



Comforting the Lord as He Weeps: On Palm Sunday

The Holy Gospel, my beloved brethren, says this in its account of the Lord's Entry into Jerusalem: *And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it* (Luke 19:41).

People's hearts are all the same. If someone is weeping, what do we do? We approach him, ask him what he is weeping about, and try to comfort him in some way. Sometimes one becomes so sorry for the person in distress that one feels ready to give up one's soul, if only his grief would be made lighter. Let us now approach the Lord, too, and ask: "Lord, about what are You weeping?"



Bishop Benjamin

About what, in fact, was the Lord weeping on the great day of His Entry into Jerusalem? The Lord is everywhere present. Not only the human heart, but even his hidden thoughts, cannot be hidden from His omniscient eyes. And looking upon the people with His eyes – which are said in Scripture to be one hundred times brighter than the sun, foreknowing all the ends of the universe – He foresaw the end of Jerusalem. He knew what was in store for this venerable and ancient city. He knew the inconstancy of the people and crowds that would meet Him rapturously, but soon demand His crucifixion. He saw with His



eyes the many crosses around Jerusalem, upon which His crucifiers would be crucified. He saw the horrors awaiting the city during the invasion of the Emperor Titus in 70 A.D. This is why He wept for Jerusalem, foreseeing the horrors and destruction of the city as He gazed upon it.

But the Gospel tells us that today, too, the Lord is weeping. Why, then, is the Lord now weeping? For now He is not on earth, but in the Heavenly Jerusalem. Instead of a donkey, He sits upon the flaming Cherubim; instead of the earthly Jerusalem, He abides in ineffable glory at the right hand of God; and instead of the modest suite of the Apostles, He is surrounded by a countless multitude of bodiless spirits and heavenly beings. Then about what is the Lord now weeping?

He is weeping over how we grieve Him; over how we frequently renounce Him by our terrible deeds; over how thousands of unfaithful people are now shamefully denying Him and mocking Him. He is weeping, too, over how our hearts have become hardened, over how we are losing the truth and cruelly offending Him Who by His Divine Blood redeemed the entire human race.

When the Lord entered Jerusalem, the multitude spread their garments and cut down branches from trees, waving them as the children cried out: *Hosanna to the Son of David* (Matthew 21:8-9). What can we now do for the Lord, when He is in Heaven, to comfort Him? Now we, too, can spread our garments under the feet of Christ. Upon reaching home, let us open our wretched storehouses and offer at least some spare pay to a needy person. This pay will be our garment cast before the Lord, upon which He will tread when He comes in glory – for, according to His words, that which we do for one of the least of the brethren, we do for Him.

We can also take palm branches into our hands, waving them to greet the Lord. We all see that martyrs are depicted on icons with palm branches. This is a symbol of the victory over the passions and the flesh, a symbol with which the Lord has crowned them. Let us try to defeat something ugly in ourselves. Our age is one of resentment and extreme self-love. Therefore, if we now feel offended by anyone, let us forgive him. Let us restrain ourselves, compelling the passion of self-love to subside. Now a wide wave of fleshly passions has overflowed into the world, and nearly seven-tenths of the world is under the power of Satan and has been seized by the sin of fornication. We need to defeat these passions; we need to refrain from them; we need to overcome the callousness that accompanies them with at least small good deeds. And if we will defeat these evil habits, replacing them with good deeds, we will raise a palm branch to Christ. The Gospel says that the multitude cried out: “Hosanna!” And we, too, can cry out to the Lord “Hosanna!” – but not with our mouths, but with our hearts and our entire lives. What does “Hosanna” mean? It is a praise glorifying God, as the Apostle Paul says: *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him* (Colossians 3:17). Let us do the same, crying out “Hosanna!” with our entire lives.

In order to do this we must have two vigilant guardians: the memory of death and the continual remembrance of God, for it is written in Scripture: *Seek ye Me, and ye shall live; Remember thy end, and thou shalt never do amiss* (Amos 5:4; Ecclesiasticus 7:36).

Thus, let us offer our pay as garments to the Lord and our victory over the passions as palm branches, keeping hold of the memory of death and the memory of God, and crying out to Him with our entire lives: “Hosanna!” And then we will comfort the Lord and our souls shall live unto the ages of ages. Amen.



Translated from the [Russian](#).