

## Lesson 30 Matthew 16 21-23 (21)

### *Jesus teaches concerning His death*

#### *Caesarea Philippi a turning point*

From then Jesus began to point out that he must "return to Jerusalem" or "leave Caesarea and go to Jerusalem"-here we see the critical timing for on the coming Passover it was determined He should atone for sin. He began to "explain/teach/make known/portray/point out/prove". The Greek original **δεικνυμι** is used especially of 'verbal explanation'. It is the language that is ironically so inspiring if it were not for them so distressing at one and the same time. Jesus used a series of four aorists (the tense that speaks of a once-for all act) but what is even more gripping is that he used two aorist passives, saying in effect, "I must suffer once and then have been slain and have been raised" as if to say death will be gone-past-finished once for all and resurrection life will have become the future reality. So the Lord is doing more than stating a fact-He is doing it in His inimitable way.

#### *Peter-the would be protector*

Peter took the Lord to His side. He took hold of Him and drew Him to himself. He affected such care as a husband has for a wife (the original Greek is **προσλαμβανω**-to take as a partner) He pointed out to the Lord His value in some such style as "You are much too valuable a person to die or much too mighty to allow it-it just won't happen to You-you must not-I object to the whole idea!" The Greek verb in the original text **επιτιμαω** carries both the idea of "value" and the idea of "objection". Further more Peter pleaded "Be kind to yourself, Lord" or "Conciliating, appeasing gently graciously with Yourself, Lord" the original is **ιλεωσ**. So here Peter is asking Jesus to apply the principles He will apply in death to the sinner to Himself and so to reconcile Himself to Peter's idea of living on and avoiding the cross

#### *Jesus' response*

"Unite to go with me-behind me, adversary, you are as a stick that springs a trap for me. You are a sage in the matters of men but not of God."

Here the Lord was challenging Peter, rebuking Peter and showing Peter to Peter.

- (1) The Challenge "Unite behind my march to Calvary". The Greek original **υπαγω** means "to go up together under a yoke". Peter was challenged to submit to the yoke of Christ and travel with the purpose of God in applying reconciliation through death-not conciliating with man's views as to how the world could be made a better place
- (2) The Rebuke. The word "adversary" in its well understood application is used of the devil. In a sense Peter was doing exactly what the devil tried in the temptations. The Lord had not come to put into effect Satan's vision for the world much less to establish the best form of human government. Peter had indeed touched the nerve of Christ's teaching-**reconciliation**-but was turning it upon its head. Sinful man needed to be "reconciled to God" not "a holy Lord appease the high-minded sinner for practical considerations of avoiding suffering"
- (3) The Exhibition. Peter saw himself in the light of Jesus' statement "You are prudent on the human level" and began to see that eternal optimism was not enough. He was the great encourager-and later this ministry was vital in the plain of Sharon-and for the persecuted Christians who were dispersed, and in Rome to his latest hour. But as to the things of God Peter was not yet able to "feel his way surely." The word here used in the English NKJ translation "savourest" (NIV "mind the things") is well defined by Sophocles as feeling or knowing as opposed to thinking or considering by reflection." So we might say Peter had not developed a "feel" for the Lord's whole engagement with man. He was not yet instinctively a believer in the atoning work of Christ's death.

Hence the Lord's word, "When you are converted!" (Luke 22.32 )

**Comment** The Master wanted Peter to unite in God's plan; to grasp the need for reconciliation by blood ie "be converted", and to develop a natural taste for spiritual things



#### **From Paper to Practice**

Is the presentation of the Cross that Jesus gives one of pathos or upbeat and even inspirational?

Do you think that Peter was naturally protective of others and that he had a penchant for encouragement?

How did the Lord's challenge rebuke and exhibition "show Peter himself and show him his Saviour?" Peter's remarks seemed so kind though terribly misguided. Jesus' remarks seemed so brusque though absolutely accurate. But is this really the case.