

Palm Sunday 2025

Our passage this morning is Luke 18:31-34,

Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. ³² He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; ³³ they will flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again." ³⁴ The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about.

To set the context, Jesus's life can be divided into sections:

- a. Time of Preparation: this would include his birth, childhood, and hidden years. It is the period from his birth to his time at the temple around age 12.
- b. Introduction to Ministry: which starts with John the Baptist and includes events such as Christ's baptism, his temptation, his first miracles, his gathering followers, and first coming to Jerusalem to cleanse the temple. It ends with his coming back to Galilee and meeting with the Samaritan woman. This period lasts about 6 months.
- c. The Galilean Ministry. Jesus spends roughly 12-18 months in Galilee and traverses it three times. It is here the gospels lay out the many miracles Christ performed.
- d. Season of withdrawal from Galilee. This period lasts about 6 months and is characterized by more miracles, increasing opposition, and a focus on his deity, death, and resurrection.
- e. Judean Ministry. Jesus leaves Galilee and comes to Judea (where Jerusalem is located). Jesus continues to teach and perform miracles. This period lasts about 3 months.
- f. Perean Ministry. Jesus encounters much opposition in Judea and moves eastward to Perea, which is just east of the lower Jordan river. This period lasts about 3 months and concludes with Jesus going back to Jerusalem a week before Passover, and his death.
- g. Passion week. This is the time before and including Christ's death.
- h. Resurrection and Appearances.

And so here in this passage we have Jesus ending his Perean ministry and is now ready to move on up to Jerusalem.

Now as we approach these verses, there are five things I want you to note.

- a. Jesus makes a Proclamation of Salvation in verse 31a,
- b. He reminds his disciples of the Promise of Salvation in vs 31b,
- c. He tells them of the Price of Salvation in vs 32-33a,
- d. He explains the Proof of Salvation in vs 33b.
- e. Lastly, Luke discusses the Preclusion of Salvation in vs 34.

The Proclamation of Salvation, vs 31a

Vs 31a, *Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, "We are going up to Jerusalem."*

Notice Jesus took the twelve aside. No doubt he was with a larger group, and he wanted only his disciples to know of his plans. So, he takes them aside. Note he says, "we." Though Jesus was the lamb of God and would bear all our sins on the cross, he is saying to his disciples, you are a part of this plan

with me. For in a few weeks' time, empowered by the HS, this small group save one, would be the means God used to spread this message throughout the world.

The Jesus says *we are going up to Jerusalem*. This was literally true. These words were most likely spoken just outside Jericho (Lk 18:35) which sits almost 3500 ft below and due east of Jerusalem in the Jordan Valley.

But *going up to Jerusalem* was also Jesus's way of telling them this is where it is all going to end. This is where I die and bear the sins of the world. This is where, as he notes in the next phrase, all that was written about me would be fulfilled. In an indirect way Christ was proclaiming to his disciples this is it! Salvation to all will come from here.

One other thing to note. Mk 10:32-34 and Mt 20:17-19 are the parallel passages to Lk 18:21-34. We read from Mark, *they were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished while those following behind were afraid*. The NLT says the disciples were *filled with awe* while those following behind were *overwhelmed with fear*. The word for awe and astonishment can also mean baffled or confused. So, the picture is Jesus is leading, his disciples and whoever else with them are following; confused, fearful, baffled, and awed.

The following week was going to be bad, yet here is Jesus is leading the way. He is resolute, determined, and purposeful. He is embracing what is ahead and is leading the pack.

Jesus and the disciples had to climb up 3500 ft. Jesus was with them the whole way. What mountain are you climbing today? It could be the Mountain of Despair, or Loneliness, or Mt Disappointment. Maybe it is Mt Sorrow, or Mt Missed Expectations. Whatever Mt you are climbing today, know that Jesus is leading the way and climbing it with you. *I will never leave you nor forsake you* he tells us.

The Promise of Salvation, vs 31b.

Vs 31b, *and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled*.

The phrase "*Son of Man*" is a Messianic title emphasizing Christ's humanity and humility. It is used in Dan 7:13 when Jesus will receive his Eternal kingdom from the Father.

