

Matthew 16:1-20

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Preacher: Ray Kelly

[0 : 00] I feel like I'm kind of limping a bit this morning in that I kind of thought I had a week off because Joe was preaching this morning. And also because I felt completely naff, I thought, well, at least I've got time to recover.

And then Joe took ill. So you're going to get a croaky version of a section of Matthew 16 this morning. And let's hope that God talks to us through his word in a manner that he always does, despite our weaknesses.

Father, we come to you and just ask you to speak to us through your word. We want your word to take root in our hearts. We want to learn from you this morning. And whatever we can't do out of our own weakness, we pray that you would do from your strength.

In Jesus name. Amen. So I do have some slides to show you a bit later. So I'll leave my struggle with technology till then.

But over the last two weeks, what we've seen is Jesus take his disciples into Gentile territory, haven't we? As a lesson to his disciples to reveal to them the horrific stuff that was in their own hearts towards Gentiles.

[1 : 21] The nation that was supposed to serve the Gentiles, that was supposed to give the love of God to the Gentiles and the word of God to the Gentiles. Gentiles had not done that for centuries. And so there was this rift that should never have existed because the Jews were supposed to love the Gentiles.

And his way of showing them that was initially to go and to deal with this Canaanite woman. So he went into the region of Tyre and Sidon and dealt with her.

And they were saying, send her away. She's making all that noise. And he delivered her daughter from demons, her daughter who wasn't even present, demonstrating his miraculous power and his love for the Gentiles and his compassion.

What we then learned last week was he then went into the Decapolis, the area of 10 cities that were all Gentile cities, and continued to minister for three days to the Gentiles and then performed a very similar miracle to the one he'd done when he fed the 5,000.

He fed the 4,000. Once again, his disciples didn't get it. They weren't in faith for this miracle. They were saying, where can we get bread? This is a desolate place. And Jesus said, well, how many loaves have you got?

[2 : 39] We've got seven. And so he fed 4,000 men plus women and children with the seven loaves and a few fish. And we looked at the numbers that were involved.

I'm not going to rehearse that again this morning. You can get last week's recording if I've remembered to put it somewhere. But he did these things to show them that he loved the Gentiles.

And then it was where we finished last week at the end of chapter 15. He returned by boat to this place called Magadan. And in Mark's gospel, that same place is called Dalmanutha.

Dalmanutha. Dalmanutha. They don't have a TH in Hebrew, I'm told, from our resident expert. So Dalmanutha.

We weren't able to work out what the names mean. I suspect if we could find out what the names meant, they would be meaningful. But we can't. So there we go. And so where we finished off was that he got off the boat at Magadan or Dalmanutha and was immediately accosted by the Jews.

[3 : 51] So that's where we pick up this morning. Chapter 16 and verse 1. The Pharisees and Sadducees came up and testing Jesus, they asked him to show them a sign from heaven.

But he replied to them, when it is evening, you say it will be fair weather for the sky is red. And in the morning, there will be a storm today for the sky is red and threatening.

Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky but cannot discern the signs of the times? An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign and a sign will not be given it except the sign of Jonah.

And he left them and went away. And the disciples came to the other side of the sea, but they had forgotten to bring any bread. And Jesus said to them, watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

They began to discuss this among themselves, saying, he has said that because we did not bring any bread. But Jesus, aware of this, said, you men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves that you have no bread?

[5 : 02] Do you not yet understand or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets full you picked up? Or the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets full you picked up?

How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Then they understood that he did not say to be aware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Now, when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he was asking the disciples, who do people say that the son of man is? And they said, some say John, John the Baptist, and others, Elijah, but still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.

He said to them, but who do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered, you are the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus said to him, blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my father who is in heaven.

I also say that you are Peter and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven.

[6 : 23] And whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. Then he warned the disciples that they should tell no one that he was the Christ. So, big chunk of scripture.

If we don't get through it, I will finish it next week. But what you have is he gets off the boat and the first thing you have is that the Pharisees and the Sadducees accost him.

Now, we've studied in previous studies that there was an investigation that would go on into anyone who made messianic claims. And so they'd already sent deputations of Pharisees and Sadducees to look to see if he really was the Messiah.

Was he doing stuff that would mark him out as Messiah? Which, of course, he was. But instead of embracing that, what they did was they said, they're doing this by the power of Satan.

This is particularly interesting because the Pharisees and the Sadducees here are together. And they're together against Jesus. Now, the Pharisees and the Sadducees were never together on anything.

