

THE LORD'S SERMONS

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First Sunday after Epiphany

The Twelve-Year-Old Jesus in the Temple

St. Luke II, 42-50: "And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kins folk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, that after three days found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them."

(December 26, 1871)

This text is also taken from the Gospel of Luke and deals with the three days I stayed in the temple. What I did and taught there is already known to you, since some years ago I explained it to you in more detail¹. We shall, therefore, look at it only insofar as it will be repeated spiritually before My Second Coming and is, in fact, already in the process of repeating itself. What you can gain from this repetition shall be the conclusion of today's word.

Behold, My children, I have told you repeatedly that each action at that time - from My birth to My resurrection and ascension - had a twofold, actually threefold, significance. What I then did and spoke was of importance not only for the Jewish people, but for all men of that and later times. It was also - reaching far beyond your earth - meant for My entire realm of spirits which followed My actions with curious eyes to see whether and how I would, as a human being, accomplish the mission I had set for Myself.

Being clad completely in the human body of an earth-dweller, I had to fight all the passions of human nature in order to free Myself from this and, spiritualized, return once more to whence I had come. Like every child I had to

¹ « The three Days in the Temple » Lorber Verlag, Bietigheim, Germany.

improve My soul gradually, develop My concepts and opinions in order to adapt to My Spirit the soul I had breathed into Myself, so that at the end of My earthly career I could show My spirits how I brought back not only My own Spirit in all its magnitude, but also knew how to spiritualize My human soul.

Thus I demonstrated to the great realm of spirits how My sonship could be attained, setting the example - as a living, struggling and suffering human being - how and at what price unification with Me can be attained.

If the spiritual development of the human soul, in which I was clad, made faster progress than with ordinary human children, if already in My earliest childhood I uttered words of the spirit when other children have not even learned to speak, if I, as was the case during My three days in the temple, gave explanations and even performed miracles, - you must remember Whose Spirit was latent within this Jesus and how easily it shone through the human cover at the least provocation. You must also bear in mind that I did not have before Me a human life span as other people had, but only thirty-three fleeting years during which, until My thirtieth year, My earthly man matured for the great feat, and then there remained only three years for the laying of the foundation stone for the supreme, everlasting, great spiritual teaching, without which the spirit world - and indirectly also the material world - could not have continued to exist.

In My creation it did not suffice to have called into existence spirits with immense powers and qualities. They also had to know for what purpose and why I had given them such perfection, so that they, by wisely using it, would honour Me, their Creator, and learn to fully comprehend Me and My creation. In order to divinely establish the great realm of the spirits, to give the whole as well as each individual their true spiritual value and to teach them to recognize matter as only consolidated spiritual which must, like the spirits themselves, only by a longer way, accomplish their spiritualization so that one day they can return to Me, spiritualized, as particles of My spiritual Self. For this purpose I descended upon this earth, and My entire earthly career, as is known to you to the end, served this purpose.

Thus the events of My birth, My flight and return to the land of the Jews, were only individual, predestined phases in the spiritual education of the human soul given to Me. The same principle was evident also at the temple in Jerusalem where I already at the age of twelve began to expound thoughts, which reached far beyond the ideas about life and religion common at that time. Many of My listeners were thereby awakened to thinking, since in the entire Jewish nation the expectation of the coming Messiah, inspired by earlier prophecies, concentrated upon just this time of My appearance.

That they all wanted quite a different Messiah is, of course, not surprising, since the people - especially the Jews - being under the oppression of a foreign nation were hoping for a liberator. However, they were all gazing downwards whereas the Messiah came from above.

What I taught in the temple - where instead of *answering* questions I *put embarrassing questions* to the erudite priests - was meant to prove to them how

superficial their knowledge was of the things of which they claimed to have exclusive knowledge. I did this in the temple, the spiritual school at that time, and in front of numerous listeners, because the word as carrier of infinite spiritual reality would forever continue to be effective. Thereby I planted the seed for My future teaching. During these days I already gained eager worshippers of My person and teaching who remained faithful. While I there acquired supporters, I also made enemies of the Pharisees and priests; and it was through these two opposites that the piece of spiritual bread I had dropped lived on and bore its well calculated fruits. Had all been in agreement with Me, on the fourth day no one would have given a further thought to Me und My teaching, especially since I was regarded as just a bright, somewhat critical boy. That thereafter I retreated under the cover of a carpenter, thereby for years detracting attention from Me, had its good reasons. I wanted people to forget the earlier manifestations of My divine Spirit - especially in the temple - and intended as a man to confirm by word and deed what one would not have believed a boy or a youth.

