

The Miracles of Christ - Jesus Heals Daughter of Gentiles

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[0 : 00] Alright, we are continuing our consideration of the miracles of our Lord, and the last one that we dealt with had to do with the feeding of the 5,000, not to be confused with the feeding of the 4,000.

And it is a little confusing when you look at the texts that are involved, but if you examine them closely, you will see that this is not, as some have said, well, it's just another contradiction in the Bible.

Because one place it says that Jesus fed 5,000, another place it says 4,000, so you really don't know, you can't take the Bible at face value because there are mistakes in it and errors in it, and on and on they go.

But if you look at the record, and you don't have to look all that closely, but just give it a halfway examination, you will discover that there are two miraculous feedings.

The first one is 5,000, and we don't know really how many were there. All we know is the text says there were 5,000 men, and I'm sure that 5,000 men did not get away without their wives.

[1 : 09] Maybe they left some of them at home, but I'm sure there were some that came with them. And if the wives come with them, who else comes with them? Well, there's some kids. There's probably teenagers and children, and so how many were there, we don't know.

But there were 5,000 men. It could have been 15,000, 18,000. We don't know. And then when you look at the next record, there are 4,000 that are fed as well, and they too are described as 4,000 men.

So we've taken the first one, feeding of the 5,000, but we're not going to take the feeding of the 4,000 just yet, because the two feedings are interrupted by a Syrophenician woman.

And there is a miracle in connection with that, and we're going to look at it. So if you would take your text, please, for whatever you have before you, because you can actually look at Matthew 15 if you want, or you can look at Mark chapter 7.

The text is a little bit different, but both of them are in the account. And to just refresh your thinking of what we've already said, in Mark chapters 6 and 7, there is the feeding of the 5,000 and the feeding of the 4,000.

[2 : 30] And in Matthew chapter 14, there's the feeding of the 5,000. In chapter 15, there's the feeding of the 4,000. So you've got to keep that in mind. But sandwiched right in between those is the account that we have here in Matthew chapter 15 and verse 21.

And we read that Jesus went out thence and withdrew into the parts of Tyre and Sidon.

Now, if you take a look at your map, and I guess, I don't know if you bring your map with you each time, but it would be a good idea if you did. If you look at your map, you will see there are actually different places that record it.

But if you open it to the large one that is labeled as number two, you look up at the coast, and you see Phoenicia. This, of course, is where the ancient Phoenicians were.

And you see the seaport town of Sidon. It's a very important place. And by the way, just right above it is Beirut. Lebanon.

[3 : 35] And that's a modern city. By the way, it was just devastated not too long ago with bombs and everything. And just literally. Beirut was called the jewel of the Mediterranean.

And they absolutely ruined it. I mean, it just practically devastated. But right below Beirut, the modern city, is the ancient city of Sidon. And then further down the coast is the city of Tyre.

And these are both very significant. And you need to understand these are not Jewish. These are Gentiles. People, these Phoenicians, come from a different stock.

They are not Jewish at all. They are Gentiles. And yet, this is where Jesus is. And I want to pose a situation, something for you to think about. Because it's another one of those things that leaves us with a kind of question.

What is Jesus doing in the land of Tyre and Sidon? When he earlier made it clear to the twelve in Matthew 10 that they were not to go to the Gentiles.

[4 : 47] But confined their ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Now here, Jesus himself is going into the land of the Gentiles. Tyre and Sidon.

And that's where he's going to be confronted with this Phoenician woman. Who has a problem with their daughter. What, Joe? I was going to just say, aren't there some scattered Jews? There's some Jews that are scattered?

Oh yeah, I'm sure there are some Jews that are scattered there. But this woman was clearly not a Jew. No. She is identified as a Canaanite. And if you know anything historically about the Canaanites, they were the scum of the earth.

I mean, they were, these people were pretty wicked people. And they're the Phoenicians, the Canaanites, and so on. So, Jesus is going to confront this.

Another thing to keep in mind, in light of the fact that he told them not to go to the Gentiles, but when he decides to go from Jerusalem back home to Galilee, the normal way is to go through Samaria.

[5 : 54] And if you were the kind of Jew that most Jews were, rather than set foot in Samaritan territory, they would go and skirt all the way around it and bypass it in order to get there.

But the text says that Jesus must need to go through Samaria, and that's where he met the woman at the well, in John chapter 4. And his apostles were kind of dumbfounded that he was actually conversing not only with a woman, but with a Gentile woman.

