

## Your Saviour Weeps.

Text: Luke 19:41-44

1) Over Jerusalem

Suggested Hymns:

2) Over the world

191, 461, 305, 304, 263

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Luke 19:41-44, <sup>41</sup> *Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it,* <sup>42</sup> *saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.*

<sup>43</sup> *For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side,* <sup>44</sup> *and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Our text is an earnest word of Scripture. The Lord Jesus is weeping over Jerusalem and giving expression to a heart-breaking lament. It is unusual to see a strong man weep.

We seldom see Jesus in tears in the Sacred Record. The two other occasions are at the grave of Lazarus,<sup>1</sup> and the added tears of Jesus to His prayers in His Passion.<sup>2</sup>

It is a very moving sight, one to touch the heart, to see Jesus weep. We like to think of Jesus, as in that moment of transfiguration on the mount, when He shone forth in His heavenly glory. We like to think of Jesus as the majestic Lord stilling the wind and the waves.

We are drawn to Jesus when He takes the little children into His arms and blesses them. We worship Jesus as our Saviour in the Garden and on the Cross. We fall down in adoration when we see our risen Lord.

But when we see Jesus weep, our heart melts, and we are inclined to weep with Him.

You maybe familiar with that wonderful painting of Jesus sitting on the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem. The anguish of His heart is written on His face.

In spirit we can substitute any place and any city for the one depicted in the painting, and the figure of the Saviour remains the same. He still weeps over the world as He once wept over Jerusalem.

The theme for today is *Your Saviour Weeps*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

### **1. Your Saviour Weeps Over Jerusalem.**

What was the cause for His tears? They occurred at a moment when no one would expect His tears. It was Palm Sunday. Jesus was acclaimed by the multitude *“Hosanna! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ The King of Israel!”*<sup>3</sup>

Jesus reaches the heights of the Mount of Olives and the city is spread out before His view. Here, in the midst of the songs of welcome, Jesus wept. His tears were expressive of feelings so contrary to those which the multitude shared. They sang and rejoiced, but Jesus wept.

Why did the sight of Jerusalem call forth those tears? The cause was the spiritual ignorance of its inhabitants. Our text says, *“If you had known, even you, especially in this your day ...* The implication is clearly this: they did not know.

In spite of the extravagant acclaim of the people Jesus knew that this emotion of the masses was short-lived. Today they hailed Him as King, but five days later they would nail Him to the cross.

They could have known. They should have known. God had been gracious to them. Jesus was the Helper in their troubles. God sent them prophets. God promised them the Messiah.

Jesus Christ, the Messiah, had worked and lived among them for three years, preaching the Words of Life, performing His miracles, and expounding the Scriptures.

When He called the weary and heavy-laden to Himself to give them rest, the response was next to nothing; but when He fed the multitude with bread, they wanted to make Him their king. That was spiritual ignorance. They rejected Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. They looked for a temporal Messiah who could give them the full and abundant life here and now; but when Jesus offered them the bread from heaven, it did not suit their taste.

They claimed kinship with God as His children, but rejected and denied God's Son in their midst. They wanted freedom from the yoke of Rome, but they rejected the freedom from sin and hell which Jesus offered.

When His miracles proved His claims, they declared Jesus to be in league with the devil. At the moment when the people welcomed Him as the Son of David, the leaders plotted His destruction.

They are like white sepulchres or graves, outwardly beautiful and clean, but inwardly full of dead men's bones. They could thank God that they were better than other people, but then in their self-righteousness, they rejected the righteousness which alone avails before God.

Seeing this spiritual ignorance, Jesus could not restrain His tears. They did not know the things that belonged to their temporal and eternal welfare.

Jesus weeps because they did not recognise the time of God's gracious visitation. ***"If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace!"***

The fathers had killed the prophets and stoned those whom God had sent to them. Their children were no better. This was Jesus' time in their midst, a special day of grace. God did not send Moses, Elijah, or another prophet, but His only-begotten Son. But even this special time of grace was not recognised.

Jesus wept because it was drawing to a close; then it would be too late to think of those things which belonged to their peace. At that very moment Jesus was on His way to the cross, to offer His life as the Lamb of God, to fulfil the

Scriptures. They could and should have recognised Jesus and accepted Him in faith.

Even a Roman centurion exclaimed when he saw these things come to pass: ***“Truly this was the Son of God!”***<sup>4</sup> But Jerusalem cursed herself and called down His blood upon her children.

They were spiritually blind, they did not heed the call of Jesus for them to repent. They felt secure in the fact that they were Abraham’s children and therefore would inherit the promise. His day of grace passed by unheeded.

God had certainly been gracious to them. Prophets, priests, and finally God’s Son proclaimed God’s will concerning man’s salvation. Innumerable blessings were enjoyed. Opportunities were granted. It seemed God’s day of grace was endless. But in spite of all those things, Jesus had to complain so bitterly over Jerusalem: ***“If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace!”***

Our text continues, ***But now they are hidden from your eyes.*** They were hidden because they had already rejected Christ. Their minds were closed.

