

Matthew Survey — Section Two

Doctrinal Response #3

Matthew 16:1-20 | Lessons 41-42

Topical Study Overview

About This Section

The third and final doctrinal chapter of section two brings the second section of Matthew's gospel to its close. In the opening twelve verses the Lord formally dismisses Israel's religious leadership -- Pharisees and Sadducees together -- and warns his disciples about their doctrine, identifying it as the antichrist doctrine with three phases. In verses 13-20 he asks who men say he is, draws out Peter's confession, commends the Father's revelation as the rock upon which the remnant church is built, and then charges the disciples to tell no man he is Jesus the Christ -- formally closing his public ministry. Section two ends; section three begins immediately with Christ preparing his disciples for the rejection to come.



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Topics at a Glance

Topic	Core Content
Part 1	The Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees -- Three-Phase Antichrist Doctrine Identified
Part 2	Peter's Confession and the Close of Public Ministry -- The Rock and the Remnant Church

Topic Summaries

P1

The Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees -- Three-Phase Antichrist Doctrine Identified *Matt 16:1-12 | Lesson 41*

- The Pharisees and Sadducees -- normally opposing parties -- come together and tempt the Lord to show them a sign from heaven; their unity demonstrates that the rejection proceedings have advanced to the point where even natural enemies join forces.
- The Lord rebukes them: they can discern the face of the sky but cannot discern the signs of the times -- all the hallmark signs and mighty works already done were the very signs they claim to seek. 'A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign.'
 - The only sign to be given is the sign of the prophet Jonas -- his resurrection from

the dead -- which will be the central testimony of the Holy Ghost in the third member of the Godhead's ministry during the extension of mercy and forbearance.

- 'He left them, and departed' -- the Lord formally dismisses Israel's religious leadership; God is done with them via the second member of the Godhead's public testimony. They will not be dealt with again until the Holy Ghost testifies.
 - This dismissal makes legal space for the cross to be forgiven: when they crucify him, they can be held legally ignorant ('they know not what they do' -- Luke 23:34; Acts 3:17), enabling the extension of mercy in the opening chapters of Acts.

The Three Phases of the Doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees

- The Lord warns: 'Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.' They initially think he means literal bread; he corrects them: it is the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees -- the antichrist doctrine.
- Phase One: from Matthew 16 (when the Lord dismisses them) to the crucifixion -- their doctrine results in the nation rejecting and killing the Christ; they join forces with Herod and the Herodians.
 - Phase Two: during the Holy Ghost's testimony in the extension and forbearance (Acts 1 through the stoning of Stephen and beyond) -- their intensified doctrine results in the nation ultimately rejecting the Holy Ghost's testimony as well.
- Phase Three: after the dispensation of grace, at the resumption of Israel's program -- the doctrine has so corrupted the nation that when the Assyrian man of sin comes in his own name, Israel accepts him as the Christ (John 5:43).
 - The Lord says in John 5:43: 'I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.' The three phases of the antichrist doctrine provide the doctrinal preparation for that acceptance.
- The disciples finally understand in verse 12: 'he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.'

P2

Peter's Confession and the Close of Public Ministry -- The Rock and the Remnant Church *Matt 16:13-20 | Lesson 42*

- At Caesarea Philippi the Lord asks: 'Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?' The answers -- John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremias, one of the prophets -- reflect the prevailing effect of the antichrist doctrine on public perception.
- 'But whom say ye that I am?' -- Simon Peter answers: 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' This is the answer that stands in direct antithesis to the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.
 - Keith emphasizes that Peter arrived at this confession not by supernatural direct revelation ('zapping') but by dealing with the Father's written testimony in the scriptures -- 'for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven' means Peter searched and found the Father's revelation in the word.
- 'Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona' -- Peter is commended because he went by the Father's revelation in the scriptures rather than by flesh and blood opinion; he was, in effect, a Berean -- 'Search the scriptures; for they are they which testify of me' (John 5:39).

The Rock and the Remnant Church

- 'Upon this rock I will build my church' -- the rock is not Peter himself but the

revelation of who Jesus of Nazareth is: the Christ, the Son of the living God, as declared by the Father in the written word.