They couldn't figure out what that was all about. So, that's something to keep in mind. And I've puzzled a little bit over that. If you've got any light, you'll have opportunity to share it. Why would Jesus be doing this ministry to these Gentiles when in Matthew 10, he told his disciples, don't go to the Gentiles, confine your ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

That means Jew only. And we'll explore that a little bit later. But it's a fascinating thing. I just want you to think about it. So, let's look at Matthew 15. I'm in verse 21. Jesus went out thence, withdrew into the parts of Tyre and Sidon.

And behold, a Canaanitish woman came out from those borders and cried, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David.

[7 : 22] Now, that's really interesting, too. You've got a Gentile woman who apparently has heard and obviously believes that Jesus of Nazareth is a direct descendant of David the king.

I want you to keep the time frame in mind. When was David the king on the throne? A thousand years earlier. Jesus is the last descendant of David.

And with him, the line stops. Because, of course, he did not marry and had no children. So, the throne of David, by the way, the throne of David today remains open.

They don't have a monarchy. They've got a democratic kind of government. They've got a prime minister. And they've got a Knesset, which is the word for Congress.

But they don't have a king. And there has not been a king sit on the throne of Israel since Zedekiah was forced to watch the execution of his sons.

[8 : 44] And then they put out his eyes and made him walk all the way to Babylon. That was the last man to sit on the throne of Israel.

And it has remained ever since. And they've been under domination by all these foreign powers. They've been subjugated by the Babylonians, by the Medes and the Persians, by the Romans, now by the Romans.

And this is why this gives meaning to that question at the ascension of our Lord in Acts 1, right before he ascended back to heaven.

The question that the disciples asked was, Lord, is it at this time, now, that you are going to restore the throne, the kingdom, to Israel?

And Jesus answered and said, it was not their time to know. It's times and the seasons that the fathers put in his hands, but you shall receive power and so on.

[9 : 46] So that obviously wasn't at the time either. So you've got to remember that that throne remains open. And to this day, there is but one person who is qualified to occupy the throne of David in Jerusalem.

And he is in absentia. He is in exile in heaven, but he's going to come back and occupy that throne. So here this woman is recognizing his Davidic descent.

And she says, my daughter is grievously vexed with the devil. And that's not a good translation. It ought to be, and I think the more modern translations render it a demon.

The King James Version never uses the word demon. It always uses the term devil. It's diabolos. And it's just an unfortunate translation because it's confusing.

There's just one devil. One devil. That's Satan, the adversary. He is apparently the epitome of God's creation.

[10 : 55] And he is regarded as such. So there's just one devil. But there are multiple demons. And we don't know how many. The best guess that we have is that demons are the fallen angels, of which there was one third, that Satan succeeded in recruiting when he rebelled.

And that was before creation even took place in Genesis 1. So the angels transcend the beginning of humans and the Garden of Eden and all the rest of it.

So we've got a demon here rather than the devil. And Jesus answered her, not a word, which is another way of saying he ignored her.

He paid no attention to her question. And this is a woman who is desperate because we men have an affinity, of course, and a love for our children.

But we don't know the kind of maternal love that a woman has for her child. Because, largely because she bore that child in her own body.

[12 : 04] So there is something about motherhood that transcends fatherhood in terms of emotion and feeling and caring and love and all the rest of it that only a mom can provide.

And this woman is going to bat for her daughter. And she is desperate. And I can't tell you how it is or why it is that this young girl was possessed by a demon because I don't understand enough about demonology as to...

I'm convinced that demons cannot enter in and occupy people at will. That's quite obvious. Or everybody would probably be possessed.

So we don't know why it is that some are more susceptible to this or why in the world a child would be susceptible to this. We don't have an answer for that.

But suffice it to say, this is not epilepsy. That's a different thing. And that's also described in the Bible. So it's not epilepsy. But it is the indwelling, the taking up residence within a human body by an immaterial spirit that is not physical at all.

[13 : 29] And that's difficult for us to understand, but that's what it is. And this is... She is vexed with this devil. And Jesus answered her, not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, send her away.

Now, these guys are not exactly exuding compassion. And one reason, I think, is because... We won't go there, but if you were to look back just five chapters, in chapter 10 of Matthew, where Jesus chose the twelve, He called them, and the text says that He gave them authority, which they, of course, did not have.

He gave them authority to cast out demons and to heal diseases. What Jesus is doing is multiplying His own ministry sixfold.

By choosing these twelve apostles, they are going to go out in teams of two, two-man teams throughout the whole area, and they are going to replicate the ministry of Jesus in healing and preaching and teaching.

