

# The Canaanite Woman from Tyre

📖 Matthew 15:21-28

👤 Pastor Jeremy Thomas

📅 March 9, 2016

🌐 fgbible.org

📍 Fredericksburg Bible Church

107 East Austin Street

Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

(830) 997-8834

**Q: Several Wednesday nights ago someone asked the question about, "If someone has taken the mark in the tribulation, do or can they still be saved? You said, "NO!" I thought as long as a person is still alive he has opportunity to be saved?"**

**A:** I'm glad you would ask this question. It is important that we all learn together and understand the Scriptures. This is correct, if someone takes the mark in the tribulation they cannot be saved. This does not mean that the opportunity is not still there but simply that they *will not* believe and be saved. We should be clear that the tribulation is a unique period of history and that the mark is a visible indicator during that time that the person has made his or her final decision to reject Christ and to worship the anti-Christ as God. The text of Rev 14:9-11 explicitly teaches that anyone who takes the mark will be in torment forever. "Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name." Since they will be in torment forever they cannot be saved. The text of Rev 16:2 is supportive of the mark as a visible indicator that a person has made their final decision because it isolates the first bowl judgment to those people who take the mark of the beast. "So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth; and it became a loathsome and malignant sore on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image." The text of Rev 20:4 indicates that only those who do not take the mark of the beast will be raised at the second advent to reign with Christ for the thousand years. "Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years." Since all who are saved will be raised to reign with Christ and none took the mark of the beast then by negation this verse teaches that none who receive the mark will be saved. 2 Thess 2:8-12 does not mention the mark but it does

shed further light on and confirmation of this truth. "Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness." I think the questioner is concerned about whether they have the opportunity. I'm not saying they won't have the opportunity. I'm saying that they have the opportunity during the tribulation but their taking the mark is a visible indicator that they rejected the opportunity and that that rejection is final so that all who take the mark will not be saved. Is that clear? I can give more detail (1<sup>st</sup> half, mid-point, 2<sup>nd</sup> half)?

Let's get back in the saddle by briefly recapping the progression of the Gospel of Matthew. What does Matt 1-11 do? It records the kingdom offer. Jesus was offering Himself as the King and demonstrating He had the power to restore the Davidic kingdom if they would repent. What does Matt 12 do? It records the rejection of the King and the kingdom offer. They would not repent. It is a vile rejection. What does Matt 13-28 do? It records the postponement of the kingdom. The arrival of the kingdom in history is now going to be delayed, from the human perspective. We're in Matt 15 which falls in the postponement section. What two things is Jesus doing in the postponement section? There are two basic things. One, He is training His disciples for their future ministry during the interadvent age. Two, He is preparing for His cross work. Which of the two things is His emphasis in our section? Is He training His disciples or preparing for His death? He's training His disciples. There is now an interadvent age that is opening up that had never before been revealed and since He is leaving His disciples need to be trained to minister during this age. As we follow the training we've seen there is a definite pattern; it begins with Jesus being opposed by the leadership of the nation, then He withdraws in order to avoid being prematurely arrested because it is not yet His time and while in withdrawal He trains His disciples and yet while training He is so popular among the people that they seek Him out and He does some miracles that bring Him into the spotlight and arouses more opposition from the leadership. So the pattern is opposition, withdrawal, training and miracles. This pattern will repeat until Jesus abandons the leadership of Israel and then He will begin to prepare for His cross work.

Last time we studied Matt 15:1-20 and here we saw part of the pattern; opposition from the leadership of Israel that will lead to the withdrawal section we will deal with tonight in 15:21ff. So let's review the opposition. In 15:1 the news of Jesus' miracles aroused the religious leaders at Jerusalem to send some top Pharisees and scribes to investigate. In 15:2, after observing the practices of Jesus and His disciples they ask, "Why do Your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread." This washing of the hands was a part of rabbinic tradition. In 15:3 Jesus answers their question with a more appropriate question, "Why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition." In 15:4 Jesus cited a commandment of God that they commonly transgressed, the responsibility of a son to honor his parents by

