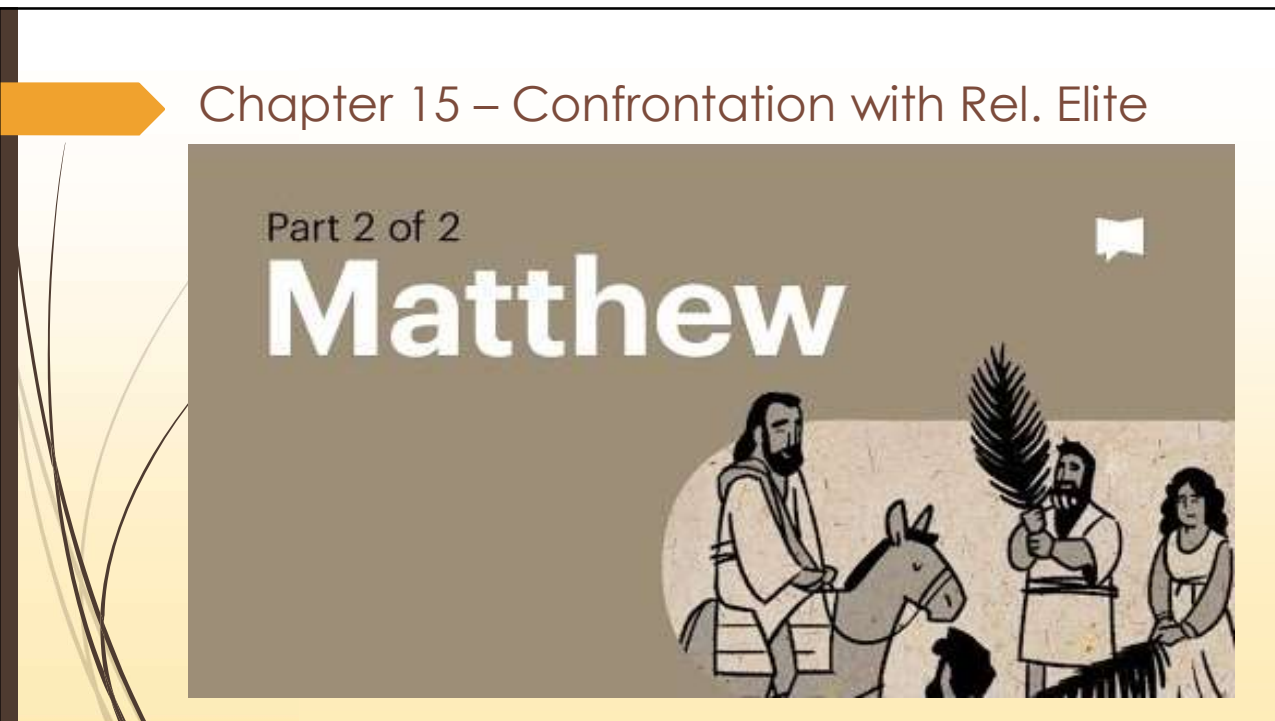


The Gospel of Matthew

Bible Study – Examination, Exposition, and Application
Chapter 15:1-39 – Confrontation with the Religious Elite


1



Chapter 15 – Confrontation with Rel. Elite

Part 2 of 2

Matthew



2

Chapter 15 – Confrontation with Rel. Elite

► V. 1-10 Rejection by Israel's Religious Elite

- Gennesaret...Pharisees and Scribes (Law Clerks)
 - Question of the Babylonian Captivity: Why was Israel exiled?
 - Pharisaic Answer: Israel failed to keep the Law (faithfulness)
 - Vigilant separatist sect: ethnic, political, religious, moral, etc.
 - Tradition of the Elders [Gk. *Paradosin*]: strict analysis, commentary, and interpretation of the Law recorded in two sacred texts:
 - Mishnah (6 vols.) – the oldest authoritative collection of exegetical material embodying the oral tradition of Jewish law, systematically compiled by numerous scholars (called *Tannaim*) over a period of two centuries (Ezra/Return ~450 BC<)
 - Talmud (20 vols.) – a collection of Jewish civil and ceremonial law and legend; the Mishnah and the Gemara (<5 Cent AD)
 - "Faithfulness": Fasting (Mt 9:14), Washing of Hands (Mt. 15:1-3), Children (Mt. 15:4-9), Sabbath observations (Mt. 12:2-8); "Hypocrisy"

3

Chapter 15 – Confrontation with Rel. Elite

► V. 10-20 Rejection by Israel's Religious Elite

- Religion: Actions to Appease God + Avert Disaster
 - Washing of Hands (Mt. 15:1-3) – hygiene or hypocrisy?
 - Obedience to Parents (Mt. 15:4-9) –
 - Exodus 20:12, Deut. 5:16; Ex. 21:17; Lev. 20:9
 - Financial Support "Offered" to God absolves Moral Responsibility
 - Hypocrites! Quotes Isaiah 29:13
 - Defilement [Gk. *Koinoi*, contaminating]: exterior vs. interior conditions render an individual unfit to share in the worship / blessings of God?
 - v. 19-20: evil intentions in the heart: murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander... "You are not a sinner because you sin; you sin because you are a sinner" (inner desires, intentions, motivations, etc.)
 - Offending the Pharisees: Jesus quotes Isaiah 60:21

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Chapter 15 – Confrontation with Rel. Elite

▶ V. 21-28 Canaanite Woman (Ritually Unclean)

- ▶ Tyre and Sidon (Phoenician territory)...Gentile area
- ▶ Canaanite (Pagan) – religious request: healing
- ▶ Disciples – “send her away” (exclusion; unclean)
- ▶ Jesus’ reply: primary mission to call back the Jews
 - ▶ Woman’s response: “dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table”
 - ▶ Jesus’ reaction and response: Healing!

▶ V. 29-31 Healing Stories

- ▶ Mountain top – healing the throng...worship

5

Chapter 15 – Confrontation with Rel. Elite

▶ V. 32-39 Feeding of the Four Thousand

- ▶ Jews and Gentiles (mixed crowd) – common-unity
- ▶ Jesus’ compassion for the crowd: three days, faint
- ▶ Disciples’ response: lack of knowledge and faith
 - ▶ Resources: seven loaves and a few fish (common)
 - ▶ Took, Blessed, Broke, Gave: messianic meal pattern
 - ▶ Left-overs: seven baskets full
- ▶ Crowd: four thousand men besides women and children
- ▶ Jesus departed for the region of Magadan

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