

Sermon for Trinity 10 – Luke 19:41-48

In the Name of the Father and of the Son ✠ and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

As predicted by the news and media for over a year now, the Great American Eclipse, as it's been called, will occur tomorrow, August 21st. Very close to our location is the path of totality, which is where the complete or total solar eclipse can be seen. The moon will block the sun's light over us for a short time. This predicted eclipse will result in us losing a few moments of sunlight during the middle of the day, but other than that, life will likely move on.

And our Lord also made a prediction in today's Gospel. As He looked upon city of Jerusalem, He wept and said that destruction would come upon it. He even gives specific details as to how this would happen: Her enemies would barricade her and surround her on every side. Jerusalem's walls and citizens (even children) would be torn down to the ground with not one stone even left upon another.

And as always, our Lord's prediction came true. Some forty years after His death and resurrection, in the year 70 AD, Jerusalem was destroyed. In the times after Christ's death, the city was in uproar. Men sought to control the temple. Through violence some sought to rule the upper or lower parts of the city. When the Roman emperor Caesar Nero sent a delegation to bring order, they murdered them. Soldiers of Judea even went about to try and take other Roman cities, though it was to little avail. Nero's successor Caesar Vespasian then sent his son Titus to wage war against Jerusalem. Titus laid siege to the city and blockaded it. Severe famine set in. Food was so scarce that people ate the leather from their shoes and worse. An innumerable multitude starved. Two walls were conquered and taken by the Romans. In the temple, the priests begging to have their lives spared were burned with fire by the Roman soldiers. All the young and old citizens were slaughtered. Those who tried to escape were captured by Roman legions outside the city and were sold as slaves.

Thus was Jerusalem, a most renowned city in the Middle East brought to a miserable, woeful end. Thus did God avenge the neglect and persecution of the Gospel, and put forth to all the world a sober example of His wrath and punishment. God would not even spare His own people to which He gave so glorious promises, which were even kinsman with His own Son, how much more would He punish other nations who reject His Gospel and grace?!?

So why did this horrid destruction of Jerusalem happen? Jesus gives us a clue. He lamented that Jerusalem did not know the things that made for peace. They thought they knew peace. They thought killing this insurrectionist Messiah called Jesus would be in compliance with the Roman government. It was a careful balance of peace the Jews wanted to maintain. More than that – they wanted Jesus dead. He was not the Messiah

they envisioned. The peace He brought was not the peace that they wanted. Truly, they did not know the time of their visitation.

What makes for peace for us? Do we hang our hope on a new medicine or treatment? Do we think, if only I had a little more money – I'd be at peace? If only I could lose a few more pounds – I'd be good? If only I could take back that foolish mistake – then I'd have no worries.

What makes for peace for us? The Prince of Peace who comes to the City of Peace as a Peace Offering. He makes for more than a break between wars, more than a peace secured by threat of violence. He makes for peace in the hearts of humanity by giving Himself as a ransom, by being the substitutionary atonement for the sins of the world. In Jerusalem, the sky was dark in the middle of the day when the Son of God expired. He, Himself, is the Lamb that is slaughtered. He Himself is the scape goat that is banished. He wipes clean the slate of men and their histories. He reconciles us to the Father. He rises from death, vindicated. He is innocent and His Word is true. And though His disciples are still full of fear, He comes to them, in His Body, through locked doors and breathes peace fulfilling the song of the angels to shepherds in their fields.

He makes for peace whether we want it or not. He weeps for those who deny themselves the benefit of His sacrifice. He still weeps and does not stop.

We are the Temples of the Holy Spirit and He comes to sweep us clean, to rid of us of that which seeks to buy and sell, which stands in the way of righteousness and faith. He comes to us, His Temples, with Peace in the Sacrament. There He prepares us to face, if we must, the destruction of our country, the destruction of our families, and the destruction of our bodies – because take they our life, goods, fame, child, and wife – though these all be gone – they yet have nothing won. The kingdom ours remaineth. We have peace with God. He has bought us and washed us. He has named us and fed us. He will not let us go. We are His and He is coming back to rescue us.

In the Sacrament, in His Word, in the Absolution, we are ready. We are ready to leave this war torn world of slander and vice. We cast our burdens upon the Lord. We rejoice in the peace that passes all understanding. He will sustain us and in Him there will be better days. As God said, so shall it be. Amen.

The Peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen. ✠BJF✠