Even Mary, the mother of My body, did not understand My words when I replied to her loving reproach about her long search: "Knew ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" Joseph and Mary did not understand the meaning of "My Father's business". They were still too devoted to the Jewish cult and believed religion to consist entirely in observing the customs. They did not know Me, and My Father even less, because for them there existed only *one* indivisible God. Even if they had recognized My Divine Self, this dual being, I and God, or the Son and the Father, would have been inconceivable to them.

So it had to happen that at the time of My ministry, when human kinship was coming to an end making room for the great spiritual kinship of mankind with the great realm of spirits, My Self had matured to enable Me to fully accomplish My mission, in that My soul, united with the Divine Spirit, *taught and did* what you find recorded in the Gospel of John. This, since that time, has been written with indelible script upon the great plan of all creation with the words: "Establishment and right conception of the divine attributes, explanation and proper comprehension of human and spiritual dignity in relation to the Creator of all things and their correlation."

This was the purpose of the teaching I then established, which is divine and permanent, because it was given by God, left by God to His divine descendants as a yardstick, showing how God can be loved as the Lord, the Creator, but also - as the Father, and how one can approach Him.

And now, My children, once you comprehend why I came into the world, why until My twelfth year events had to take that course and no other, I will lead you away from the past and into the present and explain the significance of the boy-hood of Jesus and his questions to the priests for your present world conditions. Behold, in the world it often happens that one looks into the distance and does not see what is near or - as your proverb says - one does not see the wood for the trees.

What does boyhood generally mean? It is the awakening of the inner spirit, when the soul wants to acquire intellectual knowledge, when it studies the external things, the surroundings, yet is not deaf to the voice within that often speaks differently from what one wishes.

This boyhood of mankind, this awakening from the long sleep of belief, especially in religious things, this time of My twelfth year is here now. The spiritual movement, which is taking possession of all people, is manifesting in the trend to carefully consider the things people are expected to believe, and in the questions the awakened is putting to the spiritual authorities, the theologians and scribes of your time who claim to be learned and the only ones to be well-informed. However, these authorities, since they are incapable of answering the questions put to them, want to solve the questions with questions.

This 'twelfth year', as the forerunner of My later more mature teaching, is that which brings peace to some but leads others to despair. It again is the word: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." It is again the word - as the expression of spiritual thought-forms which, almightily flashing through all hearts, arouses a thousand other thoughts and gives rise to a thousand other words.

Also in those days I threw the stone only to the slope; its own weight then pulled it down, causing it to roll and finally to fall. Thus it is with the word! It is like an avalanche. Although small in the beginning, it becomes larger and larger, dragging everything along into the abyss. Just as the avalanche frees snow-covered slopes of their cover, making it easier for the light of the sun once again to reach mother earth, thus the thought and word avalanche crushes the artificial edifice of falsehood and deceit, and the gracious shine of the divine light of love illumines and warms the hearts which had been kept numb under the cover of ice and snow.

This is the preparation for the great process of purification. Even the social conditions, a result of the spiritual-religious ones, are stirring and demanding adjustment, the re-institution of divine-human rights.

This is the 'twelfth year' or spring, which must precede the hot summer during which the fruits mature, so that in autumn the harvest may be brought in.

My twelfth year, My boyhood, was My year of spring; My teaching years were My summer; My last forty days until the Ascension - My harvest-time.

You will be seeing how everything will develop in accordance with these laws and periods. The years of spring, the time of fermentation, will be followed by the summer-years of maturing with their winds and thunderstorms, and then by the years of autumn when I, as the harvester, shall separate the chaff from the wheat, gathering the better fruits into My spiritual heavens and spiritualized celestial bodies, but banning the bad ones into solidified matter within which then, upon a longer road, that must be attained which was rejected upon the shorter one.

Therefore, in the spring of your spiritual life - through the fermentation and purification process within the heart of each individual - be prepared to do the

same that I did on a larger scale. Let everyone free his heart as much as possible from all worldly things so that he may withstand the gales and thunderstorms of the succeeding summer with spiritual strength and, like plants and trees in the open field, emerge from the storms victorious. Then there will not be merely empty leaves in autumn, but fully ripened fruits in words and deeds, worthy of a child of the Divine Father!

This is the only way to win My love, My Kingdom and the peace of your soul, and you will have then developed into trees that have grown strong in wind and weather and will not have become swaying reeds.

This is the reason for the movement of the time, of the minds and of the movement in your own hearts, which keep urging you to progress. Therefore, heed My call, which is coming to you in so many forms! It is always meant for your good, and with the help of My grace, you can achieve it if only you have the will. Amen.