

LESSON IX—March 1st, 1896.

Jesus the Messiah. LUKE 9: 18-27.

(Commit to memory verses 23-26).

GOLDEN TEXT: "This is my beloved Son: hear him." Luke 9: 35.

PROVE THAT—We should confess Christ openly. Rom. 10: 9.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 49. *Which is the second commandment?* A. The second commandment is, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*. Nos. 30, 60, 146, 98.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday*. Jesus the Messiah. Luke 9: 18-27. *Tuesday*. Testimony from heaven. Luke 9: 28-36. *Wednesday*. Foretold in prophecy. Isaiah 53. *Thursday*. John's record. John 1: 19-28. *Friday*. The Spirit's witness. John 1: 29-34. *Saturday*. Christ's own claim. John 4: 19-26. *Sabbath*. Not ashamed. 2 Tim. 1: 1-12. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. After his discourse at Capernaum on "The Bread of Life," many of his followers forsook Jesus. They were disappointed in him. He would not come up to their expectations of an earthly prince, and his doctrine was above their spiritual comprehension. It was the turn of the tide of his popularity. Henceforth he met increasingly bitter opposition. For a time he leaves Galilee and takes a tour to the north, passing through Caes-ar-e'a Phil-ip'pi, where the conversation recorded in our lesson took place. Parallel passages Matt. 16: 13-28; Mark 8: 22-38; 9: 1.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Christ of God. vs. 18-22. II. The Cross of Christ. vs. 23-27.

I. Although Jesus gave them so many proofs that he was their Messiah, the people were slow to accept him. They were quite willing to acknowledge that he was a great prophet, but not that he was the Son of God. ¹ Jesus knew this, but he wished his disciples to be ready to confess him, so he asked them "Whom say ye that I am?" At once Peter answered for all the others "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."² Jesus was pleased with this clear and decided acknowledgement of his true nature, and pronounced a blessing upon Peter and all who should shew Peter's outspoken faithfulness. ³ Then Jesus told them not to say this openly yet, for before he could be received as the Messiah he would have to suffer and die. Peter did not like to hear him speaking in that way, and ventured to protest against it. ⁴ But Jesus was very much displeased with him for trying to persuade him not to do what God had sent him into the world to accomplish. The only way in which Jesus could be a Saviour was by enduring all the shame and agony of the cross.

II. So Jesus went on to shew them all that the only way in which they could be his dis-

ciples was by following him in cross-bearing. ⁵ If we want to be his true disciples we must practice self-denial every day. We must restrain our sinful dispositions, resist the temptations to evil that are continually meeting us, sacrifice our own comfort and convenience for the good of others, and try in everything to do as we think Jesus would. ⁶ Those who will do anything to get riches, or honor, or pleasure, are making a very foolish bargain for they are selling themselves to purchase what won't be worth anything when they come to die. ⁷ But those who first give their hearts to Christ and then try to be like him, will be really happy as long as they live and will have a home in heaven forever. If we are ashamed to shew that we love and serve Christ because some one will say unpleasant things about us, or perhaps, try to do us harm, he will be ashamed of us when we come before him at the judgment day. ⁸ But surely there is no reason why we should be afraid to confess him now.

Ashamed of Jesus! that dear Friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend;
No! when I blush, be this my shame,
That I so feebly love his name.

¹ John 1: 5, 10, 11. ² Luke 2: 26, 30-32; John 1: 49; 11: 27; 6: 9; Acts 8: 37; Heb. 1: 2-5. ³ Matt. 16: 16-19. ⁴ Mark 8: 32, 33. ⁵ Luke 14: 26, 27; Acts 14: 22. ⁶ Luke 17: 33; John 12: 25; 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12. ⁷ Matt. 16: 26; Acts 4: 12; 1 Tim. 2: 5, 6. ⁸ Luke 12: 9; 2 Tim. 1: 8, 12; 2: 12.

LESSONS. 1. No confession of Christ which does not accept him as the Son of God is pleasing. 2. The kingdom of Christ is founded upon his sufferings and death. 3. Self-denial, not self-indulgence, must mark the follower of Jesus. 4. Worldly gain, or pleasure, will not compensate for the loss of the soul. 5. It is a shame to be ashamed of Jesus.