

COMMENTARY

MATTHEW 15:

vs. 1-20:

Jesus was questioned by some Pharisees and teachers of the law concerning why His disciples failed to wash their hands before they ate, thus breaking their Jewish traditions. According to the people of that time; breaking the traditional law incurred heavier guilt than the breaking of Moses' Law. If this could be proved, then Jesus would be encouraging "sinful" practices and surely the "Messiah" wouldn't do that. The leaders were thus trying to discredit Jesus.

Jesus was indifferent towards the traditions but was concerned about the disobeying of God's Law. The leaders would allow a person who made a vow to give of their wealth to God or to another individual to be free from supporting their parents, even though they were obligated in the sight of God to providing for their parents (Let us remember that we Still have an obligation to provide for our parents and relatives: I Timothy 5:8). Jesus called them hypocrites, quoting Isaiah 29:13. He further explains that it is what a man says and does that makes him unclean and not germs that may enter the body.

The disciples were concerned because Jesus offended the Pharisees. Jesus told them not to worry, for those that don't belong to God will be destroyed and have no power. The Pharisees were helpless and would destroy themselves through their ignorance.

vs. 21-28:

Jesus had gone west to the region of Tyre and Sidon when a woman of that area, Canaanite (not Jewish), appealed to Him on behalf of her daughter. Her address, Son of David, was one which implied that Jesus was A Messiah. Jesus could not acknowledge that, but because of her insistence, He taught her first that He was THE MESSIAH and then healed her daughter. This miracle not only demonstrated His power to the woman, but also was a sign that what He had said was true.

vs. 29-39:

Jesus returns to the region of the Sea of Galilee. After ministering to the people and healing (because of His compassion and love for them), He called His disciples and asked them to feed the people. The disciples did not understand as to how that would be possible, for there was not enough food in the area. Jesus then took the 7 loaves and few small fish and multiplied to feed 4,000 men (not including women and children) and still have 7 basketfuls left over. Jesus then, after dismissing the people, left for Magadan.

STUDY GUIDE

MATTHEW 15:

1. What accusation did the Pharisees and teachers of the law, make?
2. For what reason were they nullifying the word of God?
3. Even though they honored with their lips, what was far from God?
4. What makes a man unclean, according to verse 11?
5. What happens to the plants, not planted by God?
6. What comes out of the heart?
7. What did a Canaanite woman ask Jesus to do?
8. Why did Jesus grant the woman's request?
9. Who did the great crowds bring to Jesus?
10. What amazed the people?
11. How many loaves and fishes did they have?
12. How many were fed on this occasion?

BONUS:

1. What traditions do Christians have, that they may place equal to God's commands?
2. Who might Christians treat poorly, even as the Jews treated the non-Jews?
3. What miracles has God performed, that amazed you?