

## VI. - The second Adam.

Thus it is also written: The first Adam became a living soul; the last Adam a living spirit. 1 COR. 15:45.

If the Kingship of Christ has a general human (and therefore not national Jewish) character on the one hand and an organic character on the other hand, a difficulty arises here which requires further discussion. The organic connection between the Head and the members of the mystical Body exists, as such, only between the Christ and those of the children of mankind, who were given to Him by the Father. Even if one widens this to the circle of believers, all believers in Christ together form less than a quarter of the total population of this world. Thus, however broadly and however mildly conceived, it is no more than a relatively small part of humanity with which the Christ stands in this organic relationship of the mystical body. And so the question cannot be suppressed as to how this limited organic connection can be reconciled with the general human character of his Kingship.

The Apostle Paul has explained this question in the presentation of the first and second Adam. He uses the name Adam in the sense of a head of the family, who lives on in the whole of the family that corresponds to his type. Only hear what the Apostle tells us about this. He mentions two types of head, whom he calls the first and the last Adam, and these two are different in that the first became a living soul and the second a living spirit. And then he adds that he speaks of the first Adam, and in connection with this, of the second Adam, in order to make it clear that he is discussing a holy matter that concerns the entire human race. The reason for the difference between the first and second Adam as the head of the family is that the first man was earthly, and the second man is the Lord from heaven. From both of these Adams, he continues, a human race now arises. Such as the earthly Adam was, such also are the earthly men, and such as the heavenly Adam is, such also are the heavenly men. - Does this apply one time to different people and another time to different people, so that one can say: There are people who belong to Adam I, and there are other people who belong to Adam II? No, not so. No one who has passed from death to life is counted among the second Adam, or by nature he was counted among the first Adam. Paul himself acknowledges that he too first bore the image of the first Adam, he and all Christians with him, but that all those who belong to Jesus will now also bear the image of the second Adam. They already bear this new image in their souls, but one day they will also bear it in their bodies; for the entire account of the second Adam occurs in 1 Cor. 15, and in this rich chapter the resurrection of the dead is the powerful subject. The whole pericope or

phrase reads as follows in context: "Also is written: The first Adam became a living soul; the last Adam a living spirit. But the spiritual is not first, but the natural, then the spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second man is the Lord from heaven. Such as are earthly, such are earthly men; and such as are heavenly, such are heavenly men. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly. But this I say to you, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and corruption cannot inherit salvation.

What is meant is a transformation in the nature of our human race, which can best be compared to the grafting of a noble shoot onto a wild tree. It is not as if this were the same thing, but insofar as an image can do this, it does clarify the distinction. On a tree that was wild by nature, one carefully grafts a shoot from a nobler stock, and prunes the wild scum. That noble shoot now draws the lifeblood from the wild stem to itself and converts it into noble sap. As a result, the shoot grows and expands, forming new branches and twigs, new leaves, new flowers and new fruit. And the whole of that new crop now bears the character of the nobler shoot, and if the lifeblood of that new outgrowth could speak for the nobler shoot, then it would also say here: I was wild from the wild stock, but the living, ennobling spirit of the noble shoot has meant that I now naturally possess the noble quality of the noble shoot". And so now, the salvation of our human race is not about the few branches or leaves, but about the preservation and salvation of the trunk. In oak autumn the leaves on the branches die away, and the branches themselves are pruned, but the trunk, the tree remains one and the same, the same organism. If we now compare mankind and our human race with such a family tree, then here too it is not a question of what happens to each twig and each leaf and each oak blossom, but only of how the family tree itself fared. And just as it is not the wild branches that still sprout from below but only those that sprout from the noble shoot that decide the nature and type of the tree and its preservation, so too it is not what happens to that which still sprouts from the wild stem below that decides the preservation and eternal future of our human race, but only that which sprouts from the noble shoot. One could therefore say that the Christ, as the second Adam, has been grafted onto the originally good, but now wild, stem of the human race. The fruit and effect of that grafting is that everything that sprouts and blossoms above the point where the grafting took place now displays the character that distinguishes the nobler shoot from the savage stem. Christ is the vivifying spirit, who introduces his spirit into new sprouts. And from the moment that

grafting took place, the heavenly orchardist no longer regards the tree as wild, but as noble, and he no longer looks at the outgrowth of the root, but at the fine sprout from the grafted shoot. Thus, the human race, as it applies to God, no longer looks at the wild stem from the first Adam, but at the noble outgrowth from the second Adam. There has been a transition, a change, a transformation. The old trunk was the human race, but from now on our human race is what grows on the grafted part of the tree. And here it is remarkable that the new life is not planted like a new cutting next to the old, wild tree, but that the new life grows up from the old life and draws the lifeblood of the old trunk to itself, in order to transform it into a new, noble type.

