

Jesus Looking Forward to Golgotha

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[0 : 01] Now we're turning once more this evening to Luke's Gospel, chapter 18, Gospel according to Luke, chapter 18, and this evening we'll consider the words of verses 31 down to 34.

Luke 18, at verse 31, let's just read these few verses before we come and look at some of the contents of it. And taking the twelve, Jesus said to them, See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.

For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked, and shamefully treated, and spat upon. And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise.

But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them. And they did not grasp what was said. You'll be aware from watching races, if you've watched them on television, that in a long race, such as a 10,000 meters, with something like 25 laps of the track, when it comes to the final lap, there is a bell rung as the runners go past.

Just as the final lap begins, they hear the bell, and that tells them that it's the final lap. Because obviously after a good number of laps, it's possible to just not quite remember which lap you're on.

[1 : 36] So the final lap is announced by the ringing of the bell. And it's something like that in a spiritual sense with the Lord. We've been following him in Luke on his journey to Jerusalem.

And we've seen many things happening on the way. There'll still be a few more things before he finally reaches Jerusalem, where his journey will end. But this is the final leg beginning at this point.

This is the final lap for him. From now on, there's not much time between this moment and his reaching Jerusalem. So the cross is very much upon his mind.

And it's as if Jesus is really saying to himself particularly, as much as to the disciples, as he enters this final lap, these words are like a kind of ringing of the bell by himself, just to announce, I'm now coming to this final stage of my journey as I go towards Jerusalem.

And that's why he contains, why he has given us in these verses, that they contain for us this further announcement in more detail than before.

[2 : 52] We've seen a number of places previously where the Lord actually announced this, like in chapter 9, for example, verses 22 and 24. He made it clear there what was going to happen to him as he came to Jerusalem.

But here it's much more detailed. As he rings the bell, the disciples hear the details of what is going to happen at the end of the journey.

That he's going to be taken into custody. That he's going to be shamefully treated and abused. That he's going to be killed. And yet that he's going to rise on the third day.

And isn't it an amazing thing that Jesus knew all these things in advance, yet he still went on wholeheartedly with his journey to the cross.

This is not like you would find in what you would normally call a prediction, which may or may not come through. Which may have some details that will come through, whereas others will end up not being coming through.

[4 : 04] There are many predictions that don't end up coming through, or at least coming through only partially. This is not a prediction in that sense of it, though it is, in a sense, a prediction as well, because he's telling the disciples what is yet in the future.

But everything he says here, he knows that will be exactly how it will turn out. And the Lord was carrying this on his heart, in his mind.

All of this time that he was going about dealing with people who had so many things to ask of him, who made so many demands on him, as we've seen on this journey, one of the incredible things that you notice is just how busy and how crammed the Lord's life was, was people in need, and with helping people in need.

And in all of that, the Lord is carrying this burden that he knows in its detail of what awaits him at the end of his journey.

Here are three things. A perfect accomplishment, a dynamic sequence of events, and a truth too big for the disciples to grasp at that moment.

[5 : 23] They are all in the future, but nevertheless he's brought them into the present, telling the disciples, this is how it will be. There will be, firstly, a perfect accomplishment.

We are going to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man, by that he meant himself, by the prophets, will be accomplished. And one of the things that that tells you is the understanding that Jesus himself had of his own identity.

Because you will find some people suggesting, actually, that Jesus wasn't too sure about his own identity. But nothing like that comes across from this passage, or other passages in the Gospel.

That's just the kind of thing from which people get PhDs. There's things which are said by the Lord about himself, as in this passage, that tell us clearly that he knew who he was, and he understood his mission in the world, because he was saying that all of the Old Testament times, all of the years of the Old Testament, and the revelation of God in the Old Testament, was a preparation for him, for his coming, for his work, and especially for his life, and death, and resurrection.

He knew who he was. He knew that he was the one that the Old Testament really was all about. And as he came to this moment, it is from the Old Testament, that he actually brought out the things that would be done to him, that would be done as an accomplishment.

[7 : 08] They would be an accomplishment, or a fulfilling, of Old Testament prophecy. All the things that are written by the prophets will be accomplished.

And you notice he did say, everything. Everything that was written by the Old Testament prophets, they will be accomplished in his ministry.

