

Caesarea Philippi



**WALKING WITH
MATTHEW
IN THE LAND OF JESUS**

DOWN AND CONNOR
2019

WELCOME

- BEFORE WE GO: INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW
- DAY 1: THE BIRTH NARRATIVES (MT 1-2 / Exodus 1-2)
- DAY 2: THE TEMPLE ACTION (MT 21)
- DAY 3: THE LORD'S PRAYER (MT 6)
- DAY 4: THE RESURRECTION (MT 28)
- DAY 5: THE TRANSFIGURATION (MT 17 / Exodus 24 and 34)
- DAY 6: CAESAREA PHILIPPI (MT 18)
- DAY 7: THE BEATITUDES (MT 5-7 / Pentateuch)

Sequence

- Reading the passage
- Comparisons the other Gospels
- Observations
- The historical Jesus
- Commentary
- Conclusions
- Conversations

Matt 16:13 When Jesus came to the area of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" **14** They answered, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." **15** He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" **16** Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **17** And Jesus answered him, "You are blessed, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven! **18** And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. **19** I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will have been released in heaven." **20** Then he instructed his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

Matt 18:18 "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will have been released in heaven.

Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
<p>Matt 16:13 When Jesus came to the area of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 They answered, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”</p>	<p>Mark 8:27 Then Jesus and his disciples went to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” 28 They said, “John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and still others, one of the prophets.” 29 He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.”</p>	<p>Luke 9:18 Once when Jesus was praying by himself, and his disciples were nearby, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” 19 They answered, “John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others that one of the prophets of long ago has risen.” 20 Then he said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “The Christ of God.”</p>	<p>John 6:66 After this many of his disciples quit following him and did not accompany him any longer. 67 So Jesus said to the twelve, “You don’t want to go away too, do you?” 68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God!”</p>
<p>17 And Jesus answered him, “You are blessed, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven!</p>			
<p>18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.</p>			<p>John 1:42 Andrew brought Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon, the son of John. You will be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).</p>
<p>19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will have been released in heaven.”</p>			<p>Cf John 21:15-17</p>
<p>20 Then he instructed his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.</p>	<p>30 Then he warned them not to tell anyone about him.</p>	<p>21 But he forcefully commanded them not to tell this to anyone,</p>	<p>John 20:22 And after he said this, he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven; if you retain anyone’s sins, they are retained.”</p>

Matt 16:13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” **16** Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

20 Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

Mark 8:27 And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?”

28 And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.”

29 And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.”

30 And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

General remarks

- This story is Matthew's version of Mark 8:27-30. There is a parallel version in Luke 9:18-20 (a typically different reception of the same tradition can be found in John 6:66-68).
- It is clear across the New Testament that Peter was a key figure in the early church—all four Gospels, the letters of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles assure us of this.
- The foundation for this role is not simply in the call of Jesus or in resurrection appearances to Peter, but in his confession of Jesus' identity in the scene at Caesarea Philippi.
- (The "Petrine office" of the bishop of Rome finds its theological grounding in vv. 18-19.)



Binding and loosing

- The sentence about binding and losing is repeated in Matt 18:18 Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.
- This may well reflect the emergence of a church structure in the areas around Antioch and Syria associated with Peter and with the writing of this Gospel.
- This is the only Gospel to use the technical term “assembly” (= church) and it preserves five blocks of unique material about Peter (Matt. 14:28-31; 15:15-20; 16:18-19; 17:24-27; 18:21-22).



Expectations at the time...

- The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you—from your fellow Israelites; you must listen to him. (Deuteronomy 18:15 NET)
- “Remember the law of my servant Moses, to whom at Horeb I gave rules and regulations for all Israel to obey. Look, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord arrives. (Malachi 4:4–5 NET)
- I was watching in the night visions, “And with the clouds of the sky one like a son of man was approaching. He went up to the Ancient of Days and was escorted before him. (Daniel 7:13 NET)
- There is a major problem with the expression “anointed”



- No text of the Hebrew Bible speaks of the expectation of a “messiah”, an anointed one, in that precise language.
- Anointed: priests, kings and prophets.
- To find what people were expecting, it is necessary to go outside the text of the bible and a look at other Jewish writings of the time.
- Three are important: The Psalms of Solomon, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Dead Sea Scrolls.
- We glance briefly at the Psalms of Solomon and the Dead Sea Scrolls.



Psalms of Solomon

Ps Solomon 17:32 And he will be a righteous king over them, taught by God.
There will be no unrighteousness among them in his days,
for all shall be holy,
and their king shall be the Lord **Messiah**.

