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Text: Matthew 15:29-39
Title: Jesus' Compassion in Ministry!

Intro: Last week we saw Jesus heal a Syrophenician woman's daughter because of her great faith. After healing the Gentile woman's daughter, Jesus moved from the region of Sidon and Tyre, and went into Decapolis. Decapolis was another Gentile region southeast of the Sea of Galilee. Decapolis was an area named for a league of ten cities in what is now called Jordan. Knowing the location of Jesus determines the people to whom He ministered.

Jesus went up into the mountain and sat there. The phrase "He sat there" indicates an attitude of teaching. This is the same posture He had when He taught His disciples and the people as in the sermon on the mount. Jesus' aim was to teach. But teaching was not what the people wanted. The people were anxious for bodily healing. In other words, the people were more anxious to receive earthly blessings than to secure the higher spiritual blessings Jesus came to bestow. Jesus always thinks first of the kingdom of Heaven. As disciples, we should seek first what Jesus Christ sets first before us.

- I. Meeting the Needs of the Hurting: ***Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them. The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel*** (vv. 30-31).

- A. Brotherly Sympathy: Walter Frederic Adeney said, "The people brought their afflicted friends, leading the blind and carrying the lame up the steep, broken mountain oath. It was the Christ Spirit that helped the poor sufferers to Christ. There is room for mutual helpfulness in the kingdom of Heaven. If we cannot save our brothers, we can bring them to the Savior" (Ages Librarian, Pulpit Commentary).

The people expressed their faith in bringing to Jesus the lame, crippled, blind, dumb, and many others and then laying them down at Jesus' feet. The verb here translated "laid" carries with it the sense of casting or throwing down in haste, yet not carelessly. The people brought their friends and laid them at the feet of Jesus. At the feet of Jesus is where we belong.

Notice, Jesus did not challenge them as He did the Syrophenician woman.

- B. Jesus Heals the hurting: The healing is stated in a few words, "And He healed them." Jesus does not ignore the hurting. He sees bodily distresses. He sees diseases and defects of the body. Not only does Jesus see defects, diseases, and distresses of the body, He has power to heal the body.

Jesus healed the lame, blind, crippled, the mute, maimed, and many others. The word "maimed" shows that Jesus healed people who suffered atrocities or accidents. Matthew also said that Jesus healed many others, which means that Jesus healed many other types of illness. Matthew's purpose for recording this is

he wanted the Jew to know who Jesus is. Matthew points out who Jesus healed in connection with Isaiah 35. Isaiah reveals the coming of the Messiah.

The multitude of spectators came to Jesus with expectation of seeing miracles done. Yet, the miracles of Jesus were beyond what they could imagine. The multitude wondered! The word “wondered” means they were amazed.

The multitude glorified the God of Israel. “They glorified the God of Israel,” points out that they are Gentiles. The Jews just glorified God as God. The Gentiles saw the hand of God and spontaneously praised God. This brings out an interesting point, for the Pharisees (Jewish Leaders) saw Jesus perform like miracles but claimed that Jesus performed the miracles through the power of Beelzebub (Matthew 12). The Jews rejected Jesus as the One sent from heaven and the source of eternal life. Yet these Gentiles, who grew up worshipping false gods, immediately recognized that Jesus is the God of Israel.

Seeing the necessities of the multitude Jesus called the disciples into council. Jesus tried their faith.

II. Meeting the Needs of the Hungry: (vv. 32-39)

Verse 32 says, ***“Jesus called unto Him His disciples, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with Me now three days and have nothing to eat: and I would not send them away fasting, lest haply they faint on the way.”***

In verse 32 we see Jesus is moved with compassion for these people just as He is moved with compassion for the people in Matthew 14. These people had been with Jesus for three days and Jesus was concerned about the people leaving Him without something to eat. He knew they would pass out from hunger on their way home if they did not get something to eat.

Jesus’ compassion: Jesus said, “I have compassion on the multitude. The word “compassion” means to have the bowels yearn, i.e., to feel sympathy, to pity.

There are references to Jesus’ compassion.

Isaiah 49:15 ***“Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.”***

Jeremiah 12:15 ***“And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return, and have compassion on them, and will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land.”***

Micah 7:19 ***“You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.”***

Matthew 9:36 ***“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”***

Matthew 14:14 ***“When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.”***

Matthew 20:34 ***“Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.”***

Verse 33 says, ***“And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?”*** The disciples questioned Jesus. Why would the disciples question Jesus when this is not the first time Jesus feed a multitude with fish and bread? Jesus feed the multitude of five thousand men with two fish and five loaves of bread. Their question was big with objection. They emphasized the impossibility of conducting the idea of feeding the people. The place is uninhabited; the multitude is numerous; the quantity of food required is enormous; and how can we, poor and needy as we are, help them? The miraculous power of Jesus to feed the multitude did not cross their minds. In Matthew 14 Jesus feed five thousand men with two fish and five loaves of bread.

- A. The amount of food: He has only seven loaves of bread and a few small fishes.
- B. The abundance of food: Seven full baskets remain after all have eaten their fill.

The feeding of the four thousand reveals Jesus power to prevent human suffering.