

43

Mark 10:32-34 Jesus predicts his death a third time

Discussion: Can you think of a situation where disaster struck unexpectedly, but looking back, the warning signs were there (e.g., 2008 global financial crisis)?

Mark 10	Matthew 20	Luke 18
<p>Jesus predicts his death a third time 32 They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid. Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him.</p>	<p>Jesus predicts his death a third time 17 Now Jesus was going up to Jerusalem.</p> <p>On the way, he took the Twelve aside and said to them,</p>	<p>Jesus predicts his death a third time</p> <p>31 Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them,</p>
<p>33 'We are going up to Jerusalem,' he said,</p>	<p>18 'We are going up to Jerusalem,</p>	<p>'We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled.</p>
<p>'and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death</p>	<p>and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death</p>	
<p>and will hand him over to the Gentiles,</p>	<p>19 and will hand him over to the Gentiles</p>	<p>32 He will be handed over to the Gentiles.</p>
<p>34 who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.'</p>	<p>to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!'</p>	<p>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.'</p>
		<p>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.</p>

Comparison

- All three Synoptics state that Jesus was leading a group of Disciples up to Jerusalem. Mark describes the Disciples as *astonished* while the other followers were *afraid*. Jesus takes the Twelve aside to offer them further details more privately.

Bible Study of Mark's Gospel

- Jesus refers to himself as the Son of Man in all three accounts, telling his Disciples he will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, while Luke emphasises the Gentiles.
- Jesus will be mocked, flogged and killed and Matthew clarifies it will be by crucifixion.
- Jesus states he will rise on the third day, Luke adding that the Disciples still don't comprehend what he is saying.

Context

- Previous verses state that Jesus had set off from Perea and the group were “on their way up to Jerusalem”. This implies that they had crossed the River Jordan (about 350m or 1100' below sea level) and were heading up the mountain to Jerusalem which is almost 20 miles away (a steep ascent of over 1000m or 3500').⁷⁷

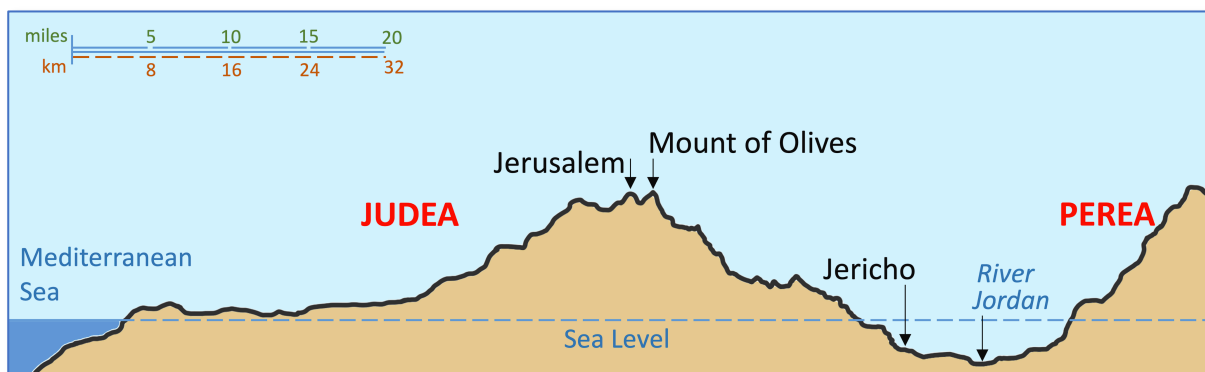


Figure 47: Profile of their journey from Perea to the River Jordan, then up to Jerusalem

