

The Stone Cut Out Without Hands

Mt. 16:19 - 23 pt. ii

13Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

14And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." 15He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18"I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon 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; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven." 20Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ.

21From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. 22Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You." 23But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

Well, it's been 3 weeks hiatus since we were in this pinnacle passage in Matthew's gospel, and I admit, not a perfect place to stop either. We didn't make it to a paragraph break or even an idea break, so I'd encourage you, if this seems disconnected but somehow important, to go to the web site, tonopahchurch.org, and read through our study of vss. 13 - 18. The title is **the Stone cut out without hands**.

We covered some very important ground. We said that these events were the pinnacle of Matthews story. The high ground that is the purpose for everything else he's written. That important!

That God revealed to these men that this Jesus is the promised Messiah. He is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And then the famously mis-translated part about Peter being the rock that Christ will build His church upon.

We labored to explain the rock isn't a person, it is the revelation of God to many such small rocks like Peter that Jesus is the Christ, and the fact that God calls His "called out ones" His church out of Satan's worldly kingdom, into Christ's glorious Kingdom. Do go back and read through it again.

With that said, we'll pick up Jesus words to His little group of called out ones. The church, in it's infant stage. These 12 men. The apostles. The apostles are the foundation stones of a giant structure that God will likewise call out and build on their foundation. This next sentence is uniquely for them.

19 "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."

Now again, we can't avoid looking at some of the errors that have come from mis-interpretation of these words.

The Roman church says: see, Peter is the first in a long succession of papal fathers who holds the keys that let men into the kingdom and keep men out of the kingdom.

The church holds the keys. The church, with the papal authority at it's head, decides who is in, and who is out.

Is that what this means? If it is, we're anathema.

I want to submit to you a different interpretation. What are the keys to the Kingdom of God. What is the portal?

Look back at the verses we covered 4 weeks ago. Vs. 17. Flesh and

blood did not . . . what? Reveal this to you. Revelation. From God. I'm going to submit that revelation is the portal to the Kingdom. The revealed word of God.

The revelation that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God is what Christ will build His church on.

What is the portal to the Kingdom of Heaven? How does one get out of the prison of sin and death that binds us to this world, this kingdom of Satan that only promises death and then hell?

Jesus says he's going to give Peter and the apostles the keys. The portal is through these men, somehow. Ultimately, the portal is exclusively, Jesus himself. His own words; *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* Those words came to us intact through John the apostle.

In Acts 4:12, Peter weilds the keys; *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

In what sense do these men then have the keys to that kingdom? They are the ones that wrote it down. They defined the gospel for us. They and those close to them preserved the revelation of God concerning this salvation.

Ephesians 2:20 says the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Jesus Christ is the cornerstone.

The portal of the Kingdom is this book. See how that fits with what He's going to say next.

19 "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."

Listen to the verb tenses. The New American Standard does a wonderful job of presenting this truth taking into account the tenses of

the verbs.

whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven

It was the apostles and those close to them's job to write down the New Testament. I believe this is a promise that revelation will be bound on earth by those authors and the tenses of the verbs are saying; it was already bound in heaven. Loosed on earth. Already loosed in heaven.

The process of inspiration of the book we hold, begins in heaven and ends through these special men, in the book we hold. It is the written Word of God.

The Church, the ecclesia, the called out ones, revolves around this book. Everything necessary for life eternal and Godliness is available to us in this book. AND ONLY in this book. There is exclusivity.

We're witnessing history in the making at Wheaton college in the news. A young black woman, a tenured professor made the statement that christians and muslims worship the same God. She did that on Facebook. It wasn't her first run in of theological importance with the dean of Wheaton college. But it may be her last.

She was put on administrative leave, and Wheaton College is standing firm that they are a confessional institution. And their confession is based in this book. You cannot teach there and dis-agree with that confessional statement. Exclusivity.