Then Jesus reminds his disciples that long ago; God had planned the events that will shortly unfold. He reviews the promise of salvation to them. Jesus says, *"everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man be fulfilled."*

Scholars estimate there were over 300 OT prophecies fulfilled by the life and death of Jesus. We will not review all of them. But I do want to show you the prophetic thread of how Jesus was the fulfillment of what God, and the prophets foretold.

To start, remember sin began with the rebellion of Satan who desired to take God's place (Is 14:12-14, Ez 28:12-14). When Adam and Eve were created, they were warned not to join this rebellion as the penalty would be death (Gen 2:17). Yet, despite the warning, they listened to Satan's words and joined him in his rebellious efforts. God then leveled the penalty of death on Adam and Eve, and against its will creation also bore this punishment as it was under Adam and Eve's authority. Yet God loved Adam and Eve and

wanted to reestablish the relationship he had before they chose to rebel. So early in scripture God showed how this was to be done. To have sin covered or removed, there must be a sacrifice of a living being to satisfy that penalty of death. This being would function as a substitute, taking on the penalty of death that man deserved. So, we find way back in Gen 3:21 that God killed an innocent animal and clothed Adam and Eve with skins so they would be clothed, and he could talk to them again. This pattern continues throughout the scriptures.

- a. Gen 3:21, *The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and Eve and clothed them.*
- b. Gen 4:3-4, *When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground. ³ When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the Lord. ⁴ Abel also brought a gift—the best portions of the firstborn lambs from his flock.*
- c. Gen 22:8, *God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son.*
- d. Ex 12:1-13, *each family must choose a lamb or a young goat for a sacrifice, one animal for each household (Ex 12:3).*
- e. Lev 1-6, *When you become aware of your guilt in any of these ways, you must confess your sin. ⁶ Then you must bring to the Lord as the penalty for your sin a female from the flock, either a sheep or a goat (Lev 5:5)*
- f. Lev 16, *Aaron will present his own bull as a sin offering to purify himself and his family, making them right with the Lord.^[a] ⁷ Then he must take the two male goats and present them to the Lord at the entrance of the Tabernacle.^[b] ⁸ He is to cast sacred lots to determine which goat will be reserved as an offering to the Lord and which will carry the sins of the people to the wilderness of Azazel. (Lev 16:6-8).*
- g. Is 53:1-12, *But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed (Is 53:5).*
- h. Jn 1:29, *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

Jesus knew these scriptures and as John had declared, He was the *Lamb of God*, who would soon sacrifice his life for sin once and for all, thus ending the sacrificial system. When Jesus says we are going up to Jerusalem and the prophecies will be fulfilled, he knows exactly what it is to become of him: that he is going to his death and resurrection. Jesus is telling his disciples there is a promise of a savior—and it is I; and we are going up to Jerusalem, so that everything written of me will be fulfilled; so, the promise will become reality.

The Price of Salvation, vs 32-33a.

Vs 32-33a, *He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; ³³ they will flog him and kill him.*

In verse 32 and 33a Jesus describes the price of providing our Salvation: *He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; ³³ they will flog him and kill him.* Jesus had in fact twice before warned his disciples that these events would take place. Note Lk 9:22, *and he said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”* In Lk 9:44 he says,

"Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men."

Of note, the word *delivered* is best translated betrayed. Jesus was betrayed by Judas, then handed over to the Sanhedrin and chief priest, then condemned to death in a rigged trial, then handed over to the Romans (Gentiles) as the Scribes and Pharisees lacked the authority to kill Jesus. Under Roman authority he is mocked, insulted, spat upon, flogged, and finally killed on a cross.

But this was not new information as these events had been predicted many years earlier in multiple OT passages. These things were spoken of in:

Ps 22: 1, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?

Ps 22:6-7, But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people. ⁷ All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads.

Ps 22:14-18, I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me. ¹⁵ My mouth^[d] is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. ¹⁶ Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce^[e] my hands and my feet. ¹⁷ All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. ¹⁸ They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.

Is 53:4-10 Surely, he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ⁸ By oppression^[d] and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished.^[b] ⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth ¹⁰ Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes^[c] his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days.