And they have just one message. Just one message. And I want you to hear this loud and clear. Their message is not, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.

[14 : 53] That's not their message. That message didn't even exist then. That message will not be available until after Christ has died on that cross and been resurrected from the grave.

Then, that message comes into force. Then, you can believe on Jesus Christ and be saved. But before Jesus died on that cross, He saved no one.

He gave eternal life to no one. Because He had not paid for it yet. And He will do that on the cross. So, that makes all the difference in the world.

Their message is, Repent. As you go preach, Repent. Change your mind. Because the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And guys, I don't want to belabor the point, but I just want to tell you that this kingdom thing is what everything is all about.

You heard me right. It is what everything is all about. Because it has to do with the restoration, the reestablishing of the kingdom of God come from heaven established on earth.

[16:07] And it will be the answer to the prayer that is found in what is commonly called the Lord's Prayer. Our Father who art in heaven, Thy kingdom come.

That's a prayer for the kingdom to come. Why does the kingdom have to come? Because the world is really in a mess. And when the kingdom comes, the world will get fixed.

It will be revitalized. It will be restored. It will be regenerated. Evil will be put down. The lion will eat straw like an ox. And the wolf and the lamb will lie down together.

It's going to be wonderful. It's going to be the way it ought to be. We live in a fallen world. This world is a mess. Death and disease and corruption is everywhere.

But when Jesus Christ returns as the king and establishes that kingdom, it's going to get fixed. It's going to be what it ought to be. And in case you didn't notice, this is not it.

[17:11] All right? So, the text goes on to say, He answered her not a word. His disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away! For she cries after us.

Now they were probably thinking that, well, Jesus has already told us not to go to the Gentiles. And here this woman is, she's just a pest. And she doesn't have any claim at all on what Jesus is saying because this woman's not a Jew.

She's a Gentile. She's a Syrophenician. Send her away! Get rid of her! And, Jesus answered her and said, I was not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And once again, fellas, you've got to see the clarification here. What in the world is this saying?

Some read this to mean that Jesus was being crude and unkind, nothing of the kind.

And some read this to say that Jesus is so pro-Jewish that he doesn't give a whip about anybody that isn't Jewish. That isn't true either. All you have to do is take the whole of Scripture into consideration.

[18:25] And if you just zero in on one point like this, you might come to that conclusion that Jesus is being very unkind, but he wasn't being unkind at all. When he says, I was not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house, that's another way of saying I was just sent to the Jew.

You remember that verse in John 1, I think it's John 1, 12, says that Jesus came unto his own. Who were they?

The whole world. No, it wasn't. It was Israel. He came unto his own. It means his own people, his own kind, his own country.

And his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the authority, the right to become the sons of God.

What, Joe? He came to fill the promises God made to the fathers. Right. That's what he came to do.

And that's made clear at the birth of Jesus by Mary, the mother of our Lord, that she extolled God and said that the son that she is going to bear is the fulfillment of the promise that God made to our fathers.

[19:39] And she wasn't talking about her dad. She was talking about the fathers. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob started way back in Genesis 12.

And that was the promise that was made. And it's a beautiful thing. So keep this in mind. And Jesus came to Israel for the world.

Big difference. Big difference. And the reason he came specifically to Israel was that the game plan was that Israel then was to reach the rest of the world, the rest of the nation.

But Israel was established as the spearhead nation, the point of the spear. And God saw fit to start there because that's where the ultimate conversion of the whole world is going to start.

It's going to start with the Jew, with Israel, with the Messiah. It's a beautiful, beautiful thing. And by the way, you've got to keep in mind that text in Exodus 19 where Moses predicts and says that Israel, and by the way, they'd just become a nation in Exodus when they came out of Egypt.

[20:54] They were birthed out of Egypt. And that was for all practical purposes when they really became a nation, Israel. And Moses is given the promise of God that Israel is going to become a nation of priests.

That's really important. A nation of priests. Now you've got to keep in mind Israel as a nation already had one tribe that was designated as the priestly tribe for the nation of Israel. And that was the tribe of Levi. And Levi was a direct descendant of Aaron who was a brother of Moses. Moses was a Levite also.

They were a pair of Levite brothers. And Aaron was a priest and Levi was the son out of which they came. So now he is saying that Israel is going to become a whole nation of priests.

Well, if one tribe, if one tribe, the tribe of Levi serves all the rest of the nation of Israel, then who are all twelve tribes as a nation of tribes, a nation of priests, who are they going to serve?

[22 : 09] All the rest of the world. All the rest of the world. All the Gentiles. But it has to start with Israel. Why?