And of course, when you go to the passages that we will come to eventually after his resurrection, towards the end of Luke's Gospel in chapter 24, listen to what he says there to the disciples at verse 24 of chapter 24.

Where they were just unsure as to what to make of this person that was walking with them on the way to Emmaus. Some of those, they said to him, who were with us, went to the tomb and found it just as the woman had said, but him they did not see.

And he said to them, O foolish ones, and slow of heart, to believe all of the prophets have spoken. And then verse 44, he says, these are the things, my words, that I spoke to you while I was still with you.

[8 : 29] That's before he died. That everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. And in verse 27, beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted them in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself.

How long was that sermon? As a preacher of the gospel, while we recognize, of course, that God chose not to write the details of that sermon for us, how we wish that he had in that sense.

What a sermon that would have been. What a commentary that would have made. What a wonderful book that would have been to read. Jesus beginning with Moses and all the prophets, expounding to these disciples in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself.

No commentator could possibly have written such a book but himself. It's all to do with him. And he knows it even before he goes to the cross and comes through the resurrection.

So it's a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. But let's remember something else. It is a fulfillment too. It's an accomplishment not just of Old Testament prophecy but by Jesus in the work that he himself was doing and especially in the things that would happen at Jerusalem.

[10 : 05] You see, we mustn't just say that the Old Testament was accomplished, that the prophecies were fulfilled. What we have to say is that every single aspect of the Lord's own doing, his own actions, his own willing actions as our Savior, these are the way by which together these Old Testament scriptures were fulfilled.

They were fulfilled by what he did. And they were fulfilled as one who knew that he was doing what he did in accomplishment of prophecy about himself.

What a unique person the Lord is. What a journey this was to be traveling with him to Jerusalem and hearing all of this and seeing all of these miracles that he did on the way and looking at all of these different aspects of the Lord's ministry and the Lord's person as he was involved in this and hearing him say such things as these that looked into the future that if you like if you follow the title of our study tonight Jesus looking forward to Golgotha yes he's looking forward to it not just by telling us of what telling the disciples what would happen but looking forward himself to accomplishing it looking forward to it in the sense we talk about looking forward to something who could possibly look forward to such a thing when you know it in advance the kind of death the kind of suffering the kind of abuse the death you're going to actually experience there and yet he looked forward to it his mind was wholly given to accomplishment to fulfilling the details of Old Testament prophecy about him it's a perfect accomplishment everything that he did there accomplished

Old Testament prophecy and of course that as we said itself is one of the pointers towards the kind of book the Bible is how could it possibly have been the case that Isaiah for example in the passage we read in chapter 52 into 53 could have written all of the details that he wrote unless he was indeed a man inspired by God how could that possibly have happened setting out the detail of Christ's sufferings in such a detailed way unless God is behind it unless God is in control of it and it is one of the pointers that bring us to the conclusion that this Bible is nothing less than the word of God and that it holds together so wonderfully even in such things as you see here the Lord Jesus in his ministry and in his sufferings and in his death by what he does actually fulfilling what was written hundreds of years before nothing else but the book of God and nothing else but the

God of the book could have put all that together so secondly here is a dynamic sequence of events because the Lord went on to speak about in the accomplishment of these things the prophets had written this would entail him being delivered him being mocked and shamefully treated and spat upon him being flogged and then him being killed and then on the third day that he would rise now that's a sequence of events but we've called it a dynamic sequence of events because they are filled with power and they are filled especially with his power they are the means by which he himself obtained salvation for us they are not just things that were done to him they are things in which he was actively involved and in which he was doing things to obtain salvation for us let's look at them in this dynamic sequence that he's given us first of all he was going to be delivered he will be delivered over to the Gentiles now remember the Lord is talking to

[14 : 35] Jews at this point to whom Gentiles are out there somewhere just completely outside of the pale of the church outside of the revelation of God Gentiles are held at arm's length they're not the people of God they don't have the promises they don't have the scriptures God has confined that to the Jews that's why it's so difficult for the Jews in Christ's day to think of the Gentiles having any part in the salvation of God and here is Jesus saying to them that the Son of Man the Saviour is going to be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles what they don't know yet is that the Son of Man is going to be delivered by being betrayed by one of themselves Judas Iscariot betrayed the Son of Man with a kiss that's what Jesus said to him as you read when they came to arrest

