

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“I call to God, and he hears my voice; he redeems my soul in safety. Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you.”

Jesus looks over the city during Holy Week and what is the situation? The people didn’t receive Jesus. Luke tells us, “And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, ‘Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.’” When Jesus weeps over Jerusalem in the Gospel reading, he’s weeping over unbelief and its consequences. Jesus weeps over the city that rejected him and all things that make for peace in him. God came to his own and his own did not receive him.

Even though you are not in the city of Jerusalem Jesus weeps over, you are warned not to suffer the same fate. Peace is found only in Christ. When God speaks about this peace he’s talking about atonement, reconciliation, and the forgiveness of your sins. Outside of Christ there’s no peace, you stand as God’s enemy in your sin.

Jesus fulfilled the whole Old Testament. Everything written in the law, the prophets, the Psalms, and all things Jesus fulfilled in his life, death, and resurrection. God promised it all would be fulfilled in Jesus. The patriarch and prophets wrote about this as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. The people trusted the word of God. God counted their faith in his promises as righteousness. They looked forward to and trusted in the promised Messiah and now here he has come and he is met with rejection.

God had called the people of Israel as his own people, but they gave into the culture around them. St. Paul asks what advantage the Jews have. Much in every way, he says. For to them was entrusted the oracles of God he writes in Rom 3. God gave his Word to the children of Israel. He sent them his prophets. He provided them with a place to worship in his temple. He taught them that he would provide the sacrifice to take away their sins. But they were attracted to the false worship of the surrounding nations instead. They sacrificed to Baal. They even sacrificed their own children to Molech, like how so many today promote the so-called right to sacrifice unborn child to a false god of independence or choice. They committed sexual immorality, not much different from how many churches today promote all kinds of sexual perversions. This holy people, set apart by God to be his own, had the very words of the living God. But they sold out to the world just like Esau sold his inheritance for a bowl of soup. Now when the Son of Man appeared they wanted him dead.

Their time has now come and gone. In the Epistle reading we heard, “What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, as it is written, ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.’” The rejection of Jesus is serious both spiritually and physically.

Spiritually, the rejection of Christ meant there were no peace and rest for their souls in this life or in the life to come. Without the shedding of Christ’s blood there is no peace with God. You stand under God’s wrath and condemnation and the opposite of peace. So too, apprehending or receiving Christ in God given faith imparts that peace with God through faith. It doesn’t mean you are going to be calm all the time. It doesn’t guarantee you will have a “peaceful” life in how the world defines it. What it does mean, however, is that your sin is no longer held against you but it is placed on Jesus and his righteousness is counted for you and placed on you. That’s the peace that Jesus is talking about here. It’s a clear conscience before God and the world. To know your sin is forgiven and you have eternal life gives peace no matter what you face. No one can take that away from you and it’s yours forever.

Physically the rejection of Jesus would see no peace in terms of their city. Jesus said, “For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear

you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.” Jerusalem would be destroyed and the Temple along with it because they rejected Christ. He had come to visit them and they killed him. To this day, Jerusalem is no special city, and the Jewish people are not the people of God because they have rejected the Messiah, Jesus. “They did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone.” They stumbled and were scandalized by Jesus. The nation of Israel is simply a nation in the world in the sense that any nation is. They don’t hold a special place in the heart of God but rather their day has come and gone. The chosen people of God is the church, the Bride of Christ bought and made spotless in the blood of Christ.

In the life to come the rejection of Jesus also has physical consequences. On the Last Day all people are raised bodily. Those who have rejected Christ physically are in hell in both soul and body. Only in Christ and by grace through faith in him is there a physical salvation and bliss with God in the new creation for all eternity. Both truths we confess in the Creeds every week and daily in our homes and for us Christians, this is a thing of vindication and hope.

Jesus weeps, then, over this rejection. He has come to his people, and they didn’t receive him and he knows the consequences. When Jesus comes to people it’s either in peace or judgment. Just the very fact that Jesus has come and is present isn’t always a good thing. Only in repentance and faith is the arrival and presence of Jesus for the good of people and for your benefit. The Lord weeps over the impenitence and apathy of his people. He weeps over their unbelief.

“And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, saying to them, ‘It is written, “My house shall be a house of prayer,” but you have made it a den of robbers.”’ Going into the Temple Jesus sees what he has been weeping over. His house had become something it wasn’t given to be. The people turned the Temple into a den of robbers in that they turned it into a place where people were cheated and deceived both financially and spiritually. God’s house had been turned into a worldly place as opposed to the holy and sacred place God had made it and had placed his name upon.

Just as Jesus weeps over our sin so too when we turn his house into something it isn’t we are called to repent. We are called to examine what it means that God’s house is a place set apart to be different than the world around us. The Temple is no more but Jesus is the Temple and as his Body, the Church he comes to us in appointed means and in this place. God’s house, the church, isn’t meant to be a place of commerce nor it is to be a place of entertainment, shallowness, or false teaching. We may not be selling things for profit in the narthex, but we still have lost sight of this sacred space.