The scriptures make clear, the price of our salvation was the death of God's Son. His motive was love for us. God longed to reestablish the lost relationship he had with us while in the Garden. Scripture makes this very clear!

Jn 3:16, For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Rm 5:8, But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 Pet 3:18, for Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.

Heb 2:17, *For this reason he had to be made like them,^[k] fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.*

Heb 7:27, *Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.*

Heb 9:11-15, *But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here,^[a] he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. ¹² He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining^[b] eternal redemption. ¹³ The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. ¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death,^[c] so that we may serve the living God! ¹⁵ For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*

Heb 9:24-28, *For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. ²⁵ Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶ Otherwise Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But he has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷ Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.*

These scriptures now lead us into verse 33b, the proof of our salvation.

The Proof of Salvation, vs 33b.

Vs 33b, *On the third day he will rise again.*

Before Christ, no one in history had ever promised to rescue people from the curse of death. Yes, many have died trying to save friends from any sort of natural or manmade disaster, but none said, I will save you from the penalty of death. All of us experience death. And we all experience death because we are all under the curse of God's punishment for Adam's sin and our own.

So, here is the remarkable thing about Jesus' promise. He said, if you believe in me, I will rescue you from the penalty of death that God imposed on mankind because I bore that penalty for you; and he proved that he did so, by dying and then coming back to life to show that it was done.

Rm 5:6-11 (NLT), *When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. ⁷ Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. ⁸ But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. ⁹ And since we have been made right in God's sight*

by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. ¹⁰ For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. ¹¹ So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.

Now Romans 5 had not yet been written when Jesus uttered the words *on the third day he rise again*. But Jesus knew the Word and the promises that concerned Him. He knew:

Ps 16:10, *For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your holy one to rot in the grave.*

Mt 12:39-40, Jesus used the example of Jonah to foretell his own resurrection: *But Jesus replied, "Only an evil, adulterous generation would demand a miraculous sign; but the only sign I will give them is the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.*

The Preclusion of Salvation, vs 34.

Vs 34, *The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about.*

This is one of the more remarkable passages in Scripture. Here are these twelve men who have been living with Jesus for three years, and who are now on their way up to Jerusalem, where the Son of man will be handed over, and they have not a clue as to what it all means.

But I will not be too hard on them for there are instances in my life and in all our lives, where we hear information, and we see information, and we use information, but we do not know what it means.

The disciples knew they were going up to Jerusalem for Passover. They knew that Jesus had promised a kingdom, and they fully expected Jesus to be their Messianic King who would restore the kingdom of Israel to the Jewish people and deliver them from Roman rule. They knew they faced increased opposition, and now they were about to enter the area where it was strongest, Jerusalem. They knew they were afraid and apprehensive. They felt trapped as they wanted the kingdom but didn't see any way in which it would come about, and like Thomas they felt fatalistic about their prospects, as John 11:16 says, *Thomas, nicknamed the Twin,^[a] said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go, too—and die with Jesus.*

But there was nothing in their comprehension for a suffering Messiah, or a Messiah who would die as the lamb of God to bear the penalty of our sin, or a Messiah who would end the sacrificial system, or a messiah who would be raised from the dead, even though Jesus had told them before as we noted in Lk 9:21 and Lk 9:44.

They had information, but didn't know what it meant for as the scripture says, *its meaning was hidden from them.*

What about you this morning? Many of you have had Biblical information for years. But do you know what it means? God had to open the disciples' minds and hearts to the truth of what Jesus did. This is the pattern in scripture: God must open your eyes and ears and heart to the truth.

- a. In Mt 16:17 Jesus tells Peter the Lord had revealed to him the truth about himself.
- b. In Lk 24:31 God opened the eyes of the men on the Emmaus Road.
- c. In Acts 9:17 the Lord blinded Paul, then opened his eyes through Ananias.
- d. In Acts 16:14 the Lord opened Lydia's heart.
- e. In Acts 26:18 Paul said he was sent to open the eyes of the Gentiles.
- f. In Eph 1:18 Paul prayed that the hearts of the Ephesian Church would be opened
- g. In 2 Cor 4:4 we note Satan has blinded the minds of those who don't believe.

And there are other examples. So, like David in Ps 119:18, pray that God will *open your eyes to see the wonderful truths in your instruction.*