

Jesus is the Messiah

Key Verse: “*He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.*”
—Mark 8:29

Selected Scripture:
Mark 8:27-9:1
ets.”—Mark 8:27,28

NEAR THE END OF OUR
Lord’s ministry, Jesus began to prepare his disciples for his shameful crucifixion. “Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Caesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am? And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others, one of the proph-

In our Key Verse, the Master pointedly inquired of the disciples as to their estimation of him, and Peter declared that he was the promised Messiah.

Jesus then charged the twelve that they should not reveal this truth to anyone, and also began to tell them about his ignominious death at the hands of his enemies—“that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and be killed”—as well as his subsequent resurrection after three days.—vss. 30,31

Peter could not accept the idea that Jesus would have to suffer and die, in view of the many miraculous deeds the Lord had performed. Furthermore, he was unable to understand how, as the Messiah, Jesus could bless all the families of the earth, yet he be put to death as a malefactor. In view of this seeming contradiction, Peter

began to chide the Master for proclaiming his forthcoming death.—vs. 32

“When he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.”—vs. 33

The time had come for the disciples, as well as others who had been favorably impressed by Jesus’ ministry, to understand the necessity for self-denial and cross bearing if they were to have a share in his kingdom. “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” (vs. 34) The Lord continued to emphasize that his followers would be tested as to whether they would be more interested in attaining earthly hopes, aims, and ambitions or in submitting to the divine will by participating in present sufferings associated with the privilege of proclaiming the righteous principles of Christ. These righteous principles were exemplified by his willingness to sacrifice life itself in the face of opposition by the ungody in this sinful world.—vss. 35-38

The Apostle Paul elsewhere exhorts believers to faithfulness in their Christian endeavors. “If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”—Rom. 8:17,18

The need for full devotedness to God, and the counting of present earthly attainments as being unworthy in comparison to the spiritual inheritance promised to those who set their affections upon heavenly pursuits, continues to inspire the hearts of the consecrated followers of Christ to this very day. Let us ever maintain our efforts to be diligent in following the Master to the very end of our Christian sojourn. “He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.”—Rev. 17:14 ■