

Set his Face

Luke 9:51

When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.

Goals and resolutions are set by companies and individuals all of the time. This is especially true when a new year comes around. The resolve and determination can soon dissipate when life intrudes. Some resolutions are soon abandoned when the cost in energy and time become clear.

Jesus had a purpose for coming from heaven to earth. This devotion is about how he responded to that intent. He had already come through some significant tests, including the temptation by the devil. Where Adam and Eve had failed he had passed with flying colors. But the devil didn't stop after the three-fold temptation. Luke's gospel ends with the temptation narration with these words: *"And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time."*

When our text says: *"When the days drew near for him to be taken up,"* it meant that Jesus' death on the cross to save us from our sin was just around the corner. Given that Jesus was omniscient, he knew about all the suffering that he would have to endure. He was looking at a most brutal time in the upcoming weeks. No one would have blamed him if he had stopped short in his mission. Thankfully for us, Jesus went through with his purpose.

Isaiah 50:7 speaks of this in the third of four Suffering Servant Song. There we find the sentence *"I have set my face like a flint."* Growing up I saw my father use a large flint stone for sharpening knives and other instruments. Its hardness is pretty much unmatched. In the case of Jesus, setting his face was an absolute certainty that he would do what had to be done for the salvation of the world.

Jesus' finishing what he came from heaven to do gives us incredible comfort and hope. We know that he has saved us from our sins and removed them as far the East is from the West. In fact, he never stops forgiving us as we continue to fall short of his expectations. We know that our names are written in the Book of Heaven. We know that when we die we will be in the presence of Jesus. Given such great assurance, we can be empowered to share this good news with others.

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for not even flinching when it came for you to go to Jerusalem to suffer, die and rise. That complete victory of sin, death and devil has saved us for eternity. Amen