

Screen 1

“A Remarkable Confession”
Matthew 16:1-20
August 11, 2019

Screen 2

Last week, we discussed the other “A Remarkable Meal” – the feeding of the 4,000 men plus women and children in Gentile (Greek) Decapolis – thus declaring all people clean (i.e. all who come to him seeking salvation) – Jew and Gentile alike.

Matthew 15:39 And after sending away the crowds, he got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan.

Screen 3

“Magadan” – was located on the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee just north of Gennesaret. This is predominately Jewish territory.

Map here of Magadan...

Screen 4

Matthew 16:1 And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test him they asked him to show them a sign from heaven.

Screen 5

“Pharisees and Sadducees” came to harass Jesus. This is the twelfth time Pharisees are mentioned in Matthew. This is the second time Sadducees are mentioned in Matthew. The first time (and only time before here) they are mentioned are in:

Matthew 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”

Screen 6

They have come to harass John the Baptist there. This is the first time they come after Jesus. Pharisees and scribes had come from Jerusalem in **Matthew 15:1** and had just a bit of “a run in” when Jesus declared all foods clean. So, the Pharisees went and got their serious enemies, the Sadducees and now both come after the Lord. “The enemy of my enemy is my friend.” Winston Churchill stated that “if Hitler invaded Hell I would make at least a favorable reference to the devil in the House of Commons.” (Sadducees did not even believe a Messiah would come.)

Research on how the Pharisees and Sadducees were enemies.

Screen 7

“to test him” – just like Satan had come to Jesus in the Temptation in the wilderness in **Matthew 4:1-11**, now these two groups come.

In **Matthew 4:7** Jesus quotes **Deuteronomy 6:16** “Jesus said to him, ‘Again it is written, you shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” So many people think the devil just left the Lord alone from **Matthew 4:11** through this book (Matthew) until maybe the Garden of Gethsemane in **Matthew 26**. Nothing could be further from the truth. “The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy.” **John 10:10A** – anything and anyone of God. Satan is on the offensive

Screen 8

“show them a sign from Heaven” – in **Matthew 12:38-39** scribes and Pharisees demanded “a sign.” (An ambiguous sign to prove the divine origin of Jesus’ exorcisms.) But, here, they want a sign from Heaven – evidently some apocalyptic and triumphal manifestation of Christ’s power – i.e. something from/in the sky.

This is ridiculous, given Jesus has already preformed thousands of miracles inside and outside the Jewish territory. Tradition held that a sign done on earth would

be a counterfeit from Satan, but signs done from heaven (coming from the sky) were assumed to be from God.

APPLICATION: Some people, regardless of the number of miracles Jesus performed, will still refuse to believe in him. They will always require more. If Jesus would (fill in the blank), I'll believe in Him. I'll put my trust in Him. No you won't! If what is already written is not enough, another spectacular manifestation of his power isn't going to change your mind! The response from the Jewish religious leaders contrasts sharply with how the Gentiles reacted in **Matthew 15:31** "they glorified the God of Israel."

Screen 9

Matthew 16:2 He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.

Screen 10

My mom used to say this: "Red sky in the morning, sailors take warning. Red sky at night, sailor's delight."

Matthew 16:3 And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.

"you know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times" – these religious Jewish leaders can interpret the weather but they can't recognize the dawning of the kingdom of Heaven and the messianic age by what Jesus does and teaches. Jesus has already provided plenty of signs to prove who he is.

Matthew 16:4 An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." So he left them and departed.

Screen 11

Jesus, once again, says just as he did in **Matthew 12:39**.

Matthew 12:40-41 **40** For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. **41** The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

Screen 12

His resurrection would have power to bring people to faith.

Jesus like Jonah:

Screen 13

1. Sacrificed himself that others would be saved.
2. Disappeared from all human view in doing this.
3. Was sustained the days when he could not be seen
4. Came back after three days, as back from the dead.
5. Preached repentance.

(There was a proverb/saying in Jesus' day that "if all the hypocrites in the world were divided into ten parts, Jerusalem would contain nine of the ten parts."

Guzik).

"he left them and departed" – heading toward the eastern shores of the Sea of Galilee.

Matthew 16:5 When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread.

Screen 14

Why would they need bread? Jesus could create it spontaneously at will!