Because that is linked to the promises of God. There will be no kingdom of heaven come to earth apart from Israel's involvement.

Israel is the key state. And by the way, guys, it ought to become intuitively obvious to you why Israel has been under such tremendous attack.

Going all the way back to Egypt with the effort to destroy all of the male children. Remember? All the males, babies born. The persecution started then, continues up through the Middle Ages, the Spanish Inquisition, and it was capped off with the Holocaust, six million Jews, murdered.

Why? What had they done? They were born. They were Jews. That was enough to eliminate them right there. And who was behind that whole thing?

[23 : 21] This has got satanic fingerprints all over it. Satan knows, Satan knows that he cannot get at God. So he gets at those who are vulnerable.

God isn't vulnerable. but God's people are. The nation of Israel is vulnerable. And who else does he hate? He hates you with a passion because you are also people of God.

And Paul, Peter said, be sober, be diligent, your adversary. Satan, walks about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

Joe, you're going to bust it. If he can eliminate all the Jews, then he can eliminate God's plan. Absolutely. And God's plan will be false work.

And you know, I want you to just keep this in mind because Revelation 19 and 20 makes it quite clear what Satan's end is going to be. And I don't know how much Satan knows, but I know he knows a lot more than I do.

[24 : 32] And I don't know how well he knows the scriptures, but Satan is evil, but he's not stupid. Big difference. And he can read as easily as you can what his end is going to be as it is described there in Revelation 19 and 20 that he is going to be dispatched.

Well, first of all, he'll be incarcerated in that bottomless pit. And then after that thousand years when he's released and the insurrection takes place again, then he will be dispatched to what is referred to as the lake of fire.

So his end is spelled out there and I cannot help but believe that he has read that, but do you think he believes it? I'll tell you the thing. The thing to keep in mind, keep in mind about Satan because it is human-like.

It is human-like also. And that is Satan has an insufferable ego. ego. You mean to tell me that he actually has the brass to think that he can displace God as was his efforts described in Isaiah 14, I will exalt my throne above the heavens, I will be like the Most High, and all the rest of it.

Do you think that he can actually do that? Well, of course he's not going to, but do you think that he believes that? Like I said, he's got an insufferable ego, and that's what's keeping him active, and he's always holding out for that possibility.

[26 : 16] Well, let's get back to our text here, all right? So he answered him not, and he said, I was not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But she came and worshipped him, saying, by the way, this is one of a number of times where Jesus receives worship.

it. And he never refuses it or discourages it. Isn't that interesting?

Only deity, only deity can legitimately receive worship. And the time is going to come in the New Testament when there are going to be those who will fall down at the feet of Peter and prostrate themselves before Peter.

And Peter will say, stand up! I myself am also just a man. Worship God. You don't worship any human being. And this woman falls at the feet of Jesus in a worshipful kind of attitude.

And I don't know exactly what she knew, but she knew the distance that separated her from this man was incalculable. She knows that. And she falls at his feet, and she obviously sees him as her only hope for her daughter.

[27 : 41] Probably she's tried to obtain help from other sources without any success. And the text says she worshipped him. Lord, help me! And he answered and said, now this just seems so cold and so cruel, doesn't it?

He answered and said, it is not me to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs. What? Who are the children?

Israel! The Jew! They are the children. Who are the dogs? Gentiles. Everybody else. Everybody else. The Jew saw two classes of people in the whole world.

The Jew and the Gentiles. I've given you the numbers before. Let me give them to you again. Because they still hold true. The Jewish people do not represent even one tenth of the world's population.

They have two tenths of one percent of the world's population is Jewish. It was so back then. It's still so now.

[29 : 01] That's their makeup. And the Jew sees everyone as Jew or Gentile. And if you are a Gentile, you are classified among the Jews.

They probably wouldn't call the Gentile this to their face, you know, like what Jesus is doing here. By the way, you read the New Testament, you get the impression that Jesus was not into political correctness.

He was into truth. That's what he was into. And sometimes truth hurts. But when he refers to Gentiles as dogs, the common reason given among Jews as to why and how they would be so unkind as to call Gentiles, which is anybody who isn't a Jew, dogs, is because of their diet.

The Jew had a strict diet. Not only did he have a strict order of worship in the synagogue and a strict day of the week and the Sabbath and a strict diet which included any kind of unclean meat or anything, the Jew couldn't even eat catfish because catfish didn't have scales.