[7 : 32] I mean, they just didn't. They believed different things. They all claimed to revere God and they all claimed to revere his word. However, the Sadducees were the liberals of the day.

They held the law very, very loosely. They didn't believe in bodily resurrection. They believed that once you died, your soul ceased to exist.

So it's the equivalent of the annihilationists of today that teach that there is no, that once you die, unless you're saved, of course. If you're saved, you go to heaven. And if you're not saved, you just cease to exist, according to them.

Which, of course, is not biblical and not true. The Pharisees revered the law so much that they added to the law and created a new law that had an awful lot added to it that was of no benefit.

And that's an important background for what we're going to look at in a moment. It was interesting that this difference between them and this there was a marked difference.

[8 : 37] And I'm not going to study it this morning. But in Acts 23 and verse 6, what you see is you see Paul being tried, really being put before a court.

And what he does is he uses these differences to get himself off the hook. Because you've got this mixture of Pharisees and Sadducees there.

And Paul says, I'm a Pharisee. And I believe in the resurrection. And with that, the Pharisees and the Sadducees had a big argument over that, forgetting the fact that they're supposed to be trying Paul.

So he used this difference to set them against each other, which, of course, one can do if you're not united in what you believe.

It's one of the reasons that we wage war so hard on the establishment of the word of God here, because we need to be united. We need to have a common understanding of what the word of God means.

[9 : 38] So, and they said, we want to see a sign. Now, they've already had their answer to this question. In Matthew 12, you may as well turn there.

Matthew 12, just turn back a few pages. And verses 38 to 45. Now, this is after he's cast out the dumb demon.

And that in itself was what the Pharisees had said is a messianic miracle. If somebody turns up and can cast out the dumb demon, that is Messiah. No one else will ever be able to do that.

They couldn't do that. And if you want to understand why, you need to go back and listen to that study. So come to verse 38 of chapter 12.

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, teacher, we want to see a sign from you. But he answers and said to them, an evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign. And yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet.

[10 : 41] So he's already given them the same answer as he's now giving them. Jesus is being absolutely consistent. And he goes on and says, for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

So he put himself as someone who was greater than Jonah. And what he said was, these Gentiles to whom the gospel was preached by Jonah are going to stand head and shoulders above you on the day of judgment because they listened and they repented the very thing that you refuse to do.

So back to Matthew 16. The way he approaches it with them is he says, you know, you see, and we've all heard the saying, I guess we've all heard the saying, red sky at night, sailor's delight or shepherd's delight or whatever.

Red sky in the morning, sailor's warning. It's been around for millennia, this observation that you can tell roughly what the weather's going to do by looking at the sky at night.

[12 : 06] And he's saying, you can look at the sky and discern things, but you can't discern the sign of the times. And what he meant by that was you have had so many signs of these times. Jesus has come.

He's come and he has portrayed himself. I made a little list in the notes, so that would probably help if I looked at it.

When you think about Jesus coming into Jewish society when he did, he came at the right time from Daniel 9, verse 26 onwards.

They should have been able to tell what time he would arrive. And if you remember when he rode into the city on the back of a donkey, he was crying over the Jews and saying, if only you had known the time of your visitation or if you had known the day of your visitation, it was perfectly possible for Jews to understand the very day he would arrive and proclaim himself as king.

So he was of the right lineage. Unless you're God, you don't get to choose your lineage. But he was of the prophesied lineage.

[13 : 31] He was born of Abraham, born of David, born of the line of these people. He was born of a virgin. And people will often say, well, how would you know whether that was true or not?

Well, actually, it's extremely likely that Jesus was attended by midwives at birth and that they would have been able to deny any claims that she was a virgin at birth.

It was accepted and proclaimed that she was a virgin at birth, although people did try to deny it at the time. But he was born of a virgin. He then, as a baby, went to Egypt to be spared, just as was prophesied that he would.

And then after that, he settled in Nazareth, which, again, was prophesied that he would. He then performed all the messianic miracles that were expected of him from the Old Testament.

He was visited by Gentile kings. And the Gentiles knew who he was when the Jews refused to accept who he was. And during his ministry, he raised the dead.

[14 : 43] He cast out demons. He healed the sick. He took control over the weather. He multiplied food. And still they're saying, we want to see a sign from you.

And it's interesting because what they say here is not just we want to see a sign from you, but it says, show them a sign from heaven. And the word from heaven is constructed in Greek in such a way it's ek.