Matthew 16:6 Jesus said to them, “Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

“leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees” – To the Jew, leaven was symbolic of evil. It stood for an evil influence liable to spread through life and corrupt it (Barclay). “False doctrine is called leaven because it soureth, swelleth, spreadeth, corrupteth, the whole lump, and all this secretly.” (Trapp)

Screen 15

Matthew 16:7 And they began discussing it among themselves, saying, “We brought no bread.”

Screen 16

The disciples are being a bit dull here. They just don’t understand at all what Jesus is talking about (this makes me feel so good to know I am not the only one)!

Matthew 16:8 But Jesus, aware of this, said, “O you of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you have no bread?”

Jesus rebukes the disciples here and calls them “little faiths” just as he called Peter in **Matthew 14:31** walking on the water. (He also used this description in **Matthew 6:30** in the Sermon on the Mount and in **Matthew 8:26** – the disciples at the calming of a storm on Lake Galilee.)

Screen 17

Matthew 16:9 Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered?

Screen 18

Jesus has already accused the disciples of unbelief, i.e. “little faiths” in **verse 8**. Here, they do not perceive or remember the lessons from the feeding of the 5,000 (Jews) nor the feeding of the 4,000 (Gentiles).

“baskets” – from the 5,000 feeding – twelve baskets full of leftovers were taken (twelve literal small baskets representing the twelve tribes of Israel).

Matthew 16:10 Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered?

Screen 19

“baskets” – from the 4,000 feeding. Seven large baskets full of leftovers were taken (seven literal baskets representing the seven Gentile people groups of **Joshua 3:10** - “Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites and Jebusites”). All Gentiles are just as welcome at the Messianic Banquet/The Marriage Supper of the Lamb at the end of time in Heaven!

(These feedings of 5,000 and 4,000 are extremely significant. In fact, they, together, prompt what’s about to happen.

Matthew 16:11 How is it that you fail to understand that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

Screen 20

The Pharisees and Sadducees were false teachers in that the **Pharisees** added to the written word of God (39 Old Testament books) with their endless rules and regulations (meaningless rituals) on how to keep the law, i.e. the ORAL LAW/MISHNAH. (39 categories of Sabbath; 8 chapters on ritual hand washings; etc.) The **Sadducees** were false teachers in that they only believed the first five books of the Old Testament/The Pentateuch (they did not believe in a Messiah/resurrection, etc.) The other 34 Old Testament books were discarded. These two polar opposites were sorely mistaken – sorely wrong!

A true miracle occurs here – something remarkable!

Matthew 16:12 Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Screen 21

“Then they understood” - an enormous, A-Ha moment! Only Matthew inserts statements like this in regard to the disciples “understanding” certain teachings of Jesus (see also **Matthew 13:51** the teaching of parables).

Now and only now do they truly understand (as much as possible before the death, burial and resurrection) just who Jesus is!

Watch this . . .

Matthew 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?”

Screen 22

Map from last two weeks here

Screen 23

“Caesarea Philippi” - is located 25 miles northeast of the Sea of Galilee. The population was mainly non-Jewish (Jesus and the twelve are back in Gentile territory quickly after the last run-in with the Pharisees and Sadducees.) There were at least 14 temples located in this region. The area was scattered with temples of the ancient Syrian Baal worship. There was a deep cavern there was said to be the birthplace of the great god Pan, the god of nature. There was also a great temple of white marble built to the godhead of Caesar. It was as if Jesus deliberately set himself against the background of the world’s religions in all their history and splendor, and demanded to be compared to them and to have the verdict given in his favor (Barclay).

Screen 24

“who do people say that the son of man is?” – Be careful how you answer that question. Your eternity depends on what you say. Who do people say Jesus is today? >Great (make no mistakes): teacher/philosopher/prophet/miracle-worker/theologian/leader/influencer/revolutionary... The list goes on and one and on. It’s divided today, isn’t it? But what about at that exact moment in time?

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

Screen 25

“John the Baptist” - like Herod (**Matthew 14:12**) John risen from the dead [the forerunner of the Messiah]. A herald of national repentance.

“Elijah” – resurrected, indeed [the forerunner of the Messiah from the Old Testament] – a famous worker of miracles.