Ps Solomon 18:0 A Psalm of Solomon About the Lord **Messiah**

18:5 May God cleanse Israel for the day of mercy in blessing,
for the appointed day when his **Messiah** will reign.

18:7 (which will be) under the rod of discipline of the Lord **Messiah**,
in the fear of his God,
in wisdom of spirit,
and of righteousness and of strength,



Dead Sea Scrolls

The **DSS** contain some **15** references to a messiah / anointed one.

CD 12:23; 14:19; 19:10; 20:1; 1QS 9:11; 1QSa 2:12, 14, 20; 1Q30 f1:2;
4Q252 5:3; 4Q266 f10i:12; 4Q269 f11i:2; 4Q521 f2ii+4:1; f9:3

...until the appearance of the **Messi]ah** of Aaron and of Israel, so that their iniquity may be atoned for. [Cereal offering and sin offering ...] (Cd 14:19)

doing so until there come the Prophet and the **Messiahs** of Aaron and Israel. (1Qs 9:11)

[and the thous]ands of Israel are "the feet," until the Righteous **Messiah**, the Branch of David, has come. (4Q252 5:3)



Historical Jesus

- The historical Jesus had a ministry “the lost sheep of the house of Israel”. **Go instead to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.** (Matthew 10:6); **So he answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”** (Matthew 15:24).
- The historical Jesus forbade a ministry beyond the limits of Israel: Jesus sent out these twelve, instructing them as follows: **“Do not go to Gentile regions and do not enter any Samaritan town.”** (Matthew 10:5 NT).
- The historical Jesus encountered very few non-Jews in the course of his ministry.
- The full list is: centurion with his son/servant; the centurion at the cross; the Syro-Phoenician woman; the Samaritan woman; Pilate. Not all these are historical in the usual sense.



Historical Jesus

- In the Gospels, the word “church” (assembly) occurs only in Matthew in two places: And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. (Matthew 16:18 NET) If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. If he refuses to listen to the church, treat him like a Gentile or a tax collector. (Matthew 18:17 NET).
- As such the term is neutral, meaning assembly.
- Earliest usage comes from Paul, who needs to specify *the church of God*.
- It is historically unlikely that the historical Jesus foresaw (a) a separation from Judaism (b) a new religion and (c) a time of “church”.



Historical Jesus

- Ministries evolved differently in the various churches.
- The Twelve constitute a symbolic acts (and lose their importance early)
- Styles of ministry: Paul, Matthew, Luke, the Pastorals, Ignatius of Antioch
- Even the ministry of Peter is evaluated retrospectively
- Jesus did send out disciples / apostles.
- It is, however, historically unlikely that Jesus set up church structures of any kind – these evolved over time, especially in the post-Pauline churches.



- While one perhaps could not exclude the possibility that Jesus might have thought of building a church in the very restricted sense of organising a people in preparation for the imminent end, the reference to the “gates of Hades” not prevailing over the church does seem to suggest a permanence which would go beyond the supposed intentions of the earthly Jesus.
- The intentions expressed here cohere more closely with those post-resurrectional appearances described previously as “church-founding.”



The Beatitude

- And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed (this) to you, but my Father who is in heaven'" (16:17).
- This verse adds strength to the suggestion that we may be dealing with an originally post-resurrectional context. The clause, "flesh and blood has not revealed [**apokalyptein**] this to you" is remarkably similar to Paul's description of his experience with the resurrected Jesus in Gal 1:16: when God "was pleased to reveal [**apokalyptein**] his Son to me [...] I did not confer with flesh and blood."
- Both Matthew and Galatians contrast a revelation from God with mere human information ("flesh and blood").
- In all likelihood neither is dependent on the other; more probably, both have taken up a traditional way of describing post-resurrectional appearances.



Church building

- And I tell you, you are Peter; and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (16:18).
- The argument for a pre-Matthean origin for the basic material contained in this verse is strengthened by the recognition of an Aramaic substratum lying behind Matthew's Greek. In Aramaic the Greek play on the word "Peter" is marked by an identity: "You are Kepha and upon this kepha I will build my church."
- Further, the Semitisms, "gates of Hades" as well as "flesh and blood" and "bind and loose," all suggest that 16:17-19 originated in an Aramaic-speaking environment.
- The setting of this verse is in all probability post-resurrectional encounter of some kind.