It uses the word ek, which means to call down out of heaven a sign. It wasn't just do your magic. It was show us that you can call down signs from heaven.

And what he said was, I've already told you, you're not going to get a sign other than the sign of Jonah, which is the sign of resurrection. And if we turn to Luke 16 a moment, because you must recall, again, not going to study it this morning, but he gave them the sign of resurrection on two occasions.

The first being the resurrection of Lazarus from the tomb, where there is something like 44 verses devoted to that in John's gospel. And then his own resurrection.

[16 : 01] But in Luke 11, 16, it says this, others to test him were demanding of him a sign from heaven. But he knew their thoughts and said to them, any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste and a house divided against itself falls.

If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out?

So they will be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. And what I'm trying to get to and seem to have missed, it was verse 21 was the key verse.

When a strong man fully armed guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. But when some of them stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes the plunder.

He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters. When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through the waterless places seeking rest and not finding any.

[17 : 20] It says, I will return to my house from which I came. And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. And then it goes and takes along seven other spirits, more evil than itself, and they go in and live there.

And the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. So they've been asking for a sign. And in this very similar set of circumstances to the ones we're reading about, he's saying a sign isn't going to do you any good.

What is going to happen to you if you don't pay attention to the signs you have been given is that you will be in a worse situation than you were when you started because the demonic presences that you've been protected from will come back stronger and you'll be, if you like, even more demon-possessed than you used to be.

And one of the... I can't remember exactly where it is, but it does say... It does say... I've written the wrong scripture reference down, but the scripture does say, even if someone is raised from the dead, you will still not believe.

Now that... What he's saying is, you've got one more sign to come, the sign of Jonah, and you're not even going to believe that sign, and the result of not believing that sign is you will be even more demon-possessed than you are now.

[18 : 46] Your life will be directed by the demonic rather than by the Holy Spirit. So he's basically given them, in a sense, a death sentence, a hell sentence.

They've become irredeemable, and that hasn't changed since Matthew 12, and here we are in Matthew 16 going round the block again. We want to see a sign from you. And he said, You're an evil and adulterous generation, and a sign is not going to be coming your way.

And then it says, And he left them and went away. And you get a sense of abruptness there. And why would he abruptly leave at that point? Well, number one, they're not listening. And number two, he is deferring his conflict with them until the right time, because the right time for his crucifixion is Passover.

However, God has laid out in advance the time frame for all that will happen to Jesus, and Jesus is very skillfully playing them until that time comes.

And so we go on to this next part. They came to the other side of the sea, but they had forgotten to bring any bread. So we're on bread again, right? And when he says to them, Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

[20 : 12] This is verse six. They began to discuss this among themselves, saying, He said that because we didn't bring any bread. You would have thought that having watched him feed 5,000, and then watched him feed 4,000, plus women and children in both cases, so a total of probably 50 odd thousand people across both miracles.

You would have thought that they would have got the idea that the fact that they forgot to bring bread wasn't really all that important, and it wasn't really difficult for Jesus to feed them.

Just a passing thought. But Jesus corrects them, and I think it's, you know, we've forgotten to bring bread again. Again. But he says, no, no, no.

It's nothing to do with bread. The leaven of the Pharisees is the doctrine or the teaching of the Pharisees. An interesting point that will become even more interesting in a moment is that Mark's gospel includes Herod in this.

So Mark reports that Jesus said, Beware the gospel of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Mark says, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and Herod. Beware the leaven of Herod.

[21 : 28] And you might think at that point, why is the leaven of Herod important? Well, apart from the fact that he was the one that built the temple that they had back then, and he had kind of taken over where he had no business in being a head figure over Judaism, so whatever came from him wasn't going to be good.

But as we'll get to in a moment, there was a completely different reason for Herod's inclusion. He says to them, Didn't you get it? You've seen me feed 5,000.

You've seen me feed 4,000. How many baskets full did you have left over? Why are you worried about bread? I'm not talking to you about bread. I'm talking to you about doctrine. I'm talking to you about teaching.

And he says, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. And in Luke 12, verse 1, it says, Which is hypocrisy? Now, for some reason, Matthew doesn't say that, and neither does Mark.

But Luke says, The doctrine of the Pharisees, or Luke reports that Jesus said, The doctrine of the Pharisees is hypocrisy. So you think, Well, where does that come from?

[22 : 42] Why is the doctrine of the Pharisees, and the Sadducees, and Herod, hypocrisy? Well, let's sort of dissect it a bit.