Not a single force from the original creation of our human race is thus surrendered or nullified. Only the character of man, which our entire life had taken on as a result of sin, is destroyed, but life itself, with all its juices and all its powers, remains. The natural life from the first Adam, because it has been corrupted, could no longer control the nature of our life. Everything in our human race that still bears this savage nature, and persists in it, and refuses to be transformed by the graft of the noble shoot into nobler branches and leaves and fruits, is finished, no longer counts, dissolves and is consecrated to death. Thus, from the moment of grafting, the first Adam is no longer the master and representative and determines the nature of the life of our generation, but the second Adam. The first Adam, whose sprout had become wild, has been discarded and his place as the head of the family is now taken by the second Adam. The first Adam, the Christ, as the second head of the family, only enters our family in the middle of our growth. He takes on our nature. He is grafted onto the old Adam tribe. But from the moment that grafting is completed, the new outgrowth no longer grows in the line of the first Adam, but in conformity with the second Adam. At first this is small, hardly noticeable and insignificant. He who has no eye for it and knows nothing about it, does not even notice it, when a sprouted trunk is grafted, so small and unsightly is this graft. But gradually both the noble shoot and what sprouts from it gain strength, and when later the arborist prunes away all the wild branches on the old trunk, the new graft grows wider and wider, and then this new graft becomes the actual tree. Every comparison, and thus also this one, falls short when widened, inasmuch as the pruning away of the stump on the old wild trunk of our human race will not take place in time, but only in the day of judgment. But once this has happened, and the wild branches are cut away for good, then the tree, the trunk, then the human race in its nobler part, born of the graft, remains. The wild

branches, not the tree, are lost. And as many as go to eternal destruction, these are always just loose branches and twigs, and it is never the tree itself. What is lost falls away from the human race, and the human race, God's most noble creation, remains, as a result of grafting, forever preserved.

Even though Christ, as the Head of the mystical Body, is only organically related to those persons who have passed from death to life, in that organic connection to the part of humanity that has come to life He also finds His organic connection to the whole human race, for the decisive reason that only that which comes to life lives. That which does not come to life, but remains in death, passes into a state of decomposition and ultimately no longer counts for the living human race, as it does for God. Yet the noble shoot continues to draw the lifeblood from the wild stem to itself, and so too the Christ does not abandon the stem of our lineage, but draws to himself all the strength and talents that God placed in our lineage at creation. His life-giving spirit does not only pass over the persons who are called, but also over their powers and talents. The result is that the Christ, as the second Adam, is the new head of the family through his life-giving spirit, who preserves and renews our human family, in both its called persons and its powers, gifts and talents, and causes them to blossom into a higher life.

The idea that the Christ takes away a few branches for the preservation of the human race, in order to save them for eternal life as individuals and as persons in their own right, in order to abandon the human race with all its gifts and talents, which God created in our race, and to dedicate it to destruction, is therefore counterproductive and reprehensible. It is not just a few persons, it is a body, an organically linked whole, that is being saved, and that organic body is under Christ, as the new Head of the Family, the actual human race, from which individuals may fall, but which will be preserved as a family, as a unit, as an organic body. An all-embracing fact, which will only be revealed to everyone's eyes at the end of days; a fact that now still seems to contradict what we see before us; but a fact that nevertheless can and may be understood in this way and no other, if we honor the Christ as the second Adam, i.e., as the new Head of the Family, together with the Apostle Paul.

Yet this is not enough. One could certainly compare this effect of Jesus on our human race with the influence exerted by every great and powerful reformer on the course of life. Scripture therefore points out two more things to establish the

organic connection between us and Christ. First, his Resurrection from the dead, and second, his Eternal Sonship.

The Christ is "the firstborn among many brothers," and also in this respect He is called the second Adam. The first Adam brought death to all his descendants, and thus to our entire human race, and in return the second Adam brought life to light, in which the human race must flourish again to the glory of God. And here too there is an organic relationship. The first Adam gives us the life we possess by nature, but the shadow of death hangs over that natural life. The second Adam also gives us life, but a life that is elevated above death, and thus bears the character of being imperishable and immortal. It is this life, triumphant over death, that Christ has brought to light through his resurrection, and that through the power of the Spirit, and it is this same newly-acquired resurrection life that he now communicates to his own through the Spirit. His own do not receive this new life from elsewhere, but from Him. Now, if the first Adam was our Head of Gender because he gave life from his loins to the human race, then likewise, and in a much higher sense, Christ, the second Adam, is now the Head of Gender of renewed humanity because he also gives us life, and this life is given from himself, but it is given as life of an immortal character. Adam lapsed as the Head of the Family because he caused death to creep into the life that was to come from him to his family through his fall, and Christ remains the Head of the human family because he destroyed the seed of death in the natural life and now elevated and renewed life itself, so that it can no longer undergo. Only in this way does one understand the profound meaning of Paul's statement: "Christ has been raised from the dead and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as death came into our generation through a man, i.e., by human agency, so also the resurrection of the dead was effected by a man (note that it does not say by one man). For as they all die in Adam, so shall they all be made alive in Christ. That is, all those who turn out to belong to the saved and restored humanity. But for this a rule has been established, viz. each one is made alive in his order, the first of Christ, then those of Christ; but so that this first comes out in his future. Adam the first in the natural life, but then also the first in sin and in death; Christ, the second Adam, the first in the spiritual life and the first in the glory to come. All of which the Apostle summarizes in his letter to the people of Colosse: "He is the head of the body, namely the church, he who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that he may be first in all things. The very moment at which this transformation of our human race took place is thus accurately indicated. It was not yet at Bethlehem, it

