

Up To Jerusalem
Mark 10:32-34
ABC 11/26/23

Today is one of those in-between Sundays. Thanksgiving is over but Advent isn't yet here. In God's timing we come to the passage in Mark's gospel where Jesus tells His disciples what He came to do & for the 1st time, why He came. & so with Paul we say, **thanks be to God for His indescribable gift** (2 Cor 9:15). But we also know that the heart of Christmas is in understanding not that Jesus came, but why He came. Jesus was born to die. God planned it, the angels praised it, & Jesus predicted it. The heart of Scripture, the heart of the gospel, the heart of the Christmas story is the salvation of sinners through the death & resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, about which He knew every detail. Jesus is unique in human history. His entire life was lived under the shadow of the cross. Being God in the flesh, He had knowledge of His immediate future as well as His eternal future. He had a unique role to play in the history of the world, to suffer & die on the cross as the Savior of the world. From the moment He was born in that stable in Bethlehem, He lived under the shadow of the cross. In Mk 10:32-34 we come to Jesus' 3rd passion prediction & cycle of events during which He predicts His death, the disciples exhibit pride & self-interest, & Jesus teaches about the sacrificial & self-giving role of being His disciple (8:31-38; 9:31-50; 10:32-45). Our text today functions as the climax of the 3 cycles & prepares the way for Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem & the last week of His life, when He'll **give His life as a ransom for many** (10:45). While the disciples compete for positions of power & prestige, Jesus identifies the true model of all Christians as the sacrificial service of the Son of Man, who will give His life as a ransom for us. Our text this morning is vss 32-34 but let's read **Mk 10:32-45**.

All 3 passion predictions (8:31-32; 9:31; 10:32-34) identify Jesus as the **Son of Man**, describe His being killed & speak of His resurrection after 3 days. He is going to defeat death. His death & resurrection will bring about the death of death & everlasting life for those who receive Him.¹ Every sinner needs to see Jesus as the willing substitute before the justice of God on our behalf for our sins. Jesus' death on the cross was God's plan for our salvation. & not just ours, but for the sins of

¹ Jason Meyer, <https://bethlehem.church/sermon/the-end-of-the-road/>

the world. & so Jesus predicted His death 3x in 3 chapters. He knew His death wasn't incidental to His mission, but was central to His identity & purpose on earth. He's going to Jerusalem, not to triumph in a military victory, but to die. In our text we have a private & personal conversation the disciples needed even if they didn't understand it at 1st. Jesus came not to be served but to die & give His life for us. He knows what's coming in every detail.

1. Jesus' Commitment People always go up to Jerusalem, both because of its altitude & because it is the Holy City where God's temple was. In connection with the great feasts, Jews made their way to Jerusalem to worship, which included the bringing of an offering. Jesus is now **going up to Jerusalem** to bring Himself as an offering for **the sin of the world** (Is 53:10; Jn 1:29). He's walking toward His suffering & death. He was ahead of them. He was determined to go. Jesus knew He was going to die. He came to die. He was born to die. **32a**

Who are **they**? Who was **amazed**? & who was **fearful**? The **they** who are going up to Jerusalem are Jesus, the disciples, & probably other followers & pilgrims heading to Jerusalem for the Passover. Those **amazed** would include the 12, & perhaps others. What were they amazed about? There must have been something about the bearing of Jesus, the look in His eyes, the manner of His walk, that explains this amazement.² They recognize a change in Him. He has a new intensity (Lk 9:51). The response is amazement by all, but fear by **those who followed**. Who is this 3rd group & why are they afraid? The answer might relate to Peter's insight in 8:29 where he exclaims, **You are the Christ**, & Jesus' acceptance of it. If Jesus is the Messiah & is heading for Jerusalem, this can only mean a clash with the Romans & may mean civil war as well, since the Jewish religious leadership wouldn't be sympathetic to it. This 3rd group is thinking, *What are we doing? Shouldn't we head back to Galilee, where it's safer?* They were confused as to why the One they hoped was the Messiah was walking into the danger that faced Him in Jerusalem.³ They're caught up in the Messianic idea of Judaism that Jesus will set up a physical kingdom. They're baffled, confused, & afraid because going to Jerusalem in the company of Jesus will be risky. While we don't see it here, the disciples'