“Jeremiah” – only Matthew mentions Jeremiah, the first of the latter prophets in the Hebrew canon. Jeremiah was believed to have been resurrected? (**check II Macc. 2:1-12; 15:14-18**) A great prophet! (Evidently the Jews believed in the transmigration of souls – reincarnation.)

All these men were very famous, amazing men who God used in truly unique ways. This is a complement to Jesus – but all these answers UNDERESTIMATE Jesus. Just as all the other answers of who people speculate Jesus to be today.

“Christ is sometimes up in the market, and sometimes down in the market; but mark your word, he is not in the market at all. He can neither be bought or sold. They say well of him one day; they speak ill of him another day: what matters what they say? He needs no honor from them, and he fears not their dishonor.

Screen 26

Unless they will believe in him as Lord and Savior, it is of no importance what they think of him.” (Spurgeon)

Matthew 16:15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

Screen 27

The single greatest question in all of eternity!!! (This is the quote that puts Peter on the map – makes him more famous than anything else he ever said.)

Matthew 16:16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

It took time – probably years for Peter and the other disciples (minus Judas) to see and believe this, but he correctly noted that Jesus is the Messiah >This is the first time anyone unambiguously acknowledges Jesus as Messiah!< (Jewish and Gentile both) and he is the son of God. . . i.e. Jesus is not only Messiah, but also God himself! The Jews properly understood that the title “son of the living God” was unique and was to make a claim to deity itself. Jesus has been exclaimed to be the “Son of God” by Peter and the other disciples in **Matthew 14:33** – this title is fuller – a more full description of just who Jesus is!

Matthew 16:17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah!

Screen 28

For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

“Simon Bar-Jonah” – Jesus had just been speaking about the “sign of Jonah” (**Matthew 16:4**). Peter gets the sign of Jonah – he understands and speaks it for the very first time that any of the twelve do.

[Jonah is most likely a variant spelling of John – Just as you know who my father is, I know who your father is . . .]

“for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you.” – only the Father can reveal the Son.

John 6:44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

Screen 29

You and I need a supernatural revelation of Jesus!

Verses 18 and 19 are incredibly difficult verses to interpret.)

Matthew 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.

Screen 30

“you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church” This can (this rock) mean:

Screen 31

1. Jesus is the cornerstone, a living stone rejected by men, etc. (**1 Peter 2:4-5**)
2. The confession that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God;
3. Some argue that the rock is Peter – there were differing views in Roman Catholicism prior to 1560. It became “rock-solid” when Luther argues against this.

“church” – this is the very first time this word is used in Matthew. The only other time is twice in **Matthew 18:17**. It means an assembly (ekklesia) – a gathering of people for a particular purpose. In the Old Testament these gatherings normally involved the Israelites at worship. This simply means a gathered community of his followers.

“and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” – The church – the community of people who submit to God’s kingly rule is **indestructible** – say it with me three times! “The church is indestructible!”

Screen 32

“gates of a hell” – a defensible protection but for all practical purposes – Satan’s kingdom is on the offense, too. Hell is really on the offense and defense since the resurrection of Jesus.

Matthew 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.”

Screen 33

What if, to understand this verse, we combined all three possibilities from verse 18?

1. Jesus is the cornerstone (“the rock”)
2. Peter’s confession that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God is “the rock”
3. Peter himself is a living stone – “the rock” (**1 Peter 2:4-5**)

Screen 34

(Barclay, p. 254-256)

All of this happened in Gentile territory (**vs. 13-20**).

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

Screen 35

Not yet! (About being the Christ).

In closing, the constancy of Satan coming after/attacking Christ and his disciples gives us a snapshot into how Satan still attacks today – unrelenting! He never

stops – and no matter how much it appears he is successful, he will never stop Jesus and His Church (and his disciples). “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” What a comfort we can find in Peter’s exclamation and the indestructibility of Christ’s church – A Remarkable Confession/Explanation! (The church of Jesus Christ is more than an audience!)

With this passage the largest section of Matthew’s gospel draws to a close (**Matthew 4:16 – 16:20**), and the main body of Jesus’ ministry is complete. Matthew has highlighted all facts of Jesus’ words and deeds – save one – the road to the cross. Jesus has transferred his authority to his disciples so they can work wonders and bring people under God’s rule. Now they must learn that they too have crosses to bear (Blombery, p. 256).

Screen 36

PRAYER AND INVITATION