

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Letter of St Paul to the Ephesians (Ephesians 6:12-13)

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. The Word of the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – The Scourge of the world

The disbelief in the existence of Satan is a product of his demonic deception. The secular world scoffs at the existence of Satan. Nevertheless, he exists. In fact, he tries his very best to go unnoticed so that he can do as much harm as he can without detection. *Jesus replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven (Luke 10:18).* Satan was a powerful head angel who grew proud of the wonderful gifts God gave him. He rebelled against God in heaven but was defeated by Archangel Michael and thrown out of heaven. *Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down - that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray (Revelation 12:7-9).* The disbelief of Satan's existence is a product of his demonic deception. Unbelievers of the existence of Satan provide easy target for him as the battle is half won when the other cannot recognise the enemy in the battlefield.

At every present moment Satan and the Holy Spirit are in conflict to win dominion over souls; the Holy Spirit to save, Satan to damn. The greatest work of God is not the wonderful, amazing creation we can see around us; the act of creation is mere child's play to God for nothing here hampers His infinite power, ingenuity and wisdom. He can let all these come into free play as He so wishes. But not so for the conversion of sinners. This is God's greatest work. God is tied hands and feet when it comes to the conversion of sinners. Though He plans a wonderful inheritance for each of His children and opened the door of heaven to all through the death of Jesus Christ, each child of God chooses his/her own destiny by the exercise of the God-given freewill. Though like any good parent, the deepest desire of God is the salvation of every one of His children, God will never force His salvation on any unwilling child.

Satan uses the media, human agents and direct suggestions to hearts and minds to do his dirty work. Satan uses the modern media with great cunning and skill to advance his kingdom of darkness. We see the cinema, TV, Internet, social media of communication, books and other printed matter used universally to darken hearts and minds, and render them unfit for God's kingdom when they die. Satan leverages on greed and self-profit to gain control of the media. To gain control over human minds and hearts, Satan leverages on pride and disorderly self-love, self-obsession, lack of charity, ignorance and no love for the truth. Once infested, these poor souls are then used as his instruments to further his evil.

The diabolical one has a plan for each child of God. Satan says: *"I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of Mount Zaphon. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."* (Isaiah 14:13-14). In his pride, he has plans to take over the sovereignty of God over His creation but since He cannot do that, He takes His vengeance on those who are most loved by God – His children. His plan for each of God's children is to drag them into eternal misery with Him since He knows that due to his disobedience despite His perfect knowledge of God, he is destined for eternal punishment.

Satan has already been defeated by the precious Blood of Jesus Christ shed on the Cross. We must claim the victory in Jesus. Though we must undergo great tests and trials in order to enter God's Kingdom (Cf. Acts 14:22), God's grace is greater than all the evil in the world. Through His life, death and resurrection, Jesus shows us how to live and love, to overcome evil and eternal death so as to walk in the path of truth.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, I come before You acknowledging my own sinfulness. The self-knowledge of my most glaring faults will be the agent of my daily conversion. Help me desist Satan and his demons by practising a sincere prayer life, humility, obedience to Your laws and commandments, steadfast faith, love for the Truth and allegiance to your Word. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. www.twohearts.hk