Identity of Jesus

- In Mark, Caesarea Philippi is a point of arrive and departure.
- In Matthew, the disciples have already worshipped Jesus, so this scene is not the dramatic break-through it is in Mark.
- Rather, it has to do with church organisation and authority.
- A new community is coming into being, distinct from those who oppose and reject it.
- The extra verses about Peter are regarded by the majority of biblical scholars as either pre-Matthean or Matthean. In any case, they do not go back to the historical Jesus.



A final glance across Matthew's gospel

- **A matching text**
- **A background in the Old Testament**
- **A foreground in Matthew**

A final glance across Matthew's gospel

Matt 11:25 At that time Jesus declared,

a. "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,

b. that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding

c. and revealed them to little children;

...

27 a. All things have been handed over to me by my Father,

b. and no one knows the Son except the Father,

c. and no one knows the Father except the Son

....

A final glance across Matthew's gospel

Matt 16:17 And Jesus answered him,

a. "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah!

b. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you,

c. but my Father who is in heaven.

18 a. And I tell you, you are Peter,

b. and on this rock I will build my church,

c. and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19 a. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven,

b. and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven,

c. and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

**Isa 29:14 ...therefore, behold, I will again
do wonderful things with this people,
with wonder upon wonder;
and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish,
and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hidden.**

Condemnation of the religious leadership = Matthew 16:17-19

Isa 28:14 Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scoffers,
 who rule this people in Jerusalem!

15 Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with **death**,
 and with **Sheol** we have an agreement,
when the overwhelming whip passes through
 it will not come to us,
for we have made lies our refuge,
 and in falsehood we have taken shelter";

16 therefore thus says the Lord GOD,
"Behold, I am the one who has laid as a **foundation** in Zion,
 a stone, a tested stone,
a precious **cornerstone**, of a sure **foundation**:
 'Whoever believes will not be in haste.'

17 And I will make justice the line,
 and righteousness the plumb line;
and hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,
 and waters will overwhelm the shelter."

18 Then your covenant with **death** will be annulled,
 and your agreement with **Sheol** will not stand;
when the overwhelming scourge passes through,
 you will be beaten down by it.

Matt 16:19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Matt 18:18 Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matt 23:13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in.

Some conclusions

- In contrast with continuing Pharisaic Judaism under Rabbi Johannan ben Zakkai, which had made it compromises with the the imperial power of the Day.
- Matthew's context: separation from the Jewish matrix.
- The new, emerging community will not lack a teaching voice.
- This community takes the place of the Temple
- Who will teach with authority then?
- In Antioch, Peter had indeed been especially active.

Matt 16:13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

- Caesarea Philippi had associations with Baal and with Pan.
- The sacred nature may contrast with the confession here.
- "Son of Man" (added) is used in the strong sense based Daniel.



Matt 16:14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

- The list reflects Biblical expectations based on Deuteronomy and Malachi.
- Alone in the Gospels, Matthew names the prophet Jeremiah and seems to have a special interest in him (Matt 2:17; 16:14; 27:9).



Matt 16:15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter replied, a "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

- V. 15 speaks to us directly.
- Christ: as we saw, Jews at the time did indeed have expectations of a messiah or messiahs, of some kind.
- Son of the Living God: later Christian confession, put back on the lips of the historical Peter.



Matt 16:17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

- A beatitude.
- Note the use of Aramaic.
- Flesh and blood: semitic expression.
- Revealed: apokalyptein.
- Cf. post-Easter appears to Paul, as we saw above.
- NB cf. Matthew 11:25-27.



Matt 16:18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Gates of Hell = the realm of the dead, which no human can conquer but which cannot prevail against the church of Christ.

- Petros / petra
- Church: unique to Matthew
- NB *my* church.
- Gate of Hell: why would the gate of hell *prevail against* anything?
- Context: Antioch on the Orontes, with the emerging church and Peter's historical role.



Ecumenical consensus

- In ecumenical biblical studies since Vatican II, the following consensus has been reached.
- (a) The church is build on the foundation of Peter (>< previous Protestant readings)
- (b) That role of Peter was unique and unrepeatable (>< previous Roman Catholic readings)
- There is no need for a polemical reading of the passage.
- The teaching at the time of Matthew is: "the promise of Christ to build his church on the likes of Peter despite the forces of death arrayed against it." (M. Eugene Boring)



Matt 16:19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

= Mt 18:17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. 18 Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

- Not to do with the afterlife!
- Rather, Peter as the chief teacher after the departure of Jesus.
- "Binding and loosing" = rabbinic terminology for authoritative teaching.
- Peter had the capacity to make authoritative decision regarding the Christian life in the name of Jesus.



Matt 16:20 Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

- This is really a hang-over from Mark's "Messianic Secret".



Conversation

