

## **The King's Future** **Matthew 20:17-19**

### **Introduction**

This is the third time Jesus mentions His identity, mission and destiny (see Matthew 12:28-42; 16:21-28). The King's teaching on the way to Jerusalem also provides us with a sneak peak of the remaining chapters in Matthew's gospel. "Behold, we are going to Jerusalem (chapters 21-26). "And the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and scribes (chapter 26:47-75); "and they will condemn him to death" (chapter 26:66); "and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify" (chapter 27:1-56). **Here for the first time Jesus specifically points out the manner of his death—He will be crucified. "And the third day he will rise again" (chapter 28:1-20).** The words are prophetic utterances that describe in chilling detail the King's future. But the prophecy also includes the King's disciples! The disciples have agreed to follow Jesus.

We sing the song—I have decided to follow Jesus!  
The road that leads to Jerusalem also leads to Calvary and a cross.

*This is the road marked with suffering and pain in the offering—but. . .*

Calvary and a cross will lead to a glorious resurrection. And so it is a description not only of the King's future—but in a real sense incorporates the future for all Christ followers and Jesus lovers! His future is your future. That is of course only true—if you accompany Jesus into His future.

### **The Lord Jesus' Revelation To The Disciples (v.17)**

*Matthew 20:17 (NKJV) 17 Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them,*

The Lord leaves Perea by way of Jericho (see v.29).  
The road to Jerusalem is always 'up'.

Jerusalem is the most important city in the world. This was the city set aside by God to reveal His Son. The city is mentioned some 600 times as Jerusalem—but is also called by many other names; "The City of God or Jehovah" (see Psalm 46:4); "My Lord's City" the Holy City—Zion. This City more than any other City in the world aroused deep emotion in the Lord joy—pain—hurt—tears. This is the city that stoned the prophets (Matt. 23:37)—and is the object of more prophecies than any other city in the world. Jesus predicted the City's future—"Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

The Lord Jesus "took the twelve disciples aside"—the word 'took' has monumental meaning. The Greek word is *parelaben*—*which means—took to Himself—or set apart for Himself*—the expression is filled with tenderness and warmth and intimacy. Jesus wants them—with Him. Close to Him. Present with Him. Again—Jesus goes to Jerusalem—to face humiliation—

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torture, death and a resurrection. Jesus takes the disciples aside—not simply to affirm affection—but also to prepare them for the journey. The events to come will prove shocking and even devastating but needful. One translation reads; “When Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, he took the twelve apostles aside *privately*. . .” This is a deliberate journey. Clearly this news would generate confusion and fear. But there is rhyme and reason to God’s plan.

In our journey Jesus will draw us to Himself—provide moments of tenderness—in the tensions of life. The purpose is not to confuse or generate fear—but rather understanding strength and encouragement—comfort for the journey. When we anticipate pain or hardship we may be tempted to shirk or shun the future. Jesus wants to *fortify the disciples—because rejection and ridicule and persecution are a part of their future.*

We all find ourselves in different chapters of maturity and accountability and willingness to follow Jesus. This revelation is given to the disciples—and we know their comprehension was limited.

Are you a new Christian? Unfamiliar with what the Bible says about the future? Are you carnal—with little or now understanding of spiritual matters?

Whether young or old—mature or immature—we all want to know about our lives—the meaning of our lives and the future for our lives. Ronald Boyd-MacMillan wrote; “The meaning of life does not consist in what we make of it, but what God makes of it.”

### **The Lord Jesus’ Betrayal And Prosecution (v.18)**

*18“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death,*

This is the first time Jesus reveals the place of His betrayal and execution (Jerusalem) and later the involvement of Gentiles (v.19a).

Why is that important? Remember this is the **third time** Jesus predicts His future. The first time Jesus revealed **the fact of His death and resurrection (Matt.16:21); the second prediction added the means (betrayal —17:22) and now more information regarding the prosecution by the religious authorities (the chief priests and to the scribes).**

In the time of Jesus Judea was occupied by Rome and was governed by a Procurator or Governor. In many religious and civil matters the occupation forces allowed the Jews a measure of self governance but would not allow the local authorities to rule in Capital crimes (those worthy of death).

For the Christian—Christ lover and Christ follower—all roads lead to Jerusalem. The betrayer remains unnamed.

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The word betrayed conjures an image of one who loves you and then turns on you. Strangers can't betray you. The prophet Zechariah hinted at betrayal as "The wounds I was given in the house of my friends" (13:6).

In John's gospel (13:19) in reference to His betrayal he says "Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass you may believe that I am He". The prediction is not simply to provide warning but also to generate faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Christian might face opposition, personal slander, injustice, discrimination, mistreatment. The writer of Hebrews said "Consider (Jesus) who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you not grow weary and lose heart" (Hebrews 12:3). Jesus has already preached (Matthew 5:11) "Blessed are you when people. . .falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me".

Do you mean if I follow Jesus into His future—the road might include discrimination and deprivation? In Acts 8:33a we read "In his humiliation (Jesus) was deprived of justice."

### **The Lord Jesus' Delivery And Execution (v.19a)**

*19and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify.*

The Lord Jesus would be delivered to the Gentiles and join the religious leaders in this conspiracy of guilt. The writer of Hebrews said, "Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering" (Heb. 13:3). The source for torture, imprisonment—or martyrdom can come from police—or radical extremists—militias—religious groups—the state—even family! Christians all over the world are falsely accused and falsely imprisoned and experience violence.

At this very moment—100 million Christians are living in areas where they face persecution. Another 400 million Christians are living in areas under the threat of persecution.

David Wells points out the difference between the words 'crucify' and 'cross'  
Crucify is a description of the painful execution of an individual.  
Cross is a term that for the Christian will come to mean so much more.

