

## Scripture Reading

### **A Reading of the Book of Prophet Hosea** (*Hosea 11:3-5*)

It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love. To them I was like one who lifts a little child to the cheek, and I bent down to feed them. Will they not return to Egypt and will not Assyria rule over them because they refuse to repent? The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

### **Reflection ~ Our Final Security is to Abide in God's Divine Will**

**God is Father and desires the best for His children.** The tenderness of the heart of God the Father towards His people (here called Ephraim, one of the largest tribe in Israel) is reflected in the writings of Prophet Hosea. God is the true One who guides our movements, heals us of our ailments whether physical, emotional or spiritual, gives us comfort, warmth and security, and nourishes us both physically and spiritually. In God, all our needs are fulfilled. He is the good shepherd. *The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing* (*Psalms 23:28*). He has shown His love for us beyond doubt by sending His own Son, Jesus for our salvation. Would He withhold any good thing from us?

**The human heart is blind through pride and sin.** *For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them* (*Matthew 13:15*). The human heart is hardened through pride and sins. We are not fully aware of how we really appear in God's eyes. We are complacent about our relationship with God, and take our salvation for granted. We do not recognize how sin has taken root in our lives and how we are in need of spiritual healing by God. Unconsciously, we depend on ourselves and our intellect. We do not take enough efforts to understand with our heart God's personal love for us.

**It is useless to gain the world but lose one's own soul (cf. Matthew 16:26).** While still in the flesh we will always be in conflict over the inclinations of the Spirit within us and the opposing desires of our lower self. The allurements and attractions of the world will prove irresistible to those who do not understand life is a testing ground, a pilgrimage to the eternal inheritance that our Heavenly Father has planned for each of His children from the beginning. Thus Jesus says: *Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on Him God the Father has placed His seal of approval* (*John 6:27*).

**Lack of repentance results in slavery to sin.** *Will they not return to Egypt and will not Assyria rule over them because they refuse to repent?* (*Hosea 11:5*). Egypt signifies the land of slavery of the ancient Jews, while Assyrians one of their conquerors. Without repentance, we cannot live a life of grace and truth. The wages of sins is spiritual death but God is ever waiting to give us eternal life through Jesus Christ once we return to Him in repentance (cf. *Romans 6:23*).

**God sends sufferings to free His children from deadly attachments to the material world.** *The Lord disciplines the one He loves, and He chastens everyone He accepts as His son* (*Hebrews 12:6*). Every good father will discipline his child. God is wiser and more loving than the best earthly parent. Unlike an earthly parent, God in His almighty ways has infinite methods by which to bring a child of His to holiness. This is usually through pain and suffering which if endured will bring about the much needed change in the heart and mind of the person.

### **Conversation with Jesus**

Precious Lord, my freewill is one of Your most precious gifts to me. It makes me like You, free and responsible for my own decisions and actions. You put before me choices of life in You or death in sin. Outside of Your will is sin. You have made known to me Your will for me encapsulated in Your commandments. In every present moment, You make present the grace that will help me abide in Your holy will. You send me sufferings and pain to strengthen me spiritually and to refocus on my heavenly goal. Thank You Lord for all You have done, are doing and will do for me. I place all my trust in Your divine will. Through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I surrender to You my own will. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus. [www.twoheart5.hk](http://www.twoheart5.hk)