

Saturday 27th March 2021



When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" "Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve."

[Mark 11: 7–11]

Palm Sunday

I love this story from the gospel. The people had waited lifetimes for their promised king and Messiah. They had built up their expectations of what he would be like – a warrior to overthrow the Romans, a strong and powerful leader who would destroy their enemies forever. Yet what they get is not a soldier on a white stallion with a sword, but the son of a carpenter riding a young donkey.

Jesus had come to save them and to destroy their oppressor, but they misunderstood what that oppression was and how Jesus would defeat it. Instead of starting a war to rid the world of Roman oppressors, Jesus would quietly sacrifice himself to free us from sin, the thing that keeps us from God.

We wait patiently for the second coming (just as we wait for the return to 'normal' after the pandemic is defeated!) – but what are we expecting? I'm sure that we will be surprised when God comes again to earth as Jesus will not be what we are expecting. I'm sure we'll be surprised by how evil is defeated, not how we may be expecting. I'm sure Jesus will be more than we can ever imagine and whatever happens will be greater than anything we are expecting. We have expectations of what 'normal' will be like, though I suspect we will be surprised by this too. That doesn't mean we should be disappointed; it is likely to be even better than what we hope for – if we give it a chance.

There are many Palm Sunday hymns for you to look at – perhaps 'Make Way' by Graham Kendrick, or 'Hosanna (Praise is rising)' by Paul Baloche.

*Unexpected God
We worship and adore you.
Hosannah! We praise you!
We can never understand all your ways;
We constantly underestimate you –
Yet we love you. Hosanna!
Amen.*