Jesus Judas with the crowd that came to take Jesus into custody he went over and kissed Jesus just to make it clear who it was they should arrest and Jesus turned to him and this is exactly what he said Judas are you betraying the Son of Man with kiss what was a kiss well it was more than a sign of affection it was that but a kiss was something that you gave to a king when a king stretched out his hand you kissed the hand of the king to show that you were in homage to him that you were giving obedience to him that you were acknowledging that he was your master that he was your king that you were his subject and here is Judas combining all of these things in the meaning of a kiss a sign of affection what is a sign of affection as much as a genuine kiss is what is a sign of homage like the kissing of the hand of the king and there is the king and there is the betrayer and

Jesus saying to him are you taking what among human beings represents the greatest affection and a sign of the greatest obedience are you using that to betray me what a hypocrite but before we actually lay the charge at Judas door let's look into our own hearts have we ever betrayed the son of man with a kiss have we given out affection to someone else before him are we still saying of him we will not have this man to rule over us is our kissing of the hand of Jesus is it genuine is it a pretense is it something that will accuse us on the day of judgment or is it something that the

Lord will say blessed are you because you have come to accept me as your king well he was betrayed he was delivered over to the Gentiles and through the betrayal of Judas Iscariot the Lord was handed over to the Jewish authorities first of all to the high priest but he was then delivered over to Pontius Pilate the Roman governor who sent him for a while it is Luke who tells us that he sent him to Herod because it was in the jurisdiction of Herod in that area Herod examined him he sent him back with a message to Pilate I don't find any fault in him you see Herod this evil wicked man this schemer he tried everything possible to find fault with Jesus and in all his examination it was an impossibility he couldn't find any fault in him at all and in fact fault with him and so

Pilate took him and put him through a trial and raised judgment against him ultimately to deliver him to the death of the cross he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and the final aspect of that is when the soldiers the Gentile soldiers in the Roman army took him and brought him to be tied or nailed to the cross and hung at Golgotha but not only that but he will be shamefully treated mocked and spat upon and after flogging him they will kill him the Lord was delivered but he was then abused and this is not an easy thing to speak about I know the sufferings of his soul were the soul of his sufferings as

[20 : 00] Hugh Martin puts it and that all his physical sufferings great though they were were nothing like as great as the suffering spiritually which he endured in his soul on the cross when he cried out my God my God why have you forsaken me that is the depth of suffering that is the most intense aspect of his sufferings because there he is experiencing hell in his own soul the hell that his people deserved he has taken to himself he is experiencing it there whatever that entails we shall never know in its full extent and yet it is true that he was horribly abused physically we don't like to see anything to do with physical abuse but it's a dreadful thought to think what

Jesus must have looked like after this battering this physical battering that he endured and the flogging to crown it all was the worst of the physical sufferings there were two kinds of floggings under Roman law the worst of them was this kind of flogging flogging that took a scourge and a Roman scourge was made up of a piece of wood to which there were lengths of leather attached like strips of leather and tied into the strips of leather were pieces of bone and if you are flogged with that with your bare back and a

Roman soldier taking that and flogging you with it it was required that you would be flogged until the blood flowed freely this is the sinless son of god why is it happening to him why did this have to take place in his experience because he loved sinners he took the flogging for them he endured this abuse including this flogging why because as Isaiah put it all these hundreds of years before he was bruised for our iniquities he was wounded for our transgressions the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed have we ever considered really the extent to which

Christ suffered physical pain and abuse and have we considered that it was because he loved the likes of you and I he shall be delivered over to the Gentiles and having been delivered he shall be abused he shall be mocked and shamefully treated and spat upon and after flogging him they will kill him yes the Lord was killed and you know Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles that's the other book in the New Testament that Luke actually wrote and in the Acts of the Apostles you have references to the actual death of the Lord that Luke makes are statements that you need to spend a long time over in order to try and get into the sheer depth of them because they're such amazing statements just let me give you one or two in chapter 2 for example in

Acts and verse 23 makes it clear that the Lord was in fact killed where it is Peter in his speech in the sermon at Pentecost that's saying that this Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God you crucified you people crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men then you turn to chapter 3 and verse 15 where you find an even more amazing statement where you find that you denied the holy and righteous one and asked for a murderer to be granted to you that was Barabbas of course that the Jews insisted be released and Jesus be taken into custody instead of you denied the holy and righteous one and asked for a murderer to be granted to you and listen to this and you killed the author of life whom

