

# Reading for the Memorial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

16<sup>th</sup> July 2024

**First reading**

**Isaiah 7:1-9**

## **Isaiah tells the king not to fear**

In the reign of Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Razon the king of Aram went up against Jerusalem with Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, to lay siege to it; but he was unable to capture it.

The news was brought to the House of David. 'Aram' they said 'has reached Ephraim.' Then the heart of the king and the hearts of the people shuddered as the trees of the forest shudder in front of the wind. The Lord said to Isaiah, 'Go with your son Shear-jashub, and meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the Fuller's Field road, and say to him:

"Pay attention, keep calm, have no fear, do not let your heart sink because of these two smouldering stumps of firebrands, or because Aram, Ephraim and the son of Remaliah have plotted to ruin you, and have said:

Let us invade Judah and terrorise it and seize it for ourselves, and set up a king there, the son of Tabeel.

The Lord says this:

It shall not come true; it shall not be.

The capital of Aram is Damascus, the head of Damascus, Razon; the capital of Ephraim, Samaria, the head of Samaria, the son of Remaliah. Six or five years more and a shattered Ephraim shall no longer be a people.

But if you do not stand by me, you will not stand at all."

## **Responsorial Psalm Psalm 47(48):2-8**

*R./: God upholds his city for ever*

Great is the Lord and worthy to be praised  
in the city of our God.

His holy mountain rises in beauty,  
the joy of all the earth.

Mount Zion, the recesses of the North,  
is the city of the great King.

God is with her castles;  
renowned is he as a stronghold.

For lo! the kings assemble,  
they come on together;  
They also see, and at once are stunned,  
terrified, routed.

A trembling seized them there;  
anguish, like a woman's in labour,  
As though a wind from the east  
were shattering ships of Tarshish.

## **Gospel Acclamation**

**Ps118:24**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Train me, Lord, to observe your law,  
to keep it with my heart.

Alleluia!

## **Gospel Matthew 11:20-24**

### **It will not go as hard with Sodom on Judgement Day as with you**

Jesus began to reproach the towns in which most of his miracles had been worked, because they refused to repent.

‘Alas for you, Chorazin! Alas for you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. And still, I tell you that it will not go as hard on Judgement day with Tyre and Sidon as with you. And as for you, Capernaum, did you want to be exalted as high as heaven? You shall be thrown down to hell. For if the miracles done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have been standing yet. And still, I tell you that it will not go as hard with the land of Sodom on Judgement day as with you.’

### **Short reflection on the reading for today**

We like to imagine ourselves as having everything under control. Yet in so many ways we are not really in charge. So much happens in life that is outside our control. For example, we don't know how people regard us. We can offer our friendship, for example, but it's up to the other how to respond. Even Jesus could not control how others responded to him. He brought people the gift of God's presence but not everyone received that in him God was visiting his people.

Jesus laments the painful fact that his neighbours in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum did not respond to his message, after all the cures they had witnessed. He suggests that the pagan cities of Tyre and Sodom would have been much more responsive to his presence. The fact that people were graced by the Lord did not necessarily mean that they responded to that grace. We have been graced by the Lord in many ways. We have the gift of the Lord's presence in his word, in the sacraments, in each other. We spend our lives learning to respond to the many graces the Lord is always offering us.