

Sunday December 30th 2018
The Word of God
A Survey of the Bible – Lesson 14C
‘The End of Your Faith’

1). Gen 1:3 *Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.*

We have seen in our previous weeks of study that God has established an unchangeable pattern revealing an unchangeable process at the beginning of His revelation to us, a process by which He would restore His ruined creation, whether that be the material creation or fallen Man.

a). In Genesis Chapter 1 as we know, the process began with a Sovereign act of God as He brought light out of the darkness making a division between the two.

b). And we had seen that beyond that beginning point on day 1 there was then a continuing work on God’s part through days 2-6, with His restorative process completed on the 6th day and marked by the creation of the Man and the Woman in His own image and likeness for the purpose of rulership – Gen 1:27 *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion*

And so, to summarize this briefly, there was a Divine intervention followed by a continuing work which led to the fulfillment of God’s purpose.

c). The process set out in Genesis Chapter 1 through the 6 days followed by a 7th day provides the foundational type for the restoration of fallen Man, both Mankind generally, and individually for each of us as Christians. And this exact same process is seen again in Genesis Chapter 2, adding another dimension to the foundation, through the building of the Woman to be Adam’s wife – Gen 2: 21 *And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 Then the*

rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

Again, just so we are clear in our minds, we see God's Divine intervention in putting Adam into a deep sleep. This initial action was then followed by God's continuing work seen in the removal of one of Adam's ribs and the building of that rib into Adam's Wife. God's work then came to completion as He brought the Woman to the Man that they might complete one another, 'one flesh', for the purpose of rulership.

d). And we had seen this same process of a Divine intervention, a continuing work and a fulfillment of that work detailed yet again in the picture given through the account of Ruth and the account of the first generation of Israel to come out of Egypt, with more detail being added to the foundation each time.

e). And then with regards to this process of restoration and our own personal experience we have seen God's Divine intervention through our eternal salvation, made possible by the Lord's death on the cross. We have seen His continuing work in us through the child training of the Lord, with a view to the future conclusion of an inherited salvation, the salvation of our soul, by which we will realize the redemption of our body that we might once again be in the image and likeness of God for the purpose of rulership in the 7th Day.

2). And so, keeping all this in mind, we are going to revisit the scripture from Matthew Chapter 16 that came at the conclusion of our last study.

a). Now just before we go there let's note that in this passage of scripture there is one Greek word, 'psuche', that is translated both life and soul. And this word can be translated as either life or soul as these are interchangeable. And so, for it to be translated 'life' in one place and 'soul' in another would not be wrong. But, not to keep the same translation throughout can be confusing and give rise to thinking that two separate things are being dealt with when there is in fact only one.

b). And so, in the scripture that follows the Greek word 'psuche' has been translated as 'soul' throughout - Mt 16:13 *When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" 14 So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered and said, "**You are the Christ, the Son***

of the living God.” 17 Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” 20 Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ. 21 From that time Jesus began to show to 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 the third day. 22 Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!” 23 But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.” 24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone [of you] desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever desires to save his soul will lose it, but whoever loses his soul for My sake will find it. 26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

So, to begin, let’s state the obvious. Matthew Chapter 16 comes after the events of Matthew Chapter 12, the Chapter in which the Kingdom of the Heavens is in effect taken from Israel following the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and it comes after Chapter 13, where Jesus left the house to sit by the sea. A Chapter in which we find parables that introduce a new entity, the church, those who would become the one new man in Christ – And this is the context in which these verses from Chapter 16 must be placed. These verses present teaching concerning the new entity that would be brought into existence to be the recipient of the Kingdom of the Heavens taken from Israel.

c). As Jesus and His disciples came into the region of Caesarea Philippi Jesus asked a question concerning His identity, to which Peter, by revelation through the Spirit, gave 2 connected statements in answer to the Lord’s question - ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God’.

d). The first statement, ‘You are the Christ’ is the acknowledgment that Jesus is Israel’s Messiah; a title that means ‘the Anointed One’.

e). And within the OT economy those who were anointed were Prophets, Priests and Kings.

f). The Christ then, is the promised Messiah, anointed as Prophet, Priest and King showing the 3 interconnected phases of His ministry. The first of which – Prophet, has been completed. The second phase of His ministry – Priest, presently continues. And the third phase – King, is still to come.

g). And these 3 phases of Christ's ministry, given the context, relate to those who will comprise His church, those to whom the Kingdom of the Heavens is being offered.

h). The second statement Peter made, 'the Son of the living God' connects with the Lord's future ministry as King, making clear that Jesus is the Son that God has chosen as ruler over the earth in the place of Satan.

i). Putting all this together we can see that the revelation given to Peter provides the most profound and complete description of Jesus' identity and His purpose.

