

LESSON IX.—MARCH 1.
JESUS THE MESSIAH.—Luke ix. 18—27.

(Read the whole chapter; also Matt. xvi. 13.)

Memory Verses 23—26.

Golden Text—"This is *my beloved Son: hear him.*" (Luke ix. 35.)

Parallel passages—Mark viii. 27—33; Matt. xvi. 13—20; Dan. ii. 44.

Time—Near the close of the ministry of Christ.

Place—Near Caesarea Philippi. Persons—Jesus and his disciples.

There were two cities called Caesarea in Palestine. One was the Roman capital of Palestine and the residence of the Roman governor, situated on the Mediterranean coast, forty—seven miles from Jerusalem. It was known simply as Caesarea. It was built by Herod the Great, and was named in honor of the emperor, Augustus Caesar.

Caesarea Philippi, or Caesarea of Philip, is the place of our lesson. It was built by Philip the Tetrarch, and was called Caesarea Philippi, and was named in honor of Tiberius Caesar, with Philippi attached to perpetuate his own renown and to distinguish it from the older Caesarea. It was situated one hundred and twenty miles north of Jerusalem, and about sixty miles west of Damascus. It is thought to be on the site of the town of Laish, in the tribe of Dan (Judges xviii. 7, 29).

"It was at the easternmost and most important of the two sources of the Jordan, the other being at Tel—el—Kady. The spring rises, and the city was built on a limestone terrace, in a valley at the base of Mount Hermon It nestles in its recess at its southern base of the mighty Hermon, which towers in majesty 7,000 or 8,000 feet above. The abundant waters of the glorious fountain spread over the terrace luxuriant fertility, and the graceful interchange of copse, lawn, and waving fields. It has dwindled into a paltry and insignificant village."—McClintock *and Strong's Encyclopedia*.

Caesarea Philippi and the surrounding country was settled largely with Gentiles, though many Jews lived among them.

LESSON CONNECTION.

After restoring the daughter of Jairus to life, Jesus called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure all diseases, and he sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. They were to go forth without purse or scrip or food or extra clothing, and to depend wholly on the community in which they labored for food and comforts.

Herod the Tetrarch was the son of Herod the Great. "He had four sons, between whom he divided his kingdom. "Tetrarch" means the ruler of a fourth part of a kingdom; hence the name. Herod had taken his brother Philip's wife from him for his own wife. John the Baptist reproved them for their adultery. She instigated Herod to have him beheaded. Some now said Jesus was John restored to life. The guilty and superstitious conscience of Herod accepted this. Mark vi. 14: "And King Herod heard of him; . . . and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him." Here he is represented as troubled over the matter, and of desiring to see him.

On the death of John, the apostles who had all been disciples of John returned and told Jesus of those things, and he took them aside into a wilderness place adjacent to Bethsaida.

When the people knew of their going they followed them, and he taught them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

As the evening drew on the people became hungry, and his disciples said, Send them away that they may get food. He told them, Give ye them to eat. They said, We have but five loaves and two fishes. "He took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude. And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets."

18 And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

19 They answering said, John the Baptist; but some *say*, Elias; and others *say*, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

20 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

And it came to pass, as he was praying 18
alone, the disciples were with him: and he asked
them, saying, Who do the multitudes say that I
am? And they answering said, John the Baptist; 19
but others say Elijah; and others, that one of the
old prophets is risen again. And he said unto 20
them, But who say ye that I am? And Peter an-

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

18 And it came to pass. We are not told here where they were. Matthew tells us they had come into the coasts or borders of Caesarea Philippi—the town with adjacent territory northeast of the Sea of Galilee, at the foot of Mount Hermon. This seems to have been the extreme northern point of the travels of Jesus. From this place he turned his face southward, to go to Jerusalem for the last time. Mark says it was "by the way," as they traveled. Luke says, "As he was alone praying, his disciples were with him." Putting them together, as they traveled through the lands of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus went aside to pray, and his disciples came to him; and, alone with the apostles, he asked, Whom do men say that I am? Matthew says, "That I the Son of man am." He called himself the "Son of man," and left his works to declare him the Son of God. He asks the question because he desired to call out what impression his works and teaching had made on the world and on his disciples. His face was now turned to go to Jerusalem, where he would be crucified. His works were nearing an end, and he wished to bring the question of his works and who they proved him to be before them.

19 They answering said. The people naturally spoke more freely to the apostles than they did to Jesus. That Jesus asked the question did not imply that he did not know what the people thought and said of him. We have too many examples of his reading the thoughts of the heart to doubt he could know these things, did he choose to exercise his divine powers to know them. But he desired to call the question up at this time for the purpose of calling out an expression from the apostles themselves, and to give the occasion of teaching the lesson here presented. "Some say thou art John the Baptist." This meant John risen from the dead. Herod had killed him when he knew he was guilty of no crime, and was a prophet. His sense of guilt excited his dread, and he believed John was risen from the dead. "Some Elias," or Elijah. Malachi had prophesied that Elijah would come. So Jesus was said by some to be the coming Elijah. "Others, Jeremias." We know of no promise of the return of Jeremiah "Or one of the prophets." Many of the Jews held to the idea of transmigration of souls, and some think this idea is here suggested, but it is not clear. Why they thought Jesus was one of the old prophets, raised from the dead, we know not. Regarding him as a prophet returned from the unseen world was giving high honor to him as a divine person, or it would have been to anyone save Jesus. He was higher than any of these positions, and none of them met his demands.