providing for them in their elderly age. In 15:5 they transgressed this law by pronouncing corban over their money so that it was dedicated to some other purpose and could not be used to help their parents. This was an evil thing to do and the parallel in Mark says they did many such things like this. It was all a charade; they did not keep the word of God, they kept their traditions. In 15:6 Jesus said their traditions invalidated the word of God. In 15:7 He called them hypocrites, mere actors and in 15:8-9 He applied the historical situation of Isaiah's day to the scribes and Pharisees of His own day. Both generations acted as if they loved God but neither loved anything but themselves and their ritual observance. In 15:10 Jesus used this as an opportunity to teach the crowds calling on them to "hear and understand" even though they did not have ears to hear and understand. As stated in Matt 13 He now teaches the crowds via parables saying in 15:11, "It is not what enters into the mouth that defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man." This statement contradicted the traditions of the Pharisees. They thought they were clean internally and wholly acceptable to God because they did not eat unclean food, but in reality they were filthy. In 15:12 Jesus' disciples thought He had gone too far in His criticism of their traditions, saying to Him, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?" They viewed the Pharisees as the true religious leaders of the nation and men deserving of respect but in 15:13 Jesus said that they were not planted among them as religious leaders by the Father but were planted among them by the evil one and would be uprooted. In 15:14 He says "Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit." It was treacherous to follow the Pharisees as they were going to destruction, a possible reference to the judgment in AD70. In 15:15 Peter said, "Explain the parable to us." In 15:16 Jesus rebuked them for needing explanation saying, "Are you still lacking in understanding also?" The disciples should have understood this parable. They did have ears to hear and understand. In 15:17 He brings the teaching down to a very basic level, "Do you not understand that everything that goes into the mouth" goes out the other end? Therefore, the things that go in can neither make one clean or unclean. Rather in 15:18, "the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man." Jesus' point was that it is what is inside a man that comes out that makes him unclean and not what enters a man. This was the exact opposite of the rabbinic tradition. They had no concept that man was unclean on the inside by nature and needed a righteousness to come to them from the outside. 15:19 explains the sinful nature, "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders." In 15:20 He concludes, "These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man." This is the essential teaching. At this point Jesus openly broke with the Pharisees and He urged His disciples to do the same lest they be guided by these blind leaders. Why did Matthew include this pericope? The main reason is to highlight the opposition arising from the leadership in Jerusalem. Jesus is becoming an increasingly confrontational figure and these confrontations are going to lead to His betrayal, arrest and execution.

Ok, next section. As a result of the opposition, what do we find next in the pattern in 15:21? Withdrawal. After opposition Jesus always withdraws. Why does He withdraw? In order to avoid being arrested prematurely. It was

not yet His time. What was it time to do? Train His disciples. His disciples need to be trained for their ministry during the coming interadvent age. So what we find in 15:21-28 is chiefly training of His disciples.

Note in 15:21 the training ground He took them to. Jesus went away from there, and withdrew into the district of Tyre and Sidon, also known as Phoenicia. Where are Tyre and Sidon? Is this Jewish territory? No, this is Gentile territory. Note that Phoenicia is north of Israel on the Mediterranean coastline. That area corresponds to modern day Lebanon and where Iran's proxy, Hezbollah, camps out. The war was along that front in 2006. This was an intensely Gentile region. Interestingly, in Matt 11:21 when Jesus pronounced doom on the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida where many of His miracles were done He said of Tyre and Sidon. "If the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." So He predicted a positive response from this region and now He is in the region and we get a taste of the response of one of the ladies from this region. This was Gentile territory and I can't think of any other time when He went into Gentile territory except when Joseph and Mary were instructed to take Him to Egypt for safekeeping against the evils of Herod the Great. So this is a significant withdrawal.

