

Acknowledgments. (Gen.3:9-15 Mr. 3:20-35;2Cor 4:13-18)

* Dear Friends, the lesson for this Sunday will guide us, first, to the Garden of Eden, (Gen.3:9-15); next, to hear the public opinion regarding Jesus' identity, (Mr. 3:20-35) and in conclusion to reflect upon Paul's piece of theology, (2Cor 4:13-18). Doing so with God's help we will shape up all these readings under one idea,

Acknowledgments.

* Friends, when I work with a sermon I always reflect upon your spiritual needs. When your needs are determined, I compose the message that believed is inspired by the Word and the Spirit; and if it is so, this message turns into the effective tool that is able to treat your spiritual needs. But at first, I myself am in need of correction, direction and encouragement. Without such things the message would be not sufficient, it would be helpless. My dear listeners, before writing this sermon I asked the Lord for help and I was helped. Now it is your turn to be admonished, guided and encouraged.

* Now let see what is going on in our world. Besides heavy rain and economic recession we've noticed the appearance of many different beliefs on account of God's nature and purpose. By mixing the junk of utopia with the true knowledge of God satan destroys people's souls by hand of God. The gospel for today says that a blasphemer against the Holy Spirit will be never forgiven, (Mar 3:29). Thereby, satan leads people to commit specifically the eternal sin in order to deprive them of the redemptive grace. Satan knows that Almighty God will not forgive eternal sin because He can not deny his words. Could you imagine what satan is doing today! The blasphemers are left without help and forgiveness; though they might imagine the quite different outcome. Unfortunately millions continue to despise the witness of the Holy Spirit about Jesus Christ, the Holy Trinity, God's integrity, His holiness, awesomeness and so on. "Who is the liar but the person who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This one is the antichrist: the person who denies the Father and the Son," (1Jn 2:22). Who denies the witness of the Holy Spirit that salvation is available only through faith in Christ Jesus also makes the Holy Spirit as a liar. Now millions blame God in deeds and words.

* Actually the blasphemous is very old. Where do you think it originated? Right, It took place many years ago. Every body knows this story. Our text from (Gen. 3) says that after transgression, Adam and Eve acknowledged their nakedness but they failed to acknowledge what they did until God began questioning them. In response to God's call Adam said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." Following Adam's way of confession some Christians acknowledge before God their weakness generally but not sin itself. Friends, but the nakedness it is not the full picture about Adam and his followers. Adam and Eve's problem was not so much in the eating of magic fruit. Who knows, maybe God would forgive Adam and Eve's transgression if they ate the fruit accidentally, for example. But the real problem arose when Eve doubted God's integrity. Watch out, here is the point!

* Adam and Eve were not forgiven, that is why they died. They were not forgiven because they disqualified God from his integrity, from his exclusiveness to speak truth and only truth. "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die." But serpent-satan said to the woman, "You will

not surely die.” By this saying the satanic world built a wrong god in woman’s head and the heads of millions, the god who is lacking integrity, who can deceive. It is hard to say with what idea Eve was preoccupied with after hearing satan but at least she might think either that God was not honest with them, or He tricked them with a certain purpose. Eve’s act of disobedience proved that she doubted God’s integrity. But God can not lie, (Heb 6:18). He said and it came out; both died after awhile. But unlike Adam and Eve who were not forgiven, we experience God’s mercy that is so abundant. Our Lord is ready to forgive us in Christ Jesus, on the other hand, sovereign God can not deny His words, "Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"—“ (Mar 3:28,29). Can we escape the guilt of an eternal sin or there is no warranty? Who can answer except of One who knows what is in us.

* Now let see what happened at Nazareth, in some year of our Lord. (Mk 3:20-35) says that Jesus and the disciples remained under the overcrowd shelter when his mother and brothers arrived. There were also Jewish scholars, they went down from Jerusalem. Other people in attendance either were the residents of that city or from surrounding villages. In sum all those in attendance were preoccupied with certain acknowledgements regarding Jesus’ identity. Some might think that he is “ A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!” (Mat 11:19). Some people said that Jesus “... is possessed by the prince of demons,” (Mr. 3:22). Some of them said that “ he had gone mad,” (Mr. 3:21). Because the unity of Persons under one Godhead, the blasphemy against one Person is also correlated to others. The Trinity can not lie, the Father glorifies Jesus, saying, “This is my beloved Son, listen him.” Don’t you mind that blaming Jesus by mouth those in attendance blamed the Father and the Holy Spirit as well? Watch out, now it is the point! In this particular situation people didn’t accuse God by deeds, they sinned against God by words of their mouth, by their mouth they committed the worst sin in the world. They didn’t kill, steal or fornicate but they acknowledged the second person of the Trinity unjustly. They might become guilty of an eternal sin.

