

**Message #56****Matthew 15:29-39**

This text of Scripture is extremely important for this reason—this passage teaches that God will do great things for the Gentiles just as He also did for Israel.

**JESUS CHRIST HAD COMPASSION ON GENTILES JUST LIKE HE DID JEWS, AND HE DEMONSTRATED HIS GRACE BY HEALING THEM AND PROVIDING FOR THEM.**

For the most part, the people Jesus does these things for do not accept Him as Savior, yet He still ministers to them and still meets needs. Now the context of this is important; Jesus had just ministered to a Canaanite woman (15:22) and healed her demon-possessed daughter (15:29). In the aftermath of this, **verse 29** informs us that Christ went along by the Sea of Galilee and went up into the mountain and sat down. Mark 7:31 informs us that He was in the region of Decapolis, which was a Gentile area.

As Christ sat on that mountain, He must have thought about the fact that all of Israel had rejected Him. As John said, He came to His own people, Israel, and they did not receive Him (John 1:11). He was getting better response from Canaanites than He was His own people who should have loved Him and received Him.

**NARRATIVE FACT #1** – Large Gentile crowds came to Him with people to be healed. **15:30**

The word “heal” is “therapeuo” from which we get our English word “therapeutic.” The word means to medically heal or cure someone. The aorist tense of the verb indicates He healed them at one point of time and they did not need any additional medical care. Now what is tragic here is that these Gentiles brought all of their sick Jesus, but not all of their sin to Jesus.

**NARRATIVE FACT #2** – Large Gentile crowds marveled at the miracles of Jesus. **15:31**

The Greek word means they stood in wonderment, totally amazed that mute people were speaking, crippled people were restored, lame people were walking and blind people were seeing. Now notice the last part of the verse—“They glorified the God of Israel.” Here were Gentiles recognizing the link that Jesus had to the being God of Israel.

This is a prelude picture of things to come. The Gentiles would initially have a better relationship with Jesus Christ than the Jewish people and that is true to this very day.

**NARRATIVE FACT #3** – Jesus feels compassion for the Gentile crowd and wants to feed them. **15:32**

The word “compassion” indicates that Jesus felt pity in his heart for this Gentile crowd because they were hungry.

In the feeding of the 5000, plus the women and children, they had been with Jesus about a day (Matt. 14:15). But these Gentiles had been without food for three days. They were so thrilled at Jesus' ministry that they didn't leave Him for three days.

II Peter 3:8 says that one day is, in the mind of God, like 1000 years. If we use this text in Matthew as a time principle, we may say that the Gentiles would be near Jesus Christ for three days or 3000 years. If the Millennium is 1000 years, a time when believers will reign with Jesus Christ (Rev. 20:1-7), that would leave 2000 additional Gentile years. Our year is 2004, which means we must be very near the end of the Gentile age.

**NARRATIVE FACT #4** – The disciples wonder where they will get enough food. **15:33**

This has to be one of the dumbest moments in the disciple's lives. They have just watched Jesus heal people miraculously for three straight days. Furthermore, they already saw Jesus do this very thing to 5000 of Israel's men, plus women and children.

**NARRATIVE FACT #5** – Jesus feeds the Gentile crowd. **15:34-38**

I love the question Christ asks them in **verse 34**—it must have jogged their memory, something Christ had to do with these boys (Matt. 16:9-10). Notice Christ asks “How many loaves do you have?” Look at their response—“Seven loaves and a few small fish.” He didn't ask how many fish. But they were thinking of what happened in Matt. 14:17.

**Verse 35** - Christ had the people sit down.

**Verse 36** - He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks and started breaking them and handing them to the disciples to pass out to the people.

**Verse 37** - All of these Gentiles ate and were “satisfied.” What this means is that they were all stuffed. The Greek word literally means they were full to the point of being fattened (Smith, p. 482).

**These disciples would learn an important lesson—God cares about Gentiles and He also gives His blessings to them.**

**NARRATIVE FACT #6** – Jesus leaves the Gentile area. **15:39**

It was kind of sad that Jesus had to leave this heathen area in which He had been better received by Gentiles, to go to Jerusalem to a cross.