

## Scripture Reading

### **A Reading from the Book of Obadiah** (*Obadiah 1:3*)

The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rocks and make your home on the heights, you who say to yourself, 'Who can bring me down to the ground?' The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

### Reflection ~ **Pride, the root of our unhappiness**

**The pride in our heart deceives us.** Deception is living in a false world, not in touch with true reality. Under deception we believe the falsehoods and lies that the enemy of our salvation has planted in our minds. This will lead us into a way of thinking that ultimately causes us to be less loving and more judgemental towards others with the end result of drawing us away from God and into sin. Thus, pride leads us to believe we are better than we actually are, and to see the faults of others more clearly than we can see ours. Without the light of God's truth, we are unaware of the pride that lurks in our hearts and that our mind is under deception. With the exception of the Immaculate Heart of our Blessed Mother Mary, no other human heart is free from the taint of pride.

**Pride puts the focus on ourselves.** The inclination to focus on our own self-interest at the expense of others is a short cut to unhappiness. Once we put ourselves at the top of our concern, we have a false demanding god that leads us to self-centredness, over-sensitivity, bearing grudges, jealousy, greed, unforgiveness, hatred, worry and anxiety and finally eternal damnation.

**In his pride the wicked does not seek Him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God. (Psalm 10:4).** The prideful soul has a myopic vision, it seeks mostly earthly things. Without the grace of God, it is unable to rise above the physical realm in which it operates. In its deception, the soul is blinded to the goodness of God and believes all his/her successes are due to his/her own efforts only. *In their own eyes they flatter themselves too much to detect or hate their sin (Psalm 36:2).* They do not understand God's ways or His precepts and therefore do not inform their conscience of the truth of God and His commandments.

**Pride makes us over-sensitive, retain grudges and encourages unforgiveness.** Pride makes us easily hurt and misread insult when none was intended. Thus, a prideful heart is easily wounded. Pride in our heart magnifies the faults of others and continually plays it in our minds. When we constantly recall the offences of others, our hearts harden and we adopt unloving attitudes towards the person. Eventually the seed of grudges grows to full grown unforgiveness when we are unable to accept the faults and failings of others.

**Pride encourages envy and jealousy.** Pride puts focus on ourselves and retains the glory that belongs to God. Pride makes us less supportive of the good that is done by others. Our lower self would prefer to have the good done by ourselves in order to feed our ego and false self-esteem though we maybe unaware of it. Unlike other faults, pride is a hidden one. It cannot be perceived from the external appearance of a person as it is chiefly an attitude of the heart. It exerts itself in challenging situations that calls for humility but justifies itself in the mind of the prideful person by some false virtues e.g. false peace, false freedom and human rights.

### Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, You want me to rejoice in You always. To do that I need to rise above myself especially my pride. When I am led by my pride, I stray from Your holy Will and the true path. I end up feeling empty, unfulfilled and contributing to the unhappiness of others as well. Through Your life example You teach me how to walk on the road to eternal joy: walking in faith and obedience, humbly acknowledging Your presence at my side. Render my heart meek and humble like Yours so that I am worthy of the heavenly inheritance You prepared for me. Mary, Refuge of Holy Love, pray for me. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus.