

Luke 13:31-35

The Lament over Jerusalem

³¹At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.” ³²He said to them, “Go and tell that fox for me,^[a] ‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. ³³Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.’ ³⁴Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁵See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when^[b] you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

There’s a rainbow in the window of the house next door.

There’s a few in the windows of my childminder’s house too.

There’s one chalked on a driveway on my way to work that has been there almost a fortnight.

That feels like a very long time ago now.

This storm seemed only on the horizon then.

And there were quite a few who expected it would just pass this island by.

And then there were others who started to batten down the hatches.

I think my household has drifted comfortably into a place somewhere between the extremes of these two camps. This of course is a luxury provided by the fact no one in the house has health issues that warrant 12 weeks of isolation. Maybe it’s also a luxury of never having faced a storm quite like this before: maybe we are being naïve.

I wonder what camp the residence of those Rainbow clad houses fall into. Is it naïve to display rainbows before the storm-proper arrives? The winds have only just begun to pick up: the rain is still far off, at least from here anyway.

Then I wonder what camp the disciples and friends of Jesus fell into.



This Sunday sees the start of Holy week, when those who continue to follow Jesus now recall, remember and spiritually walk with Him and His disciples through the storm that was the last week of His life. But we do this with the Rainbow of the resurrection always in front of us. We know it is there, waiting for us at the end of the week: the disciples did not. At this point in their journey Jesus has given His friends several warnings about the approaching storm: He has been clear, His life will be ended. And yet, there are various accounts of the disciples behaving in ways which seem to suggest they aren't taking this warning seriously at all.

Are they being naïve?

Are they expecting that it will pass them by?

Jesus is urged, in this evening's Gospel reading, to 'batten down the hatches', stop what He's doing to provoke the storm, and flee. He doesn't.

Is He being naïve?

Was He expecting it to pass Him by unharmed?

I don't think so. I think Jesus held the promise of the Rainbow, as those houses do now.

It's not a promise that we will come out unscathed.

It's not a promise that things will go back to how they were.

It's a promise that the storm will end and at some point we will see the sun again.