

# 2019-2020 Bible Study

## #21

2/25/20

# Matthew 14

- **Matthew 14:1-2** *“At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus...why those powers are at work in him”*
  - Father suggested that Jesus may have looked a bit like John the Baptist as they were related
  - According to Matthew, they were both appearing in the same place on the Jordan River
  - They both shared some of the same disciples
  - They seemed to be saying similar things to the people to include a presentation that the Kingdom of God was at hand

# Matthew 14 (Cont)

- **Matthew 14:3-12** *“For Herod had seized John...’It is not lawful for you to have her”*
  - Here we can see a great example of the differences between the gospel according to Matthew and that of Mark
  - Matthew simply says that it was unlawful for Herod to have Herodias (his brother Philip’s wife) because he assumes that his audience knows the issue
  - The Torah said that if a man took a wife she became a part of his body and therefore he could not divorce her
  - She therefore, could not marry a brother or relative because she was considered to be a sister of that brother

# Matthew 14 (Cont)

- **Leviticus 15** prohibited a man from marrying a sister
- This made Herod's act unlawful
- Mark explains all this in his gospel (Mark 6:17-18) where he explains that Herod could not marry his brother's wife

# Matthew 15

2/25/20

# Outline for Matthew 15

- **Matthew 15**
  - The Traditions of the Elders
  - Things That Defile a Man
  - The Canaanite Woman's Faith
  - Jesus Heals Many People
  - Feeding the Four Thousand

# Matthew 15

- **Matthew 15:1-2** *“Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem...For they do not wash their hands when they eat”*
  - As discussed earlier, the Pharisees tried to separate Jesus’ disciples from Him, and at this point tried to separate Jesus from His disciples
  - Their goal was to divide and conquer \*

# Matthew 15 (Cont)

- **Matthew 15: 3-9** *“He answered them...teaching as doctrines the precepts of men”*
  - This was an example of the Pharisees trying to enforce one of the “traditions of the elders” rather than a commandment or precept of the Torah (Law)
  - In this, the Pharisees were accusing Jesus as a rabbi of not properly teaching His disciples
  - Further, for them this meant that Jesus could not be the Messiah or even a prophet since He would not teach these “hedges” around the Torah

# Matthew 15 (Cont)

- The Torah taught that one should not touch anything unclean
- But, the Pharisees would not only avoid unclean things, but to be sure, they demanded hand washing in case they might have touched something unclean
- Thus, they demanded that one always wash their hands before eating
- Father pointed out that this was not about hygiene or microbes, but an enforcement of all aspects of the Law
- For them, if a person began by breaking one of the hedges, it would not be long before they broke a Law

# Matthew 15 (Cont)

- The Pharisees believed that if they allowed Jesus' disciples to pluck the grain on the Sabbath, they would soon be harvesting on the Sabbath
- To them, this was a slippery slope
- Father pointed out that Jesus did not have a problem with their hedge(s), but He told them that they had much bigger problems
- They were concerned with the disciples not keeping the hedge (tradition of the elders) while they were not keeping the actual Torah that the hedge was supposed to protect

# Matthew 15 (Cont)

- He then gave the example of the *Corban*
- Father pointed out that this was one more example of the differences between the Gospel writers as Matthew assumes you know about these things (while the others go into great detail explaining the meaning of these details) \*

# Matthew 15 (Cont)

- **Matthew 15:10 –20** *“And he called the people to him and said to them, ‘Hear and understand:...but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man’”*
  - Here, Matthew gives a teaching concerning the misuse of the Torah
  - At this point, Father directed us to look at the same story in **Mark 7:1-23**

# Mark 7

- Father reminded us that this is Peter speaking in Rome to a bunch of Christians
- It would appear that whether they were Gentile Christians or Hellenized Jewish Christians, they did not know the Torah very well
- They certainly did not know the “hedges”
- Most in *Rome* had never met a *Pharisee*
- It seems as though Mark’s story is almost twice as long as Matthew’s because he had to give so many more explanations to his audience

# Setting the Stage for Mark

- You are a 30-year old, 1<sup>st</sup> Century Gentile:
  - Living in Rome in 65 A.D.
  - Married with a family
  - Working for the Roman Government
  - Worshiping the Roman gods including the emperor
  - Curious about a new religion presented by Peter and his followers in Rome based on the teachings of a deceased Jewish rabbi

# Mark 7 (Cont)

- **Mark 7:1-8** Mark had to explain to his audience what a Pharisee was and what they were saying about washing of hands
- This sustains the view that Mark's gospel was a record of the preaching of Peter to an audience not in Judea
- *Papias*, the Bishop of *Areopolis* in 120 A.D. stated that Matthew wrote in the tongue of the Hebrews (Aramaic) while Mark wrote down what Peter was saying in Rome