What was His intention taking them there? The parallel in Mark 7:24 says, "And when He had entered a house, He wanted no one to know of it; yet He could not escape notice." So it seems He went there to train His disciples. Training requires an atmosphere where you can concentrate and learn and you cannot do that when people are always bothering you or opposing you. So He went there to get away. Pentecost felt that, "The hostility of the religious leaders was so intense that Christ withdrew to a Gentile area where the religious leaders would not follow Him. Here, away from the hostility of the mob, He had an opportunity to spend time with the Twelve and to instruct them."<sup>1</sup> Yet, as the parallel in Mark 7 noted, "He could not escape notice." I want you to think about that. He was in a Gentile territory and yet "He could not escape notice." They knew about Him. They knew what He could do. As Glasscock says, "...His reputation had obviously already penetrated this region as well."<sup>2</sup>

Now this region, if you know your OT, was filled with Canaanites who worshipped Baal. The nice little girl Jezebel who married into the royal house was from this region and imported Baalism into Israel. Baal was the storm god and so the religion of Baalism was a fertility cult. It involved all kinds of sexual excesses in Temple prostitution that were designed to manipulate Baal to send rain to make their crops and flocks grow. It was these people that Elijah went up against at Mt Carmel many centuries before. Anyway, the Canaanites were a filthy people to the Jews and you have to understand that as background to the significance of the interaction.

In 15:22, And a Canaanite woman from that region came out and *began* to cry out. The parallel in Mark refers to her as "a Gentile, of the Syrophoenician race" which was simply "the more contemporary name for her nationality."<sup>3</sup> The expression *began* to cry out is an imperfect tense and it is probably rightly translated as an inceptive imperfect and so emphasizes the beginning of her crying out. The imperfect stresses that she kept crying out and that indeed is the tenor of the passage. She kept doing it to the point of annoyance. But here is the beginning of the annoyance. Note what she is saying; "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David." What do you

think of her use of those two titles? Lord and Son of David. Do you think she knew who Jesus was? You better believe she knew who He was. It was well-known that Jesus was a descendant of David. It is fascinating that in the Gospels no scribe, Pharisee or Sadducee ever says that Jesus is unqualified to be the King because He is not a descendant of David. Yet this is all they would have to show to rightly reject Him. The fact is they knew He was a descendant of David and in that sense qualified to be the rightful heir of the throne of David. Even this woman in the region of Tyre and Sidon knew that Jesus was the Messiah. This was a well-known and established fact. Pentecost says, "We note that this Gentile addressed Christ by a double messianic title, for both "Lord" and "Son of David" were messianic names (cf. Ps. 110:1; 2 Sam 7:16)."<sup>4</sup> Lenski says, "She plainly reveals that she has knowledge of the Messianic hopes of Israel and had heard that they were being connected with Jesus as the promised great descendant of King David."<sup>5</sup>

And what was this Gentile woman's request? Have mercy on me...my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed. We might comment that we in the West probably do not have a high enough estimation of the amount of demon possession that prevails in our world. And if you even explain certain phenomenon such as suicide bombers as being demon possessed you will be labeled a kook! That's probably because of the naturalism that prevails in our educational system that mocks any concept of the supernatural. But in any case, it is enough to point out that our estimation of the amount of demon possession in the world is skewed far below reality and while we don't want to attribute too much to demon possession we certainly want to be more open to its reality.

So we have this woman with a daughter who is cruelly demon-possessed and Jesus never denies that this woman was right in her estimation. She was right. The girl was demon-possessed. She's requesting mercy. What's mercy? Contextually it's a request for compassion in a time of need. This woman has a serious need.

And what I want you to observe is Jesus's response in 15:23. But He did not answer her a word. Now that seems very cold. Where is the Lord's compassion? David Smith said, "There is no incident in our Lord's earthly ministry more puzzling than this."<sup>6</sup> Why did the Lord just ignore her? What is His problem? He doesn't have a problem at all. What is happening here is something that can only be understood by the dispensationalist. Who's the dispensationalist? The dispensationalist is the one who holds that there is a distinction in God's dealings with Israel and the Church. He is the one who recognizes that God has covenanted Himself to Israel and that He has not covenanted Himself to Gentiles. He has no covenant obligation to Gentiles. Therefore, Jesus is not obligated to this Gentile in any way. So Jesus is thinking in terms of God's covenants and the obligation is to the Jews, they are the direct recipients of the covenants. Gentiles can only participate in blessings from the covenants when they are mediated through the Jews and I hope that is one thing you come to see in this passage. But some will object that Jesus had dealt with Gentiles before. He dealt with the Gentile centurion in Matt 8, said He had not seen such great faith with anyone in Israel. He had healed many from Syria and the Decapolis and from beyond Jordan in Matt 4:24-25. So He had shown mercy to Gentiles before. What is the difference with this Gentile? This Gentile lives outside of the land. In the original terms of the Abrahamic Covenant, Gen 12:3 says "in you all the