[25 : 33] God raised from the dead are there any words more remarkable in the Bible than that the creator of life the author of life the one from whom all other life derives you killed him and not only did you kill the author of life which seems to us such paradox such an impossibility you can't get your head round that can you that the author of life should be put to death that's who Jesus is but along with that instead of setting Jesus free as the author of life they set free one who had taken a life a murderer he shall be killed he shall be put to death amazing though it is for such a person to be put to death that is what happened now all of that is something in all of these three things you see the delivery you see abuse and you've got he was killed in all of that they are put in this passages things that were done to him but like we said earlier it's so important for us to bear in mind that all of these things actually were done by him as well in the sense that he gave himself willingly to these things he gave himself willingly to be delivered into the hands of the

Gentiles he gave himself willingly to be abused he gave himself willingly to be put to death on the cross his activity controlled the activity of human beings as they did these things to him let me just try and refer to that in the way that he was delivered over to the Gentiles think of what John says in his gospel chapter 18 and verses 5 and 6 and when you find the details there we mentioned this I think recently as well in relation to something else John chapter 18 verses 5 and 6 when they came to this garden and Judas pointed him out Jesus said whom do you seek he said Jesus of Nazareth Jesus answered I told you that I am he so if you seek me let these men go this was to fulfill the word that he had spoken when he asked that the previous time

Jesus knowing what would happen to him came forward and said whom do you seek they answered him Jesus of Nazareth Jesus said to them I am he and Judas who betrayed him was standing with him when Jesus said to them I am he they drew back or they fell back backwards to the ground that that's a remarkable thing itself because when people stumble forward it's usually that they stumble forwards to the ground they were coming towards Jesus to rest but they fell backwards it was just like a bolt of lightning had hit the ground and an electric shock had actually touched them and they fell backwards with the shock what was it that caused them to fall back in shock well it was when Jesus said these I am he and if you look into the Greek text of the New Testament at that point you will only find these words

I am when Jesus said I am as far as John is concerned as he recorded this for us Jesus saying I am was a demonstration that this was the God of the Exodus the God who met Moses at the burning bush and when Moses asked what name shall I tell the Israelites when I go back to them and tell them that I have met with you what shall I say your name is tell them that I am has met with you and here is I am being arrested in Gethsemane how could they have possibly taken this person into custody except that he himself controlled the event and the fact that he controlled the event is shown in what happened at that moment when they fell backwards they could never have taken

Jesus into custody except as Jesus himself gave himself to them he said the same to Pilate did me in John 19 verse 11 where Pilate said to him do you not know that I have authority to release you and I have authority also to take you into custody or to crucify you Jesus said to him you could have no authority at all against me if it were not given you from above who's controlling the event of Christ's arrest Christ is who's controlling the event of Christ's trial and Christ's examination by Pilate Pilate thinks that he's the Roman governor that he's actually in control of this man's destiny he has the power to release him or he has the power to order him to be crucified Jesus is saying actually you're not in control you may be a Roman governor but

[31 : 27] I am the king yes he was delivered and he was delivered into the hand of Gentiles and he was abused he gave himself to all of that willingly and when he came to die on the cross you remember that they didn't take his life from him they crucified him they abused him they did so much to him that's recorded in the bible but he died himself he released his soul nobody else could do that but him father into your hands I commit my spirit nobody took his life from him he willingly gave it away in control of his own life and death this great person remember the question that Luke is setting before us all the way through his gospel who is this man well he's no more than a man isn't he he's the great

I am and the great I am has gone to be delivered and abused and killed in his love for his people but then he said the final event in the sequence and they all are in sequence and on the third day he will rise and you notice it's not saying he will be raised he will rise they will do this to him they will deliver him they will do this tomb he will be abused by them they will do this tomb they will tie him to the cross they will kill him they put him to death but on the third day he will rise the Bible does say to us that there are two sides two aspects of the resurrection of Christ there is the fact that he was raised by God the father we haven't time to go into that much tonight but the Bible in many places tells us Ephesians chapter 2 and also in Hebrews chapter 13 that God the father raised Jesus from the dead and the final one there in