20 He said unto them. Unwilling to accept the judgment the people had rendered as to his true character and office, he turns directly to his

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21 And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing;

22 Saying. The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

swering said, The Christ of God. But he charged them, and commanded them to tell this to no man; saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes. and be killed, and the third day be raised

apostles, who had been with him constantly, heard his teaching, and seen his miracles, and asked, What impression have [made on you? Whom do you say that I am? They had been closer to him, had seen and heard more of him, had better opportunities to know him, so he called forth an expression of their faith. Peter was usually forward with an answer—not that he was pert or offensively officious, but he reached decisions quickly, and acted on them promptly. He did not doubt and hesitate and delay. He decided quickly, and had the courage to avow his thoughts. For these qualities, no doubt, Jesus chose him as leader. Peter at once said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This was his true character and position, as foretold in prophecy and proved by his works and his life. He had been the Word that was with God, and that was God before the world was. By him all things were created that are created. He was the maker of all things. In him was life, and he was the light of the world. He was the only—begotten of the Father, and in him all the fullness of the Godhead dwelled bodily. His work with the apostles was to convince them that he was the Son of God. They then were to bear witness of this truth to the world. Matthew gives this conversation much more fully (xvi. 17—19): "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar—jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." That is, he gave full authority to his apostles to proclaim the terms of salvation to the world. In giving the terms of salvation, he gave also what would bar the entrance of men into the kingdom of God. These terms that they were to proclaim to the world were not such as they might choose to give, but they were to tarry at Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came to guide them into all truth, and he would give the terms they were to deliver to the world.

21 And he straitly charged them. This restriction lasted only until his resurrection. Afterward their mission was to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Why he did not wish them to tell now, we do not understand. Possibly because the idle crowd thronged him and the disciples, and hindered their work.

22 Saying, The Son of man must suffer, etc. The apostles now seem to understand who he is, and to understand his mission. And Jesus begins at once to tell the trials that shall come upon him; that he must go unto Jerusalem and suffer and be killed and raised the third day. These things would come to pass before the keys would be given them, and they permitted to open the doors or proclaim the terms of pardon to the world. This seemed to the ardent and sanguine Peter incompatible with the con-

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23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

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save it. For what is a man profited, if he gain the 25
whole

fession he had just made concerning him as the Christ, the Son of the living God. Why should a being with such matchless power and glory so suffer

23 And he said to them all. He had just told them he must suffer, be rejected of men, be slain and raised the third day; and he tells them that they, as his disciples, if they will follow him, must deny themselves all pleasures and privileges or enjoyments and desires that stand in the way of following in his footsteps. "Take up his cross" means to endure whatever trials and difficulties, bear whatever burdens and sorrows, may stand in the way of following him. Some of the self—denials and difficulties that stand in the way are presented in the last six verses of this chapter: "And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." It was necessary to follow Jesus, although he had not where to lay his head. It must be done, though it involved the sacrifice of the tenderest ties of blood; and, notwithstanding these, he who put his hand to the plow, started in the work, yet turned hack, was not fit for the kingdom of God.

24 For whosoever will save his life, etc. Whoever is not ready not only to sever these ties, but is not ready to give up life itself, for the sake of Jesus who died to save us, is not worthy to be his disciple. To do it for Jesus' sake is to do it that we may serve and honor him as our Lord and Master, that we may exemplify his life in ours before the world. To enjoy this fleshly life and its pleasures and gratifications is to save this life. To sacrifice these is to lose the life for the sake of Christ. In doing this we save the spiritual and eternal life.

25 For what is a man advantaged, etc. If a man should gain all the world, and when the strife to gain it is over he is called to die and leave it, what does it profit him? He is like the fool who built great barns and stored much goods, and said to himself (Luke xii.19, 20): "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" All who strive to grow rich in this world's goods are fools before God.

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26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in the Father's. and of the holy angels.

27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

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whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my
words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed,
when he cometh in his own glory, and *the glory*
of the Father, and of the holy angels. But I tell 27
you of a truth, There be some of them that stand
here, which shall in no wise taste of death, till
they see the kingdom of God.

26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me, etc. To be ashamed of Jesus is to be ashamed to follow him, stand forth as his disciple, live according to his precepts, and practice his rules, although it bring persecution, poverty, want, and death. To be ashamed of his words is to be ashamed to practice them in our lives. Many are willing to nominally follow Jesus that are not willing to practice his precepts or follow his examples in poverty, want, and suffering. Unless we do these he will be ashamed of us when we come before his Father and the holy angels. For him to be ashamed to own us then is to appoint us our place among the lost forever.

27 But I tell you of a truth. He assured them there were some standing present that would be firm and steadfast in their fidelity to him, and would not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God come.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the Lesson Connection. — Whom did Jesus send out? What did he give them power to do? How were they to go? What were they not to carry? When they entered a house, what were they to do? When they would not receive them, what were they to do? Who was Herod the Tetrarch? What does "tetrarch" mean? What had he done to John the Baptist? When he heard of Jesus, who did he say he was? When the apostles returned, what did they tell Jesus? Where did he and his disciples go? What did the people do? As the day passed, what did they tell him as to the multitude? What did he reply? What did they have to eat? What did he do? How many did he feed? How much was left?

Questions on the Lesson.—Give the Subject, Memory Verses, Golden Text, Time, Place, Persons. 18 Where was Jesus? Who was with him? What did he ask them? 19 What did they answer? 20 What did he then ask them? 21 Who answered? What did Peter say? What further answer did Peter make as told by Matthew? What did Jesus charge Peter? 22 What did Jesus say must happen to him? 23 What shall a man do to become his disciple? What is meant by taking up the cross? 24 What shall become of him who saves his life? Of him who loses it for Jesus' sake? What is meant by saving his life? What by losing it? 25 What question does he ask here? 26 What does he say of him who is ashamed of Jesus? What is it to be ashamed of Jesus? 27 What did he say of some standing there?