

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

Journey of the Heart Twenty-sixth Week in Ordinary Time Saturday, October 3, 2015
8:15 AM Bar 4:5-12, 27-29; **Lk 10:17-24** (BVM) (We have to be taught the way to God by the Holy Spirit who will reveal to us hidden things, if we are childlike enough, if we are humble enough, if we allow God be God for us.)

“I give you praise Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike.”

Israel has been on a journey for centuries. By the time Jesus comes on earth already the Jewish people are used to the idea that God has chosen them for something. The disciples are rejoicing because they experience the power of the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit. And Jesus says, well, that’s really good, but don’t be so thrilled with that. Be more thrilled by the fact that you are called to be with God. **Your names are written in heaven. You have a home not on earth.**

Now that’s an idea that the Scriptures has been trying to get across for a long time. Abraham was called from where he lived to somewhere else. Why? It’s hard to say, but part of the idea is what you call home is not your home. You have to go somewhere else, and **we are always on a journey.** Now **this is a journey of the heart;** it’s not a journey of the feet. That’s another problem.

At first it seemed to be a matter of location, but location was in service of something else. The land of Israel was to be a land of liberation, of deliverance. When the people of God were confined and oppressed in Egypt, God delivered them into the **land of freedom.** But, unfortunately, the land of freedom had its own snares, because freedom is not a matter of outward mobility. **It’s a matter of inward mobility.** And **they became snared by the evils of the nations around them.** They copied the worst things. Baruch says some of this:

worshipping demons. The demons came to possess them. They accepted guidance from lesser gods, not the God, and **eventually ended up in exile.**

Again, **exile was a wonderful metaphor for what happens when we don't listen to God.** By the time Jesus comes, **they have returned from exile;** but they are still alienated in so many ways, **and they still don't know where home really is.** And so **home comes to them. Jesus is the Word of God,** God's own speech embodied now in humanity and offering praise to the Father because of the disciples, because of the goodness, the innocence, **the** simplicity, the zeal of these people, these young, mostly young, **Jewish disciples that are so enthusiastic to be part of Jesus' work and Jesus' mission.**

But the point is, made very clearly here, this is a journey of the heart. It is a journey of the will. It's the journey of goodness. It's not a matter of the mind. This becomes a great snare also. **It isn't only that the heart can be ensnared by false desires or evil desires, but it's the mind itself can take over where it doesn't belong. The inordinate interest in the mind and in knowledge often goes by the term "gnosticism."** We know the early Church was beset by a gnosticism. St. Paul warns against thinking that knowledge itself is so important. "If I have all the knowledge to know all things, but have not love"—which is a matter of the heart—"I am nothing." But there are always people who think they are something because they know something, because they have power, the power of knowledge. **And that's only getting worse as knowledge explodes in our world.** But the way to God is not the way of knowledge. It's not something we learn in a book and it's not something we get from research. We have to be taught it by the Holy Spirit who will reveal to us hidden things, if we are childlike enough, if we are humble enough, if we allow God be God for us.