Hebrews is quite a remarkable one because what he is saying is Hebrews 13 and verse 20 where he says now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus the great shepherd of the sheep and so on he's praying for those that he's writing to there that God will equip them with every good thing to do his will but this is how he referred to him he's the God of dead our Lord Jesus and these words brought again have a kind of compulsion built into them God the Father is something we have to say with all respect and reverence but this is what the Bible teaches God the Father had no option but to raise Jesus from the dead because the work that Jesus had done up to and including his death pleased the

Father perfectly satisfied his justice paid the price of sin there is no way that the Father could not have raised Jesus from the dead when Jesus had done what he did on the third day he will be raised but what this is emphasizing is he will rise it's not just the fact that the Father raised him from the dead he also raised himself John chapter 10 again has this for us we're going through a few texts tonight I know it's difficult flitting back and forward but they're so important because they're all strung together on this one string of Christ's ministry and John chapter 10 Christ himself talking about himself as the good shepherd for this reason he says in verse 17 the Father loves me because I lay down my life I lay down my life he's saying so that

I might take it up again no one takes it from me I have power to lay it down of my own accord and I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it up again this commandment I receive from my Father in words Jesus is saying when he came into the world and when he came to do the not only that he would give his life in the death he died but that he would take it again in resurrection I can't understand that because this is something that no mere human being can do you cannot in your own strength as a human being rise from the dead nobody has ever done that except this human being this son of God in our nature having been put to death having died and his body being buried he rose from the dead he arose himself and that's built into what he said to

[37 : 03] Martha in John 11 where she said Lord if you had been here my brother would not have died it would have been a different circumstance of only you had been here what did he say to her I am the resurrection and the life I am that I have it in myself he is saying that's who I am now as we approach death ourselves need to die to die and all of you who are saved tonight have the privilege and the benefit of looking forward to death knowing that there has been someone there ahead of you for you to take care of you when you come to die that he has gone before you and has occupied the grave before you yourself need to have your body laid there but there's more than that to it not only has he gone ahead of you into death but he's gone ahead of you into resurrection and the fact that he rose from the dead for his people means that you and

I will rise from the dead victoriously in him he's gone ahead of us into that as well how thankful we should be tonight if that is what we're anticipating if that's our relationship with Jesus let me put it this way when you look at a dead corpse or even if you've never seen a dead corpse you imagine what it's like absolutely lifeless you know looking at that and you know as you think ahead to your own corpse if you die before the Lord comes back your corpse will be laid out in a coffin absolutely lifeless and as you think ahead and see yourself there tonight as you and I must in preparation you know that that corpse cannot of its own accord rise from the state of death but that's not the last word you mustn't think that because that is true therefore death has the victory no mere human being can do that but he can and he did and he will for all of his people you believe in

Christ resurrection from the dead therefore you believe in your own and when you believe in your own you believe that Christ has taken the last word not death but he himself in life that's who has the last word now they couldn't understand this of course the saying was hidden from them and they did not understand what was said they understood the words that he was saying they knew the words from their ordinary meaning but they just couldn't grasp the meaning of it this possibly be and that shouldn't surprise us because this really is an event much greater than they themselves could possibly comprehend at that stage why is that well because the events themselves needed to take place before this would actually be understood by them you can only understand as these disciples are at that moment they could only understand these things that he was telling about them once they had taken place and that's why in chapter 24 of

Luke we can leave the last word with verse 27 there where he began with Moses and all the prophets he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself and then we read that he went on and spoke to them in such a way and as they went in to stay with them their eyes were opened and they recognized him did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road and while he opened to us the scriptures I do hope that something of that burning heart will have been experienced by myself and by yourselves tonight we have been with Jesus again on the road to Jerusalem we have heard him speaking about his death and his resurrection we have heard him saying that all this is an accomplishment of what

God had foretold in the prophets did your heart feel anything of the power of this Christ did your heart burn as he took you to the cross as he took you to the sepulcher where he is no longer found did your heart burn in love and appreciation that such a saviour did such a thing for such as you let's pray Lord our gracious Lord we stand once again in wonder at the way in which you acted for your people at the greatness of these actions that took place in your own experience we thank you that they are recorded for us in your word as truth we bless you for the meaning of them in the experience of our salvation bless your word to us once again we pray continue to bless us as the

[43 : 20] Lord who is now on high and who ministers grace to his people we ask all of this for your own name sake Amen