

Greek form for Jeremiah. *One of the prophets.* This class could not decide which. *But whom say ye?* He wished both to test and classify, and to increase the knowledge of His disciples. They were more ready now to understand His true character and mission.

V. 16. *Peter answered*; as spokesman, as always, for the others. *Thou art the Christ*; the Messiah. "Christ" is Greek and "Messiah" is Hebrew for "Anointed." Prophets, priests and kings were set apart by anointing. This public confession was the result of convictions that had been growing for a long time.

II. A Wonderful Promise, 17-19.

Vs. 17, 18. *Flesh and blood*; human knowledge. *But my Father.* It was a divine, not a human revelation. *Thou art Peter*; from the Greek *Petros*, meaning a rock. (John 1: 42.) "Cephas" is the Hebrew form. *Upon this rock*; i.e. on Peter as confessing that Jesus is the Christ and as representing the Twelve, who were the first Christians and therefore the first tier in the construction of the Christian Church. In Eph. 2: 20, "Christ is the corner stone, the apostles the foundation, and believers the edifice." (Hodge.) There is, therefore, no comfort here for those who would make Peter the first Pope, the representative of Christ on earth. *My church*; no mere human organization, but the Lord Jesus' own Church, the great spiritual temple made up of all believers. How closely these beginnings of the Church are joined to the Cross of Calvary and the resurrection. (v. 21.) *Gates of Hell*; i.e. Hades, (Rev. Ver.) the realm of the dead. "Gates" is an Oriental expression for court, throne, power. *Shall not prevail against it.* The Church is indestructible. (Exod. 3: 2.)

V. 19. *I will give unto thee*; to Peter as the representative of the others, who were included in Matt. 18: 18; John 20: 23. *The keys of the kingdom*; the truths essential to entering the kingdom. Peter used the "keys" when he explained the way of salvation to the Jews at Pentecost (Acts 2); and later to the Gentiles (Acts 10: 32-40).

Bind; forbid. *Loose*; allow. The disciples exercised this power in preaching Christ as Redeemer and Lord. *On earth . . . in heaven.* It was as though Christ spoke through them and made their words effectual. (John 8: 31, 32.)

III. A Plain Revelation, 20, 21.

V. 20. *Tell no man.* The people were not yet prepared, as the disciples were, for this revelation.

V. 21. *To shew unto the disciples*; little by little as they could receive it. He had referred to the subject before (John 2: 19; Mark 2: 20), but now speaks more plainly. *The elders—chief priests—scribes*; the lay, ecclesiastical and law members of the Sanhedrin or Council of Seventy. *Killed*; He does not go into details; the truth is broken gradually.

IV. A Stern Rebuke, 22, 23.

V. 22. *Then Peter . . . began to rebuke Him.* The announcement of v. 21 was a cruel death-blow to all their hopes.

V. 23. *Said unto Peter*; before the others. (Mark 8: 33.) *Get thee behind me, Satan.* Peter was tempting Him as Satan had done. (Matt 4: 10.) "Satan" means adversary. *An offence*; a stumbling block, a temptation to do wrong. *Savourlest not.* What spiritual insight Peter had, had failed him here.

V. The Way of the Cross, 24-26.

V. 24. *If any man*, etc. Jesus lays down the law of self-denial for His followers. He must suffer, and they must be willing to suffer with Him. *Follow me*; in obedience, renouncing everything that is opposed to the Christ Spirit. (2 Cor. 6: 16-18.)

V. 25. *Save his life*; by seeking exclusively the comforts, pleasures and successes of this life. *Shall lose it*; shall miss life in its highest, spiritual sense. Grasping at the shadow he shall lose the substance. *Lose his life for my sake*; in the sense of v. 24 *Shall find it*; in the higher life of God. *

V. 26. *What is a man profited?* The world is no compensation for the loss of the higher life of the soul. The word for "soul" is the same as for "life" in v. 25.