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Are you a son of peace?

"Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves (...). But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you."

Luke 10:3-6

In Biblical language, the expression 'son of ...' serves to identify or associate someone with a particular place or condition. Similarly, there is talk of "the sons of this age, or this world" and "the sons of light", in order to indicate believers and unbelievers (Luke 16:8; John 12:36).

Indeed, children of God are "children of light" (Eph. 5:8). The light of God is the origin of the new life in Christ. It is the sphere to which we now belong, having passed from darkness into light. And those who participate in the first resurrection are also "sons of the resurrection" (Luke 20:36). Barnabas was a "son of consolation, or encouragement" (Acts 4:36). While unbelievers are qualified as "sons of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2; 5:6), believers are actually "children of obedience", or "obedient children" (1 Pet. 1:14).

A "son of peace," then, is one who is in a clear relationship with peace, in that he himself knows peace and propagates it. In light of the New Testament letters, we can speak of one who has found peace with God through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1). Practically speaking, Christians may also know and enjoy the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding (Phil. 4:7). In the context of Luke 10, we are specifically talking about people who are open to receive the offer of peace, persons who respond positively to the gospel message and the message of reconciliation by the preachers of the Kingdom of God.

Although the practice described here can also serve as an example for contemporary preachers, we must remember that the task of the seventy – like that of the twelve – related in the first place to the people of Israel and was fulfilled by special proxies on the part of the Lord (cf. Matt. 10:1-15). In the end time, this mission of the coming King will again be taken up by Jewish preachers, and they will not have finished with the cities of Israel before the Son of Man returns (Matt. 10:23).

The offer of peace and blessing by the preacher of the gospel of the Kingdom, as he enters a house or a city, is presented here as something very personal. The peace is a tangible reality, something that rests on him. After all, the Spirit of God rests on the messengers and He has anointed them for their mission (cf. Num. 11:25 LXX). That is why there is repeated mention of "your peace," the shalom that is offered personally and that can return even if there is no openness to the message. At the sending of the twelve in Matthew 10:12-13 we find similar wording.

*Come, O come with all your needs,
peace is offered now to you.
Flee then, before you must die,
with your sins at Jesus' feet.*

