

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Book of Joshua (*Joshua 23:14*)

(Joshua said:) Today, as you see, I am going the way of all the earth. So now acknowledge with your whole heart and soul that not one of all the promises the LORD, your God, made concerning you has failed. Everyone has come true for you; not one has failed. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection - God has the will and power to keep His promises

God promises eternal life to all who believe in Jesus Christ. *For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life (John 3:16).* God's promise of a Saviour was fulfilled when His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ was borne incarnate into our world, shed His Blood and died on the Cross as atonement for all sins. Christ promises His disciples: *In My Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? (John 14:2).* We have an unfading crown of glory awaiting us when our life on earth is over. We are on pilgrimage on earth with many trials and purification in order to be made fit to enter the gates of Heaven, our true home. St Paul tells us that it will be more than worth it. *I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us (Romans 8:18).* Further, St Paul, having ascended in spirit to heaven, has this to say: *What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love Him (1 Corinthians 2:9).* God has the power and will to reward His children well.

God promises His constant help and no temptation beyond our endurance. *Before they call, I will answer; while they are yet speaking, I will hear (Isaiah 65:24).* *No trial has come to you but what is human. God is faithful and will not let you be tried beyond your strength; but with the trial He will also provide a way out, so that you may be able to bear it (1 Corinthians 10:13).* We may be weak and fragile like clay pots, with a natural inclination to sin due to our fallen nature but the mighty power of God's grace is within us.

God promises help in overcoming temptation. Temptation can be of many kinds but involve three things at their core: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. *For all that is in the world, sensual lust, enticement for the eyes, and a pretentious life, is not from the Father but is from the world (1 John 2:16).* For our sakes, Jesus was strongly tempted in the desert when He was fasting for forty days: temptation on lust of the flesh – temptation of turning stones into bread; temptation on the pride – temptation to prove He is really the Son of God by throwing Himself down from the height; temptation on lust of the eyes – temptation to possess what is before the eyes. Jesus in His time on earth in the flesh has overcome all temptations for our sakes and merited all the graces we need not only to overcome temptation but also to grow in holiness and sanctity. *In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world (John 16:33).* For our part, we need to be very vigilant against temptation, to be able to recognize sin dressed up as good, and subtle temptation whenever they present themselves. For this, we need to live and adhere to the Word of God and His teachings, and assimilate His truths into our heart and mind so that we can be led by the Holy Spirit and remain in the truth of Christ.

God promises to be always with us, never to abandon us. *And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age (Matthew 28:20).* What do we fear when God is on our side? Out of His desire and generosity, God has made us His children. We are not mere creatures but members of God's family. This sonship of God changes everything. We become co-heirs with Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. We call God "Father"! We may not be very filial children but this has not stopped God from being a wonderful Father. Everything has been done for us to attain the glorious, eternal inheritance God has planned in advance for each and every one of His precious children. By His life, Passion, death and resurrection, Jesus has obtained for us complete forgiveness from God, opened the gates of Paradise and merited for us all the graces we need to overcome all and any temptation on earth and to grow in holiness and sanctity required for life with the Father in eternity.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, open the eyes of my heart and mind to understand the greatness of the hope to which I am called. Enlighten my mind and heart to greatly desire the wondrous things that God has planned for me. Give me all the graces I need to work single-mindedly to attain the eternal glories that is my birthright as a child of the Most High. For my part, in response to such love and generosity of my Heavenly Father, I offer my will, my love, my allegiance, my body, heart, mind, soul and everything I possess interior and exterior to my Heavenly Father through Your Sacred Heart. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. www.twohearts.hk