² William Hendriksen & Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Mark*, p 404

³ John MacArthur, *Mark 9–16*, p 92

expectation were equally grim. They were fatalistic about it. We know this from Jn 11:16 when Jesus told them they were going to Bethany, near Jerusalem. Thomas responded, **Let us also go, so that we may die with Him.** They were grim, defeatist, resigned, & fatalistic. As we see in Mk 10, Jesus has set His face like flint (Is 50:7) to go to Jerusalem & He knew what would happen when they got there. Most of us, if we knew we were going to our deaths, would drag our feet. Not Jesus. He was prepared to obey the Father to the utmost. The disciples were amazed by His resolution & were terrified at what might befall Him, & them, in Jerusalem.⁴

2. Jesus' Teaching As we've seen frequently, Jesus has another private instruction time for the disciples.⁵ This is a personal conversation the disciples needed even if they didn't understand it at 1st. **32b**

Jesus takes the 12 aside, so that in private (Mt 20:17) He can give them detailed information regarding His approaching agony. He seeks to set the record straight about the nature of His messiahship (8:31; 9:31). As we know, when it happened, they had a difficult enough time coping with His betrayal, arrest, trials, crucifixion, & death. Had they not been forewarned about it, the level of doubt & fear they would have experienced would have been far greater. But when those events took place, the knowledge that things were unfolding just as Jesus had predicted, had to have eventually reassured them that God was in complete control. Jesus' teaching here again confirms that the coming events are neither tragic nor unexpected. They're part of God's purpose & plan for the Messiah & the salvation He'll accomplish.⁶ The Jews didn't associate the Suffering Servant passages of Isaiah with their hope of the coming Messiah, but Jesus knew those texts applied to Him. Even without any direct revelation from the Father, He knew He'd be treated with scorn, be scourged, & spat upon.⁷ While vs 32 doesn't say anything about OT prophecies Luke's parallel passage does. **Then He took the twelve aside & said to them, 'Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, & all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be**

⁴ R. C. Sproul, *Mark*, p 264

⁵ See 4:10, 34; 7:17–23; 9:28–29, 30, 35; 10:10–12; 12:43–44; 13:3–4

⁶ Mark L. Strauss, *Mark*, pp 452–453

⁷ Sproul, p 265

accomplished (Lk 18:31). How did Jesus know what was going to happen? Because He knew what the prophets wrote & He explains these truths to His men. Jesus is on His way to the cross & while heading there He explains to them the OT prophecies He'd fulfill, & there are many of them. But 1st, think about His time on earth: Before He was even born an angel told His father, Joseph, that **Mary will bear a Son; & you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins** (Mt 1:21). Anticipating the cross, Jesus said, **Now My soul has become troubled; & what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour'** (Jn 12:27). Jesus alluded to His death throughout His ministry:

Jesus said ... **"While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, & then they will fast in that day"** (Mk 2:19–20).

I have a baptism to undergo, & how distressed I am until it is accomplished! (Lk 12:50).

He said to them, **"Go & tell that fox (Herod Antipas), 'Behold, I cast out demons & perform cures today & tomorrow, & the third day I reach My goal.'** Nevertheless I must journey on today & tomorrow & the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet would perish outside of Jerusalem" (Lk 13:32–33).

The reason Jesus was able to make specific & accurate predictions concerning His death is twofold: 1st, because He knew the OT perfectly, & 2nd, because He possessed divine knowledge. His death was promised in the OT, not in vague, general terms but very specifically. For example, the whole sacrificial system pointed to one final sacrifice, as the writer of Hebrews makes clear:

For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come & not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year (Heb 10:1–3).

By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Every priest stands daily ministering & offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God (Heb 10:10–12).

Jesus would surely have pointed out that Ps 22 graphically described the details of His death on the cross, even though crucifixion was unknown in Israel at the time it was written. It opens with the words Jesus spoke on the cross, **My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?** (1; Mt 27:46).

Vss 6–8 predict the scorn & mockery heaped on Jesus by His enemies:

But I am a worm & not a man, a reproach of men & despised by the people. All who see me sneer at me; they separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, "Commit yourself to the Lord; let Him deliver him; let Him rescue him, because He delights in him" (cf Lk 23:35–39).

