

Saint Thomas' and Saint Thomas' of the Air Church  
Trinity X  
August 9, 2026  
rmcneely+

Today's Gospel transports us to the final week in Jesus' three-year earthly ministry.

Luke takes us to the Mt of Olives

Just outside and above the walls of Jerusalem.

Jesus is with the 12 Apostles

And is moments from His triumphal entry into Jerusalem;

Moments, before being heralded as "the One"

The Messiah;

For whom the Jews have waited for Centuries.

Luke pairs two events:

The first is the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem.

The second is Jesus' cleansing of the corruption of the Temple.

Only Luke writes of Jesus' lament for Jerusalem.

And no one else combines the doomed City with Jesus

Chastising the moneychangers.

Is there some message in this?

Let's see.

From the Mt of Olives, Jesus and the 12

Are treated to a magnificent view of Jerusalem.

The Temple dominates the landscape,

Glittering in gold and shining in white marble.

It must have been a sight that took your breath away.

Jesus is minutes away from entering the City

But He pauses to prophesy the demise of Jerusalem

And He prefaces the prophecy with this enigmatic statement:

“If thou hadst known,  
even thou,  
at least in this thy day,  
the things that belong unto thy peace!  
but now they are hid from thine eyes”

And then He proceeds to describe in horrific detail  
what will come to pass in Jerusalem some 40 years later.

In doing so, He gives us a rare glimpse into his two Natures:

His Divine nature reflects upon what only He knows is coming:  
The utter destruction of the beauty they behold at their feet.

40 years hence, the Romans would destroy the Temple, the City walls  
and everything within them.

They would brutally take the lives  
Of women and children  
Leaving their bodies rotting in the streets  
And not leaving one stone to stand upon another.  
The Temple never to rise again.

The specter of the murder and destruction are too much.

Jesus gives us a rare glimpse into His other Nature  
His human nature.

He is overcome and He weeps.

He concludes the prophecy with this bewildering statement:

“...because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation”.

Luke leaves us hanging and

Immediately takes us to the Temple and its Courtyards  
Where Jesus overturns the tables of the moneychangers  
And vendors

And scolds them with the famous tongue-lashing: “My house is a house  
of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves”

We are left to wonder

Why Luke chose to put these two events together.  
And what Jesus was telling us with His  
Enigmatic pronouncement.

Let's leave the enigma for last.

What is it Luke wants us learn from the prophecy of the destruction of  
Jerusalem

and the overturning of the moneychangers?

Is Luke suggesting a connection between these two events?

Is there a causal connection?

one event caused by the other?

Is Luke suggesting that the destruction of the Temple is the result of the  
corruption of the Temple leaders?

Jesus pointed out the den of thieves and took decisive and unambiguous  
action.

He angrily threw them out,  
Even fashioned a whip from a tent cord  
to acquaint them with their corruption.

When Jesus was done

There was left no doubt  
that the Temple regulations which made the people  
pay the moneychangers and vendors and thieves  
for no justifiable theological reason  
was an affront and an insult to God.

Was that corruption and the decay in religious morals

Over the next 40 years

Responsible for the collapse of Judaism

And ultimately manifested in the collapse of the Temple?

Had the Jews of Jerusalem drifted so far from God,

Become worshipful only of their laws

That they lost all connection with God

And all hope of saving the Temple?  
Had God withheld His protective Hand  
So that when the Romans attacked  
the Jews were helpless to stop  
the horrible bloodshed and destruction?

If so, is there a lesson in this for us, all these years  
and thousands of miles later?

Maybe.  
Let me pass on a tip I learned in Seminary:  
Sometimes the word Jerusalem  
Refers not only to the Holy City  
But to ourselves;  
You  
And me.

So was Jesus foreseeing the destruction not of a glorious City  
But of you and of me?  
Was it our own failings, corruption and moral decay  
That drove Him to tears?

Have we seen it in our lives?  
Has our enemy cast a trench about us?  
Have any of us felt compassed round about on all sides?  
That we are kept in on every side?  
Have we felt  
Brought down by the enemy?  
brought down, even with the ground?

What was it He said to preface the prophecy  
That enigmatic statement?

“If thou hadst known, even thou  
at least in this thy day,  
the things that belong unto thy peace,  
but now they are hid from thine eyes”.

If we had but known those things which make up our peace  
But which were hidden from us.

If we could know that the key to our peace is Jesus, the Christ.  
His sacrifice  
His propitiation of our sins,  
Has relieved us  
Has restored us to God.  
Has opened for us the pathway to eternal life.

So as we face these tough times in our fallen world  
If we are to avoid the disaster of a collapse  
If we are to restore the world to God  
Prevent the worldly destruction of our souls  
We must turn in prayer to Our Lord.

In today's Epistle to the Corinthians Paul faces the people's  
tendency to brag and gloat  
Over the gifts that God has showered upon them.  
Paul reminds them that all gifts come from God  
And that it is God who should be glorified  
Not the recipient.  
The gifts of God do not mark a superior person  
The gifts mark the obligation to use them to further God's will.

Paul reminds us that each of us has been given gifts from God  
A different gift to each one of us.  
No one gift is better than another.  
The body of Christ; His church  
Is whole, only when all of us devote the Gifts to God's purpose.

Unlike our ancient Jerusalem cousins  
    We know the time of our visitation.  
They had Jesus in their midst  
    Their salvation was right before their very eyes.  
    They could hear Him,  
    See Him,  
    Reach out and touch Him.  
But as He said, the things which would give them their peace,  
    “were hid from their eyes.”

We have no such impediment;  
    No such excuse.  
We know what makes up our peace  
    And we know the Gifts God has bestowed upon His people.

We know the day of our visitation is upon us.  
    Is now.  
We know the Jesus before us in spirit.  
We know the Gifts of God  
    Showered upon us.  
We know the things that form our peace.

And we have a choice.

Like the Jews in today's Gospel  
    We can remain blinded  
    Carry on in the corruption of our day  
    Risk the collapse of the Temple  
    The collapse of our mortal souls.

Or,  
We can draw upon the Gifts that God has given each of us  
    Purge the evil from our lives  
    Chase the corrupt money changers and vendors from our lives  
    Fill our hearts with the Love of God  
    And fulfill His will in our lives.

Is this the Day of our Opportunity?  
Is this the day we make that choice in our lives?  
Or are the things that belong to our peace  
    Still hid from our eyes?  
Even though He is right before us?