

## MATTHEW 15:1-28

A. Matthew 15:1-3 - Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Matt. 15:2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. Matt. 15:3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

1. Jesus will begin to teach about the **contention** between Himself and the Pharisees as He begins His march toward Calvary. Matthew will begin to reveal the real **heart** condition of the nation's religious leaders and what was at the center of their problem.
2. As Jesus was at Gennesaret, healing and blessing the needy (Matt. 14:34-36), Jerusalem has **sent** some Pharisees and Scribes to trap Him doctrinally. It says they accused the disciples of breaking [the **tradition** of the elders] (Mark 7:1-3).
  - a. \*|The Jewish leaders had added hundreds of rules and rituals to the Mosaic Law. They even held \*|that their oral laws (personal preferences) were **more** valid than the commandments of God.
  - b. Actually, God had **not** commanded them to wash their hands before they ate. But God did say in Deuteronomy 4:2 - [Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.]
  - c. By adding to the hundreds of Mosaic commandments (as if they weren't enough!), they completely **destroyed** their ability to worship God scripturally. Christendom? They were to be obedient to what God's Word said.  
Mark 7:7 - Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.
  - d. \*They gave precedence to their rituals and personal preferences **over** the Word of God.  
Mark 7:9 - And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.
3. In doing this, they developed a heart of rebellion to the Word of God and would not submit to its truths. They followed human viewpoint instead of the Word, causing traditionalism, formalism, and **leaven** of the Pharisees.  
Matthew 15:4 - 5[But ye say], 9 - For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. Matt. 15:9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.  
I Peter 1:18 - Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;  
\*\*Believers were redeemed out of religious tradition and man's bondage.
4. Us today?  
Colossians 2:8 - Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

\*The only time that Paul speaks of tradition as being **good**, maintained, and historically carried on is in II Thessalonians 3:6, 14; 2:15 - [ Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. 2Thess. 3:14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. 2Thess. 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.]

B. Matthew 15:4-6 - For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. Matt. 15:5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is a gift*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; Matt. 15:6 And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free*. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

1. Their traditions cancelled what God's Word had commanded them to do. God said to take **care** of your parents. But the Pharisees went against that by encouraging the people instead to **give** what was to be used to help mom and dad to the temple-priests.

\*The children then would go to the parents and say **sorry**, because they had given their gift (corban) to the temple. When they did this, the Pharisees would relieve them from their responsibility to their parents' welfare. They would **buy** their freedom from responsibility, and prosper the religious system.

2. Doing what the Pharisees told them to do violated what God commanded them to do. God said honor your mother and father, or you will face **punishment**.

C. Matthew 15:7-9 - *Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, Matt. 15:8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. Matt. 15:9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.*

1. The real problem with Israel is that they acted or played the part of being religious (and were good at it), but they had no **reality** of God in their hearts.
2. What was the reason why Israel failed to recognize Jesus Christ?

Romans 9:31-33; 10:3 - But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Rom. 9:32 Wherefore? Because *they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law*. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; Rom. 9:33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. Rom. 10:3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish *their own righteousness*, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

\*They were not seeking God by faith but by works, and their hearts were **far** from Him.

D. Matthew 15:10-11 - And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: Matt. 15:11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

1. Jesus calls the multitude to hear what He says. He is saying, "Hey you all...don't miss this."
2. He explains that it is not the physical things entering the body that defiles one, but the things that come out from **within**. What is inside is the old sin nature, revealing man's **depravity**.

Matthew 15:18-20 - But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. Matt. 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: Matt. 15:20 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

\*Cleansing the outside of man with different baptisms and washings **cannot** change the inward condition.

E. Matthew 15:12 - Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

1. The disciples were concerned and fearful that He had **offended** them. The truth was that the Pharisees did not like what He had to say! He called them out for being **hypocrites** and having wicked hearts. That offended them.
2. The reason that Christ offended them was because the things they were doing went along with these sins in verse 19! Jesus was reading their **minds**!