Vs 16 says of His tormentors, **They pierced my hands & my feet**, an obvious reference to crucifixion.

Vss 14–17 describe the physical suffering the Lord endured on the cross:

I am poured out like water, & all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, & my tongue cleaves to my jaws; & You lay me in the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands & my feet. I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me.

This remarkably accurate prediction even records the detail that His executioners would divide up Jesus' garments: **They divide my garments among them, & for my clothing they cast lots** (18; Lk 23:34). He must have also spoken of the greatest prophecy of His suffering, death, & resurrection, Isaiah 53. Jesus **was determined to go to Jerusalem** (Lk 9:51) to fulfill all that the OT predicted concerning His death, burial, & resurrection. After His resurrection, He would go back through all the OT prophecies with His disciples to explain again the predictions with their fulfillment (Lk 24:26–27, 32, 44–47).

In addition to the OT prophecies, Jesus somehow had knowledge of the events surrounding His death that only One who knew the future could possess. A few examples: A) Jesus' knowledge of people's hearts, like Nathanael (Jn 1:47; 2:24–25; cf Lk 6:8; 11:17). B) He knew the precise location of where Peter would find a fish with a coin in its mouth (Mt 17:27; cf Jn 21:5–6). C) He knew that a woman whom He'd met for the 1st time had had 5 husbands & was living with a man to whom she wasn't married (Jn 4:18). D) He knew where the colt He'd ride in the triumphal entry would be located & what its owners would say when the disciples took it (Lk 19:30–34). E) He knew that the disciples would meet a man carrying a pitcher who would show them the place where they'd eat the Last Supper (Lk 22:10). F) & He knew that Jerusalem would be destroyed 4 decades later (Lk 21:20). Wouldn't you have loved to hear Jesus **tell them what was going to happen to Him**? The disciples knew they were **going up to Jerusalem** to celebrate the Passover. What they didn't yet understand was that Jesus would be the Passover Lamb, the ultimate & acceptable sacrifice that alone would satisfy God & bring to an end the old covenant sacrificial system. One reason that Jesus needed to explain these truths to them in advance is that the concept of a dying Messiah

was completely foreign to what they'd been taught all their lives (cf Lk 9:44–45). But the sufferings of Jesus were no accident. His sacrifice was no miscalculation. The cross wasn't a surprise. Jesus gives a detailed & exact accounting of what's going to happen. The disciples still don't grasp this. They wanted a Messiah to conquer, not die. They wanted a lion, not a lamb. But our Lord pre-planned all these events.

3. Jesus' Suffering 33-34

Jesus was able to make specific & accurate predictions concerning His death because He knew the OT Scriptures & because He had divine knowledge. What does Jesus tell them that would happen to Him?

A. Delivered Someone will deliver Jesus over to death. Who? He was betrayed & **delivered** to the Jewish religious leaders by Judas, one of His disciples. While Ps 41:9 predicted the Messiah would be betrayed by a friend, only Jesus knew that Judas Iscariot would be the betrayer (Jn 6:70–71). Judas betrayed Christ to the Jewish authorities for 30 pieces of silver, just as Scripture predicted (Zech 11:12). While the phrase, **will be delivered**, could refer to the actions of Judas (14:10, 43), more likely it's referring to God's actions (1:14; 9:31). Remember what Peter said in Acts 2:22–24?

Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles & wonders & signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— this *Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan & foreknowledge of God*, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men & put *Him* to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

This was all according to plan. While Judas betrayed Him, God delivered Jesus to death as part of His plan.

B. Rejected Only this passion prediction describes the 2-step nature of Jesus' trial. He will 1st be condemned to death by the Jewish leaders. This fits what we know about their authority at this time. They could pronounce guilt but couldn't carry out capital punishment (Jn 18:31). The **chief priests** are the aristocratic members of the high priest's family & other influential priests (8:31; cf Acts 4:6). They will be allied with the **scribes** or experts in the law. In 8:31 Jesus had mentioned the **elders** as well, who were the lay leadership of the Sanhedrin. But notice the legal language. There's going to be a trial & they'll pronounce that Jesus deserves to die, **they will condemn Him**

to death. Jesus was rejected by the religious rulers. He was rejected by the general public. As Jesus stood before Pilate & the crowd of people they yelled out, **Crucify Him!** (Mt 27:22). He was rejected by His own disciples. Even the men closest to Him temporarily abandoned Him. After Jesus was arrested, **all the disciples left Him & fled** (Mt 26:56). Jesus was rejected by His own people

