

Thursday 13 May 2021

Zeph.3,19: *"I will gather the exiles. I will give them praise and honour in every land where they have suffered shame."*

Acts 1,1-6: *"Then they gathered round him and asked him, 'Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He said to them: 'It is not for you to know the times or the dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses.'"*

There can be various ideas and images of what this promise of God to 'gather the exiles' refers to and might look like. Much depends on what we think is our true belonging. The truth here is not a matter of preference ("as you like") or natural instinct. It is claimed by him who says: "I am the way and the truth and the life" (Jn.1,6) – Christ Jesus.

This claim is made good by his ascension, which signals to the disciples and to all who receive the gospel that they do no longer belong to death and to that which subjects them to it, sin, that they are no longer alienated from their true home, but belong to life with God in being where Christ is. And Christ communes with the believer through the Holy Spirit.

*"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." (Col.3,1-4)*