

GOSPEL PEARLS

A punishment foretold

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Jesus began to reproach the towns in which most of his miracles had been worked, because they refused to repent. 'Alas for you, Chorazin! Alas for you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. And still, I tell you that it will not go as hard on Judgement day with Tyre and Sidon as with you. And as for you, Capernaum, did you want to be exalted as high as heaven? You shall be thrown down to hell. For if the miracles done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have been standing yet. And still, I tell you that it will not go as hard with the land of Sodom on Judgement day as with you.' (Matthew 11,20-24)

One might think that those who witness a miracle will certainly choose to convert. Unfortunately, this is not the case because if the heart is hardened and the will lacks openness to mystery, not even miracles will lead to conversion. Moreover, this closure becomes a reason for condemnation. Jesus announces that the cities which have witnessed His miracles and have still not been questioned by them will be punished. In fact, everyone runs the risk of letting the Word of God pass by them in vain. Tyre and Sidon are cities that symbolise distance from God, yet, Jesus tells us, they will be treated less harshly than those cities that have refused to believe in Christ's preaching. Are you willing to open your heart to Christ to welcome what He wants to tell you today?