

THE GATES OF HELL

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JESUS was a preacher, teacher, healer and miracle worker. Preachers proclaim truths, teachers explain them while healing and miracles often confirm them. Jesus chose to reveal his identity to his disciples at a place called Caesarea Philippi. This was not a random location in the mind of Jesus. He was there to make a statement to the dark spiritual forces in that region.

Caesarea Philippi - A Roman city located at the southwest base of Mount Hermon. It became the capital and residence of the Roman rulers after the death of Herod. It was here that ancient pagans built altars to their gods on high places, which were considered to be gateways or portals to heaven. Mount Hermon was the highest place in the entire region with an elevation of 9,232 feet above sea level. The Canaanites worshiped Baal and Asherah gods at such a high place. - 1 Kings 14:23, 2 Kings 17:29. Later the Greeks worshiped their god Pan at Mt. Hermon. Herod the Great built a great marble temple there in dedication to Augustus Caesar. It stood high on a **foundation of rock** at the edge of the Gentile world. The pagans considered this rock to be a special spiritual place.

Matthew 16:13-19

The people in that region had many different polytheistic ideas about God unlike the rest of Israel which was monotheistic. As Jesus and his disciples stood near that rock, Jesus asked them, '**Who do you say I am?**' Peter answered correctly via the inspiration of God. '**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**' Jesus called Peter a rock (petros) but that He (Jesus) would build his church upon an even bigger rock (Petra), the revelation of His identity as the Messiah, the Son of God. (Peter would later write more about Jesus as the rock and cornerstone of the church / 1 Peter 2:4-8)

Petros = detached stone or boulder that can be thrown or easily moved.

Petra = mass of rock - Vines Dictionary.

Here is a loose paraphrase of Jesus' statement. (see Matthew 16:13-18).

***You are Peter, and any man can move you, but the faith you have expressed in my deity is a rock immovable as the mountains. On it I will build my church.
- Halley's Bible Handbook***

I tell you, you are Peter (petros, a large piece of rock) and on this rock (petra, a huge rock like Gibraltar) I will build My church, and the gates of Hades (the powers of the infernal region) shall not overpower it - or be strong to its detriment, or hold out against it.' Matthew 16:18 Amplified

GATES The gates of a city were where the leaders made their plans and developed their strategies. When Jesus mentioned the gates of hell, he was referring to the plans of Satan and his evil powers that oppose God and His people. However, there are also portals throughout the world where supernatural powers, both good and bad find entrance. Mount

Hermon was believed to be one such place, a portal to the underworld. Jesus gave his disciples a way to deal with the gates of hell.

*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.*

Jesus came to earth for many reasons, but as I studied scripture I found well over 25 of them. One of His prime purposes was to **repossess** the earth for mankind and restore God's rule. The name of my website (**jesusreigns.net**) was purposeful, as it describes the ultimate plan of God, that Jesus will reign over all. Handel's Messiah song is an apt description of that. He shall reign for ever and ever!

The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven which said: 'The kingdom of the world of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign for ever and ever.'

Revelation 11:15 NIV

'The ultimate message of the Bible is that Christ will return to drive out the last vestiges of Satan's operations on earth, but, in the meantime His church has been commissioned to walk the pathway to restored rulership. Jesus has committed the "keys of the kingdom" to those who know and obey Him. These keys are fitted to:

- a. Stop hell's worst and insist on heaven's best*
- b. Unlock mankind's captives and shatter Satan's chains*

- Prayer is Invading the Impossible - Jack Hayford 1977 Logos

CHURCH (Greek = *ecclesia*) called out ones

Ecclesia in Greece was a body of citizens gathered to discuss the affairs of the state. Acts 19:38-39. During the Old Testament it referred to the gathering of Israel for a definite purpose and as a representative of the whole nation. In the New Testament it was the assembly of believers in Jesus called out to conduct his kingdom business as His spiritual agents.

KEYS They give one the right and authority to enter a given domain. Keys open and close doors. Peter was first given the keys of the kingdom - Matthew 16:19, but the other disciples were given them too - Matthew 18:18. It involves binding and loosing.

*How can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up (binds) the strong man. Then he can rob his house.
- Matthew 12:29 NIV*

BIND Greek/deo - to fasten or tie, as with chains, as an animal tied to keep it from straying. Greek/deesis = Supplication, which is that intense prevailing prayer that binds over to earth what ought to be experienced here according to God's eternal counsels. For example, God has made a contract for man's salvation and signed it in his blood. Our job is to call forth

upon earth what God has willed. Larger issues may take longer but we should persist, knowing that God is working on other related matters relevant to the situation.

LOOSE Greek/ luo - to unbind, release, dissolve, put off, break - Vines Dictionary

To loose anything tied or fastened, to loose one bound, to set free, to discharge from prison, to free from bondage or disease (one held by Satan) by restoration to health.

- Thayer's Lexicon

- Isaiah 58:6 loose from the bonds of wickedness
- Psalm 102:20 loose those condemned to death
- Luke 4:18 loose the captives and the oppressed
- Luke 13:12 woman is loosed from her infirmity
- Acts 2:24 Jesus was loosed from the agony of death

A few books have shaped my life, including one by Jack Hayford titled: **Prayer is Invading the Impossible**. He included a translation of Matthew 16:19 based on the Greek meaning.

Whatever you may at anytime encounter (of hell's counsels which I am declaring my church shall prevail against) you will then face a decision as to whether you will or you won't bind it. What happens will be conditional upon your response. If you do personally and consciously involve yourself in the act of binding the issue on earth, you will discover that at that future moment when you do, that it has already been bound in heaven. - Prayer is Invading the Impossible 1977 Logos

Jesus' Disciples are Called To:

- **BE** like Jesus Luke 6:40
- **DO** what Jesus did John 14:12
- **WALK** as Jesus walked 1 John 2:6

The Life of Jesus.....gave us a Perfect Example of one who:

- **Walked in Truth**
- **Walked in Light**
- **Walked in Life**
- **Walked in Love**
- **Walked in Authority**

The **Death of Jesus** brought us **Forgiveness of Sins**

The **Resurrection of Jesus** brought us **New Life**

The **Ascension of Jesus to the Throne** gave us **New Authority**

The **Descent of the Holy Spirit** gave us **New Power**

My prayer life changed after I read the aforementioned book. I found this book on shelf in a house in Belgium. I was co-leader of student evangelism team in 1983 -1984 at the largest Catholic University in Europe in Leuven, Belgium.

The one phrase from the book that really caught my attention and has remained a key aspect of my prayer life for several decades is this:

STOP HELL'S WORST.....INSIST ON HEAVEN'S BEST

This is part of our assignment as we **train to reign with Christ** now and in the future. Join me as we learn together!

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