

THE GREAT WENCHOSTER BIBLE

Matthew 16: 13-20.

(*NOTE: The manuscript from which the translation of this particular passage was made was stored in the archives of the old St. Paul's cathedral. It was lost when that building was destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666. No other ancient source contains these additional comments made by the disciples, but scholars agree that the more unusual a passage, the more likely it is to be an authentic record.)

13: And it came to pass that Jesus entered unto the coasts of Caesarea Philippi. He sat down at an beach café, and asked His disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

14: And they said, Well! Funny that thou should ask. Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the bearded prophets. You know – that one with the long stick. And Judas (not that one – the other) spake up and said unto Him, Some say thou art the fishmonger from Capernaum.

15a: And suddenly Matthias, who was with them from the beginning, (let the reader understand,) said, There are rumours of rumours that thy father is alive and well and living here in Caesarea, and that thou art but an jobbing wood-smith.

15b: And lo! Jesus raised an eyebrow and saith He unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16: And verily they were silent. Then up spake Simon, saying unto Him, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. I read that somewhere.

17: And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah (which means what it says:) for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which art in heaven.

18: And get this: Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, with one hell of a set of gates.

19: And, stay with me here; I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and don't play loose with them.

20a: Then Simon was non-plussed, but John explained unto him that it was all a play on Greek vocabulary. And then muttereth he – that is Simon, or Peter, not John - unto his companions, What shall I tell my mother-in-law? She that hath laboured to embroider tunics with my name so that (what was it that He said?) there shall be no lost shirt of Israel.

20b: Then charged Jesus His disciples that they should tell no man that He was the Christ. And they found this easy, for as yet they did not comprehend. (John having explained that there were fourteen chapters to go.) And suddenly Judas (yes, that one – not the other) departed to buy a christening present. And it was night, and the shops were shut, and lo, there were many virgins without oil.