3). Peter's 2 statements are then followed by the Lord's prophetic declaration that 'on this rock I will build My church'. The Christ is the One who would build His church, no one else, and the use of the word 'build' takes us back to the building of the Woman to be Adam's wife in Genesis Chapter 2. And this is exactly where it is supposed to take us because the experiences of Adam in relation to the Woman foreshadow the experiences of the Lord in relation to His Bride, Adam being a type of Christ – 1 Cor 15: 45 *And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. 47 The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.*

a). In Genesis Chapter 2 God took the rib, a part of Adam's body, to build it into Adam's wife and this picture is what is in view here through Christ building His church – Now, we will remember from our study of the Book of Acts that the compound word translated 'church' simply means those who are 'called out' and within a Christian context it can refer to all Christians as we see in Revelation Chapters 2-3. All those who have been called out of the world by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

b). But it can also be used within a future context to refer to those who are called out of those called out of the world for the purpose of rulership – Heb 12:23 *to the general assembly and **church of the firstborn** who are*

registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,

c). And it is with respect to this future context that the word 'church' is used in Matthew Chapter 16.

d). Just as the Woman existed in Adam from his creation but was not brought into existence as a separate entity until Adam was put into a deep sleep and his side was opened, so the Bride of Christ has existed in the Son from eternity. We can see that the Bride's existence and salvation can be traced back to 'before the foundation of the world' – Eph 1:4 *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,*

Rev 13: 8..... *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

But the Bride for Christ could not be brought into existence as a separate entity until a specific time within Man's Day when the Last Adam was put into a deep sleep on the cross and His side was opened – Joh 19:33 *But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. 34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

And we should make the connection here between the blood and water, the 2 elements that the Lord uses to build His Bride/Church, and that which we read in Ephesians Chapter 5 that draws directly from Genesis Chapter 2 – Eph 5:5 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

And all of this is inseparable from the Lord's present ministry, that of High Priest.

e). Once Israel had been delivered from Egypt on the night of Passover God then established the Priesthood in the Tabernacle in the wilderness to deal with the sins of those who had already been saved.

f). And in the same way, it was necessary for God to establish a High Priestly ministry in the heavenly Tabernacle for those who had been delivered out of the world through the death and shed blood of The Passover Lamb, because those who are delivered from the world still possess a sin nature. And because we possess a sin nature, we constantly face the prospect of falling into sin, and this sin, that comes after our eternal salvation, must be dealt with if we are to be 'holy and without blemish' before Him – 1 Joh 1:7 *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

4). Matt 16:21 *From that time Jesus began to show to 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 the third day.*

As we look at this verse let us again remember our context – the Kingdom had in effect been taken from Israel in Matthew Chapter 12, a new entity had been introduced to receive that taken from Israel in Matthew Chapter 13 and revelation concerning Christ's threefold ministry with respect to the building of His Church has been given here in Chapter 16.

a). Before this new entity could be brought into existence though and before the Lord's side could be opened and His High Priestly ministry on behalf of this new entity could begin, He had to go to Jerusalem, be killed and raised the third day. Without the Lord's death and resurrection none of this would have been possible.

b). And this is why the Lord began to teach His disciples at this particular point about what was to shortly take place in Jerusalem.

c). And if we remember Peter's reaction to the Lord's teaching about His death and resurrection – Matt 16:22 *Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"*

We can understand that Peter's response in effect denied the Lord's ministry as Prophet, because it was as Prophet that He would die. Peter denied the Lord's ministry as Priest and also denied the very thing that he had previously asserted, Christ's ministry as King, because the Kingly part of the Lord's ministry cannot be accomplished apart from the completion of the ministries of Prophet and Priest. Hence the severity of the Lord's rebuke to him - *23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan!"*

