

Study Guide: Palm Sunday and the Tears of Sovereign Mercy

March 29, 2026

This study guide is designed to facilitate a deep understanding of the events of Palm Sunday, the theological significance of the Triumphal Entry, and the dual nature of Jesus Christ as both Sovereign King and Merciful Savior. The following sections provide a comprehensive review of the teachings surrounding His final entrance into Jerusalem and the "Tears of Sovereign Mercy" He shed for a blind and hostile world.

Part I: Short-Answer Quiz

Instructions: Answer the following questions in two to three sentences based on the provided text.

1. According to the text, what specific actions did the soldiers take to mock Jesus Christ in the Praetorium?
 2. What prophetic significance is attached to Jesus Christ riding into Jerusalem on a donkey's colt?
 3. How did the crowd's behavior on Palm Sunday contrast with their actions only five days later?
 4. How does the speaker define the unique combination of "Sovereignty" and "Mercy" found in Jesus Christ?
 5. Why did Jesus Christ tell the Pharisees that the stones would cry out if His disciples were silenced?
 6. According to the analysis of Luke 19:41-44, why did Jesus Christ weep as He drew near to Jerusalem?
 7. In the context of the sermon, what is the significance of the "visitation" that the people of Jerusalem failed to recognize?
 8. What is the distinction made in the text between "mercy" and "pity"?
 9. How does the concept of "self-denial" relate to Jesus Christ's intentional journey toward Jerusalem?
 10. What role should the church play in meeting the needs of the community, as described in the concluding remarks?
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Part II: Answer Key

1. The soldiers led Him into the hall called the Praetorium, clothed Him in purple, and placed a crown of thorns on His head. They saluted Him mockingly as the "King of the Jews," struck Him with a reed, spat on Him, and bowed their knees in fake worship before leading Him away to be crucified.
2. This act fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah, which stated that the King would come to Zion gentle and riding on a donkey's colt. It demonstrated that the Lord of heaven and earth did not enter with worldly magnificence but with meekness and humility.
3. On Palm Sunday, the multitude rejoiced and shouted "Hosanna," laying their coats and branches on the road to honor Him as the King. However, only five days later, the same people would follow their leaders and shout "Crucify Him," forsaking the One they had previously celebrated.
4. While most people see sovereignty and mercy as contrary qualities, Jesus Christ unites them perfectly as a Peerless and Matchless Being. He possesses supreme authority over all creation—including the power to make rocks praise Him—yet He uses that power to express tenderhearted, sovereign mercy toward the lost.
5. Jesus Christ insisted that He must and will be praised because the entire design of the universe is for Him to receive honor. If human beings refuse to acknowledge His Lordship, the very elements of creation, such as stones, are prepared to fulfill that purpose by crying out in His praise.
6. He wept because He saw the spiritual blindness and impending misery of the city, knowing they would soon be destroyed by their enemies. His tears were not for a failed plan, but for the hardness of heart in a people who rejected the peace He offered.
7. "Visitation" refers to the moment God visited His people through His Son, Jesus Christ, to offer salvation and peace. Because the people did not understand or receive Him, they "stumbled over the stumbling stone," leading to their eventual judgment and the destruction of Jerusalem.
8. The text asserts that mercy without action is merely pity, which is just a feeling of sorrow for someone. True mercy, as modeled by Jesus Christ, is "tenderly moved" and "self-denying," but it must also "intend to help" by actively moving toward the needs of others.
9. Self-denial is defined as moving intentionally toward suffering and death to meet the needs of a broken world. Jesus Christ modeled this by choosing to enter Jerusalem—knowing the pain, mockery, and death that awaited Him—to provide a sacrifice for the sins of mankind.
10. The speaker argues that the church has historically failed by giving the job of helping those in need to other institutions, which has resulted in people being "enslaved" to

their needs. He calls for the church to "take back that ground" by being tenderhearted and reaching out to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the community.

Part III: Essay Questions

Instructions: Use the Source Context to develop detailed responses to the following prompts.

1. **The Theology of the Triumphal Entry:** Discuss how the use of a donkey's colt, the spreading of garments, and the cries of "Hosanna" define the specific nature of the Kingdom Jesus Christ was establishing.
 2. **Sovereignty in the Face of Rejection:** Analyze the argument that the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus Christ were not "failures" of His plan but were instead the "fulfillment" of His sovereign will.
 3. **The Anatomy of Divine Tears:** Explore the significance of Jesus Christ weeping over Jerusalem while simultaneously "giving them over" to their hardness of heart. How does this illustrate the concept of "Sovereign Mercy"?
 4. **The Humility of the Son of God:** Using the references from Philippians 2 mentioned in the text, explain how Jesus Christ transitioned from being "equal with God" to taking on the "nature of a servant" and the implications this has for His followers.
 5. **Practical Mercy in the Modern Church:** Based on the sermon's conclusion, outline the three characteristics of Christ-like mercy (tenderly moved, self-denying, and intending to help) and explain how they should be applied by believers today.
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Part IV: Glossary of Key Terms

- **Bethphage:** A village located near the Mount of Olives where Jesus Christ sent His disciples to find the donkey and colt for His entry into Jerusalem.
- **Hosanna:** A cry of praise or adoration, literally meaning "Save now," used by the multitudes to greet Jesus Christ as the Son of David.
- **Mercy:** A quality of Jesus Christ characterized by being tenderly moved by the sorrow of others, involving self-denial and a direct intention to provide help.
- **Mount of Olives:** The location from which Jesus Christ descended toward Jerusalem during His Triumphal Entry and where the disciples began to rejoice and praise God.
- **Palm Sunday:** The day marking the original entrance of the Lord of heaven and earth into Jerusalem, characterized by the use of palm branches and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.

- **Pharisees:** Religious leaders who reacted with hostility to the praise given to Jesus Christ, asking Him to rebuke His disciples and eventually leading the people to reject Him.
- **Praetorium (Ptorium):** The hall or governor’s headquarters where the Roman soldiers mocked Jesus Christ, clothed Him in purple, and crowned Him with thorns.
- **Self-Denial:** The act of setting aside personal comfort, security, and ease to move toward the needs and suffering of others, as exemplified by Jesus Christ’s journey to the Cross.
- **Sovereignty:** The supreme power and authority of Jesus Christ over all creation, including His ability to command nature, raise the dead, and ensure He is praised by the universe.
- **Visitation:** The specific time when God reached out to His people through the incarnation of Jesus Christ; a missed opportunity for peace that resulted in judgment for Jerusalem.
- **Zion:** A biblical term for Jerusalem, specifically used in prophecy to describe the city to which the King would come riding on a donkey.

Part V: Greek Terms and Pronunciation Guide

The following terms used in the study guide are derived from or transliterated from Greek (or used in the Greek New Testament text) and have been defined based on their usage in the Source Context.

Term	Phonetic Pronunciation	Definition
Hosanna [¹]	ho-zan-nah	An exclamation of praise, adoration, or a plea for salvation directed toward the King.
Praetorium [²]	pre-tor-ee-um	The judicial hall or residence of the Roman governor where Jesus Christ was mocked.

[¹]: **Hosanna (ἰσάννά):** Derived from Hebrew but utilized in the Greek New Testament (Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9) as a shout of welcome and praise for the Messiah during the Triumphal Entry. [²]: **Praetorium (πραιτώριον):** Transliterated from Latin into Greek; it refers to the headquarters of the Roman military governor where the whole garrison was called together to mock Jesus Christ (Mark 15:16).