God, I warn you, will sweep away this place for good and will take vengeance upon all the people.' He does not repeat the lashing of the last time, but seeing that the merchants and money-changers are slow in obeying, He goes to the nearest bench and turns it over spreading scales and money on the ground.

The vendors and money-changers make haste and carry out Jesus' order, after witnessing the first example. And Jesus shouts after them: 'And how many times shall I have to say that this must not be a place of filth, but a place of prayer?' And He looks at those of the Temple who, obeying the orders of the Pontiff, do not make any gesture of reprisal.

After cleansing the court, Jesus goes towards the porches where blind, paralytic, mute, crippled and other sick people are gathered