Catfish had skins. So catfish and shrimp and oysters and all of that stuff was unclean. They couldn't eat that. But the Jews, while they had to forego all of that stuff, the Gentiles thrived on it.

[30 : 33] And so far as the Jews were concerned, Gentiles were dogs because they would eat anything. They would even eat pork. And when we get to the text about Jesus going over into the land of the Gadarenes, remember that's where the herd of swine is?

And these are Gentiles and they represent an economic loss to the community. And you can be sure they're not Jews because Jews aren't going to be raising swine.

They're not going to be raising pigs and butchering them. But the Gentiles were and that's another rabbit trail. So let's get back to the text. She calls him, as much as calls her a dog, and he says it's not appropriate.

The word meat is an old English word. It means appropriate. It's not fitting. It is not fitting to take the children's bread, in which case it is the truth that he is disseminating.

that's what he's referring to as the bread. The information that he is disseminating, and it has to do with what? The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[31 : 43] Now what do Gentiles know about the kingdom of heaven? Zilch. Nothing. Does not register with them at all.

Because the promise was never given to them, even though it's going to impact them and affect them. But the Jew, oh boy, you better believe it. They knew everything. They were thinking Messiah, Messiah, Messiah.

And it goes all the way back to Genesis chapter 3 when God made a promise. He didn't make many promises to Satan, but he made one there in Genesis 3.15.

He said the seed of the woman, which means the offspring, the seed of the woman is going to come into the world and Satan will strike him on his heel.

That means wound him, but it will be on his heel. And it says, and he, the seed of the woman, will crush the head of the serpent.

[32 : 51] And it's pretty difficult to survive a crushed head. seed. So that means that the seed of the woman, that will be Yeshua, will be the one who will do battle with Satan, and it will begin with the temptation, and it continues even to this day.

So what we've got here is, this is big picture stuff, guys. This is as big picture as it gets, what we're talking about here.

And from the time that promise was given in Genesis 315 through Moses, the Jewish people have longed for, and looked for, and pined for, and prayed for, and begged for the coming of the Messiah.

Every woman, every Jewish woman, when she was pregnant, she could only think how wonderful it would be to be the mother of that one seed that was promised way back in Genesis.

And they knew it was going to be some Jewish woman, just didn't know which one. And you know, the years passed, the centuries passed, the millennia passed, and Israel waited for 4,000 years.

[34 : 14] 4,000 years before the voice of John the Baptist would be heard, saying, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Behold, the Lamb of God. And here comes Jesus walking down the trail. 4,000 years they waited for that moment. And when he came, they received him not.

and long story short, through the rejection of Israel, God made available this Savior Jesus to the whole world, to everybody.

And it is through the fall of Israel that repentance and opportunity has come to who? Gentiles. The dogs.

Us. Wow! That is something. And Israel as a nation still remains blinded in their unbelief. And if you want a commentary on that, read Romans 9, 10, and 11.

[35 : 24] And it will explain where the Jew is now and where they will be because the time is coming when all Israel will be saved.

But, all Israel then will consist of only a tiny minority. And they will be the ones who will be incarcerated, I think, in Petra, awaiting the arrival of the Lord Jesus.

And when he comes, it's going to be something. All right, let's get back to the text. And this woman says, she's not going to take no for an answer. Listen, any mother worth her salt is not going to take no for an answer.

And this woman is no different. And she says, yes, Lord. She agrees. She agrees. She's not arguing. How dare you call us dogs? None of that.

She submits to that role. She knows what the Jews think of them. And she knows what she thinks of the Jews. And this kind of tit for tat went back and forth for years and years. Everybody was familiar with it.

[36 : 28] And she says, I understand that. I understand that. The bread that you come is not to be given to the children, children, but even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.

You know what I think happened here? Jesus melted. He just melted. He could not resist this woman's plea.

Her love for her daughter, and he was actually out of sync here with what was taking place, with what was the norm. And he is going to make an exception.

He's going to make an exception also when he goes to the Samaritans and confronts the woman at the well and a whole group. She goes back to the town and tells the people about what Jesus had told her and the whole town turns out and the Samaritans had a revival right then and there.

It's a beautiful thing. But that's in John chapter 4. We'll get there eventually maybe. So she says, Even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master's table.

[37 : 42] Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is your faith. Jesus was impressed with this woman's confidence in him and his ability to address the situation and she wants to acknowledge that.

And indeed she does. her daughter, the text says, Be it unto thee as thou wilt. And her daughter was healed from that hour.

Once again, how did all this happen? The answer is always the same. It's all wrapped up in the identity of Jesus of Nazareth. of said, so we maybe,