

Theresa's Prayer

February 2, 2013

It is extraordinary how far God is lost to the great number of souls around us today. It is in him that every one of us "lives and moves and has his being" (Acts, XVII, 28). Without him we cannot lift a finger, think a thought or do any naturally good action, let alone any supernaturally good action. All that we can do by ourselves, without him, is to sin, and even then the sinful action as action comes from God, only its sinfulness comes from ourselves, because the sinfulness is in itself something not positive but defective.

Yet the mass of souls around us treat God as though he does not exist, or, if he does exist, as though he is of no importance. It is a truly incredible state of affairs. It is getting worse day by day. It cannot last. It can only be compared with the state of mankind in the time of Noah. Men's corruption at that time was such (Gen. VI, 11–12) that unless God took away from them the use of their most precious endowment, their free-will – just see how most men react when one tries to force them to do something! – then the only way they left for him to save any significant number of them was to inflict a universal chastisement in which they would nevertheless have time to repent. That was the Flood, a historical event proved by a mass of geological evidence.

Similarly today, a worldwide chastisement is surely, before God, the only way that mankind has left for him to save still any large number of souls from the horror of their damning themselves for eternity. As in Noah's time, the mercy of God makes it virtually certain that the huge number of souls will be given the time and knowledge necessary to save themselves if they wish. And afterwards many of the large number that will be saved (alas, not the majority) will recognize that only that chastisement saved them from drifting with today's corruption all the way down to Hell.

Still, it will be easy to be frightened by the explosion of the just anger of a majestic God. From miles and miles away the Israelites were terrified by a demonstration of his power on the top of Mount Sinai (Exod. XX, 18). In our own times it will be well to recall the famous prayer of St Theresa of Avila (given here with a rhyming translation into English to facilitate memorisation):-

Nada te turbe, Let nothing fret you, Nada te espante, Nothing upset you. Todo se pasa, Everything falters, Dios no se muda. God never alters. La paciencia Patience withal Todo lo alcanza. Will obtain all. Quien a Dios tiene Who to God will cling Nada le falta. Can lack for no thing. Solo Dios basta. God alone is enough.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I put in you all the trust I can lay my hands on. But help my lack of trust!

Kyrie eleison.