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Teacher Training Course

Presbyterian Church in Canada

Under the Direction of the General Assembly's Sabbath School Committee

DEPARTMENT OF SCRIPTURE—I. The Life of Jesus Christ; II. New Testament Geography and Institutions.

N.B.—It is recommended that the Revised Version be consulted in these studies.

LESSON XIII.

THE CLIMAX OF THE EARLIER MINISTRY

TIME—Passover, 28 A.D., and following months. The next fixed date is the Feast of Tabernacles in October, John 7 : 2. It is impossible to say how long Jesus remained in Central Galilee after the crisis in Capernaum, John 6 : 59-66. But the hatred of the Pharisees was steadily rising, Mark 7 :

JOURNEY TO NORTH AND EAST—His main work in Galilee being about done, Jesus wishes to have *more time alone with His disciples*. So He goes beyond Galilee into the Gentile district near Tyre and Sidon, and then moves east beyond the Sea of Galilee to another Gentile region, the Decapolis, so called because of ten Greek cities situated there, Mark 7 : 24, 31.

THE SYRO-PHENICIAN WOMAN (Matt. 15 : 21-28)—This story illustrates the self-limitation of Jesus during His earthly life (v. 24), but is also a prophecy of His larger kingdom in the future, for a heathen is granted the blessings of Messiah's mercy, her faith making her a true Israelite (v. 28).

THE FIRST GREAT CONFESSION (Matt. 16 : 13-20)—Still further north Jesus journeys till He reaches Caesarea Philippi, the beautifully situated capital of Herod Philip, which lay on the southern spurs of Mount Hermon, near the head waters of the Jordan. Jesus takes the initiative in getting Peter to say, after their long and intimate fellowship, who He really is. Peter, on behalf of the disciples, confesses that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. We cannot suppose that he understood by this all that the apostles afterwards put into those words, but thereby he became the first Christian, and his faith is due

to nothing less than a divine revelation. Jesus solemnly assures them that on this apostolic faith, to which Peter first gave utterance, His eternal church would be built. Compare with this passage Matt. 11 : 25-30, which was probably spoken not very long before.

FIRST PROPHECY OF HIS DEATH (Matt. 16 : 21-28)—A new note is struck. It was almost impossible for a Jew to believe that the Messiah should die, inheriting a curse instead of glory, Gal. 3 : 13. But Jesus foretells His death as a necessity for the kingdom, though the promise of the Resurrection always follows. Even for His followers the principle holds, that he who selfishly saves his life in this world will lose life eternal, vs. 24-28.

THE TRANSFIGURATION (Matt. 17 : 1-13)—Only in synoptic Gospels. The essential divine glory of Jesus breaks through the veil of His flesh, and gives confirmation to the truth of the confession just made.

MOSES AND ELLIAH—Representing the two sides of the old Covenant, law and prophecy, hold converse with Jesus regarding His death. Therefore it was an inherent part of God's purpose, Luke 24 : 25-27. Then they vanish, and the Messiah alone is left, whose word, even when it crosses their hopes, is to be obeyed as divine.

LESSON XIV.

THE PEREAN MINISTRY

THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES—Mark's gospel is divided into two sections, the first of which (chs. 1 to 9) deals entirely with the Galilean ministry of Jesus ; the last (chs. 11 to 16), with the final week of His life in Jerusalem. Chapter 10 serves as a transition, giving us hardly any hint of what happened during the last year. In Luke a long passage (ch. 9 : 51 to 19 : 28) is interposed, covering a good part of the time passed over by Mark. Though