# Mark 7 (Cont)

- Father said that the Church in Rome at the time Peter was preaching was full of Hellenized Jews who had become Christians as well as Gentiles coming into the church in droves
- We get a picture of that church in Paul's letter to the Romans
- Thus, they would not have any idea what a Pharisee was
- So, Mark had to explain to them the concept of the Law as well as the "hedges" (the Pharisees had placed around it)

# Mark 7 (Cont)

- Father said that some might ask that if his gospel was written in *Aramaic* wouldn't he list a *Hebrew* or *Aramaic* term like *Corban*?
- Father said that this was not necessary since the entire gospel was written in *Aramaic* and later translated into Greek
- Mark, on the other hand, added these little *Aramaic* phrases within his Greek because Peter was preaching in Greek to his Roman audiences
- Mark does this here because the entire story had to do with eating \*

# Mark 7 (Cont)

- **Mark 7:9-14** *“And he said to them...’Here me, all of you, and understand”*
  - Matthew did not have to give his audience what Moses had said for they knew that he gave them the Commandments of God
  - Mark gives his audience the term *“Corban”* meaning “given to God”
  - Some might ask that if his gospel was written in *Aramaic* wouldn't Matthew have listed a Hebrew or *Aramaic* term like *Corban*?
  - That was not necessary since the entire gospel was written in *Aramaic* and later translated into Greek

# Mark 7 (Cont)

- Mark, on the other hand, added these little Aramaic phrases within his Greek because Peter was preaching in Greek to his Roman audiences
- Mark does this here because the entire story had to do with eating
- Mark said that this is not about what goes into a man that defiles him, but what comes out of his heart \*

# Mark 7 (Cont)

- **Mark 7:15-19** *“there is nothing outside a man which is going into him can defile him...(Thus he declared all foods clean)*
  - Mark announced that Jesus declared all foods clean, while Matthew assumed that his audience could figure this out
  - Mark gave his audience all of these explanatory notes to ensure that it was clear
  - Father explained that there were two important notes here:
    - Sometimes we hear of certain Christian movements acting like the *Judaizers*

# Mark 7 (Cont)

- That was exactly what Paul and John were preaching against in the New Testament
- Second, the Messianic Jews continue to keep the kosher laws perfectly; never eat ham because the Torah forbids it
- Father suggested that they should read the Gospel of Mark
- We will now return to **Matthew 15**

# Matthew 15 (Cont)

- **Matthew 15:21-23** *“And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon...‘for she is crying after us’”*
  - Once again this passage demonstrates the differences between Matthew and Mark
    - Mark tells his listeners that she was a *Syrophoenician* woman
    - This was a geographical term which those in Rome would have understood
    - Matthew says that she was a *Canaanite* woman which would have made no sense to Mark’s listeners
  - At this point, Jesus was in a totally Gentile area

# Matthew 15 (Cont)

- The first part of Jesus' ministry was exclusively focused on the Jews
  - The disciples were trying to dismiss her because she was a Gentile and not a part of their mission
- But, this point marks the beginning of the second part of Jesus' ministry (which will now include the Gentiles) \*

# Matthew 15 (Cont)

- **Matthew 15:24-26** *“He answered, ‘I was sent only to the lost sheep...and throw it to the dogs’”*
  - This should remind us of **Matthew 10** where Jesus instructed his disciples to go nowhere among the Gentiles, but only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel
  - Father pointed out that there is more going on here than Jesus insulting the woman by calling her a dog
  - Providing bread for a family was a daily occurrence and it would have been unthinkable to throw any of this bread on the ground for the dogs to eat
  - This would have been offensive
  - Jesus was saying that to throw bread belonging to the children to the dogs would not have been proper \*

# Matthew 15 (Cont)

- **Matthew 15:27-28** *“She said, ‘Yes Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table...And her daughter was healed instantly’”*
  - Jesus commends her on her faith in Him
  - Remember the 12 baskets of crumbs in **Matthew 14:20**?
  - The baskets of leftovers means that there is still time in Jesus’ ministry to the Gentiles
  - For almost 3 years, He has been preaching to the Jews and now at the end of his Galilean ministry He is opening it up to the Gentiles
  - By His praise of her faith, He and the early church, were saying that a Gentile can be cleansed by faith

# Matthew 15 (Cont)

- If they accept His “word,” they can become a part of the people of God!
- This meant that they did not have to be circumcised and keep kosher
- This woman was obviously “unclean” in the eyes of the Law, but He was saying that her faith had made her clean
- Remember what Jesus said in **Matthew 15:18**: “But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles the man”
- Out of the mouth and heart of this woman came faith and so she is now clean
- After this incident, Jesus returned to Israel \*