

The Way to Jerusalem

Matthew 20:17-19

MPS Jesus is the way to the true Jerusalem: He died for sin as the true Passover lamb and resurrects to new life with God all who believe in Him.

OBJ Every person should know the true way to Jerusalem because of Three Truths.

READ Matthew 20:17-19

And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, ¹⁸“See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death ¹⁹and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day.” **Matthew 20:17-19**

Jesus is headed up to Jerusalem with his twelve disciples. They are going to observe Passover, one of the largest festival celebrations of the year. Jerusalem was the center of all Jewish worship, the highest and holiest place for them. Jerusalem centered all the Jewish hope because it was the place where the fulfillment of God’s redemption plan would come to completion. Situated on a mound, one always goes up to Jerusalem. The way to Jerusalem was always exciting. But at Passover, one could feel the tangible excitement on the road because of the crowd. Everyone on the way to Jerusalem was excited.

In the midst of this excitement, Jesus takes the disciples aside to speak to them. He tells them that the *Son of Man*, His preferred title that denotes the fulfillment of his messianic vision, will be delivered over to the religious leaders and condemned to death. Then, they will deliver him to the Romans to carry out the execution. He will be mocked and flogged and crucified, and then raised on the third day. This doesn’t sound like the excitement of a normal Passover! And that’s because it’s not! Though they are going for the great annual celebration, a great atrocity will occur. Jesus’ uses of the title, Son of Man, makes clear that he is talking about himself, but they don’t understand what He is saying. Three times prior Jesus has predicted his crucifixion and death (Matthew 16:21; 17:12, 22-23).¹ But the disciples simply cannot fathom what He means. Here Jesus includes one additional aspect to complete this record of his suffering, “*and he will be raised on the third day.*” Though He will die, death will not be the end. One scholar notes, “but as much as he tries to get his disciples to understand the necessity of that mission, they continually misapprehend its significance. Instead of being a revolutionary liberator, Jesus will be a suffering Messiah, something that even his own disciples, let alone the crowds, have great difficulty fathoming.”² Jesus is focused on the Father’s plan. The way that this fulfillment will come about is not like anyone expects. **Jesus teaches his disciples about His mission from the Father, of why he has come to earth, because He is the true sacrificial lamb of God to take away the sins of the world.** (John 1:29)

MPS Jesus is the true way to Jerusalem:

He died for sin as the true Passover lamb and resurrects to new life with God all who believe in Him.

OBJ I want us to consider today the true Way to Jerusalem, the place where hope is fulfilled because sin is atoned and life is received. **Three Truths one must believe to know the true Way to Jerusalem.**

Truth #1: The true way to Jerusalem is a person, Jesus Christ, and not a path.

The way to Jerusalem is a crowded thoroughfare, filled with people searching for hope. And along the journey, Jesus leads His disciples aside to teach them what the way to Jerusalem is really all about.

ILLUS Holiday Traffic and Excitement The roads are never more crowded than headed into a holiday or festival. More than

¹ Leon Morris, [The Gospel according to Matthew](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), 506. Morris notes, “Commentators routinely copy from one another the statement that this is Jesus’ third prediction of his passion, but Matthew has already recorded three such predictions (16:21; 17:12, 22–23; cf. 10:38); this is his fourth.”

² Michael J. Wilkins, [Matthew](#), The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2004), 569.



only crowded, the roads grind to a crawl. People pour into a holiday looking to get away from the rat race, only to get caught up in the trap of holiday / festival traffic. **And why do they come?** In one sense, all come for a similar reason, to vacation, recreate, and rest. Life is hectic, busy, and chaotic, and people are longing to get away from it all. So, they run to a festival, which are SO MUCH MORE relaxing! **Has this not been the conversation of our region now for the last year?** I digress, but you understand what the disciples were sensing here.