Luke 5:21-22 - And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? Luke 5:22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

Luke 6:7-8 - And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him. Luke 6:8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.

F. Matthew 15:13-14 - But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Matt. 15:14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

1. Jesus tells His disciples not to worry about those religious leaders out there because God is going to **remove** them. He is going to root them up, take the kingdom from them, and give it to the Little Flock (Matt. 21:43; Luke 12:32).
2. Jesus tells them the Pharisees were spiritually blind, leading others into the **ditch**.

Proverbs 23:27 - For a whore *is* a deep ditch; and a strange woman *is* a narrow pit.

\*Jesus tells them to leave them alone because apostate Israel will go into the Tribulation and, with many others, become a **part** of Antichrist's "great" whore of Revelation 17's religious system.

Revelation 17:5 - And upon her forehead *was* a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

G. Matthew 15:15-16 - Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. Matt. 15:16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?

\*Jesus said, "Pete, don't you get it? This wasn't a parable, but it was the literal truth about the depraved **religious** Pharisees."

H. Matthew 15:21-22 - Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

Matt. 15:22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

1. Jesus ministered only to Israel and to the Jews, **with a few exceptions** (Gentiles). Jesus was a Jewish man with a Jewish message about a Jewish Messiah and **Kingdom**, that would **ultimately** reach out to the Gentiles (Acts 1:8).
2. These verses tell about **one** of those **exceptions**. This burdened Canaanite mother gives a request to Jesus. She asks for **help** with her demon-controlled daughter.

I. Matthew 15:23 - But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

1. Jesus completely **ignores** her, not even recognizing her. Even the disciples don't want anything to do with this Gentile woman. They ask Jesus to get rid of her and Jesus doesn't rebuke them for seemingly being **rude**.
2. Why didn't they deal with this woman? Were they without compassion?

Answer: No. They were just being obedient to Christ's commands in Matthew 10:5-7. Since she was **not** a **Jew**, they did not want to help her at this time.

J. Matthew 15:24 - But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

1. Was Jesus sent to the Gentiles? **No**. Did this woman qualify then? **No**.  
\*The question is, are we going to bring **our** line of thinking into agreement with what the Bible says... even if it is not **popular** with **most** of Christendom?
2. The truth is that Christ and His disciples, when confronted by this Gentile woman, were **not** responding **inappropriately** or **improperly**. They responded in accordance with God's program to Israel **at that time** and under the prophetic law program.

K. Matthew 15:25 - Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

\*This woman approaches Jesus again, even worshipping Him! **Surely** He won't resist this mother's cry for her daughter?

L. Matthew 15:26 - But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* to dogs.

1. Jesus tells her that she did not have the natural **right** (Jewish blood) to get anything from Him. She, being a Gentile, had no right to take away from the true "children" (Israelites). It is the Jews' moment and not hers.



2. Then Jesus calls her a **dog** (Gentile)! Remember Genesis 3, 6, 10-12.

\*But notice this Gentile woman's response.

M. Matthew 15:27 - And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

\*This woman accepts Christ's statement of her position and status as a Gentile. She understood that Israel must believe first and then the Gentiles. She **submitted** to God's program with His favored nation Israel, but asked for some crumbs falling from her leader's table. (She had spiritual insight - Rahab?)

N. Matthew 15:28 - Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

1. Jesus makes an **exception** by healing this Gentile mother's daughter ahead of the time that Israel will embrace Christ. He honored her great faith in **under**standing and believing God's Word about Israel.

2. It was on that **basis** that Christ granted her request and healed her daughter.

\*\*She actually also availed herself of a legal provision in the Mosaic Law for God to deal with a stranger in His program with Israel. If a Gentile would spiritually **submit** himself to Israel's favored status and to the commandments, they would be accepted.

3. Even after Christ's resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit, it is Israel **first** - then they were to reach out to the Gentiles.

Acts 1:8 - But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 11:19 - Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.