The church is set apart as a holy place that is different than your front porch, sitting in your living room, watching a football game, or any other place. Those places all have their respective uses and that is good. This is something we understand. Probably when you were younger your mom told you do not throw a ball in the house or not to track dirty work boots across the kitchen floor. Those things are not for that space. Footballs are for sports venues and boots are for the fields and hog houses.

God’s church, it belongs to him, is the place where he comes in word and sacraments. If we understand that Jesus is actually here in this place through these means, that forms how we see and respond in this place. It becomes not simply a room but a “sanctuary” a sacred, holy place set apart for you to receive these gifts. If Jesus isn’t bodily present in his means, then it doesn’t matter how we treat this space and it can be multipurpose. Our worship then becomes open to adapting whatever we deem to be suiting at the time and subject to change. There is no longer a sense of awe, fear, and respect which we call reverence because worship and God’s house wrongly become our work and not God coming to us just as he came to the people in Jerusalem.

Knowing, however, how God works and what is going on before you right now this makes all the difference. You become like Moses who was told in Exodus when he speaks with God that the ground on which you are standing is

holy because God is actually here. You don't have to try and offer up something but rather you come in humility as a repentant sinner. This makes reverence and worship something that you respond to in awe, fear, shame, joy, and other things that move back and forth throughout the divine service. You experience shame as you confess your sin and then joy as your sin is forgiven. You are in awe as God's word is read and preached. You sit in awe as a child is baptized before your eyes and he dies and given new life here and now. There is a right and holy fear as you approach the altar knowing that the Lord's Supper is no child's play but it is the very Body and Blood of Jesus for you and you are as closer to him here than Mary was when she held Jesus in her arms.

You know who you are and who God is and what that means. You know that God and coming into his presence in worship is far from a safe thing. Worship isn't safe but God is good and that is how you approach in repentance and faith in Christ. And so, as a Christian at times you might even have a righteous anger like Jesus when God's house is not shown the reverence that is do it. To treat the house of God as a common place or a place that looks and sounds like the culture around you is to see God's house turned into a den of robbers and not the holy thing it is.

“And he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him, but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.” Jesus came and wept over Jerusalem. He came into the Temple and drove out the sellers. His words and actions were harsh but they served the purpose for which he came. He taught and preach and the people “were hanging on his words.” His words showed their sin and convicted them. He may have driven out with whips in the Temple but his words were driving them to himself.

Not long after this event Jesus would stand before accusers who wanted his life. As he stood before those who had been called to proclaim him he stood like a lamb who is silent before its shearers. Jesus came and he wept for his people and longed to gather under his wing. As he was nailed to the cross and lifted up from the earth his outstretched arms did indeed engulf his people. As he hung there dying and in his death he drew all people to himself and made peace with God that only he could make. He did this for you. He accomplished this for you. This rock of offense is your cornerstone and you who believe in him will never be put to shame. On that day women wept at his weep but in the midst of that weeping the cry of victory rang out. His word of “it is finished” is the word of your salvation.

Now here you are after this has all taken place. You sit here after the Lord has been crucified, risen, and ascended. The Temple is no more for it was destroyed and its worship no longer was godly after the Lord accomplished his work. You are God's people now. Your ancestors in the faith, your true ancestors are the ones who did not reject the Lord but instead who believed the word of God and by God's grace trusted in Christ. The faithful Old Testament people are your people as they looked forward to that day. Those Jews were Christians and the Gentiles who believed were grafted into this church of God by grace through faith in the same way. The Jews of today are a different religion and worship a false god. Jerusalem may have a great deal of history and worth a visit, but her time has come and gone for she is no longer the holy city, the city of peace.

You are God's people, the new Israel, the Church. As God's people, hang on to the words Jesus speaks to you. Repent of your sin and cling solely to your Savior, Jesus. He has come and comes again one day. Peace is yours in him for your sin is forgiven and you have peace with God through the blood of Christ. You are cleansed and stand upon this sure foundation of Jesus Christ. His is the one foundation just as you are his living stones made holy by water and the word. You are his holy bride and his prized delight. He has received you into his Kingdom and by the faith given you by the Holy Spirit, you receive him as your own. Welcome him with joy and gladness as your King. Come in reverence to receive his gifts in word and sacraments. Pray without ceasing to him and for that day when he comes again to take you to himself. Hang on to his words, the words of eternal life. Your peace. Your hope. Your life. Your Savior.

Jesus came into the world; he rode into Jerusalem all the way to cross. He rose from the grave on the third day and ascended into heaven forty days later. Now he is still with you even to the end of the age especially and in a saving way in his word and sacraments. He will indeed come again on the Last Day to judge the living and the dead. Baptized in

10<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity—August 9, 2026

Christ, this day for you will be a joyous day as the Father looks at you and doesn't weep. Instead, the Father will look at you and see the Son who has covered you with himself. Rather than weeping, the Lord will open his arms and welcome you bodily into his kingdom where there is no end. There the heavenly Jerusalem with all of God's saints will sing not a song of lament but a joyous song to Lamb at the Feast of Salvation and God will wipe away your tears. Until that day repent of your sin and cling solely to Christ who has accomplished your salvation and comes to you now. Your crucified and risen Lord is here for you. Taste and see that he is good and his steadfast love endures forever. Peace be with you.

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.