

Vespers of Palm Sunday

(Reader's service - for use when there is no priest)

Reader: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

O Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of good things, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *(x3)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; O Lord, blot out our sins; O Master, pardon our iniquities; O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. *(x3)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. *(x12)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O come let us worship God our King.

O come let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Psalm 103

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire, Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back for ever and ever.

The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid. The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them. Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth.

He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst. Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice.

He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, To bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted. There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares.

He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad. Young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. But man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening.

How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, whom Thou hast made to play therein.

All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled. Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works. Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being. May my words be sweet unto Him, and I will rejoice in the Lord. O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down, Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *(x3)*

Lord, have mercy. *(x12)*

Blessed Is The Man

People: Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in Him with trembling!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Salvation belongs to the Lord! Thy blessing be upon Thy people!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *(x3)*

Reader: Lord, have mercy. *(x3)*

Lord, I Call (Tone 6)

People: Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me! Hear me, O Lord! Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me! Receive the voice of my prayer when I call upon Thee. Hear me, O Lord! Let my prayer arise in Thy sight as incense, and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord!

Reader: Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips. Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins. With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chosen. The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head. For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been. They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto hades. For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away. Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity. The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by. With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication.

I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare. When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths. In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare. I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me. Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul. I have cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my hope, my portion art Thou in the land of the living. Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low. Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I. Bring my soul out of prison that I may confess Thy name.

People: *(Tone 6)* The grace of the Holy Spirit today has assembled us. Taking up Thy Cross we sing: “Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”

Reader: The righteous shall wait patiently for me until Thou shalt reward me.

People: *(Repeat 'The grace of the Holy Spirit...')*

Reader: Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice.

People: *(Tone 6)* Today the Word of God the Father, the co-eternal Son, Whose throne is heaven and Whose footstool is earth, humbles Himself and comes from Bethany, riding on a dumb beast, the foal of an ass. The children of the Hebrews hold branches in their hands. They praise Him crying out: “Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes, the King of Israel!”

Reader: Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

People: *(Repeat 'Today the Word of God the Father...')*

Reader: If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.

People: *(Tone 6)* O new Israel, church of the Gentiles, assemble today and sing with the Prophet Zechariah: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy King is coming to thee! He is meek, bearing salvation, riding on the colt of an ass.” Celebrate with the children, holding palms in thy hands: “Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes, the King of Israel!”

Reader: For Thy name's sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited patiently for Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

People: *(Repeat 'O new Israel, church of the Gentiles,...')*

Reader: From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord.

People: *(Tone 6)* By Thy command, O loving Lord, Thou didst raise Lazarus Thy friend from death. His flesh had been given over to corruption, and he was in the power of death four days. By this, Thou didst foretell Thy holy Resurrection for us. Today, Thou dost mount an untamed colt as Thy chariot, foretelling the conversion of the Gentiles. Thy beloved Israel offers Thee a hymn of praise from the mouths of innocent children, as they see Thee enter the Holy City, O Christ, six days before the Feast of Passover.

Reader: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

People: *(Repeat 'By Thy command, O loving Lord,...')*

Reader: O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples.

People: *(Tone 6)* Six days before the Feast of Passover Jesus entered Bethany. His disciples asked Him: "Where should we prepare for Thee to eat the Passover?" He answered: "When ye have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house which he enters, and tell the master of the house: "The Teacher says to thee: Here I shall eat the Passover with my disciples.""

Reader: For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, and the truth of the Lord abideth for ever.

People: *(Repeat 'Six days before the Feast of Passover...')*

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

People: *(Tone 6)* The grace of the Holy Spirit today has assembled us. Taking up Thy Cross we sing: "Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Reader: Now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

People: *(Repeat 'The grace of the Holy Spirit...')*

O Gladsome Light

People: O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal Father, heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ! Now that we have come to the setting of the sun, and behold the light of evening, we praise God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For meet it is at all times to worship Thee with voices of praise, O Son of God, and Giver of life! Therefore, all the world doth glorify Thee!

Prokeimenon

Reader: The Great Prokeimenon in the sixth tone: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: The Lord is robed with strength and hath girt Himself.

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: For He hath made the world so sure that it shall not be moved.

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days.

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: The Lord is King

People: He is robed in majesty!

Old Testament Readings

Reader: The Reading from Genesis

[Genesis 49:1-2, 8-12]

And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days: "Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob, And listen to Israel your father.

“Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father’s children shall bow down before you. Judah is a lion’s whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him?

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people. Binding his donkey to the vine, And his donkey’s colt to the choice vine, He washed his garments in wine, And his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk.

Reader: The reading from the Prophecy of Zephaniah

[Zephaniah 3:14-19]

Sing, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; You shall see disaster no more.

In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: “Do not fear; Zion, let not your hands be weak. The Lord your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.” “I will gather those who sorrow over the appointed assembly, Who are among you, To whom its reproach is a burden. Behold, at that time I will deal with all who afflict you; I will save the lame, And gather those who were driven out; I will appoint them for praise and fame In every land where they were put to shame.

Reader: The reading from the Prophecy of Zechariah

[Zechariah 9:9-15]

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

And he shall destroy the chariots out of Ephraim, and the horse out of Jerusalem, and the bow of war shall be utterly destroyed; and there shall be abundance and peace out of the nations. And he shall rule over the waters from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

And you, by the blood of your covenant, have sent forth your prisoners out of the pit that has no water. You shall sit in strongholds, you prisoners of the assembly; and for one day of your sojourning I will recompense you double. For I have bent you for Myself like a bow, O Judah, I have filled it with Ephraim; and I will raise up your children, O Zion, against the children of the Greeks, and handle you like the sword of a warrior. And the Lord shall be over them, and His arrow shall go forth like lightning. And the Lord God Almighty shall sound the trumpet and go forth in the noise of His threatening. The Lord Almighty shall defend them!

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (*x12*)

Vouchsafe, O Lord

Reader: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages. Amen. Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master, grant me understanding of Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy statutes. O Lord, Thy mercy endureth for ever; disdain not the works of Thy hands. Unto Thee is due praise, unto Thee is due song, unto Thee glory is due, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*x3*)

Aposticha

People: (*Tone 8*) Rejoice and be glad, O City of Zion! Exult and be joyful, O Church of God! Thy King is coming in righteousness. He rides on a colt, the foal of an ass. The children sing His praises: "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed art Thou, O greatly merciful One! Have mercy on us!"

Reader: Out of the mouths of babes and infants Thou hast fashioned perfect praise!

People: (*Tone 8*) Today the Savior comes to Jerusalem, fulfilling the Scriptures. He is greeted with palms and a carpet of clothes. All know it is He: the Lord, Whom the Cherubim praise. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed art Thou, O greatly merciful One! Have mercy on us!

Reader: O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is Thy Name in all the earth!

People: (*Tone 2*) O gracious Lord, Who ridest upon the Cherubim, and art praised by the Seraphim, now Thou ridest like David on the foal of an ass. The children sing hymns worthy of God, while the priests and scribes blaspheme against Thee. By riding an untamed colt, Thou hast prefigured the salvation of the Gentiles, those wild beasts, who will be brought from unbelief to faith. Glory to Thee, O merciful Christ, our King and the Lover of man!

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

People: (*Tone 6*) The grace of the Holy Spirit today has assembled us. Taking up Thy Cross we sing: "Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Reader: Now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

People: (*Repeat 'The grace of the Holy Spirit...'*)

Prayer of St. Symeon

People: Lord now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou has prepared before the face of all peoples: a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (*x3*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O Most-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; O Lord, blot out our sins; O Master, pardon our iniquities; O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*x3*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Troparia

People: *(Tone 1)* By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy passion, Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God. Like the children with the palms of victory, we cry out to Thee, O Vanquisher of Death: “Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord.”

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

People: *(Tone 4)* When we were buried with Thee in baptism, O Christ God, we were made worthy of eternal life by thy Resurrection. Now we praise Thee and sing: “Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord!”

Dismissal

People: O Christ, bless!

Reader: Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God have mercy on us!

People: Amen. Preserve, O God, the holy Orthodox faith and Orthodox Christians, unto ages of ages.

Reader: Most Holy Theotokos, save us!

People: More honorable than the cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim: without defilement you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos, we magnify you!

Reader: Glory to Thee, O Christ, our God and our hope, glory to Thee!

People: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. O Christ, bless!

Reader: May He who deigned to sit upon the foal of an ass for our salvation, Christ our true God, through the prayers of His most pure Mother, of the holy, glorious, and all-laudable Apostles, of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.