was not at Golgotha; it only took place when Christ arose from the grave and triumphed over death. In His resurrection, the new life broke through. First sin had to be destroyed on Golgotha, and only then could Death be conquered at the opened tomb. And now the other members of the Body do not each receive this new life in themselves, as Christ received it, but they receive it from Him. It is His new life, which He communicates to His own, and through this He forms the mystical Body.

Yet the Scriptures allow the seeds and fibers for the organic relationship between Christ and the new humanity to grow from even deeper grounds. He is the second Adam, because He is the originator of the new life in our humanity, just as Adam, expelled from Paradise, later became the originator of the natural life in our entire family; but He is more. He is comparable to Adam as the giver of life, and consequently as the head of the family, but there is something else in addition to this, by which the Christ far surpasses the first Adam. The Apostle expresses it thus: "He is before all things, and all things exist together through Him." He is therefore before Adam, and  $\chi$  also Adam existed through Him, and through Him became the first head of our generation, "because, - so it is said in Coloss. 1:16, - By Him were all things created, which are in the heavens and which are in the earth, which are visible and invisible, and all these things, and so also our human race, and also the first Adam were created not only by Him, but also for Him." For "it was the Father's good pleasure that in Him should dwell the fullness, i.e., the fullness of all power and might."

This gives the "organic relationship' in which the Christ stands to the reborn humanity a much deeper foundation. All power and control over all creatures is His, because he who creates omnipotently and freely is master and ruler over what he creates, to do with it and act it as he pleases. According to Divine ordinances, the root of the organic relationship between God Triune and Creation lies in the very fact of Creation. What owes its existence and continued existence, its being and suchlike to its Creator, is in its very existence organically linked to its God. Creating is not imitating, creating is not tinkering, just as we humans know how to produce all sorts of things materially and spiritually. To create is to come directly from wisdom, will and power, that is, from the virtues of the Lord. Now these "virtues of the Lord" are all spiritual in nature. In the spirit of God, therefore, lies the root and cause of all creaturely existence, both material and spiritual, and the link here has never been established mechanically, but has arisen out of existence itself, and thus organically.

And entirely this same norma is now applied by Scripture to the bond that binds us eternally to the Christ, as the originator of the new life in our human race, as soon as it has been laid. As far as type is concerned, the Christ is not only a legislator like Moses, not only a prophet like Elijah or Isaiah, and not even a patriarch like Abraham, the father of all believers. He is more. He stands much higher. "As Abraham was, so am I," the Christ Himself testified. He is before all creatures. And if we go back to the deepest root, from which all things, including our human race, have blossomed, then we cannot remain with Adam, but we must go back to the Christ after Adam. Then it is not the Christ, who only later, in the midst of history, is grafted onto the tree of our family, but our human family, already at the time of Creation, was organically connected to the Eternal Word.

The new life is thus grafted, not onto a tree that was foreign to Christ, but onto a tree that He Himself had planted. And it is for this reason that the Apostle John prefaces his Gospel, that is the Good News of Salvation, with the solemn declaration: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and was God. All things were made by this Word, and without this Word nothing was made that was made." And then it is called by name, "In that Word was life, and that life was the light of men." Now that Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. And that Word made flesh is the Christ, who later testified: "I am the Vine and you are the branches."

The organic connection of the Kingship of Christ with the reborn humanity and with our human race, as it will one day shine in glory, thus has three gradations. It is most visible in the bond that connects the Head with the members in the mystical Body. More profoundly, that mystical Body finds its origin in the new life, which Jesus brought to light by His resurrection, and has now grafted onto the stem of our family. But 3rd. most profoundly, that organic connection, both as regards the mystical Body and the Resurrection life, finds its basis and explanation in the fact that our King is the Eternal Word, and that, with all things, also our human race, and all that has been entrusted to this human race as spiritual treasure, has been created by Him.