families of the earth will be blessed." The terms extend to the whole "earth" and now that Jesus is outside the land the dispensing of the blessing is to be mediated by the Jewish people so Jesus did not answer her a word. He's limiting His ministry outside the land because that remains for Israel to carry out. Shepard says, "In Galilee He had freely ministered to the Gentiles who attended His preaching; but now the case is different. HE had come to this Gentile country. If He should engage in extended ministries here He would forever close the door to all further effort on behalf of the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." This would be to defeat His wider ministry to the world later through the Jews, who were to be His emissaries when enlightened. For the same reason no other incident is recorded of any work done in Phoenicia except this one significant cure." That leads me to think that what Jesus is doing here by way of training His disciples is paving the way for their later administration of the gospel as they carry it outside the land to Gentiles in the Book of Acts. What Jesus is doing here was probably not understood but later as the plan of God progressed and Jesus was being rejected in Jerusalem and they were being forced out to Judea and Samaria and to the remotest parts of the earth they would understand that Jesus was paving the way for Gentiles to enter into the Church during the interadvent age. That is why I say His response is a complete enigma for all who reject the dispensational distinction between God's dealings with Israel and God's dealings with the Church. God deals directly with Israel through the covenants and only indirectly with Gentiles through Israel's mediation of the covenant blessings to the outside world. That's heavy theology but that's dispensationalism 101.

But notice in verse 23 that she continues her request and this will teach us another fascinating lesson. And His disciples came and implored Him, saying, "Send her away, because she keeps shouting at us." Literally, "she keeps shouting behind us." She was following them around calling out verse 22, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed." And this must have gone on and on because in the Greek the disciples came and implored Him is another imperfect tense and it means this one is probably continuative. They continued to implore Him over and over. This is a great section on studying imperative verbs. And they continually were saying to Him, "Hey, send this lady away, she's driving us crazy." They were all saying this. But why was Jesus not already doing something about it? Why had He not already sent her away? Obviously He is training them in something else. Jesus was so purposeful. He didn't do anything without a purpose. It was all with intent.

In 15:24 He finally speaks to the woman and said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." This was His mission. Jesus was sent exclusively to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. They alone are the covenant nation and that is why we keep saying that the kingdom offer was a genuine offer. That is why we may say that a summary of the entire gospels is that He came to His own and His own received Him not. Israel is His covenant people. Now here they are seen under the metaphor of lost sheep. They are His sheep, His flock. He was the Shepherd and He had come to gather His lost sheep, Israel only. This Gentile was not in that flock. He was not sent to gather those who were not of His flock so He is not going to go after her.

In 15:25 we start to see the next lesson come further into focus. But she came and *began* to bow down before Him, saying, "Lord, help me! You can only imagine what this woman was going through with a demon-possessed child. Some parents think they have it bad but this woman really did have it bad. The word "demon-possessed" means that "The demon did not own the girl but apparently controlled, tormented, and injured her." The mother was having to deal with a very difficult situation. She now came and *began* to bow down before Him. This is another imperfect tense. She *began* to bow, either inceptive or continuative, meaning to emphasize the beginning of the bowing or she remained in a bowed position. The Greek word bow is *προσκυνεω* and can mean "worship." If she was not worshipping she was certainly in the posture of worship. This woman would not let Jesus go and certainly by now you start to see the lesson of persistence in prayer.