* One more detail. In Mt. and Lk’s Gospels Jesus says that everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, (Luk 12:10). Reflecting on this passage it says that blasphemers might anticipate the forgiveness, but reflecting on the warning of “eternal sin” we can presume exception. People will be forgiven if their blasphemies didn’t touch Christ’s divinity. But blasphemy against the Holy Trinity is the guilt of an eternal sin because God is holy. (Isaiah 6:1-6).

* Unfortunately, blasphemy against our Lord continues, even among Christians, even today. In Russia I absolved a man from my former church who spoke out blame against Jesus Christ while he was walking home. Later he cried for forgiveness. In my turn I gave him absolution but it was a heavy-duty task. I heard he left the church a few years ago. Next to that, I read a sermon where it says that a certain man had a habit to blame God after bumping into acid situation. In that moment he would usually whisper awful blasphemies mentioning God. I’ve decided to omit that phrase; I believe, upon hearing that cursing even the satanic kingdom was in shock. But who knows a man except God and what is in him? We don’t know ourselves in full, where is the end of our confidence, heroism, faithfulness

or reverence towards God take its place? Surely our boldness, confidence and other virtues may disappear in a moment; really they depend on the context. Remember Peter, upon hearing the Master, he couldn't imagine that he is able to deny his Lord, even one time. But the three fold denying, (Mt 26:75), witnesses against our radical weakness.

* I always wonder Jesus' patience that had never gone out of his control. The King of Universe, second person of the Blessed Trinity, he was blamed, mocked, bitten and then crucified. On the cross, despite of the cruel treatment Jesus didn't damn the human race, but suffer until the all damns, curses, murders were swept away by his innocent blood. Now who is in Christ receives the forgiveness and seal of Love by the Holy Spirit. Because of that we can not blame God physically and we are free from eternal sin. As Paul says in (2Cor. 4:13), "But since we have the same spirit of faith as that shown in what has been written, *"I believed; therefore I spoke,"* we also believe, therefore we also speak." Who is in the Spirit will never blame God, instead, praise Him, sing to Him, bless Him, adore Him.

* Thanks the Holy Trinity in Christ Jesus for the constant guidance over our sinful flesh. Also thanks God for keeping us alerted through this message. My dear Friends, let's be attentive to what we deed or especially what we say towards the divine prime. Be sure, God is here, His ear attentively turns to what we think or what to say about Him. Let's pray now. *O Lord, save us from blasphemy and offensive acts. Thanks Jesus for your guardian keeping us blameless from the eternal sin. But there is something that depends from us as well. We remember Job, being afflicted by terrible calamities, his wife suggested to curse you, O Lord, (Job 2:9). But faithful Job preferred to die rather than put the blame on You, O Lord. Your servant Job preoccupied with submissive mind before You. Dear Lord Jesus, save us from troubles but whatever might be happened with us, let your holy name always will be glorified through us as it was given by Job, your faithful servant. Dear Heavenly Father, govern and defend us from eternal sin, so that we may truly please you through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.*

* The Epistle reading for today begins with quote from Psalm 115, "I believed, and therefore I have spoken." By spirit of faith we acknowledge that Jesus is the Lord. By the same Spirit we address the message to the world, Jesus died for our transgressions and rose from dead for our justification. We acknowledge before this world that only in Jesus we are kept and secure from the eternal sin. We acknowledge Jesus as the unshakable ground of our salvation. We acknowledge Jesus as the shelter and fortress for all who trust in Him. He is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

* In 2Cor. Paul encourages us to bear afflictions patiently. He said that troubles are momentary and they are incomparable with bliss of eternal life. We should remain in humble and reverent spirit before God no matter in what degree we may be afflicted. Paul's message is trustful to be acknowledged. And the message of another acknowledgement came from the Son of God, "who does God's will is my brother and sister and mother," (v.35). Beloved the Spirit of the Lord be with you always. Amen.