This reminds us of Luke 13:34,<sup>34</sup> ***“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!”***

These words of Jesus are full of deepest compassion. The Pharisees are cold and hard, but the heart of Jesus is filled with deepest sadness because of their unyielding and the coming judgement.

The view of Jerusalem called forth tears from Jesus. They were tears of love, tears of earnest intercession that they might learn to know and believe the things which belonged to their peace.

Jesus wept over Jerusalem because He saw the inevitable destruction coming upon the city. <sup>43</sup> ***For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side,*** <sup>44</sup> ***and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another.***

All this happened, our text says, “*because you did not know the time of your visitation*” When Israel was in Egypt and was plagued by Pharaoh, God sent deliverance through Moses.

When Sennacherib threatened Jerusalem, God sent rescue through an angel.<sup>5</sup> But when the Romans sent their armies, there was none to help, because the time of grace had ended.

Is it any wonder that the loving Saviour wept when He saw these things to come? His tears were a final earnest call to repentance. Jerusalem should pause and reflect before it would be too late.

## **2. Your Saviour Weeps Over The World.**

As Jesus was concerned about the spiritual welfare of men in His day and moved to tears because they did not know the things that belonged to their peace, so He is still concerned about all people today.

In the state of exaltation Jesus does not of course weep as in the state of humiliation. Nevertheless His love is so great that, humanly speaking, Jesus still weeps when His Gospel of salvation and His day of gracious visitation is so often spurned by many people.

Jesus is the Saviour of the world. He bore the world's sin. He wants all people to be saved. We read in Ezekiel 33:11, *“Say to them: ‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?’*”

And in 1 Timothy 2:4 we are expressly told that God *desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

And we read in 2 Peter 3:9, *“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*”

Jesus has commanded His disciples to make known this salvation to all people. Jesus still calls people to repentance in His holy Word. He is concerned about them, because He died for them, and He wants them to live with Him.

How it must sadden His heart and deeply grieve Him when many people still go heedlessly on their way, indifferent to His love, and cold to His appeal. We can see Jesus seeing the world of men and weeping tears of entreaty and earnest supplication over them because they do not want to know the things that belong to their peace.

Jesus weeps because the spiritual ignorance which He bewailed in His day is still rampant among men. In spite of the wide-spread proclamation of the Gospel, so many people do not know that Jesus alone is the Way to the Father.

So many are still trying to reach heaven through their own good works. The teaching of Modernism. The rejection of Jesus as Saviour, as the Son of God. The denial of the saving power of His blood. Spiritual ignorance is still stalking the land. Jesus weeps because many people do not know the things that belong to their peace.

These people do not recognise God's day of gracious visitation. God grants a time of grace. His Word is freely proclaimed. He causes them to know and experience how gracious the Lord is. God's time of grace is blessing our land. God's grace is bestowed upon our Church. We have been blessed with over a century of Gospel preaching.

God's grace is also shining upon us individually. We can hear His Word. We can read His word. We can draw near to Him in prayer. He has received us as His own in Holy Baptism. He wants to strengthen our faith in His Holy Supper, and He offers comfort in sorrow and strength for our tasks.

But remember, this day of grace is short, because our life is short. How long this grace will last is uncertain, because our life is uncertain. Hence we read in Psalm 95:7-8, <sup>7</sup> *For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture, And the sheep of His hand. Today, if you will hear His voice:* <sup>8</sup> *“Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, As in the day of trial in the wilderness.*

Do not spurn His grace and give Him cause to weep over you. Do not let this day of grace pass by unheeded.

Jesus weeps because people pass by the one thing needful. In the hustle and bustle of our complex life false values are often set on passing things.

In their effort to find contentment people pass by the peace of God that passes all understanding. In their struggle to secure riches, they neglect the true riches of God in Christ Jesus. In their efforts to find comfort and hope they do not see the Rock of Ages. Spiritual blindness hides from their eyes the things that belong to their peace.

Your Saviour weeps over you, too, if you go on in your sins and trample His holy blood under foot, if you neglect His holy Word, if you despise His Holy Supper, and if you permit the interest and cares of life to take the first place in your heart. Oh, cause Him no tears.

You caused Jesus unspeakable anguish when He died for you on the cross. Do not let your Saviour weep over you, but rather go to Jesus in faith and permit Him to give you the things that will make for your eternal peace.

Finally, let the tears of Jesus soften your hearts. Let them move you to tears over your fellow-men, and urge you to redouble your efforts to make known His love among the nations. Instead of tears, there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.

Let us close with the words of the hymnist,<sup>6</sup>

Delay not, delay not, O sinner, draw near,  
The waters of life are now flowing for Thee.  
No price is demanded, the Saviour is here;  
Redemption is purchased, salvation is free. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

---

<sup>1</sup> John 11:35

<sup>2</sup> Heb. 5:7

<sup>3</sup> John 12:13

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 27:54

<sup>5</sup> 2 Chronicles 32:21-22

<sup>6</sup> Hymn 304