

THE FORTEENTH FLOWER: HEALING OR SCHISM?

My endeavor is throwing seeds. My venture is spreading the words of God and seeing their effects on the lives of the people. My mission is ministering to everyone without hesitation. The good soil will be revealed by the fruit it will bear.¹

Your words, O my Lord, are like the sword. They may divide² a family, a society, a community or a person. Your words are schismatic because of the reaction of souls to the very embodiment of these words. The souls that “have ears to hear and eyes to see”³ will bear fruit and they will be known because they will stand up against the hard souls. It is here that the schism will be very clear: a shining soul versus a soul in darkness.⁴

Your words are also schismatic for the person who accepts them. They split him between his earthly passions and the teachings of your words. They teach him how to discern and how to extinguish his earthly desires until he is absorbed by your words and lives accordingly. This person will be divided between the temptations of sin and the temptations of purity. His decision is the key that will lead him either to condemnation or to salvation.

Accepting your words, O God, creates a revolution. They are words of transformation and reformation of the self first, and later on, the change will spread to others. This change is an inner ascension to meet the Word and thus, to see others in your eyes.

Yet, O my God and my Lord, this transformation is not a magical one. It is a lifelong process. Its progress depends on how I react to each situation and how deep your words are embedded in me. Your people may praise me and may make me a god,⁵ an idol, and as such I will be diverting them from the truth; they remain idolaters. My role is to bring people to you and to make them know You as the only God. My reaction to their perceptions is to teach them that I am a man like them⁶ and my power is from you and the performed miracles are in Your Name and for your Glory only.

¹ Matthew 13: 1-9, Mark 4: 3-9 and Luke 8: 4-8, the Parable of the Sower.

² Acts 14: 4.

³ Matthew 11: 15.

⁴ Acts 14: 4.

⁵ Acts 14: 11.

⁶ Acts 14: 15.

Yes, my Lord, the impact of your words make a division in me, but my reaction is the key to my transformation and the transformation of others as well. This division is for the restoration of the broken relationship that was created by my sin. It is another attempt from you to redirect me towards you and to choose the way that is leading to you. This way may not be a paved one and it may be full of holes, robbers and distractions but your voice calls me to rise up, each and every time, and to continue the bumpy road⁷ towards other places preaching, again and again, your Gospel.⁸

My work is always to bring peace and healing to myself first, and to those who I am meeting in my way and even to those who hated and inflicted me. Even though that the lord told me to shake the dust of my feet when I am not well received in any place,⁹ but now, I have a big responsibility towards those who believed, which commands me to go back, enduring any tribulations that may occur, appointing elders, encouraging, praying and fasting with them and commending them to the Lord.¹⁰

This is the ministry of love of the Church for the Church. This is “the work of suffering love, the victory of love over hatred.”¹¹ As such, my ministry shall be directed.

⁷ Acts 14: 19.

⁸ Acts 14: 21.

⁹ Matthew 10: 14, Mark 6: 14 and Luke 9: 5.

¹⁰ Acts 22-24.

¹¹ *The Orthodox Way*, Kallistos Ware, Revised Edition, (SVS Press, New York, 1995), p.81.