C. Injustice He'll be handed **over to the Gentiles**, the Roman authorities for execution. The events described here occur rapidly in the chapters that follow. At the climax of His Jewish trial, Jesus will be condemned as worthy of death by the Sanhedrin (14:64) & the next morning be handed over to Pilate for trial (15:1). The holy, just, & righteous 2nd person of the Trinity was falsely accused of sin (Jn 9:24), sedition, insurrection (Lk 23:13–14), & blasphemy (Mt 9:3; 26:65; Jn 10:33). & His trials were monumental demonstrations of injustice at every point.

D. Ridiculed **They will mock Him & spit on Him.** The sinless Son of God, in whom **all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form** (Col 2:9), was mocked, mistreated, & spat upon by those holding Him in custody during His Jewish trials (Lk 22:63), by members of the Sanhedrin (Mt 26:67–68), by Herod & his soldiers (Lk 23:11), & by Pilate's soldiers (Mt 27:27–31). The ridicule continued even while He was on the cross; **the rulers were sneering at Him, saying, 'He saved others; let Him save Himself if this is the Christ of God, His Chosen One'** (Lk 23:35). The soldiers mocked Him, coming up to Him & offering sour wine & saying, **If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!** (36–37). Even one of those crucified alongside Him was hurling abuse at Him, saying, **'Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself & us!'** (39). The reviling & abuse He'd faced throughout His ministry (Jn 9:28; 1 Pt 2:23) intensified at His death.⁸

E. Injured **They will ... scourge Him.** He was beaten multiple times while in custody. Shortly before His crucifixion, the Romans would **scourge Him** with a whip with multiple thongs with bone, rock, or metal tied to them. So severe was the damage from scourging that many died from it. Grammatically, the actions described here, the mocking, spitting, flogging, & killing, could refer to the Gentiles alone or to both the Jewish leaders & the Gentiles.⁹ In Mark's trial & crucifixion

⁸ MacArthur, p 97

⁹ Strauss, *Mark*, p 453

narrative, Jesus will be mocked by both Roman soldiers (15:17–20) & Jewish leaders (15:31–32), spit on by both (14:65; 15:19), beaten by Jewish temple guards (14:65) & flogged by Pilate’s soldiers (15:15; cf Jn 19:1), & crucified under Pilate’s orders (15:24).

F. Killed He would be executed, **killed** in the most horribly cruel manner imaginable, crucifixion. Even now, as He told His disciples this, the horror must have been very real & terrifying (Lk 12:50). The Man of sorrows sees it coming toward Him. He already knows something of the treachery, the hypocrisy, the slander, the mockery, the pain, & the shame, which threatens to overwhelm Him. Yet, He doesn’t retreat or stand still. With unflinching determination, He walks right toward it because He knows this is necessary in order that His people may be saved.¹⁰ **Having loved His own ... He loved them to the end** (Jn 13:1). The suffering of Jesus was great on many levels. He suffered physically, socially, emotionally, mentally, & spiritually. All this demonstrated His committed to His Father’s will & His love for you & me. Jesus was leading the way to face all that He knew would come. But He also stepped forward with pure confidence & trust, knowing this was all part of His Father’s plan. He wouldn’t fail. He’d fulfill the Father’s plan. Only the perfect Lamb of God is to be our substitute, & only the perfect God-man can satisfy God’s wrath for our sin. This is going to happen. This is what Jerusalem holds for Jesus. Before Judas knew what he was going to do, Jesus knew. Before the religious leaders knew what they were going to do, Jesus knew. Before the trials could be played out, Jesus knew exactly what their end would be. Jesus knew.