Jesus impedes their momentum along the way to Jerusalem to redirect them on the true way. The way up to Jerusalem would be important not for what they expected, but for what he was about to tell them. This Passover will be like none they have ever experienced. Jesus instructs His followers in all that will take place so their faith will be anchored in the One who is the true Way. They expected a Passover festival. What they would experience was the most heinous injustice in all human history, AND the most glorious sacrifice of divine atonement for eternity. **In the midst of all the chaos, Jesus instructed His disciples to focus on Him and believe, and this would be their true way to all the hope they held in Jerusalem.**

Have you ever been in traffic and really didn't know where you were going, so you said, "follow that car in front. They probably know where we need to go." The way to Jerusalem is a crowded thoroughfare. Everybody is on the way to somewhere. **But the only true way to eternal hope and glory is not merely a path to follow, but the person who came from God, Jesus Christ. The true way to Jerusalem is a person, Jesus Christ, and not a path. Do you know where you are headed, who you are following?**

Truth #2: The promise of God in Passover is accomplished by Jesus in his mission of death and resurrection.

Jesus teaches the disciples about the celebration that will occur in Jerusalem, but it won't feel much like a festival. The title he used, *Son of Man*, will prove true: Jesus is the One sent from God to fulfill all the promises of Messiah. Jesus used this title so that after his death and resurrection the disciples would understand what He was saying to them. He was sent from God as the stoning sacrifice for sin. **In his arrest, trial, condemnation, suffering, crucifixion, and resurrection, the glory of God by the Son of Man would be made known.**

Though the Jewish religious leaders condemned him as guilty, Jesus' trial proved Him innocent. There was no guilt found in Him (Luke 23:22; John 18:38; Acts 13:28) Jesus was not condemned as guilty for His sin, but for the sins of the world. Jesus was publicly mocked, ridiculed, beaten, and shamed mercilessly before all because what He endured reveals the effect of our sin on us. Sin exposes us to public shame, maybe not all in the same way, but all nonetheless. The prophet Isaiah (53:7-12) records this for us.

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. ⁸By oppression and judgment he was taken away;... ⁹And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief;... ¹²...because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors." **Isaiah 53:7-12**

God's wrath against sin was consumed and satisfied in Jesus' sacrificial death that atoned, paid, for our sin.

Therefore, he raised Him up on the third day to an incomparable glory, exalting and bestowing on Him a Name above every other, and seating Him on the throne of Heaven where every knee will bow and tongue confess to the glory of God the Father for all that He has done in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Philippians 2:9-11) **This is the glorious message, the gospel, from God that comes to us through Jesus Christ His son; sin has been atoned, righteousness and eternal life bestowed.**

Paul condenses this into one statement when he says, *"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."* **2 Corinthians 5:21** The gospel of Jesus Christ is God's power unto salvation for all who believe. (Romans 1:16) **Jesus' message to the disciples about His mission centers our mission around His message; God sent His Son to die for sin so by His death we would have life. The promise of God in Passover will be accomplished by Jesus in his mission of death and resurrection. Have you put your faith in Jesus to receive God's promise**



of salvation in Him?

TRANS This leads us to one final truth.

Truth #3: Jesus is the true way to Jerusalem, only by faith in Him can one know and worship God.

There were many people on the way to Jerusalem, but there is only one true way to worship God. His Name is Jesus Christ. (John 14:16) Jesus is the True and only way to God. When you place your faith in His atoning death, you are united with Him in His death counted for your sin, so that you also will be united with Him in His resurrection unto eternal life. (Romans 6:5-6) There IS a city in which all our hope is fulfilled; where satisfaction is our eternal state, without doubt or question, where all longing and desire is satisfied; where we drink of living water and feast on the bread of life to our heart's content, where pleasures are forevermore, but do not destroy as they do in this world. And Jesus is the Only way to this city, known as the New Jerusalem. Jesus is preparing an eternal city in which all our hope will be realized. (John 14:6) He is the true way who leads His followers to the New Jerusalem. Put your faith in Jesus today and know the true way to Jerusalem.

Jesus is the true way to Jerusalem:

He died for sin as the true Passover lamb and resurrects to new life with God all who believe in Him.