One book. One God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. One Christ who came and lived among men, sinlessly, and died in our place to purchase us and then was resurrected from the dead to return to the right hand of God the Father. One Holy Spirit who indwells believers and quickens us from the dead into a living fellowship with God Himself. One way to God. This book defines it. Period!

If you believe that other religions are somehow climbing a different path up the same mountain to the same God, you may be in the wrong church.

This book says all of that nonsense is hopeless. Our only hope is that God reached down to us, in His Son, and did it for us. For the record, there are no similarities with our God and the muslim god whom they themselves teach is un-knowable. God has revealed Himself in one book. It's the one you hold in your hands.

And the process of that revelation, the writing down, the canonizing, the 5,000 manuscript pieces complete with scribal errors are the legacy of this promise.

19 "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."

Heaven is in control and agreement with what the apostles wrote. Modern textual criticism proves that there is virtually no disagreement in any salvific doctrine in any of the fragments. It is transmitted to us, complete. All of the doctrines are there. No arguments. People can fuss forever over tiny bits and pieces that some scribe did different, but none of it has any effect on foundational doctrine.

It was this book, intact, that caused the reformation. Sola Scriptura. Sola fide. The church had wandered off into neverland, but the book was intact.

20 Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ.

Then we have this strange verse. It seems so counterintuitive, and indeed contradictory to what we hear later in the great commission.

Some of us love this verse. It's the only verse we're good at. Don't tell anybody. Why does He say that here?

We used to hear about these guys who would offer money if you could come up with a viable biblical contradiction. Bam. Put this verse next to Matt. 28:19

19 *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: or*
Mk. 16:15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mt. 16:20 Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ.*

What do you **do** with *that*?

The key is the word therefore in the 29:19 passage. What's it there for?

Jesus had risen from the dead. He was about to ascend into heaven. His Kingdom at this time is a spiritual Kingdom. Until He returns and sets up a physical Kingdom in Jerusalem, we have a **spiritual kingdom** with Christ as the head of the church, sitting at the right hand of God the father.

In our Matthew 16 passage, the Lord and the disciples had moved outside of the land of Israel, why? Because the people wanted to make Him King. They want a physical Kingdom according to their wants and wishes and well-being over a tiny piece of real estate next to the mediteranean sea.

Jesus will have a Kingdom over the whole earth. But not now. Not how they want it. God's plan is gigantic. Death of His son to forever eradicate sin for His chosen ones. Resurrection from the dead of His Son, and Ascension into heaven. Then a spiritual Kingdom begins for an unstated period of time. Then Jesus returns and takes back the entire earth, the whole world will be filled with His glory.

Hab. 2:14 *For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.* God's Kingdom on earth isn't some piddly presidential kind of reign that we can imagine. The whole world will be immersed in His Glory! Baptized.

The people want an itty bitty kingdom with a king who makes food. A welfare state with Jesus at the helm. Kicking butt over Rome.

Jesus says; not interested. Don't tell them I am the Christ. Wait for God's plan to unfold. (btw, that isn't a pass for us. I was being facetious) Post resurrection and 21 centuries into His spiritual kingdom, the great commission is for US.

What we see in the next verses illustrates this conundrum perfectly. Peter's on the teeny kingdom now plan. God is on the rule the whole world after satan is deposed plan. The two plans will collide.

21From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. 22Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You." 23But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

I've been watching the political process unfolding lately with more interest than I can recall ever having before.

I'm completely entertained. I listen to the debates. I read articles in the Washington Post and New York Times. I listen to the talking heads at Fox News, AND NPR dot org.

Why? Well, when I analyze it, besides being as I say, entertaining, I have all kinds of self preservation motives. I'm completely engrossed for selfish reasons. Maybe this man (or woman) can really fix what's broke. Maybe my tribe can hold the warring tribe at bay a little longer. Maybe I can live a dignified quiet life with some security and safety a while longer.