Yet in 15:26 we see that even this level of persistence was not sufficient for a positive answer. And He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She is rejected again. He is certainly trying to teach her and all Gentiles a lesson. Who are the children? They are the nation Israel. Who are the dogs? They are Gentiles. As harsh as it may sound there was no more common term used by Jews to describe the Gentile heathen. Jesus even used it. What is the bread that belongs to the nation Israel? It is what is their's by right and privilege of being the covenant nation. Jesus says it is not good to take the rights and privileges that belong to the covenant nation Israel and cast them to the heathen Gentile. The word good is *καλος* and means "right, proper or fitting." In fact, it could not be done. God had made His covenant blessings contingent only upon Himself. Even if Israel rejected the blessings He could not take them away and give them to the Gentiles. Jesus' statement is a total rejection of replacement theology, the idea that the Church has superseded or taken over the place of the nation Israel in the plan of God. As Toussaint says, "It is very clear that even though Christ finally does heal the Gentile woman, the preeminent place of Israel is never lost." Israel will always be the children, the ones to whom belong the rights and privileges in the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants. These will never be taken away and given to Gentiles.

In 15:27 this woman seems to have learned the lesson when she says Yes, Lord. She agreed that she has no right to the rights and privileges under the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants. In this humble position we see that she might receive blessing. Shepard says, "Two lessons did she learn with that instinct-like rapidity which Christ's personal Presence—and it alone—seemed ever again to call forth, just as the fire which fell from heaven consumed the sacrifice of Elijah. "Yea, Lord," it is as Thou Sayest: heathenism stands related to Judaism as the house-dogs to the children, and it were not meant to rob the children of their bread in order to give it to dogs. But Thine own words show, that such would not now be the case. If they are house-dogs, then they are the Master's, and under His table, and when He breaks the bread to the children, in the breaking of it the crumbs must fall all around....heathenism may be like the dogs, when compared with the children's place and privileges; but He is their Master still, and they under His table; and when He breaks the bread there is enough and to spare for them—even under the table they eat of the children's crumbs."<sup>77</sup> The next thing she says is a marvelous statement; but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. There were two

Greek words for "dog." One is *κυν* and referred to an unclean street animal. The second one is *κυναριον* and refers to a family pet or lapdog. The latter word was used by both Jesus and the woman. The dogs that fed on the crumbs of the master's table was a family pet. This word admits a relationship of the dog to the master but subservient to the children. The children sat at the table and the master gave them bread. The pet dog sat under the table. The woman keenly picked up on the position of the pet under the master's table and humbly admitted that while she sat under the table from there she could feed on the crumbs of bread which fell from their masters table as the children dropped them. What this woman recognized was of great theological significance. The blessings and privileges of the covenants rightly belong only to the nation Israel, the children, but even the Gentiles, the family pets, could receive blessings and privileges when they are mediated to them by the nation Israel.

This great persistence finally paid off and at last, in 15:28 Jesus said to her, "O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish." The parallel in Mark 7:29 says "Because of this" Jesus said to her, "go, the demon has gone out of your daughter." This means that it was this last statement by the woman that resulted in the answer. What she had done was admit that only the nation Israel had direct access to the rights and privileges of the covenants and if she was to receive any blessing it would be through that nation. Plummer says, "She does not claim to be one of the children, and has no thought of depriving them of their bread. She accepts the position of one of the family dogs. But such animals are members of the household, and they get what the children do not want. Without confusing the difference between Jews and heathen, and without depriving the Jews of anything that is theirs, He may grant her request."<sup>8</sup> As such the Lord commended her faith as great. The woman persisted and by persisting demonstrated great faith. As with the Gentile centurion, this faith by a Gentile was unexpected. The final statement says, And her daughter was healed at once. He original says "from that hour" and is indicative in Matthew of something having happened at that very moment. The parallel in Mark says that when the woman got home "she found the child lying on the bed, the demon having left" seeming to imply that the demon's control of the child had left the child exhausted.

In summary, in 15:1, having been opposed by the scribes and Pharisees of Jerusalem, Jesus withdrew into the Gentile district of Tyre and Sidon. Mark adds that He went into a house, hoping not to be noticed. He had gone there for peace and quiet to train His disciples. In 15:22 a Canaanite woman recognized Him as the Messiah referring to Him as Lord and Son of David, both Messianic titles. She requested mercy be shown her since her daughter was demonized such that she was constantly injured and under the control of the demon. In 15:23 Jesus ignored her because in His estimation she was not recognizing that blessing comes through the Jews and it was the Jew's mission to take blessing to Gentiles outside the land. Nevertheless, she kept on shouting at them from behind and the disciples implored Him to send her away. In 15:24 He answered her a second time saying, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." She was a Gentile and not among the lost sheep of Israel. His mission did not concern her. In 15:25 she did not give up. "But she came and took the posture of worship saying, "Lord, help me!" In 15:26 He again rejected her saying, "It is not good to take the children's bread and



