



Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Luke 21: 5-11.

While some people were speaking about how the temple was adorned with costly stones and votive offerings, Jesus said, "All that you see here? the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down." Then they asked him, "Teacher, when will this happen? And what sign will there be when all these things are about to happen?" He answered, "See that you not be deceived, for many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and 'The time has come. 'Do not follow them! When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for such things must happen first, but it will not immediately be the end." Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be powerful earthquakes, famines, and plagues from place to place; and awesome sights and mighty signs will come from the sky."

Luke 21:5-11.

Introductory Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank you for this special time I have with you. It's one of the few calm moments of the day. Your presence reassures me that I don't have to endure the trials of the day alone. You are my strength and my peace. I wish to abide in your love.

Petition:

Jesus, help me to keep hoping despite the crises in my life.

1. Temple of Doom:

For the Jews, the Temple in Jerusalem was the center of religious and cultural life. It contained the Holy of Holies, the sanctuary that once housed the Ark of the Covenant. The people were proud of the Temple, but Jesus warns them that the day will arrive when it will be destroyed (as indeed it was, in A.D. 70). Yet the end of the Temple will not be the end of religion. Jesus himself will remain with us, as he does to this day, in the Eucharist. Likewise, no matter what else passes away — our house, our office, our school — Christ remains. Does that belief fill me with confidence?

2. Be Not Deceived:

Jesus doesn't directly answer the question about when the Temple will be destroyed. Rather, he tries to get his listeners to focus on what is really important: their faith. Our Lord warns them not to listen to the wrong people. Throughout the course of a normal day, to whom do we listen? Whose voices are on our radios, our TV sets? Who really has our ear day-by-day? Worldly talk-show hosts? The news media's "instant experts"? MTV gurus? Jesus cautions us that the people we listen to might affect the quality of our lives — and the quality of our eternity. Do I judge carefully, then, the voices I listen to?

3. Do Not Be Terrified:

Tsunamis, floods, terrorist attacks, wars, abortion, euthanasia -- is the world a nicer place today than in Jesus' time? Our Lord was no stranger to bad news. He knew about the tower in Siloam that killed 18 people (see Luke 13:4) -- and he knew what awaited him on Good Friday. Yet he always remained hopeful and encouraged the best in people. As his followers, we too must be witnesses to hope. We need to brighten the lives of those around us. More importantly we need to remind others that God will win in the end. "Good, not evil, has the last word," Pope John Paul II told the general audience of Oct. 17, 2001, "God triumphs over the hostile powers, even when they seem great and invincible."

Conversation with Christ:

Lord, I know in my mind that you will win in the end. If only my heart would believe that, too! Grant me this grace. Grant that my life will show that kind of optimism at every moment.

Resolution:

I will make a small sacrifice or offer up a special prayer for someone suffering today.