
¹When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, ²“You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”

~Prayer~

O Christ, you knew the day of your death, but you went forward willingly and knowingly. You became death for us, so that death would not be the end for those who believe in you. You suffered what we deserved, so that our sins could be forgiven. Grant us repentance and faith to confess our sins and believe your saving word of forgiveness which you have given to us. Amen.

Delivered for Crucifixion

I. The Prophecy

II. Its Significance

William Miller predicted that Christ's second coming would be on April 18, 1844. After that date passed, a disciple of Miller predicted October 22, 1844. Charles Russell, a Jehovah Witness, predicted that Christ would return in 1874. A Russian Mennonite, Claas Epp predicted that Christ would return on March 8, 1889. These are names of people that you have probably never heard of. Why? Because they join a long list of many other people who have predicted things about Christ and other events, which never came true.

These people are examples of modern-day false prophets. Yet, false prophets are nothing new to our times. The Lord even had to warn the people of Israel about false prophets who claimed to have revelations and prophecies from God. The Lord gave criterion to identify true and false prophets. A true prophet was someone who may be enabled by the Lord to perform great miracles. Also important, was that everything a prophet speaks would be in alignment with God's Word (Deut. 13:1-5). Yet, one of the most obvious marks of a true prophet was that their prophecies came true. If a prophet's words didn't come true, clearly, they were not from God. Deuteronomy 18:22 states, **“When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.”**

Jesus was the greatest of all prophets. He is the one whom Moses foretold, **“The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen”** (Deut. 18:15). In our Lenten series this year, we are looking at some of the prophecies made by Christ during Holy Week. Tonight, our Savior foretells that he would be delivered for crucifixion.

I. The Prophecy

During his earthly ministry Jesus was transparent to his disciples about his purpose and work. Yet, in the last year of his ministry, and especially the week before his crucifixion, we see his discussions with his disciples becoming more and more clear about how and where he would accomplish our salvation. In the Gospel of Matthew alone, Jesus had already foretold of his suffering and death to his disciples three times (Matthew 16:21-23, 17:22-23, 20:17-19). He would go to Jerusalem to suffer and die, and on the third day he would rise. He

would be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes who would condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked, flogged, and crucified.

Jesus had foretold where and how he would die. In our lesson, Jesus foretells when he would be crucified, **“You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”** Jesus is speaking fact. Jesus is saying to his disciples, “You know after two days the Passover is coming. Just as certainly as this, I will be handed over to be crucified.”

Here Jesus is indicating more than a prediction and more than supernatural knowledge. This was an act of determining, or fixing, the time of his death. Jesus is demonstrating his authority over all things. Regardless of any plans of the Jewish leaders, it would be as he directs—Thursday night and Friday, and no other time. Jesus’ words were making reality.

What’s hard for us to wrap our heads around is that Jesus was in control. He speaks as if it already happened, because what God determines will come to pass. Jesus showed his power by this prediction, a prediction in which he will be made powerless. He is showing his authority by fixing the time of his suffering, a time where he would submit himself under the authority of a kangaroo court and Pontius Pilate. With this prophecy Jesus is showing his power and authority over time. He is in control. Yet, it’s a paradox, what he causes to be, will make him look powerless, weak, and destroyed.

Jesus was not only a true prophet in the sense that his word came true. He showed his power and control over all things by fixing the exact time of his crucifixion. If you had the same power as Jesus, to not only know the future, but be in control of your future, how would you use it? I’m willing to wager that if we had the power over our future, we certainly would not be planning our own demise. We would not plan our own suffering and humiliation, and a horrible death which was saved for only the worst type of criminals. Instead, we would make a future where we would have peace, relaxation, and glory—where we wouldn’t face hardship, sorrow, or shame. We would want to avoid all pain. If we had this power, we would obviously want to make ourselves as happy as possible.

But not Jesus. He gave up his power and glory in heaven when he humbled himself to be born of a virgin. He gave up the peace of heaven to live an innocent life where he was rejected by his own people, wrongly convicted, beaten, mocked, and crucified. What could drive Jesus to do all this? If Jesus had the power to change his future, why on earth would he choose this path?

II. Its Significance

Because if he didn’t, it would be you convicted, beaten, mocked, and cast to hell for all eternity. We so often think very little about our sins. You don’t think your selfishness is that sinful, don’t I deserve better? You think your hatred of your neighbor is justified. You think your desire for more and more and more isn’t greed, but healthy ambition. You think your lust which you hold in your heart for someone who is not our spouse isn’t that bad. But any sin, no matter how small we might tell ourselves it is, deserves hell. Scripture says, **“For**

whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it" (James 2:10).

Christ chose the path of the cross because he loves you. Because he wanted to save you from what you deserve. He gladly received what he did not deserve, so that you could receive forgiveness and his undeserved kindness. God is love and in Christ we see God's love. Scripture says, **"In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins"** (I John 4:9-10).

In our lesson, Jesus prophesied when he would be crucified. When we hear this prediction, we should realize Christ's love for us. His death was no accident or coincidence. It was all part of his plan to save you. Not only did all of Jesus' prophecies come to be, but Jesus also fulfilled all the prophecies about himself. **"Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows... He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed... And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all"** (Isaiah 53).

Jesus showed himself to be a true prophet because his word came to be, which means you can trust his word. His word which says, **"whoever comes to me I will never cast out"** (John 6:37); **"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,"** (Matthew 11:28); **"Be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you"** (Matthew 9:2); **"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live"** (John 11:25); **"Because I live, you will live also"** (John 14:19).

Jesus is the greatest of all prophets. Even now as our resurrected Lord, he continues to carry out his prophetic office by sending preachers to preach his word. So that men, women, and children sitting in pews in Iowa 2,000 years later and over 6,000 miles from his empty tomb, might learn about their Savior. The names of false prophets come and go. But our Savior's name will forever be. His name is Jesus, **"because He will save His people from their sins"** (Matthew 1:21). Amen.