throw it to the dogs." The children were Israel, the bread were the rights and privileges that belonged to Israel and she was a dog, a heathen Gentile. In 15:27 she learned and acquiesced to the lesson, "Yes, Lord;" and added this remarkable statement, "but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their master's table." She did not presume to take the position of the natural children but condescended to her position as the family pet that picked up whatever scraps the children cast aside. Upon this statement in 15:28 Jesus answered saying, "O woman, your faith is great, it shall be done for you as you wish. And her daughter was healed from that hour."

In conclusion, what can we learn from this fascinating exchange? First, Matthew alone records the startling positive response of Gentiles in the midst of that generation of Israel that went negative. He seems to be fascinated by the predictive nature of these positive responses. They began with the wise men from Babylon who came to Jerusalem looking for the King of the Jews. Upon learning of his birthplace not one Jew followed them six miles down the road to see for themselves. On a second occasion it was also demonstrated by the Gentile centurion who said, "There's no need to come under the roof of my house. Just say the word, for I am a man of authority like you and I tell one man to do this and another to do that and it is done." Jesus said of this Gentile He had not seen such faith in all the land of Israel. Now for a third time we see it by way of a Canaanite woman living in a Gentile country through her persistent pleas to be shown mercy by the Lord, the Son of David. This response by Gentiles was of high interest to Matthew, as he in hindsight, saw how it foreshadowed things to come. Second, persistence in prayer is sometimes required to receive an answer to prayer. James 4:2 says, "you do not have because you do not ask." Sometimes we have to ask and ask and ask. God wants us to ask and ask and ask. The incident of delayed answering of prayer shows that sometimes we have to learn something before God will answer our prayer. The woman had to learn her place as a Gentile relative to the nation Israel. When she learned her place, that she was not worthy, and accepted it, Jesus answered her prayer. Third, Israel has the preeminence as the covenant people of God and Gentiles only have access to the blessings as mediated by Israel. That is why God originally said to Abraham, "and through you all the families of the earth will be blessed." That is why God blessed Cornelius in Acts 10 where it says, "there was a man at Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion... a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, and gave many alms to the Jewish people and prayed to God continually." Cornelius recognizes that blessing comes through the Jew and because of that God sent Peter to Him to begin the Gentile branch of the Church. Fourth, Israel will always be His sheep, His children and nothing can ever change that. There is no such thing as replacement theology, supersessionism, the idea that the Church has replaced Israel or the Church is the true Israel or any of that kind of idea. God is a covenant making, covenant keeping God and the terms of that contract as originally given must persist until fulfillment of the terms exactly as He stated them to the people whom He stated them to. Fifth, the main reason this pericope is included by Matthew is to show that Jesus was training His disciples for their mission outside the land to Gentiles by going ahead of them and ministering in their territories. He would not take over their mission and they probably did not understand all that was implied but they would understand later in the Book of Acts. Both Matthew and Acts are transitional books and for that reason alone they are critical

to understanding the plan of God. Matthew shows why there was a transition, because that generation of Israel rejected the kingdom offer. Acts shows what the transition looked like as the church began in Jerusalem with Jews, went out to Judea and Samaria and finally to the remotest parts of the earth with Gentiles. Matthew therefore prepares the way for Acts.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, p 244.

<sup>2</sup> Ed Glasscock, *Matthew*, p 324.

<sup>3</sup> John F. Walvoord, *Matthew: Thy Kingdom Come*, p 118.

<sup>4</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, p 244.

<sup>5</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *Interpretation of Matthew*, p. 594, quoted by Toussaint, *Behold the King*, p 195.

<sup>6</sup> David Smith, *The Days of His Flesh*, p. 248, quoted by Toussaint, *Behold the King*, p 195.

<sup>7</sup> Shepard quoted by J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, p 244-45.

<sup>8</sup> Plummer quoted by Toussaint, *Behold the King*, p 196.