The Bible says I should be praying for those things. I rarely do. Instead I have all these selfish interests. Elect somebody that's going to make everything OK for me, me, me. (I'm not really foolish enough to think one person can fix what's broke, but still, I get caught up in the hope.)

The folks in Israel were no different. Elect Jesus! He makes food. And Peter's right there pulling with them.

Jesus begins to unfold God the father's plan. And Peter says, that's the stupidest plan I ever heard. God's plan is crazy talk, Jesus! What're you thinking!?!? Go to Jerusalem and die?!?! Are you nuts???

Jesus declared to Pilate, *“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm”* (John 18:36).

Peter got the message. The disciples got the message. But I'm sure it was painful to be Peter on this day!

Let's look at it, and consider the plan of God with our 20-20 hindsight. Even with far more revelation and distance into this plan, we often, too often, make the same mistake that Peter is going to make.

Vs. 21 From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.

A couple of key words are here for us. Placement words in the over-all story. The big picture of Matthews book. From *that time* Jesus *began* .

This is a place marker in the story. Up until now, Jesus has had 20,000 people following Him around most of the time. They had very little time to go deeper into the plan of God. These 12 special men, and Jesus. The demands of the crowd were constant.

Ceasaria Philippi was far enough away that the crowd is removed. One on 12 time is finally a reality. And Jesus goes deeper into the plan of God for not only Him, but for these special men. We saw that last time and also today. The keys of the kingdom are thiers. That's all brand new.

Well, it's one plane to find out you're the foundation stones of a mighty Kingdom of God, and that you hold the keys to that Kingdom.

It's quite another to be facing that reality squarely and the next thing you here is. **I'm leaving.** Yikes!

Look again at vs. 21. *From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He **must** go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.*

He **must** go . . . That's an imperative. Something that must happen. If He'd said He might go . . . or something less imperative, it might not have caused the panic that it did.

Why the must?

Must go to Jerusalem

Must suffer many things from elders and chief priests and scribes

Must be killed

Must be raised up on the third day.

This is the unfolding of the plan of God from outside of time, into eternity past, present, future. This is God's design. From the foundation of the world, God has planned the redemption of His people.

There are doctrines in the Bible that are mysteries. Never seen until they are revealed. Like the church age. But these things are not a mystery. The Psalmists and Prophets spoke of the death of Messiah. The end of sin. The purchase of redemption. In Israel, it was on almost no one's mind. A few remnants like Simeon that we spoke of over Christmas, and Anna, at the same time.

None of the religious experts were on this page. Well, sadly, they **are** on the page, but their role is to cause Him to suffer and die.

Listen to Jeremiah. Mouthpiece for a God who has a plan, made in eternity.

Jer. 29:11 *'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the*

LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.

Our problem is, we can't see much beyond our noses. God can see all of eternity. His plan is for good for us, no matter what is happening around us at any given time.

Psalm 33:11

But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Isaiah 55:8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. 9"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts....

God's plans; Giant, outside of time and eternity,
Men's plans; Small, confined by our limited understanding.

God is a sovereign King. We could all preach this sermon to Peter, right? 20 - 20 hindsight. We understand these truths. Then something happens. A wind out of nowhere broadsides our little sail boats and we're a hair breadth from capsizing.

This incident was no fun for Peter, but it put a heavy ballast way down deep underneath his boat. The next time he was broadsided he had this lesson to fall back on.

22Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You." This CANNOT happen!!

There's something between the lines here for us. What was it like to walk in Judea with the Son of God? Did He glow in the dark? Did He have a halo hovering over His head like the medievell pictures?

This reaction by Peter speaks volumes about how approachable Jesus was. 100% God and 100% man. The 100% man thing becomes very believable here. Jesus was Peter's friend. Not common. But certainly

Peter approaches the Lord Jesus friend to friend. No rock star barriers.

Peter was the obvious leader of the 12. Jesus has just finished saying Peter the rock is going to be a foundation of something big! And Peter's up to the task. The first thing to do is talk Jesus down from crazy notions about going to Jerusalem and getting Himself killed.