The Jews would always use unleavened bread. Mostly they would eat unleavened bread, but not entirely. But certainly for all their offerings, they would use unleavened bread.

And to them, to use leavened bread, in any sense of making an offering, was completely anathema to them. They would hate it. They wouldn't even dream of it.

They would prefer not to get involved in the offering, rather than use leavened bread. Because leavened bread had leaven added to it, which is yeast. And what yeast does to bread, is it puffs it up.

It doesn't add anything nutritional. Bread is just as nutritious, without yeast added. But it makes it look nicer. Probably makes it smell a bit nicer.

[23 : 43] So it's more attractive, but no more nutritious. And of course, leaven is, as always, right through the Old Testament, was a representation of sin.

And so the idea of unleavened bread was, you were making a sinless offering, which of course, Jesus would be the ultimate sinless offering, when he died for our sins.

So they would commonly use unleavened bread. And what was hypocritical was, that they painted this picture of themselves, as fully righteous.

And they took the law of God, and they sowed it, with a particular kind of leaven, yeast if you like, that puffed it up into something that God never intended it to be.

And if you think of all the challenges that we've seen Jesus endure, in almost every case, it was, he was being challenged, because he wasn't obeying the extra bits of law that the Pharisees and the Sadducees had added, that were nothing to do with the original law of God.

[24 : 54] And so Jesus calls it leaven, because it's been shoved in there, and has puffed up the law, into something it was never intended to be.

And in fact, not only was no more nutritious, but was, it was the opposite. It was less nutritious, than the original law. And all of the challenges Jesus had faced, that we've read about, he got, he got castigated for allowing his, disciples to pick grain on the Sabbath, because it broke their idea of the law, the inflated law, the leavened law, not the real law.

And he also, we recently read, they got told off, because they'd eaten bread without washing their hands first, which was, again, an inflation of the law, to make it more, more, to puff it up.

What they were doing, what was hypocritical about it, is they were, they were purveying this, what they would say was a strengthened law, which of course it wasn't, and demanding that the people live by that law, when they couldn't live by it themselves.

That was the hypocritical bit. So, what was hypocritical was to present themselves in public, to be something that they're not really, because they, they present themselves as people who live by this law, that they've created, in addition to God's law, and the reality is, they can't be that righteous.

[26 : 31] focus. In Matthew 15, and verse 9, if you just look back a little bit, Jesus is quoting from Isaiah 29, verse 13, when he says, but in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines, the precepts of men.

Jesus is accusing them, and saying, what you're teaching is nothing to do with God, it's the precepts of men, but you're teaching it as if it is from God. And he's very harsh on them, but what we also glean from that quotation, is that, that has been the case for centuries before Jesus arrived.

I mean, Isaiah was written in about 700 BC, and so, he's speaking about, so-called godly people, who preach and teach stuff that is wrong, claiming it to be righteous, and putting themselves on pedestals as righteous men, when they, when their hearts are actually far from him.

That's the point. You know, the reality is not what you see. The reality is your hearts are far from me. In verse 8 of chapter 15, this people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me.

So, he's saying, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees for that reason, and also the leaven of Herod, which we will come to in a moment.

[28 : 05] Now, the place that they went to, where are we? Chapter 16 again. So, verse 13, Now, when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he was asking the disciples, who do people say that the Son of Man is?

Now, what I have been impressed by, while I've been studying for these, is just how much walking they did.

You know, they walked to the region of Tyre and Sidon, which was somewhere between 30 and 50 miles, and they walked it. Well, here you have, they've landed on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

So, the Sea of Galilee is here. Caesarea Philippi is up here, which is a distance of at least 15 miles. So, they've gone, they've got off the boat, they've had this conversation with the Jews, they've left that area, and now Jesus has taken them to the area of Caesarea Philippi, to show them something.

And so, you then got to say, well, why would you want to walk? I mean, you've got plenty of desolate areas if you want to escape. Why would you want to go to Caesarea Philippi? The answer is, that at Caesarea Philippi was this place, it was the headwaters of the River Jordan.

[29 : 25] So, the Jordan rose from the ground here, and went all the way down the Jordan Valley, down into the Lake of Galilee, and through Galilee, and on down to the Dead Sea. And at the top, and another name for this area, where this exists, is Banyas, or Panyas.

And, there was, built by no one other than King Herod, the leaven of Herod, a temple for the worship of the god Pan.

And you think, well, who's god Pan? Well, if you've, if you've read Peter Pan, that is based on Pan. Pan pipes come from the worship of Pan. Pan was a god, a pagan god.

