

A Study of the Book of Matthew: Chapter 15 v. 29-39

- **15:29-31 – “Jesus departed from there, skirted the Sea of Galilee, and went up on the mountain and sat down there. Then great multitudes came to Him, having with them *the* lame, blind, mute, maimed, and many others; and they laid them down at Jesus’ feet, and He healed them. So the multitude marveled when they saw *the* mute speaking, *the* maimed made whole, *the* lame walking, and *the* blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel”**
 - In the preceding passage (what we discussed last week), Jesus was in the region of Tyre and Sidon with His disciples.
 - He left Israel for a time to withdraw from the crowds and the religious leaders **(Matthew 15:21)**.
 - He encountered a Gentile/Canaanite woman.
 - Jesus’ Disciples learned a lesson on “great faith.”
 - Now He returns to Israel. Matthew simply says that Jesus went on and walked by the Sea of Galilee.
 - Mark's account gives additional details – **“Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee.” (Mark 7:31)**
 - Jesus' trip out of Galilee has brought Him and His disciples to the mostly Gentile region of the Decapolis, southeast of the Sea of Galilee.
 - Jesus **“went up on the mountain and sat down there”** and then the crowds find Him.
 - The people in the Decapolis area seems familiar with Him. Crowds form and come to where He is sitting on a mountain.
 - Considering the area these crowds are likely composed mostly of Gentiles: non-Jews, those not part of God's chosen people.
 - There are many among them who are lame, blind, crippled, mute, or burdened with other afflictions. Knowing of Jesus' power to heal, they bring them to Him and put them at His feet. Jesus heals them.
 - How is this account like Jesus and His encounter the women in **Matt 15:21-28**? Are there any differences?

- **15:32 – “Now Jesus called His disciples to *Himself* and said, ‘I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.’”**
 - **“Compassion”**
 - This word is found throughout the book of Matthew
 - **Matthew 9:36**
 - **Mathew 14:14**
 - **Matthew 15:32 (here)**
 - **Matthew 18:27**
 - **Matthew 20:34**
 - For three days the people have followed Jesus and have nothing to eat.
 - Jesus’ compassionate will not allow Him to see them suffer.
 - Now Jesus turns to His disciples and says that He has compassion for the people (Gentiles).
 - This seems very familiar.
 - What happened in in Bethsaida in **Matthew 14:13–21?**
- **15:33 – “Then His disciples said to Him, ‘Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?’”**
 - Why would they doubt after the feeding of the 5,000?
 - One possibility is that they were so often hungry themselves that they rarely looked for special miracles. They have experienced much discomfort and sacrifice to be a disciple. **“Behold, we have left our own homes, and followed You” (Lk 18:28).**
 - Similar to Matthew **14:13–21** the Disciples ask, **“Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?”**
 - The crowd is huge, the location is remote, they have no food and no reasonable way to obtain it.
 - What lesson (Just like in the feeding of the 5000) do you think Jesus is trying to teach his Disciples?
 - Is it possible the disciples fully expect Jesus to use another divine intervention, but don't want to be the ones to suggest it?

- **15:34-36 – “Jesus said to them, ‘How many loaves do you have?’ And they said, ‘Seven, and a few little fish.’ So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke *them* and gave *them* to His disciples; and the disciples *gave* to the multitude.”**
 - Just as with the last miraculous feeding of a huge crowd (**Matthew 14:13–21**), Jesus responds to the idea that there are not enough resources to feed the crowd by asking the disciples to inventory how much food they do have.
 - They have seven loaves and a few fish.
 - In both cases (Ch 14 and here), Jesus makes use of the little the disciples have, turning it into abundance.
 - As with the prior miraculous feeding (**Matthew 14:13–21**), the disciples find themselves receiving from Christ a seemingly endless supply. Once again, they find themselves serving the people with the bread provided to them by Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God.
 - Again, the disciples find they have every reason to trust God's power to provide what is needed when they need it.

- **15:37 – “So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left.”**
 - As in chapter **14:20** with the 5,000, “**they all ate and were satisfied.**”
 - Is there a spiritual application here?
 - Hint - Samaritan woman in **John chapter 4**.
 - What did he tell her about “living water?”

- **15:38 – “Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.”**
 - He fed four thousand *men*, in addition to any women and children present. That could have added up to ten or twelve thousand people, or more.

- **15:39 – “And He sent away the multitude, got into the boat, and came to the region of Magdala.”**

- **Chapter 16 next week!**