I'm in charge, and we'll start right here. No one's going to Jerusalem and getting killed. NOT happening!

23But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

Remember the temptation in the wilderness in Mt. 4? The response here is almost identical. There He said Go! Satan. Here; Get behind me Satan. In the Luke account it says; *13When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time.*

I think the temptation here was real! Peter's heart is in a good place, even though it's outside the plan of God for all eternity. Peter and the disciples love Jesus. And Jesus knows that these men will be crushed on that day when He is killed. Do you think for one minute, Jesus didn't think, you know, Peter's got a point. The temptation was real.

And Jesus responds, *Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me*

The conflict here is deep. Eternity deep. Man's plan. God's plan.

Peter's plan is rock solid. It's got everything built into it that men can contrive. It's a good plan. Save your skin, Jesus. We love you. We can't lose you. You say we're the foundation stones to something big. We can't do that. It won't happen if you're gone. We love you. We need you. We're going to hold onto you with every fiber of our collective being.

If Jesus was running for president of the United States, Peter would have

been a rock solid campaign manager. Rock solid. It's a good plan.

But, again; *Isaiah 55:8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. 9"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts...."*

It isn't God's plan. And nothing is going to stop God's plan. Not Peter. Not the 12 disciples. Not Satan. Nothing.

Luke 9:51 says; *And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And John 11:16 Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him."*

Jesus is resolved to carry out His Father's plan of all eternity. He sets His face to go to Jerusalem. The disciples don't do any Peter re-enactments. Once was enough!

One of the first verses I memorized as a little child, two verses actually; Proverbs 3:5,6. *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways, acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.*

God is approachable. And gracious. But He is a Sovereign King and we are His subjects. He doesn't tell us everything. He expects us to believe Jeremiah 29:11, and follow Him. Sometimes we'll understand. Some times we won't.

'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.

Sometimes we're in pain because we've simply neglected to know and understand the things He **has** revealed. It's one thing to follow through the valley of the shadow of death in blind faith, knowing the Saviour has a good plan for you. It's another entirely to be in mass confusion because we've been too lazy to learn what the book **does** say.

Massive revelation in this critical time frame for the disciples. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. God revealed that to these men, no one else did. God will likewise reveal that singular truth about His Son to other men and build His church. These 12 men are foundation stones of that structure. They hold the keys of this revelation. It will be through them that these truths will be brought to all of the called out ones, the church.

This Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the Living God must go to Jerusalem, he must endure suffering brought by the religious leaders of Isreal, and then He must die and be resurrected from the dead.

The disciples are on information overload. They have a few months to assimilate the truths they've heard in Ceasaria Philippi.

How'd it turn out? Pinch yourselves. Here we are! If we're in the Kingdom we came in precisely how Jesus defined it that day. God revealed Himself and His Son to us by His Holy Spirit, through the revelation written down in this book.

We are quickened from the dead and made alive together with Christ Jesus. The words in this book accomplish that miracle. It is the keys to the Kingdom. How precious is THAT!

Finally, a lesson for us. How elusive is our sin when we simply live for our own perceived best interest.

We would look at Peter and say; He's got righteous motives. He's got Jesus best interest at heart. He's honestly trying to prevent bad things from happening to someone he loves. It isn't sin to hang out in Ceasarea Philippi

Oh, but it is sin, if the Lord of the universe says, no, we're not going to do it the way that seems most expedient. We're going to do it this way.

We forget He's Lord. We forget we are slaves, who answer to a master, who has a plan for us. In America, that's the last thing on our minds. And the result is that the church in America is adrift. How could it not

be.

James addresses this root cause. I wonder if he was thinking about Peter when he wrote this.

13Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." 14Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. 15Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." 16But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. 17Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

When is the last time we corporately or individually reaffirmed to the Saviour that we belong to Him and that we want to leave the sin behind and follow Him, no matter where He leads.