

Source of Our Salvation



I. A LOOK AT THE THREE READINGS

FIRST READING (Is 66:18-21)

¹⁸I am coming to **gather all nations** and tongues; **they** shall come and see my glory. ¹⁹I will place a sign among **them**; from **them** I will send survivors to the nations: to Tarshish, Put and Lud, Mosoch, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands which have never heard of my fame, or seen my glory; and **they** shall proclaim my glory among the **nations**. ²⁰**They** shall bring all your kin from all the **nations** as an offering to the LORD, on horses and in chariots, in carts, upon mules and dromedaries, to Jerusalem, my holy mountain, says the LORD, just as the Israelites bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD. ²¹Some of **these** I will take as priests and Levites, says the LORD.

THE FOCUS: The Nations

COMMENTARY

- God focuses his attention on the nations.
- The nations here are the non-Israelites.
- God knows their works and thoughts V.18.
- God invites them to see his glory.
- V.19: From them, God sends fugitives to the nations (*fellow nations*).
- The places (*distant coastlands*) identified here were familiar to them in those days, but they did not know God. The gathered nations will proclaim

God's glory to them.

- V.20 indicates the means of transportation to bring people to Jerusalem, following the ways of the Israelites.
- V.21 indicates God's prerogative.

REFLECTIONS

The Reading on the nations proclaims the universality of salvation.

Salvation is not limited to the Israelite people. The nations are called by God to see his glory.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 117:1, 2) GO OUT TO ALL THE WORLD AND TELL THE GOOD NEWS.

SECOND READING (Heb 12:5-7, 11-13)

^{5b}You have also forgotten the exhortation addressed to you as sons:/ "My son, do not disdain the **discipline** of the Lord/ or lose heart when **reproved** by him;/ ⁶for whom the Lord loves, he **disciplines**;/ he scourges every son he acknowledges."/ ^{7c}Endure your trials as "**discipline**"; God treats you as sons. For what "son" is there whom his father does not **discipline**? ^{11e}At the time, all **discipline** seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it. ¹²So strengthen your drooping hands and your weak knees. ^{13g}Make straight paths for your feet, that what is lame may not be dislocated but healed.

THE FOCUS: Discipline

COMMENTARY

- The Reading is full of exhortations. The ex-

hortations are: Do not disdain... (v.5); do not lose heart... (v.5); endure your trials... (v.7); strengthen your droopings (v.12); make straight your paths (v.13);

- The main point of the exhortations is to accept discipline from the Lord.
- The reasons for discipline:
 - Because the Lord loves / acknowledges you... (v.6); because God treats you as sons (v.7); because by its nature, discipline brings peace...(v.11).

REFLECTIONS

Do not get God wrong when he disciplines / proves / scourges / rebukes / chastises / scolds you.

Discipline is a sign that you are his children, close to him.

God is a good parent. He does not allow any of his children to be mediocre in spirit. He does want them to become worse.

GOSPEL READING (Lk 13:22-30)

Setting in a journey to Jerusalem

²²He passed through towns and villages, teaching as he went and making his way to Jerusalem.

Question and answer (imperative)

²³Someone asked him, “Lord, **will only a few people be saved?**” He answered them, ^{24j}“Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I tell you, will attempt to enter but will not be strong enough.”^k

The Parable

^{25l}After the master of the house has arisen and locked the door, then will you stand outside knocking and saying, ‘Lord, open the door for us.’ He will say to you in reply, ‘I do not know where you are from.’²⁶And you will say, ‘We ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets.’

The reason for the rejection

^{27m}Then he will say to you, ‘I do not know where [you] are from. Depart from me, all you evildoers!’

The Punishment

²⁸ⁿAnd there will be wailing and grinding of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you

yourself cast out.

The reward of the righteous

^{29o}And people will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God.

The saying

^{30p}For behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”

THE FOCUS: Who Are Entitled to Salvation?

COMMENTARY

- Our Reading belongs to the long Journey Narrative of Luke.

Jesus is going to Jerusalem after his ministry in Galilee.

- On the way, he meets a lot of people with different concerns.

- v.23: Why does someone ask if a few people will be saved? What does Jesus say? (*teaching on mustard seed and yeast in relation to the kingdom of God, the healing of the sick woman on a sabbath*)

- Jesus does not directly entertain the question. He is more concerned with the man who questions him. “*Strive to enter through the narrow gate... You better be one of the few if it is the case. Be strong.*”

- The parable follows up the importance of entering the door that the Lord opens. Jesus does not open the door to evildoers. Evildoers are the ones who eat and drink with Jesus and are seemingly taught by him but do not learn how to do good.

- In v.27, Jesus does not entertain evildoers. They are judged unfit for the kingdom of God. They have not been serious with the teachings of Jesus.

- v. 28. In our catechism and homilies, we seldom hear of punishment being mentioned. Here the punishment for evildoers is wailing and grinding of teeth. Sometimes it is needed in order to warn people to shape up.

- V. 28. The evildoers will feel jealous of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets entering the door, while they are rejected.

- v. 29. The righteous from all corners of the world will recline at the banquet table in the kingdom of God. Great is the reward of the doers of good and God’s will.

- The saying in v.30 affirms the salvation of those who are serious in listening and doing the will of God, even if they realize last. Hopeless are the per-

sons who appeal they were associating with Jesus without any good fruit. Salvation is not *barkadahan* (Peer bonding).

REFLECTIONS

The Christian must make sure he enters the narrow gate. When you eat and drink with Christ, it does not mean you are saved. Associating with Christ must bear good fruits.

II. TYING THE THREE READINGS TOGETHER TO DEVELOP YOUR HOMILY/SHARING

The First Reading is about the nations seeing God's glory (=salvation).

The Second Reading is about discipline (=to be saved).

The Gospel Reading talks about how to be saved.

How to develop your sharing / homily

Begin by talking about the meaning of salvation for you.

- Salvation is work, money, good relationships, security, freedom, etc.

How do we attain salvation?

In the First Reading, we must realize that salvation is for everyone.

There is no such thing as exclusive salvation.

We are all invited to see the glory of God. All we need to do is to respond and to be responsible for others.

In the Second Reading, we attain salvation by subjecting ourselves to chastisements. We willingly submit ourselves to God's discipline. We should not be reacting if we are corrected. We must be humble enough to admit our mistakes when people point them to us.

The Gospel Reading asks each Christian to enter the narrow path.

The way to salvation is not cheap. The narrow path is doing good deeds.

Can you mention the good deeds you are doing?

- Helping the poor, visiting the sick and imprisoned, teaching catechism to children, works of

mercy, etc.

If you cannot think of anything, you must be an evildoer. You are like one of those who knock but refused entrance because you are evildoer.

The Christian must never fail to do good.

Money, time and energy must not be squandered doing nothing.

In our communities and parishes, how much time do we spend thinking, planning and implementing programs for the good of our brethren?

Are you involved in some ways like social work and teaching the faith?

The eucharist teaches us to be other centered. Jesus is totally giving himself to us for our salvation.

In the eucharist, Jesus knows that salvation can come only through him.

As a sign of our acceptance to his mystery, we take him reverently in the holy communion.

The eucharist is a sign of the narrow path, for not just anyone can receive it, but only doers of good.

No evil doer is allowed to receive the eucharist. It is a contradiction in terms.

Let each Christian realize the importance of this eucharist as a source of salvation.

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III. OUR CONTEXT

1. Salvation is...

2. What are the concrete manifestations that one is saved?

3. Quotation: Every Christian needs half an hour of prayer each day except when one is busy. Then one needs an hour. (HM)