# Going up to Jerusalem



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Exodus 29:43&45 "And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory. And I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God.

Much of the terminology in the Bible is based on first-century (and previous centuries) knowledge at the time.

Also, many of the Bible usages concerning such things as geographic directions are based on factors we may not consider today.

For example, the Bible often states "going up to Jerusalem." (Matthew 20:18, 1 Kings 12:27, John 2:13) We may think of "going up" as meaning going in a northerly direction.

In Bible speak, "going up to Jerusalem" is because Jerusalem is a high point in that specific geographic location. Mt. Moriah, the location of the first and second Jerusalem Temple, is 2700 feet above sea level. Jericho is 850 feet below sea level and only seventeen miles from Jerusalem. The trip is definitely uphill all the way.

The Dead Sea is 1200 feet below sea level and only twenty-five miles from Jerusalem. The coastal cities in Israel are of course, at or near sea level. It doesn't matter where one is traveling from (walking in Bible times); the trek is uphill, thus "up to Jerusalem."

We must also consider the Bible reference to "the world." Their world was less in area than the eastern part of the U.S.

Matthew 24:9 "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."

"All nations" would have been different from today. Whereas there are 195 countries in the world today, how many nations were there in 33 AD? We could probably come up with a close number but with over 2000 years passed, the history of nations could easily have been convoluted.

We continually try to make the Bible fit into our current day's conditions of speech, geographic, social and economic conditions.

At times, considering the differences in usages (then and now), the meaning we glean from our Bible studies can completely change. Most Christians believe the Holy Bible was written by forty men over a period of 1600 years, and their inspiration came from God.

Since such an opinion may be true, we still should consider the time factor involved. The knowledge of the planet earth possessed by those forty writers and the interpreting in the King James Bible (Published 1611) and those compiling other versions was limited.

Understanding these and other considerations are open for opinions, it becomes logical to regard the differences in time and space.

Personally, I have to think that if God inspired the writing of the Holy Bible, He would possibly have inspired the translating of the numerous versions. While those were mostly composed with a "sell-the-product" motivation, whether or not God inspired them is certainly up for opinion.

The examples of changing understandings throughout the Bible are numerous. Conditions currently identified as such as epilepsy, blindness or mental illnesses were thought to be demonic possession.

This, of course, would be impossible to disprove, but current "medical wisdom" indicates injuries, chemical imbalances or short circuits in the brain as being the causes of such conditions.

I was in a village in East Africa and saw a little boy with numerous one-inch scars on his chest and belly. The attending physician (witch doctor) had cut holes in him when he was ill to let out the evil spirits.

The child survived and appeared healthy when I saw him. Consequently, the people of the village believed the doctor's treatment cured him.

Such beliefs are in the thousands and we seldom consider all the possibilities. Our presumptions are sometimes not logical but we also know we believe what we want to believe and researchers usually publish findings that agree with their points of view.

There is one Bible teaching we can take at its face value. That would be the Biblical plan of eternal life. Regardless of one's denominational affiliation, the fundamental of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the same.

The Bible teaches there is only one eternal salvation; that is, by a faith-based belief (Ephesians 2:8) that Christ Jesus was crucified (Matthew 27:35) for the remission of sin (Romans 4:25), resurrected (Matthew 28:6) and ascended alive into Heaven (Acts 1:9).

In today's world, the church places value on many conditions and situations the Bible does not support. The Bible says nothing about the church accumulating wealth for the sake of "having wealth."

The only reference to buildings is in 1 Kings 6, the building of King Solomon's Temple. The building of cathedrals and large, elaborate church buildings is not supported by scripture. Many of us believe (Matthew 16:18) the church is the people, not a building.

One such example of changed meanings is the word "tabernacle." That word is currently used in the name of many churches but in Old Testament times (Exodus), a tabernacle was a portable/moveable structure (tent) that adapted to the nomadic nature of the people in the Middle East of that day and time.

Passage of time and generational hand-down information are many times misleading or inaccurate. Always read the Bible to determine what it really says and consider the passage of time.

Does it matter what we believe about the issues that divide Christians? Only eternity and how to be a part of it matter.

The next time you go "up to Jerusalem," be prepared for an uphill trek, and you may not be heading north.

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# Logan County Devotional Page

## How about some good news for a change?

Here are some encouraging truths filled with spiritual hope and peace. May you enjoy the Lord's presence today. God knows: The Almighty is Omniscient and fully aware of when we are going through difficult times, our worries, fears, and even what we are thinking. Actually, He is the only one who really knows how we feel, and we can always trust that He has the perfect plan to help us. There are three answers to our prayers; yes, no, and keep waiting, so whatever the situation, we can know that He is in total control and always wants the best for us. He can make things work out in your favor, no matter how the situation looks or what stands in the way.

God loves: God's love and grace are greater than all our sin. Jesus died a cruel and painful death in order to save us, and the good news is that whoever embraces this gospel about God's love and receives it into their life by faith can obtain His mercy and be redeemed and transformed into a child of the King. Nothing can stop your love for God, and nothing can stop God's love from saving you! "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" Romans 8:37-39.

God cares: He sees every tear and knows all about the mountains and giants we are facing. Do not be intimidated or deceived by the enemy – he is a liar! Jesus wants everyone to know that with God you are always a majority – He has ALL authority. His word promises that his eye is watching every sparrow, which allows us to realize how much more He is watching over us. Trust Him. He is concerned and compassionate about our circumstances and longs to have a close personal relationship with you. "Casting all your care upon him; for he cares for you." I Peter 5:7.

God provides: The Lord always supplies peace, joy, or whatever material provisions we need. God can create miracles and open doors that seem impossible; just believe His promises are true! We can place all of our trust in Him and believe with all of our heart that He will do above and beyond all that we could ask or imagine. Philippians 4:19 declares, "But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

God desires: What is God's desire? Simply for us to love Him and obey Him. He also wants us to succeed, and be an overcomer who lives a confident, abundant life. When we were born, he designed our personal blueprint, and within this wonderful plan is a destiny of victory and joy! Read Deuteronomy 31:8. "Everyone has inside of them a piece of good news. The good news is that you don't know how great you can be! How much you can love! What you can accomplish! And what your potential is." Anne Frank.

God heals: Jesus is the great physician and has all power and authority in heaven and earth. He gives instruction and wisdom to doctors; He creates medicines and knows the solutions to every problem. God has the miracle power to take care of all of our health issues including physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual. Whether in this life or in heaven, we can know that our Heavenly Father will eventually heal all of His children perfectly and completely. In Exodus 15:26 God declares, "I am the Lord that heals you."

God delivers: Whatever the bondage, temptation, crisis, or fear, the King of kings can lift you out of your anxiety and set your feet upon a solid rock. Embrace His promises and allow His absolute truth to break down your walls of doubt and set you free! Invite Him today to come into your life and give you a fresh new beginning. Praise Him for who He is! He is worthy of all worship and exaltation! Lift up your heart and sing, "O come let us adore Him!" "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from my enemies." Psalm 18:2-3

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