5). And so, to summarize, we have seen the Kingdom of the Heavens taken from Israel with the certainty of a new entity to be brought into existence to receive that which Israel had rejected. We have seen the revelation of Jesus' identity as Messiah and the threefold ministry revealed through that identity. We have seen the Lord's plan to build His Church through His ministry of Prophet and Priest. We have seen the certainty of His death and resurrection that would not only provide the means by which the one new man in Christ would be brought into existence, but also the continuing work that would follow in connection with His future ministry as King - *1 Pet 1: 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.....9 receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.*

And it is with the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, the salvation of the soul in view, that the Lord then taught His disciples, those who were already eternally saved, with respect to His future Kingdom - *Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone [of you] desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*

And this verse in succinct form describes what is necessary for the one already eternally redeemed if the salvation of their soul is to be realized.

a). Let's note that Jesus was speaking directly to His disciples, those who were already eternally saved and by extension all the eternally saved who would comprise the one new man in Christ who would come after them.

b). The Lord began His teaching with a statement which posed an individual choice, 'If any one of you desires to come after Me'. There is a choice

here isn't there? A choice that parallels that given to Rebekah, 'will you go with this man?' And that faced by Ruth of either following Orpah or Naomi.

c). But if our choice is, 'to come after' Him, then there is a threefold action that must take place – we must deny our self, take up our cross and follow Him.

d). Our choice then to 'come after' Him is not ratified by what comes out of our mouth, but by the actions we choose to take.

e). To deny our self is to deny the fleshly impulses of our soul – to deny our self-life in favor of God's Word.

f). Our unredeemed soul which occupies our unredeemed body along with our redeemed spirit is to be kept under subjection to our spirit man – As we continually receive the implanted word of God into our redeemed spirit, so we, under the leadership of the indwelling Holy Spirit, are to grow into spiritually mature Christians. And if we grow after this fashion, through the power of the Holy Spirit through the Word, we are able to deny the fleshly impulses of the soul, keeping our flesh under subjection.

g). And the subjection of our unredeemed soul under the man of the spirit is poignantly typified through the type of Sarah and Hagar.

h). We might remember the OT account where Hagar, the bondwoman, who came to despise her mistress was dealt with harshly by Sarah, the freewoman and had consequently fled into the wilderness – Gen 16: 4 *So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes. 5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The Lord judge between you and me."* 6 *So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please."* And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence.

When the angel of the Lord found Hagar by a spring of water in the wilderness, he gave her a command that we must note well – Gen 16:7 *Now the Angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. 8 And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."* 9 *The Angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand."*

If we are to have the victory over the carnal impulses of our unredeemed soul, over the flesh, then our soul, which is still under bondage to sin, must be made submissive to that which is no longer under that bondage, our redeemed spirit.

i). There is no other way that this victory can be accomplished. It is this or nothing – if we desire ‘to come after’ Him, we must deny our self.

j). This same picture is repeated through Sarah’s son, Isaac, picturing the man of the spirit and Hagar’s son, Ishmael, picturing the man of the flesh – our unredeemed soul, our self-life, that associated with our flesh, must be made submissive to the man of the spirit for clearly stated reasons – Gal 4: 28 *Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. 29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. 30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.*

Now Hagar, within the type, was blessed – Gen 16:10 *Then the Angel of the Lord said to her, “I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.”*

But this blessing was subsequent to her submission to Sarah seen from the previous verse. Likewise, we in our self-life will be blessed, but only subsequent to the submission of our unredeemed soul to the man of the spirit.

k). Therefore, we can see that the blessings for our self-life, can only be realized through the salvation of our soul, a salvation which remains yet future and determined by the choice to deny our self. In no sense can we ever have our best self-life now – only when the self-life, our soul has been freed from the bondage of sin can that be possible.

l). It is as the Lord said – Matt 16:25 *For whoever desires to save his soul will lose it, but whoever loses his soul for My sake will find it.*

Or as the Lord said through Paul concerning the same thing – Rom 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

We will pick this up again next time though – if the Lord is willing.