The Cross will come to incorporate what has been called the great exchange.  
On the Cross Jesus will suffer and die for sin. Your sin. Your punishment will become His punishment. His righteousness will become your righteousness. In the ministry of John the Baptist Andrew and John heard the Baptist say; "Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

The disciples have not yet connected the prophetic dots.

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**The Lord Jesus' Certain Resurrection (v.19b)**

*Matthew 19b* And the third day He will rise again.”

How did the disciples respond to Christ's prediction?

How is it that the Disciples are either unwilling or unable to grasp what Jesus was saying? The disciples hear the words “And the third day He will rise again” but they seem drowned out by the word ‘crucify’. The word crucify is loud and terrifying.

Jesus had spoken in parables. Surely this is a parable of some sort (in the disciples' minds). In this private meeting Jesus reveals that Jerusalem is the place where He will die—both the religious leaders and the Gentile authorities will be involved—he will be crucified—**and three days later “He will rise again”**. It makes perfect sense—that the disciples **do not want Jesus to die—they believe Jesus is the Messiah. Clearly Jesus adopts the Messianic titles—Son of Man—Son of David.** How can Jesus be both Messiah and King and dead?

Jesus gives the disciples an unwelcome reality check—the purpose of our trip to Jerusalem is for me to suffer and die and come back to life.

You would think the disciples would say—“What? What do you mean? You are going to Jerusalem. You are going there because this is the place that the Lord set aside for you—to be betrayed, arrested, humiliated, killed and come back to life?” Why does that have to happen? What will your suffering accomplish? What will your death prove? And how in the world does a person come back to life? Will God bring you back to life? Will you bring yourself back to life?

**Sometimes the Lord—takes us aside privately—and communicates specifically about our lives as well. We are given a reality check. We are reminded that some things in our lives are given to us so that we will identify with our suffering Savior.**

**Much of our Christian life is identifying with our Savior. Did Jesus experience misunderstanding from religious leaders? Yes. Did Jesus experience hostility from secular sources? Yes.**

What was it that Jesus cared about? What was it that Jesus pursued? What was it that Jesus valued? What most of the world counts as gain—Jesus counted loss. **Do some Christians achieve great wealth—great power—prestige—popularity? Some do. Most don't.**

Christians are not immune from wanting honors—recognition—influence. But the road to Jerusalem will lead at first—to a place of difficulty—hostility—arrest. In this process Jesus will suffer great contempt—mocking—flogging—and killing.

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What does it mean to mean to be a faithful follower of Jesus?

**It means to identify with Jesus in every way.**

Most find it easy to identify with Jesus in His teachings.

Most find it difficult to identify with Jesus in His sufferings.

Most find it difficult to identify with Jesus in His death.

Most find it easy to identify with Jesus in His resurrection and glory!

Much of the New Testament will be devoted to this great theme of identification with the Lord Jesus. **The predictions of Jesus were meant to demonstrate that the unfolding events were not the misguided acts of ignorant and bitter people bent on killing Jesus. The events surrounding Jesus death and resurrection were not accidents but the deliberate plan of God. Throughout Bible history the Prophets were given glimpses of the special events that would end in Christ's resurrection from the dead!**

In Psalm 22:6-8 and Isaiah 50:6; 52:13; 53:12 carefully detail the events of His resurrection in a precise fashion.

**The future that Jesus has planned will include the idea that weakness is a direct path to power.**

**The future that Jesus has planned will incorporate the idea that overcoming is greater than deliverance.**

**The future that Jesus has planned will require that extreme hurt will require extreme forgiveness.**

**The future that Jesus has planned will not allow death to have the final word.**

Death will not keep him.

The Old Testament writers pointed to a literal resurrection of the body from the dead; Job asked the question "If a man dies, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14). "For I know that my Redeemer lives, And he shall stand at last on the earth; after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!" (Job 19:25-27).

The Old Testament saints Daniel and David spoke of a resurrection (Dan.12:12) and Psalm 16:9-10—"Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou will not leave my soul in hell; neither will thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." David affirms hope not only for himself but the Holy One—Jesus. This passage is quoted by Peter in Acts 2:24-31 and by Paul in Acts 13:34-37 as a reference to the resurrection of our Lord

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Jesus Christ. Jesus predicted His death and resurrection and the New Testament narratives confirm the accuracy of Jesus' predictions about Himself and His future. The New Testament gives several reasons for the resurrection of Jesus:

1. Jesus will rise from the dead because of who He is (Acts 2:24).
2. Jesus will rise to fulfill the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:12-16)
3. Jesus will rise from the dead to be the giver of resurrection life (John 10:10).
4. Jesus will rise from the dead to be the head over the church (Eph. 1:20-23).
5. Jesus will rise from the dead because our justification is made complete (Rom. 4:25)
6. Jesus will rise from the dead as the first fruits of resurrection (1 Cor.15:20-23).

### **Conclusion**

Jesus is trying to prepare the disciples for the future. This will prompt a request for glory—in that future. The request is not for God's glory—but personal glory. Jesus will mention a cup and baptism—references to suffering and death at Calvary.

Corrie ten Boom Dutch patriot and holocaust survivor said, "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God."

Carl F. H. Henry; "There is only one real inevitability: it is necessary that the Scripture be fulfilled."

And so it will.

A 19th century song writer that understood our identification with Christ by Daniel Whittle.

'Moment by Moment':

Dying with Jesus, by death reckoned mine;  
Living with Jesus, a new life divine;  
Looking to Jesus till glory doth shine,  
Moment by moment, O Lord, I am Thine.  
Moment by moment I'm kept in His love;  
Moment by moment I've life from above;  
Looking to Jesus till glory doth shine;  
Moment by moment, O Lord, I am Thine.