4. Jesus’ Resurrection Despite all of His suffering & despite all that sinful mankind would do to Him & despite all the devil would throw at Him, Jesus would demonstrate His authority, power, dominance, Lordship, sovereignty & glory when **three days later He will rise again**. In all 3 of Jesus’ predictions of His coming suffering & death, He ends this way, **& three days later He will rise again** (34). & He did. He is risen! Jesus is alive today. He said at the beginning of His ministry, **Destroy this temple, & in three days I will raise it up** (Jn 2:19). He said He would die, He said He would rise. He died exactly the way He said He would die & He rose bodily from the dead exactly the way He said He’d rise, in exactly the time He said He’d rise. He went knowing how it all would end. He

¹⁰ Hendriksen & Kistemaker, p 407

would be vindicated. He would rise from the grave, & by doing so, He'd bring many sons & daughters to glory. Jesus tells His men that He alone is the sacrifice. He alone will be tortured, suffer & die, then rise again.

Each one of these statements about Jesus' coming death & resurrection is fulfilled in detail later in this gospel. The sinless Son of God suffered & died so that His people might have eternal life. In Peter's words,

You have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; & while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; & He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin & live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd & Guardian of your souls (1 Pt 2:21–25).

Jesus predicted each of these elements, & each of them came to pass exactly as He predicted. How does He know all this? He's God. Jesus is God in the flesh. Mark wants to declare to his readers that our Lord's death wasn't a tragedy in the hands of evil men, but rather the sovereign plan of God who rules history in order to offer His life a ransom for many. He gave His life for you; have you given your life to Him? He died for your sins, so you wouldn't die eternally in your sins. Jesus suffered death on the cross, so you wouldn't have to go there. Have you cried out for the Lord to forgive & save you? Can you say with the Centurion who watched Jesus die, **Truly this Man was the Son of God!** (Mk 15:39)? He was & is the only Savior. He came to save His people from their sins. & that's exactly what He did on the cross & through His resurrection. That's why Christmas is important. It's not about a baby in a manger; it's about a Savior on a cross & out of an empty tomb. What lessons can we take from this? 1st, understand that Jesus wasn't an unwitting & unwilling victim. He willingly laid down His life for sinners like you & me. This is a measure of His love. It's not an accident. Put your trust in Him for the forgiveness of your sins.

Jesus' passion predictions clearly show God's sovereignty in Jesus' life, death, & resurrection. The Messiah will suffer & die, but after suffering comes vindication. These events are no accident nor a catastrophe. They were all along part of God's purpose & plan. The details provided here, that Jesus will be handed over to the Gentiles, mocked, spit on, & flogged, drive home the point that

the path ahead had been mapped out by God, who is in control of the details. Jesus' authority is on center stage. He's out front, leading the way, & He understands fully the events that await Him in Jerusalem. Though wicked people put Jesus to death, this was part of God's plan, who vindicated Jesus through the resurrection. This reminds us that the path to glory is through suffering. For Paul, sharing in Christ's suffering is an essential part of His calling, as he comes to know Christ by **the fellowship of His sufferings & being conformed to His death** (Phil 3:10). Peter assures the Christians of Asia Minor that their suffering is a part of their calling in Christ & that He left an example that they should follow (1 Pt 2:21; 4:12–13). Yet the reality of suffering always comes with the promise of vindication. The resurrection of the Messiah is confirmation that His followers will also be vindicated. Throughout the NT believers are called to persevere in light of the certainty of our redemption, which is both a present reality & a future hope. The writer to the Hebrews calls us to persevere in the race of faith with our eyes set on Jesus, who **for the joy set before Him ... endured the cross, despising the shame, & has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God** (Heb 12:2). Paul reminds the persecuted Thessalonian believers that their hope is in Christ, whom God raised from the dead & **who rescues us from the wrath to come** (1 Thes 1:10). The exhortation & promise to believers in the book of Revelation is to persevere, because Jesus is the Resurrected One: **I was dead, & behold, I am alive forevermore** (Rev 1:18). & with vindication comes reward: **I am coming quickly, & My reward /s with Me** (22:12; cf 3:11; 22:7, 20).¹¹ Jesus lived a life of rejection: rejected by His hometown, rejected by His family who thought He was nuts & tried to get Him to come home, & he was rejected by the scribes & Pharisees who've been plotting to murder him ever since Mk 3. But why? Rejection was part of the story, but not the main theme. No one naturally moves with purpose toward rejection & pain & suffering. What is the point? What was the purpose in Jesus' steps? It's called *love*. He was coming for us. **For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life** (Jn 3:16).

¹¹ Strauss, pp 462–463