

Luke 19:29-40

²⁸ After saying this Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.²⁹ When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰saying, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹If anyone asks you, "Why are you untying it?" just say this: "The Lord needs it." ' ³²So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. ³³As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, 'Why are you untying the colt?'³⁴They said, 'The Lord needs it.' ³⁵Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. ³⁶As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. ³⁷As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, ³⁸saying, 'Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!'
³⁹Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, order your disciples to stop.' (⁴⁰He answered, 'I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out.')

Palm Sunday, as we are aware, is the beginning of the last week of Jesus' earthly life. The following week has a number of events within it; some parts of that week we know little about. Depending upon which Gospel account we use depends upon what we know and what are the focal points.

What we do find in the Gospels is a great deal of teaching by Jesus in the days between riding into Jerusalem and the Last Supper. Jesus is teaching through parables and answering many questions on a range of subjects. It may be that from Monday to Thursday you read the passages in one Gospel at a time from the Triumphal Entry to the Last Supper as we call the events.

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem there is great excitement and anticipation amongst the crowd, loud singing of Psalms.

As I was listening to the cricket the other day as England played India in the first One Day International I had great expectations as the English opening batsmen set to work in chasing a high score to win. They were going so well and then everything fell apart and the result went the way of India. The expectation and anticipation were not rewarded.

At the beginning of a football season many team supporters have expectation for a better season in the year ahead than the one that has gone.

Life has many opportunities for expectation and anticipation and in this time of Vaccine Roll Out expectation and anticipation are around. There is expectation and anticipation for life to return to how it was 15 months ago with the planning of holidays, parties and celebrations. We might find that many hopes are not fulfilled as quickly as we, and many others, want. How do we react?

On that first Palm Sunday there was high expectation of a Messiah riding into the city to overthrow the Romans and liberate the nation from oppression. 5 days later the crowd were shouting for crucifixion, as their expectations were not met. How fickle people can be.

On that first Palm Sunday the crowds were singing "loud Hosannas" and how we wish to do the same in Church, to raise our voices in songs of praise to God in worship. When will that be?

We can feel so much better after singing; Church and places of worship are not the only places where this happens, sporting arenas, musical events, karaoke and many other venues; we seem to be created to sing – some not as well as others.

We were also created to love one another and it was precisely because of love for others that Jesus made that journey into Jerusalem. The expectations of the crowd for a national Messiah were not met for what God provided was an international Saviour.

We shall sing again but in the meantime we worship in our actions, in quietness, reflection and meditation. We worship as we "act justly, love mercy and walk humbly before God" (Micah 6:8).