

TRINITY 10

August 25 2019

Old Test: Jeremiah 8:4-12

Epistle: I Corinthians 12:1-11

Gospel: Luke 19:41-48

Standing...

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

It was the tradition of our churches on the 10th Sunday after Trinity
to read the account of the destruction of Jerusalem,
summarized and paraphrased from the historian Josephus
by Missouri-Synod Founder, C.F.W. Walther.
I'll spare you, but...

Let us pray. Father of all mercies, You who long to gather us as a hen gathers her chicks,
guard us against the shameful and wicked despising of Your Word, *even in the midst of
a pandemic*. Awaken a fear of You in our hearts through Your Holy Spirit, so that we
abide in Your Word and follow it. Amen.

Sitting...

Jesus rides towards Jerusalem weeping.
One might think our Lord's tears were because of the upcoming cross,
for He had indeed predicted His future death.
However, His tears were not for Himself,
they were for this unrepentant, rebellious city that He rides to.

See, Israel was the nation God nurtured.
He raised them from infancy,
bringing them out of Egypt and leading them to the Land He promised.
Jerusalem then was the city of God, the city of peace, as its name implies.
The place where the LORD set His Name
and God chose to dwell with Man.
It's where God placed His temple, His altar...
where He heard prayer and accepted sacrifices.
Jerusalem was God's self-chosen "home" on earth.
Not that God needed a place to live,

but because Mankind
needed a place to dwell with God.

Jerusalem had all the blessings,
with its reputation standing out like a precious jewel.
God defended and protected it wonderfully against mighty kings,
and gave them prophet after prophet who consistently called
for the people of Jerusalem to turn from their sins and false worship.
But what did they do to the prophets?
Listen to them?
Repent because of them?
No—they killed them.
And what did they do to the Temple?
They turned it from a house of prayer
into a den of thieves.

When the Lord sent His Word to His people,
they rejected it,
despised it—thought less of it,
mocked and scorned it,
and then, at last,
when the Word of God became flesh,
promised since Genesis 3:15,
they crucified Him.

Beloved, God is long-suffering, wishing that none should perish.
But at some point, His patience comes to an end,
for He will not overlook continual rebellion.
And thus, there's nothing left, but judgment.
Judgment by God, in Jerusalem's case,
by means of the Roman Empire.
All because they rejected the Messiah
who was riding into their midst.

And listen—if God brought this horrible judgment upon Jerusalem—
to where they would never again return to their former glory,
where if you go to Jerusalem today, you go as a tourist and not as a worshipper.
If He brought this horrible judgment upon
the city He loved, filled with His own people,
what makes us think we'll escape?

We, who have acquired a taste for rebellion and sin,
 and persist in unbelief,
 with many, not all, but many
 who use Covid as their excuse to despise God's word.

I know—I may sound like a member of Westboro Baptist right now,
 but a broken clock is right twice a day.

Refuse the visitation of peace,
 receive the visitation of wrath. (*repeat*)

This is why, Luther, regarding this text said,
 "This is a fearsome lesson.
 One that should grip our hearts and
 cause us never to forget it."

Jesus wept for His unrepentant city,
 and He weeps for those today who continue in their sin.
 Indeed, the Lord has sorrow for those who refuse to repent
 and those who despise His Word,
 those who rush carelessly forward into the judgement of God;
 a judgement which no one can survive.

No doubt, after Christ's ascension,
 apostles were sent to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins,
 beginning...guess where? In Jerusalem.
 Holy Baptism was held out as a means of salvation—
 not just to Jewish boys, but to all: men and women,
 boys and girls, Jew and Gentile alike.
 Yet, they didn't want a Messiah to die in their place,
 to be crucified,
 to have nails driven through His hands and feet,
 and to wear a crown of thorns.
 Those are the things that make for peace
 between God and man,
 but they refused that.

Thus, Jerusalem's wrath would result in a smoldering pile of rubble and corpses
 within 40 years after Jesus predicted it.

Orders were given for the Roman soldiers to spare neither the old,
 nor the young, the pregnant nor babes in arms.

And if it was suspected that a Jew swallowed his money...

you gut him—wide open—reach in and take it.

Once everyone was slaughtered,
 the stones that made up the Temple were hauled
 to the edge of the Temple Mount
 and then pushed over the side.
 You'll have to take my word for it,
 but those discarded stones—they stand there today,
 as a monument to Jerusalem's unbelief.

Beloved, Christ is visiting you today,
 but not to leave you in despair, or in fear of judgment.
 Today, the Lord comes to you with forgiveness, life and salvation,
 giving you true and lasting peace—
 the peace of God that surpasses all understanding.

Thus, we give thanks to God that He hasn't departed from this place
 as He did with Jerusalem.
 He continues to visit you with His preaching and teaching,
 making this house, a house of prayer.

No doubt, this life, this congregation, this world—it will all end.
 But life with Christ, within His Holy Christian Church—
 that life will never end.

For those who despise God's Word and His gifts, repent.
 Mourn your sinful condition, beat your chest and say,
"Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!"

And for those of you who don't despise His Word,
 those of you who desire His gifts,
 know that your sins are forgiven,
 eternal life is yours,
 you are God's child,
 this is His house,
 and you have His eternal peace.

Thanks be to Jesus, in His holy name. Amen.

Standing...

And now may the peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and
 minds through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.