I haven't looked into what he was reported to have done, because, to be honest, I don't want to spend the time on it. But, this was a place where pagan gods were worship.

It was a center of Pan worship. It was also a center of Baal worship. And that cave, was looked upon, as a kind of portal, to the underworld.

[30 : 35] Nobody ventured into there, because they might not come back. And, of course, the underworld, as far as the pagans were concerned, and it's reported in scripture, with the name Hades, is the place, where departed souls go.

And so, the thought was, if you go in through this portal, or gateway, you might not come back. And Herod, had that temple built.

As you can see, it got its just desert. It's now a ruin. But, Herod had this built. Herod was a worshipper of Pan. Pan, and built this temple, to facilitate Pan worship, right by the portal, or gateway to the underworld, where Pan was reputed to have lived.

So, suddenly, this scripture, which has been a source of confusion to me, and I'm sure many others, for many years, comes clear. He went there, because he had a statement to make.

And so, he's in this area, and he is, he goes on to say, well, let's read it, otherwise I'll only get it wrong. Who do people say that the Son of Man is?

[31 : 57] And they said, some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, but still others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. And he said to them, but who do you say that I am? And this question, was then, and is now, still, the key and critical question, which all of us have to answer.

And, if you're out there doing any evangelism, or if you're talking to any of your friends about Jesus, this question is the one they have to answer. Who do you say Jesus is?

Because on that hangs your salvation, and theirs. Whatever answer they come up with, if they come up with, I mean, this lot, at least they came up with biblical examples.

Jeremiah, Elijah, John the Baptist. If you remember, King, the Herod of the time, was worried that John the Baptist had come back to life, and that this man going around doing miracles, was actually John the Baptist resurrected.

So they'd at least picked out Bible characters, and said, well, it could be this, it could be that. We don't even do that. We have religious organizations that say, well, he's the half-brother of Satan.

[33 : 12] Or, is the Archangel Michael in disguise? Or, oh, well, he was a good man, but not God. But you see, we're still doing the same as they did.

We're demoting Jesus from his throne. And so he's in this area where Pan and Baal are worshipped all the time, and he's saying, who do you say that I am?

Now, if ever there was a place where you could say, well, one of the gods, perhaps you're Pan in some sort of disguise, they could have done it here, because this is where everybody thought God was Pan or Baal.

And Peter says, and keep in mind he's acting as a spokesman, so he's speaking on behalf of the group. He says, you are, verse 16, you are the Christ, the son of the living God.

The Christ, the Christos, is the same as saying the Messiah. You are the one we've been waiting for for centuries. You are him. And you're the son of the living God, which is a way of saying you are God.

[34 : 32] So, Jesus' response straight away is, blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

It takes a revelation from the Father to understand who Jesus is. Now, that gives us a little dilemma for our evangelism, doesn't it? And you might think, puts ammunition in the guns of the Calvinists, who say, see, if God doesn't draw you, then you're not going to be saved.

And that's been decided since before the foundation of the world. No. In Scripture, it says, if I be lifted up on the earth, I will draw all men unto myself.

So, God is drawing all men. It's one answer to people who say, well, what about the person on the island who's never heard of Jesus? God is drawing all men to himself. You kind of know it in your knower.

You look at creation, and you know that somebody had to put it all together. You know that there is a God. So, he says, my Father in heaven revealed this to you.

[35 : 44] Verse 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. My goodness, we picked a complicated piece of Scripture this morning that causes a lot of confusion.

You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. And that is the Scripture that the Roman Catholic Church uses to suggest that Peter, by a process they call apostolic succession, was the vicar of Christ, and the church that came from him, which incidentally wasn't the Roman Catholic Church, but that's what they claim.

And the church that came from him was God's only church. And you then have the priesthood, which is supposedly all descended from Peter, which they've never proved and never shown, really.

But nevertheless, that's where it comes from. So let's look at this, because we need to understand it. And please don't think I'm down on Catholics. I want Catholics to get saved.

It's just that if they stick too hard and fast to the doctrines of the Catholic Church, they never will get saved. That's the important thing. So we love them. And Jude tells us, if possible, save some from false doctrine.

[37 : 05] So I don't know if you've heard the expression, certainly if you're from up north, you may have heard it. But if you pick up a stone, they say it's a Peter. You know, I picked up a Peter and I chucked it at him.

It's still one that's used. If you speak French, you will know that the French for stone is Pierre, Peter. All right.

