

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### Matthew: Jesus As Israel's Messiah And His Kingdom

#### Part XV: Christ As Israel's Messiah Seen By The Opposition To His Ministry, Matthew 11:2-16:12

##### N. Christ As Israel's Messiah By His Gracious Ministry To A Believing Gentile

(Matthew 15:21-28)

#### I. Introduction

- A. Jesus had made a series of withdrawals from fellow Hebrews who refused to believe in Him as God's Messiah (Matthew 12:14-15; 13:53-58; 15:1-21), and He ended up near the borders of Tyre and Sidon, but still in the territory of Israel, Matt. 15:21; Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, 1972, ii, p. 37.
- B. In this territory, a distraught Gentile woman approached Jesus with an imperfect knowledge of His messianic identity, but once Jesus instructed her on that true identity, she accepted it and acted in faith upon it in huge contrast to the hardness of unbelief in the Hebrews from whom Jesus had just previously withdrawn.
- C. This Matthew 15:21-28 event instructs us on understanding Christ's identity so as to trust in Him in truth:

#### II. Christ As Israel's Messiah By His Gracious Ministry To A Believing Gentile, Matthew 15:21-28.

- A. Due to extensive ministry and a very delayed effort to rest from it, and due to conflict with the Pharisees on the issue of hand washing in Matthew 15:1-20, Jesus withdrew to a private home far north in Israel near the eastern borders of the provincial regions of Tyre and Sidon, Matthew 15:21 with Mark 7:24; *Ibid.*, p. 37-38.
- B. However, it was impossible for Him to gain complete solace: news of Jesus the miracle worker spread, and a desperate Gentile woman in the Gentile territories just across the border with Israel who had a demon-possessed child sought Jesus in that nearby house in Israel for a cure for her child, Matthew 15:22.
- C. On the surface, her reference to Jesus as the "son of David," a *Jewish* title for the Messiah (*Ibid.*, p. 38) impresses us with the presumption that she was full of faith, Matthew 15:22. She certainly had learned from her close geographical proximity to Israel about this messianic term, so she used it of Jesus in hope that He would be impressed favorably to deliver her child from demonic possession, *Ibid.*
- D. However, Jesus' response to her reveals that this woman had only a **superficial** view of Jesus' identity, that she had not yet come to understand Him as the Biblical Messiah of Israel, but only an "Israelitish" Messiah, *Ibid.*, p. 39. In other words, she knew the Jews used the term of a lofty leader, but did not know what it truly meant! Accordingly, Jesus initially did not answer her a single word, Matthew 15:23a. He was seeking to get her to pursue her case further that she might be teachable as to the full meaning of His identity, *Ibid.*, p. 39.
- E. The disciples likely wanted Jesus either to heal her child so she would stop pestering them, or just to send her away, but Jesus let the tense situation continue, and began to instruct the woman that He was not sent to the Gentiles, but only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Matthew 15:23b-24; Bib. Know. Com., N. T., p. 55.
- F. At this remark by Jesus, the woman realized her reference to Jesus as "son of David" was somehow severely lacking, so she shifted, calling Him "Lord" in respect, and bowed before Him, begging for help, Matt. 15:25.
- G. By now, she was fully teachable, so Jesus informed her that she as a Gentile, a "dog" as the Hebrews referred to Gentiles, was not fit to be a recipient of God's blessings [at that time], Matthew 15:26; *Ibid.*, p. 56.
- H. This woman suddenly recognized that Jesus was to be viewed as being her sovereign, that she could receive of His blessings only if she as a Gentile submitted to Him as her *Master*. Accordingly, she replied that since she was a "dog," she was her *Master*, Jesus' "dog," and could still eat of the crumbs which fell from the table set for His Hebrew people, Matthew 15:27. She recognized that any blessings of Israel's Messiah could come to her only as she submitted to Jesus as **her Master and her personal Messiah, not just call Him the Jewish title of Messiah in order to manipulate Him to help her as a Gentile**, *Ibid.*, Edersheim, p. 39-43.
- I. Jesus then replied that her faith was great, and her request regarding the exorcism of the demon from her child was **graciously** provided by the Lord Jesus that very moment, Matthew 15:28.

***Lesson:*** In **CONTRAST** to the many Hebrews in Israel who had **REFUSED** to believe in Jesus as the Messiah of God to Whom they must **SUBMIT** in faith in His true identity, this Gentile woman grew from an artificial understanding of Jesus' office as Messiah to discern by His teaching that He was to be her **MASTER**, **NOT** just "some Jewish Messiah," before **HE** would render His blessings upon her child. Once she understood Jesus' true identity and **SUBMITTED** to Him **VERSUS** trying to **MANIPULATE** Him, He **INSTANTLY** granted her request!

***Application:*** May we (1) **BELIEVE** on Christ as **OUR MASTER**, **NOT** just "some Messiah," for eternal life, John 3:16. (2) May we **SUBMIT** to Christ as **LORD** **VERSUS** trying to **MANIPULATE** Him to do our will in our lives!