

THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Study Notes for the Christian Layperson

by: Rev. Joshua V. Scheer



Luke 19:41-48 ESV

Author and Date:

The Holy Spirit caused Luke the physician to write the words of this Gospel around AD 55-60. This history occurs at the beginning of Holy Week, immediately after the account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (19:28-40).

⁴¹ And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it,

- Luke's Gospel alone reveals this insight into Jesus' loving care over the city of Jerusalem.
- This text picks up right as the triumphal entry is happening. On the one hand, there are those who are rejoicing at the coming of the King who comes in the name of the Lord (v. 38). On the other hand were Pharisees who tried to urge Jesus to rebuke those praising Him (v. 39).
- The phrase "drew near" is reminiscent of the concern of the "Day of Visitation" (see v. 44). The idea is that God has come to this place, and this city will reject Him. Just outside its great walls, Jesus will be executed as a criminal. His rejection will have consequences. Jesus knows this.
- There are only two occasions in the Gospels where Jesus weeps. The first is over the death of His friend Lazarus (John 11:35). This is the second occasion. This is not just shedding tears, but instead a full lament over what is to come. This weeping is a confirmation of the full humanity of Jesus, as He is truly our brother by the assumption of human flesh. He doesn't weep for His own suffering and death to come, but for the rejection of men resulting in the wrath of God still being upon them.
- Jerusalem has a rich history going back to Genesis. It is the political and religious center of the Jews. The point here is not the place so much as the people who will reject the Christ and be left in their sins and trespasses.

⁴² 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.

- Christ's work of salvation was for all, even those who rejected Him. He wills that all would be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth.
 - The word "peace" is the Hebrew concept of Shalom, which is like salvation, true bliss which is received by faith in Christ.
 - As a result of their obstinate rejection of Christ, His Word and teaching, they are blinded to the Truth. Instead of eternal peace found in believing the Gospel of Christ, they would experience the utter despair of being handed over to war with the Romans.
 - St. Paul reminds us of the veil over Jewish eyes because of their continued rejection of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:14).
- ⁴³ 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

- The Jewish historian Josephus describes, in great detail, the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. This is what Jesus is speaking about. This great fortress city, which Jesus is looking on, will become a place of desolation by the siege of a Roman army. The idol of this holy city would be destroyed.
- Our Lord is a consuming fire, often using pagans and so forth to punish and chastise in this world. Just as He used Babylonians and Assyrians and other great world powers to chastise His people, so also the Romans would be used in this way. The Lord rules over matters of this world with His Law, ultimately wanting His Gospel to reign through His Church and into the world.

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⁴⁴ 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.”

- The destruction of Jerusalem will involve the complete destruction of buildings, property, and the people.
- “Visitation” has the same root words as “bishop”, which we know from Scripture is another word for pastor. Christ Jesus is the Shepherd who visits His people. The idea is that God comes near to His people at certain times. The prophets spoke of this day of Visitation being a day of judgment (Jeremiah 8; Isaiah 10). Peter speaks of it as a day to glorify God (1 Peter 2). Christ’s visitation to His people at this time was not in judgment, but in grace and mercy. His message was one of the pure Gospel. Jerusalem was blind to His visitation.
- The application of this warning can come to us every time we hear the Gospel. Rejection of preaching is not only a violation of the Third Commandment, it is a rejection of our Lord’s Visitation at that time.

⁴⁵ And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold,

- Luke here summarizes the second cleansing of the temple, which is expanded in Mark 11 and Matthew 21. This occurs on the Monday of Holy Week. The first cleansing of the temple is recorded in John 2.
- This section of the passage serves to introduce chapter 20 with its contentions between the Jewish authorities and Jesus.
- The selling mentioned here is the sale of animals for sacrifices in the temple as well as other offerings to be made in the temple. The other Gospels include money changers who would take advantage of visitors wanting to pay the temple tax.
- Jesus is driven by righteous anger, for He is the Lord their God, a jealous God.

⁴⁶ saying to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a den of robbers.”

- Even Jesus, who is God in the flesh, cites Scripture, showing its proper use for us.
- Jesus uses two passages of the Old Testament prophets. The first comes from Isaiah 56:7, where God’s house is called a house of prayer. The second comes from Jeremiah 7:11, where the wickedness in God’s house is called a den of robbers.
- The place of worship for God’s people, for their hearing of His Word and believing in the promises around the sacrifices had been desecrated by the noise and greedy buying and selling of things meant to be a part of the people’s worship.

⁴⁷ 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,

- Jesus teaches in the temple during Holy Week. His teachings follow in the next chapters of Luke. They are teachings which brought Jesus into contention with the Jewish authorities.
- The chief parts of the ruling Sanhedrin are mentioned here – the chief priests, scribes, and principal men of the people. These three groups made up the chief council.
- The Jewish authorities have been following Jesus and growing in their hatred of Him. They first seek to try to destroy Jesus in His teachings and authority. Jesus silences all of their traps and tricks and in fact turns many of them back upon themselves like many of the Psalms recount (Psalm 35; Psalm 141).
- The plans of the authorities went further than to discredit Jesus and His teachings. They were plotting to kill Him. This activity began right after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11). It is not a strange thing among those who reject Christ, for even Herod sought to kill the child Jesus in Bethlehem (Matthew 2). This last part of chapter 19 introduces the eventual passion account we find in Luke (Luke 22:1-2).

⁴⁸ but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.

- Despite all of their attempts to catch Jesus in something heretical or worthy of charges, they could not find anything with which to convict Him.
- The common people did not outright reject Christ’s teachings. Many believed in Him as the Christ. Many more detected something unique about His teachings as one with authority.
- The Jewish authorities were afraid of the popularity that Jesus had with the people. On the one hand, they were usually the ones looked to as authorities and now the people had been turning to Jesus. On the other hand, their grip on power could be shaken by an uprising of the people against them.
- Despite the plotting and planning of the powers of this earth, it is notable that the Son of God was at the work of handing Himself over into death. No one would take His life. He would gladly give it out of love for the Father and for fallen humanity. At the proper time, Christ Jesus died for sinners.

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