

THE INCESSANT PRAISE AND THE INVINCIBLE FAITH

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In this meditation, I want to take you with me to show you a wonderful sight. Pay attention! I will do with you what on a day, Jesus did when he led Peter, James and John on a high mountain and there he showed them the wonderful sight of His Transfiguration. This is a well known episode and so, I am not commenting on it. Now follow me, I want to take you with me to another high mountain, invisible to people except those who have their faith eyes well opened and not asleep. This mountain has a precise name: it is called Mount Zion, on the top of which Jerusalem is built as chosen by God to be the capital of His Kingdom and His dwelling among human beings. This is not only the earthly Mount Zion, but the Mount Zion in the Holy Spirit Who fills all that is earthly and human with the Divine Presence.

The climbing of the Spirit's Mount Zion I am asking you to do is for you to watch a spectacular vision, the one John had, the prophet of Patmos who described it in Revelation 14:1-5. Get ready to see together with him what he saw on this mountain, be amazed and rejoice with great joy. What did John see? **“the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion.”**

Shortly before that, John had seen the Lamb in heaven, standing on the throne of the Father: **“And I saw next to the throne with its four living creatures and the twenty-four elders a Lamb standing, although it had been slain. I saw him with seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out to all the earth”** (Rev 5:6).

So, first the Lamb standing upon the throne of the Father, in the place of His heavenly home, then, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, the place of His abode on earth, in the midst of people.

In heaven, standing on the throne of the Father, the Lamb is surrounded by four living creatures and elders. They are His worshipers and His heavenly servants. And is the Lamb alone on Mount Zion or are there also His worshipers and servants? Here John's vision widens: **“the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, surrounded by one hundred and forty-four thousand people who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.”** 144,000 is the symbolic number indicating a great and endless crowd, yet neat and ordered. Who are they? The only identifying mark is the name of the Lamb and of the Father written on their foreheads. Are they Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox, Anglicans, Baptists, Evangelicals or Christians of other denominations who profess their faith in the name of the Father and of the Son? John does not see written the earthly churches to which they belong, but only the name of the Father and the Son on their foreheads.

What does the seal of the name of the Father and of the Son on the forehead indicate? It indicates two things: total belonging and complete dedication to the Father and the Son. They belong to the Father and to the Son and are completely dedicated to the worship and service of the Father and the Son. John sees them gathered around the Lamb, because they are the great descendants whom the Son has obtained by His sacrifice on the cross, as Isaiah had proclaimed: **“When he makes himself an offering for sin, he will have a long life and see descendants.”** (Is 53:10).

At this point, John's vision broadens and he focuses enraptured on the contemplation which becomes audition also, of the power and glory that these 144,000 manifest as their everlasting possession: **“A sound reverberated in heaven like the sound of the roaring of waves or deafening thunder; it was like a chorus of singers, accompanied by their harps. They sing a new song before the throne, in the presence of the four living creatures and the elders, a song which no one can learn except the hundred and forty-four thousand who have been taken from the earth.”** (Rev 14:2-3). Here is the incessant praise! But what is its source? It is their invincible faith in the One who has redeemed them at the price of His Blood. They have achieved the perfect status of salvation: the victory and the glory. They are completely similar to the Father and the Son. They constitute the great family of saints.

Here are the 144,000 of Mount Zion! Their Praise and Worship is relentless, glorious, high, beautiful, joyful and full of grateful. Everything is expressed in music and singing, powerful and sweet melodies and songs which only them can deeply enjoy by the name of the Father and of the Son, written on their foreheads not by human but divine hand, through the Holy Spirit.

Let us stop here. We contemplated for a moment the incessant praise and the invincible faith not in the abstract, but as actually lived and personified by the 144,000. They look at us, showing us their faces radiant with glory and inviting us to follow them on the path of victory and holiness they have walked on the earth, and say to us: “Do you want to be part of the community of the redeemed forever? There is a place for you too! Do you want to join us? Do not you realize that it is in the faith of the Father and the Son you have the call to join the community of the saints of God? We are only the first fruits of the multitude of the redeemed and the saints that the Lamb has won to His Father by His Blood.”

John concludes his vision of the 144,000 in this way: **“They are those who were not defiled with women but chaste; these are given to follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They are the first taken from humankind who are already of God and the Lamb. No deceit has been found in them; they are faultless.”**

Feel the spiritual scent emanating from these words. It is the scent of holiness of the authentic servants of God. John speaks not of the sexual but the spiritual virginity, inherent in a ceaseless Praise to the Lord, that is never directed to praise the idols of this world in place of the Lord, and he speaks of the invincible Faith, because in this there is no room for falsity, but only truth, the truth witnessed by the One who is the Truth, by His apostles and His Church.

Here, through what God showed John regarding the 144,000 on Mount Zion, He tells us that we are all called to holiness to belong to the One who is Holy and to sing His Praises forever in a state of super-super-super-super-super... vitality that will last forever!

So let us awaken, let us sing our songs of praise and let us fight our battle for Faith every day! It is the sign that since down here we belong to the community of the 144,000 of Mount Zion! From heaven the 144,000 send us their song of praise to help us here on earth to praise the Infinite Love, which always shines on us as the sun shines every day on earth.

May the listening of the song in the attached file bring fresh air in your spiritual lungs and life-giving Love that makes new all things!