



MEDITATIONS FOR LENT by Father Robbie Low

**FIFTH WEEK OF LENT – FRIDAY John 10: 31-42**

*'I have said Ye are gods...'*

If yesterday's claim by Jesus wasn't enough, today's is truly shocking. In the continuing row about who Jesus claims to be – Son of God, co-eternal etc – Jesus adds a new twist by quoting Psalm 82 (81) v 6. 'Ye are gods...'

This is both a reminder of the destiny of Man and a harking back to the words of the Tempter in the Garden of Eden. If you eat of the Tree you will become like God. Of course, being Satan and ever envious of Man, he points them to the wrong tree.

A bit of disentangling then. Jesus is not simply reminding His hearers that Man is made in the image of God (though this is fundamental to all Christian understanding) but also of Man's destiny. It is the will of God that Man dwell with Him forever in Paradise. This cannot be achieved by Man for, after the Fall, the unholy cannot dwell in the presence of the all holy. Man is thus exiled from Eden let he eat of the Tree of Life and enshrine sin in eternity. A remedy must be provided by God Himself. So God, in the Second Person of the Trinity, incarnates as Man, lives the full human life yet without sin and dies the death of man in His humanity. He thus takes that humanity, after the Harrowing of Hell, and the Resurrection, into the godhead in Heaven. What has been achieved on the Cross is nothing less than apotheosis – the elevation of man in Christ to the divine. Only by dwelling in Christ can Man therefore hope for eternity in the Presence. This is the claim of the Gospel and the overriding purpose of the sacrifice of Christ. Nothing less can restore Man or give him back his intended and eternal place in Heaven. It is for this reason that the Christian faith espouses the highest doctrine of Man, the most radical hope of his destiny, the most outrageous love of God,

the most extravagant vision of the transfiguration of this mortal house of clay, this exiled child of the kingdom.

In order to begin this process of apotheosis each man must pass the way of the road to Calvary. There he will find, disguised as the Tree of Death, the Tree of Life which he missed in Eden and to whose eternal fruit we are now invited via lives of growing holiness and the sweet fruit of the Mass, the medicine of immortality.

***Spiritual exercise:*** Gaze on the crucifix for a few minutes and thank God that He has provided you with this supremely costly remedy for sin and death and that, the long road home, He waits to welcome you back to the lost Paradise of His eternal Presence as sons and daughters, little brothers and sisters of Jesus.