So the name Peter means stone. The name Peter is a masculine noun and it's Petros. And Petros means a stone. And Jesus said, you are Peter.

So at this point, Peter has his name changed from Simon to Peter. Peter. You are Peter. And by calling you Peter, I'm saying you are a little stone.

And on this rock, Petra, not Petros, Petra, a feminine noun, meaning a large rock. And you will notice that behind where he would have seen little stones in the stream, here, right behind is the large rock.

[38 : 13] And this is a metaphor for the rock upon which the church will be built. And I picture this, please accept this might be wrong, but I kind of picture him saying, Peter, you are now Peter.

You're a small stone. But on this rock, and I can picture him gesticulating towards himself, on this rock, I will build my church. Now that might just be my imagination, but it's not unfounded because there are lots of places in scripture where Jesus is called the rock.

In the Old Testament as well. 1 Peter 2.8. Now in scripture, apart from Peter, there are two other expressions of rock.

One is Petra that we've just looked at. And the other is lithos, which means a very large fashioned stone, stone, a stone that's built for a purpose, like the foundation stone of the temple.

So when Jesus is referred to as the cornerstone, when he's referred to as the cornerstone, that would be the large stone, which is the foundation stone upon which the whole of the building of the temple took its lines and levels.

[39 : 42] But it's not a little stone. It's a massive great stone. And a Petra is a massive great stone. So Jesus is referred to in Isaiah 28.16.

Turn there. Isaiah 28.16. Thus says the Lord God, behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone, foundation firmly placed.

He who believes in it will not be disturbed. So the Messiah there is referred to as a rock or a large stone. If you go to 1 Peter 2.8.

1 Peter 2.8. In fact, we'll start in verse 7. Hang on. Let's start in verse 6 because otherwise we don't get it, do we?

We're believers. For this is contained in Scripture. Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious cornerstone, and he who believes in him will not be disappointed.

[40 : 53] That's what we've just read from the Old Testament. This precious value is for us, for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, the stone which the builders rejected became the very cornerstone and a stone of stumbling and a rock petra of a fence.

So the illusions that Jesus made to himself, and we'll quickly turn to Romans 9 as well, the illusions Jesus made were to himself.

Now, without going into all the things about what the Roman Catholics have done with Peter, they forbade marriage, and yet Peter had a mother-in-law, so he must have been married.

But these are mere fripperies compared to this Peter, who incidentally, the first church that was formed in Jerusalem, he wasn't even the head of that church, James was.

So they've placed a huge burden on Peter, which he couldn't possibly live up to, and then for every successive pope after that, because it's supposed to be apostolic succession.

[42 : 04] Romans 9, verse 33. Starting verse 30, what should we say then, that Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness and attain righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith, but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law.

Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, Petra. Just as it is written, behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, a rock of offense, Petra.

The stone of stumbling is lithos. These are not little stones. So I just wanted to nail this doctrine that when the Catholic Church claims that they're all descended from Peter, it's not biblical, it's not correct, that's not what Jesus meant when he said on this rock I will build my church.

I better just finish out a couple of verses and then we're done. Matthew 16 again. Verse 18, on this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades, which is what we've been looking at at Caesarea Philippi, this source of pagan worship supported by the king will not prevail against the church.

the church will overcome all pagan worship and pagan gods. And he goes on and says 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 and then he warned the disciples they should tell no one that he was the Christ.

[43 : 43] And we'll come to that last verse next week but I want to finish this week simply by saying this about verse 19. There are aspects of Christianity that say if I bind it on earth it's bound in heaven and if I loose it on earth it's loosed in heaven.

That is not what this scripture means at all. What it means is when God shows me what's been bound in heaven I can bind it on earth and when God shows me what's been loosed or permitted in heaven I can loose it on earth.

The truth of this scripture is that I am a servant of heaven not that heaven will serve me if I shout it loud enough. It's been used to give men and women heirs and graces as if they were in charge of heaven and that is not what it was intended to do.

It was intended to give us a sense of perspective that yes you're going to have a special position and you'll be able to bind things that have already been bound in heaven and you'll be able to loose things that have already been loosed in heaven.

In other words you'll be able to do the will of God. Father thank you for your word and thank you for the challenge of preparing talks like this and I do pray that you'll sow the seed of your word in our hearts that we will never forget it that the word of Christ may dwell in us richly and that when we open our mouths our hearts will be so full of your word that it will be your word that proceeds from our mouths when we speak in response to all of life's situations.

[45 : 29] We commit ourselves to you for that purpose in Jesus name. Amen.