

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### Matthew: Jesus As Israel's Messiah And His Kingdom

#### Part XV: Christ As Israel's Messiah Seen In His Discipling Of His Followers, Matthew 16:13-20:34

##### A. Christ As Israel's Messiah Seen In His Teaching On Building His Church

(Matthew 16:13-20)

### I. Introduction

- A. Christendom has long differed on what Jesus meant in Matthew 16:18 when He said " . . . on this rock I will build my Church," for the Roman Catholic Church claims Jesus predicted the primacy of Peter as head of its papacy where Protestants have denied this idea, proposing that He referred to Peter's confession of faith or to Peter in a non-papal role or to Peter and the apostles together or to Christ, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 57.
- B. As Matthew's Gospel was written to show Jesus was the Messiah though He did not establish the Messianic Kingdom at His first advent (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1337), we view the context of this Matthew 16:18 statement in light of the argument of Matthew's Gospel that we might understand what Jesus meant:

### II. Christ As Israel's Messiah Seen In His Teaching On Building His Church, Matthew 16:13-20.

- A. Jesus' Matthew 16:13 question on who men thought He was followed closely upon His interaction with the apostate Pharisees and Sadducees in Matthew 16:1-4 who had rejected Him as the Messiah and Son of God.
- B. Thus, upon the disciples' answer that men claimed Jesus was either John the Baptizer or Elijah or Jeremiah or another of the Old Testament prophets (Matt. 16:14), Jesus' Matthew 16:15 question as to who **they** thought He was intended to **CONTRAST** His disciples with the unbelieving throngs and apostate rulers in the context.
- C. Accordingly, when Peter responded with a great confession of faith that Jesus was "the Messiah (**Christos**, "the Anointed One, the Messiah," U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 63; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 895), the Son of the Living God" (Matthew 16:16), an **explanation** was needed as to **WHY** he had such great insight in sharp **contrast** to the unbelieving religious rulers and the unbelieving people of Israel.
- D. Jesus thus explained that Peter was blessed of **God** so as to **perceive** His identity as Messiah and Son of God, that no human source had revealed it to Peter, but that **God** the Father in **heaven** had done so, Matthew 16:17.
- E. Thus, Jesus' **CONTINUING** Matthew 16:18-20 remarks **build** on this **theme** of **GOD'S work in Peter**, revealing what Jesus meant by the verse 18 phrase, "upon this rock I will build my Church" (as follows):
  1. By "rock," then, Jesus could **not** mean He would build His Church on **Peter** as if he were to be extolled:
    - a. Jesus had just said that "flesh and blood" had not revealed to Peter the identity of Jesus as Messiah and Son of God, but that **God** the **Father** to the **Father's glory** in His **great grace** had revealed this to Peter.
    - b. Also, the Greek term for "Peter" is **Petros**, "a loose stone" (John F. Walvoord, Matthew, 1974, p. 123), and the term for "rock" in Jesus' statement on building His Church is **petra**, "massive rock, cliff," *Ibid.*
    - c. In addition, the tenses in the Greek text to Peter's binding and loosing in Matthew 16:19 indicate that "(h)even, not the apostles, initiates all binding and loosing, while the apostles announce these things," *Ibid.*, Ryrie, fn. to Matthew 16:19. Thus, the **real** Author of the binding and loosing is **God the Father!**
  2. Also, throughout the Old Testament, "the figurative use of the word rock" reveals "it is never used of man, but always of God," G. Campbell Morgan, The Gospel According To Matthew, 1929, p. 211.
  3. Since Jesus accredited Peter's confession to God the Father (Matthew 16:17), since God in heaven would be initiating the bindings and loosings Peter would later announce on earth (Matthew 16:19) and since the figurative use of the word "rock" throughout the Old Testament always refers to God, Jesus must have meant He would graciously and securely build His Church on **God** as opposed to the weak humanity of Peter or the unbelieving throngs or Israel's apostate Pharisee and Sadducee leaders or any other mortals!
- F. Accordingly, Jesus announced God's **gracious** provision of the keys of the kingdom to Peter in line with the **Father's gracious revelation** about Christ to him, predicting Peter's being used of **God** to evangelize others in his preaching in the Early Church (Acts 2:14-38; 8:14-16 and 10:1-48) before charging the disciples to tell no man that he was the Messiah in view of Israel's unbelieving rejection of Him as the Messiah, Matt. 16:19-20.

***Lesson:*** *In light of the context and extended context, the "rock" upon which Jesus predicted He would build His Church would be GOD, and that He would thus GRACIOUSLY USE Peter in the PROCESS!*

***Application:*** *May we (1) look to GOD for salvation and (2) the SECURE building of the true Church of Christ upon Himself, (3) rejoicing that GOD nevertheless GRACIOUSLY STOOPS to USED SAVED MORTALS like Peter or ANY OF THE REST OF US for that matter in that amazingly GRACIOUS construction process!*