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# JESUS PREPARES FOR DEATH

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(editing by Kathy Boynton)

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Many millennia of human history had elapsed before Christ, the promised Messiah, had come. Yet, even before He came, many Old Testament saints had trusted Him as the coming Savior. Scripture calls these faithful believers a great “cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1).

Shortly after Jesus’ birth, Simeon had prophesied, to the Virgin Mary, that she would live to have her soul pierced through with sorrow as she witnessed the redeeming death of her Son. Simeon had told her,

*“(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed”* (Luke 2:35).

Since that day, over thirty years had passed. We now find Jesus teaching His disciples. He had just asked them who men thought He was. They had responded with the various speculations they’d heard. Then He asked them,

*“But whom say ye that I am?”* (Matthew 16:15).

Simon Peter had answered,

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*“But whom say ye that I am?”* (Matthew 16:15).

Simon Peter had answered,

*“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”* (Matthew 16:16)!

With that emphatic statement of truth before them, Jesus, the Savior, began to prepare His disciples for the awful death He would soon suffer as He died to save His people from their sins. Jesus loved His disciples and they loved Him. They didn’t want to hear anything about His prophesied death. But Jesus knew they needed to understand that His death was necessary. Scripture tells us:

*“From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day”* (Matthew 16:21).

You and I often focus on the troubling matters of this life. So did Jesus’ disciples. They wanted Jesus to deliver them from Roman oppression. His coming death didn’t support that agenda. However, Jesus’ far greater agenda was unchangeable. He would deliver His people, of all time periods (past, present, and future), by

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