



CAPITOL COMMISSION

Suffering in the Capitol: Jesus Foretells His Future

JANUARY 14, 2010

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Matthew 20:17-19 And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and on the way He said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify, and on the third day He will be raised up."

"BY HIS OWN DIVINE OMNISCIENCE, JESUS KNEW HOW MANY HUSBANDS THE WOMAN AT SYCHAR HAD, ALTHOUGH HE HAD NEVER MET OR HEARD OF HER BEFORE (JOHN 4:16-18). HE TOLD THE DISCIPLES EXACTLY WHAT THEY WOULD FIND WHEN HE SENT THEM TO JERUSALEM TO FIND A COLT (MATTHEW 21:2). HE FORECAST THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM NEARLY FORTY YEARS BEFORE IT WOULD OCCUR (MATT. 24:1-2). NOW JESUS OMNISCIENTLY ADDS ADDITIONAL DETAILS OF HIS SUFFERING AND DEATH TO THE MANY PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT"

JOHN MACARTHUR

What is the background to this passage? Why are only the disciples given this information? Do they understand what Jesus has told them? What had Jesus taught regarding suffering? What hope does Jesus provide to strengthen the disciples as they witness Christ's sufferings?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- > JANUARY 21: PASTORS' DAY AT THE CAPITOL
FEATURED SPEAKER: DR. TIM HIGHT
- > JANUARY 28: MATTHEW 20:20-28 HOW TO BE GREAT IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
- > FEBRUARY 4: MATTHEW 20:29-34 THE BLIND WHO SAW BETTER THAN THEIR LEADERS
- > FEBRUARY 11: MATTHEW 21:1-11 THE HUMBLE CORONATION OF THE KING OF KINGS

This is the third time that Jesus has clearly told His disciples that He will suffer at the hands of the leaders of Israel and be killed. On the first occasion, Peter had just recognized His deity in the foundational statement, "You are the Christ the Son of the Living God" (Mt. 16:16). After granting Peter both leadership and authority, Jesus took a new direction in His relationship with his disciples. "From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day" (Mt.16:21). He added this promise with it: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt. 16:24-26). Once they understood that He was their Messiah and truly God, He began to reveal the plan of God from the beginning of the world and something they never expected of their Messiah—that He would become the Passover sacrifice for the sins of the world, and be raised from the dead to give His own new life.

"AND THEY WERE IN THE WAY GOING UP TO JERUSALEM; AND JESUS WENT BEFORE THEM; AND THEY WERE AMAZED; AND , WHILE THEY FOLLOWED HIM WERE AFRAID" MARK 10:32

I. HE PRIVATELY PREPARES HIS OWN MT. 20:17-18A

The first time Jesus told them of His impending suffering Peter tried to correct Him and was severely rebuked (Mt. 16:22-23). The second time He repeated His prediction of His suffering, "they were exceeding sorrowful" (Mt. 17:22-23). The first two times He told them they were at the farthest northern boundary of Israel at Caesarea Phillippi and then at the base of Mt. Herman, far away from even Capernaum and even farther from the capitol city of impending doom—Jerusalem. They have been in the "region of Judea beyond

BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30AM –INTERCESSORY PRAYER – GAB 3RD FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM
THURSDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – GAB 3RD FLOOR WEST CONFERENCE ROOM
THURSDAY @ 12:00NOON –BIBLE STUDY – WYTESTONE PLAZA AT 8TH & MAIN 2ND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM

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the Jordan” (Mt. 19:1), and they are on the road going up to Jerusalem, currently approaching Jericho (20:29). Jesus is out front, leading with quiet but intense resolve to His approaching death. Every step he takes will be his last on this road and His disciples could see in every line of Jesus’ body the bitter struggle of His soul. There is a pensive fear written on the disciples’ faces as they follow Him on the road. The word for “*amazed*” in Mark 10:32 represents fear intense enough “to render immovable,” and “is frequently associated with terror as well as astonishment.”¹ And because Jesus’ thoughts are always on His disciples, He once again seeks to prepare them. They alone have this knowledge of His suffering, so they alone are addressed regarding this inescapable suffering within God’s plan. And, for the first time, Jesus specifically included them in God’s plan: “*Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem.*” Earlier, they had expected His death when they went with Jesus near Jerusalem to raise Lazarus from the dead and Thomas had said to his fellow disciples, “*Let us also go, that we may die with Him*” (John 11:16). His “*Behold*” and “*Jerusalem*” tell them His time on earth is about to end.

“I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD, THE GOOD SHEPHERD GIVES HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP” JOHN 10:11

II. HE PREDICTS HIS LEADERS’ TREACHERY MT. 20:18

The “*Son of Man*” is an Old Testament title used by the Gospel writers 84 times connoting both the Messiah’s divinity yet emphasizing His humanity and His humiliation. Jesus does not mention who will be the first in this path of treachery. Judas Iscariot is among the twelve as Jesus briefs them, but does he realize that it will be by his betrayal that “*the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes?*” Judas was unique in that he was the most trusted as the treasurer, yet he had

constantly embezzled funds from the group (John 12:6). The “*chief priests and the scribes?*” were the liberal and conservative power brokers of the Sanhedrin, the legislative body of Israel. The truth that Jesus presented was a constant threat to them so they often plotted and, on more than one occasion, attempted to kill Him. When the sinful habits of Judas and the leadership of Israel merged, it produced the greatest treachery in history: the betrayal, arrest and condemnation of Jesus Christ, the purest representation of a true Israel. The fact that they were going to “*condemn Him to death?*” meant there would be courtroom scene where he would be judged guilty of a crime worthy of capital punishment. Jesus perfectly predicts this absolute injustice from his own people.

“THERE WAS A STRANGE INCLUSIVENESS IN THE SUFFERING TO WHICH JESUS LOOKED FORWARD; IT WAS A SUFFERING IN WHICH NO PAIN OF HEART OR MIND OR BODY WAS TO BE LACKING” WILLIAM BARCLAY

III. HE PREDICTS HIS OPPRESSORS’ CRUELTY MT. 20:19

Jesus told His disciples that His nation’s leaders would “*hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify.*” Mark and Luke include the detail that He would be spit upon. Pilate had Jesus scourged with a leather whip in which sharp pieces of glass, bone or metal were imbedded which would lacerate the body so deeply that many would not survive the scourging. While Jesus was being held by the Gentile Roman authorities, they also chose to “*mock*” him by placing a royal robe about His shoulders, a crown of thorns on His head and a reed in His hand for a scepter. After bowing before Him in derision, they took his reed and began to beat the thorns into his brow and spit upon Him, finally leading Him away to be crucified (Mt. 27:26-31). He would drink of the deepest dregs of suffering before being promoted in glory. But His victory was absolutely assured when He proclaimed “*and on the third day He will be raised up.*”

¹ W.E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, & William White, Jr., *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1996), 24.

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Have you received Christ as the sacrifice for your sin?
- 2) Do you deny yourself and take up His cross?
- 3) How do you show courage for truth in the Capitol?