- The church here is the remnant church -- the true Israel of God built upon the rock revelation; it is not the church the body of Christ. Every use of 'church' in the gospels and early Acts refers to the remnant Israel congregation, not the body of Christ.
- 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against it' -- the gates of hell represent the opposition generated by all three phases of the antichrist doctrine: phase one (rejection of Christ), phase two (rejection of Holy Ghost testimony), phase three (acceptance of man of sin and extermination of the remnant).
 - Deuteronomy 32 (the song of Moses), Psalm 18, 28, 62, 71, 94 and other Rock Psalms describe the remnant built upon the Rock (the Lord himself) enduring the fifth installment -- the remnant sings the song of Moses in Revelation 15.
- 'I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven' -- Peter and the apostles have the authority to bind and loose, to open and close based on the doctrine they have been entrusted with; this authority is exercised throughout the book of Acts.
- Verse 20: 'Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.' The public ministry is formally closed; the fame factor and the public proclamation of who he is comes to its end.
 - Immediately in verse 21 section three begins: 'From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.'
- Section two began with the commencement of public ministry and his fame going throughout all Syria (Matt 4:23-24); it ends with the formal charge to tell no man. The contrast is absolute -- the testimony has been given, the nation's response is settled, and the rejection proceedings of Psalm 2 are fully underway.

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Three Members of the Godhead Testifying to Israel

Keith teaches that in the climactic stage God the Father testifies through the Son (second member), then the Holy Ghost testifies (third member), and through this sequence Israel's opportunity to repent is structured. The Lord's dismissal in Matthew 16 ends the second member's public testimony; the resurrection of Christ (sign of Jonas) becomes the central issue in the Holy Ghost's subsequent testimony. Rejecting all three members of the Godhead results in the fifth course of punishment.

The Rock Revelation as the Foundation of the Remnant Church

The church in Matthew 16:18 is the remnant church -- the true Israel of God -- not the church the body of Christ. It is built upon the rock revelation: the understanding and appreciation, from the Father's written word, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This foundation is what enables the

remnant to withstand all three phases of the antichrist doctrine and endure through the extermination policy of the fifth installment.

Legal Ignorance and the Forgiveness of the Crucifixion

Keith emphasizes that the Lord's formal dismissal of the Pharisees and Sadducees serves an important legal purpose: by withdrawing his public testimony, the nation can come to the cross in a state of legal ignorance ('they know not what they do'). This is what permits the Father to forgive them at the cross (Luke 23:34) and enables the extension of mercy and forbearance recorded in the opening chapters of Acts, giving the nation yet another opportunity to repent.

The Antichrist Doctrine's Three-Phase Development

Phase One runs from Matthew 16 to the crucifixion -- resulting in the physical rejection of Christ. Phase Two runs through the extension of mercy (Acts) -- resulting in the nation's rejection of the Holy Ghost testimony. Phase Three runs from the resumption of Israel's program through the beginning of the fifth installment -- resulting in Israel accepting the man of sin as the Christ. The doctrine intensifies with each phase; by phase three it produces the abomination of desolation and the extermination policy against the remnant.

Key Scripture References

Matt 16:1-4	Pharisees and Sadducees seek a sign; rebuke as wicked and adulterous generation; sign of Jonas
Matt 16:6	Beware the leaven (doctrine) of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees
Matt 16:16	Peter's confession: 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God'
Matt 16:17-18	Blessed art thou Simon Barjona; Father's revelation; upon this rock I will build my church
Matt 16:19	Keys of the kingdom; whatsoever thou shalt bind/loose on earth shall be bound/loosed in heaven
Matt 16:20-21	Tell no man he was Jesus the Christ; from that time forth Jesus shewed his disciples his coming rejection
John 5:43	I am come in my Father's name -- not received; another comes in his own name -- received; antichrist accepted
Luke 23:34	Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do -- legal ignorance enabled by the dismissal
Acts 3:17	Peter: through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers -- confirming legal ignorance of the crucifixion
Deut 32:15-30	Song of Moses: forsaking the Rock of salvation; another rock accepted; remnant built on the Rock prevails

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