- Over the centuries, numerous theologians have compared the four Gospels alongside one another in an attempt to devise a timeline for the events of Jesus' life. These are referred to as a *synopsis* or *harmony*.^{78,79} The Gospel writers did not always make this an easy task, as their purpose was not to write a history or a biography but to give us the message of the Good News of Jesus, which is why these scriptures are called *Gospels*.
- At this point in events, Mark's narrative will race us up the mountain to get to Jerusalem with a brief stop at Jericho, while Matthew and Luke introduce additional events that happened on the way. The Gospel of John also introduces further material (particularly raising Lazarus from the dead and a temporary escape from the authorities to Ephraim). This study remains focused on Mark's account but we will also encounter more of John's Gospel from this point. This section is typically viewed as the beginning of what is commonly referred to as the Passion narrative.⁸⁰

Key Points

- The Greek text of Mark is usually understood to be speaking about two distinct groups of followers: the *Twelve* (who were astonished) and also the *others* that followed (who were afraid).^{81,82} That a larger entourage was following Jesus than just the Twelve is confirmed by their presence at the events of the coming week (e.g., the women reported to be at the foot of the Cross):

*Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there (Mark 15:41).*⁸³

- The astonishment of the Twelve was not about his words, but rather about Jesus' behaviour as he purposefully led the way.^{84,85} Mark conveys a vivid sense of urgency in the *march toward the death* that awaited him in Jerusalem.⁸⁶ He is depicted as a strong and confident leader, inflexible in his determination to do the will of God, as foretold by the prophet Isaiah (Is. 50:7). The other followers were also bewildered and fearful at the ominous atmosphere. This was not the typical pilgrimage trip to a Jerusalem festival that they might have experienced in the past.⁸⁷
- The entire group had recently listened to Jesus describe key characteristics of the call of discipleship. These include: welcoming the Kingdom with an openness of heart found in the little children that Jesus invited into his arms (Mark 10:13-16); to be willing to let go of the trappings of wealth, status or power, as required of the Rich Young Ruler who could not let go of worldly things and allow God to be sovereign over his life (Mark 10:17-28); and, to recognise that following Jesus may result in rejection by friends or family and also be accompanied by a risk of persecution (Mark 10:28-31).⁸⁸
- This was the third prediction given by Jesus to his Disciples concerning his suffering, death and resurrection (the previous ones being Mark 8:31 and 9:31). Each prediction revealed further details, this time regarding the suffering he would endure and adding the involvement of the Gentiles (that is, the Romans).⁸⁹ Jesus was clear that it would be the Jewish leadership (rather than the Jewish people in general) who would reject and condemn him.⁹⁰ As the Jewish leaders did not have the authority under Roman law to execute Jesus, they would have to hand him over to the Romans to carry out the deed itself.⁹¹

Bible Study of Mark's Gospel

Going Deeper: Jesus predicts his death three times

This table compares the three predictions, showing where these events will occur later in Mark's narrative. Many of these had been prophesied centuries before in the OT, for example, Isaiah chapters 50 and 53, and Psalm 22.^{92,93,94}

	First prediction (8:31)	Second prediction (9:31)	Third prediction (10:33-34)	Passion Narrative in Mark
The Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests, elders and teachers of the Law (scribes)		✓	✓	14:42-53 14:53
... who will condemn him to death	✓		✓	14:64
... and deliver him to the Gentiles			✓	15:1
... who will mock him			✓	15:16-18
... and spit on him			✓	15:19
... and scourge (flog) him			✓	15:15
... and kill him	✓	✓	✓	15:24
... and after three days he will rise	✓	✓	✓	16:1-2

- It would appear from these three predictions that Jesus was readying his followers for the events of the days that lay ahead.⁹⁵ However, even though he had spoken so plainly about these things, we observe that as Passion Week unfolded, the Disciples remained unprepared for Jesus' betrayal and death.⁹⁶ Luke informs us that this is because the meaning of what Jesus was saying was hidden from them, which is also noted in the earlier predictions. Consequently, nothing of what Jesus was saying would make sense to them until *after* his resurrection when they would recall his words to them. As the events of the trial and crucifixion took place, it would appear to be a tragedy to his followers but it was always part of God's plan.⁹⁷

Discussion: Have there been occasions in your life you can see that God's hand was at work in your life, but it only became clear to you sometime later?