

MATTHEW 15

THE PHARISEES AND SCRIBES COME FROM JERUSALEM (15:1-9)

St. John Chrysostom on why traditions cannot contradict God's commands:

The issue of transgressing the traditions of the elders had gotten so inverted that they were insisting that their own commandments be kept even if God's commandment was violated. They exercised so much obsessive control that the issue finally became a matter of formal legal accusation. But the indictment would instead fall against them in two ways. They themselves were instituting new practices and were devising punishments in regard to their own observances while placing no value on those instituted by God.

THE THINGS WHICH MAKE A PERSON UNCLEAN (15:10-20)

Blessed Theophylact on the defiling power of our thoughts:

Food does not remain within but passes out below, not at all polluting a man's soul, for it does not remain inside. But thoughts are engendered within and remain there, and when they come out, that is, proceed to deed and act, they pollute the man.

THE FAITH OF THE CANAANITE WOMAN (15:21-28)

Blessed Theophylact on faithfully asking things of Christ:

If we desire to obtain something, nothing prevents us from obtaining what we desire. Notice that even if saints should ask on our behalf, as the apostles did for the woman, still, we accomplish even more when we ask for ourselves.

CHRIST HEALS AND FEEDS A GREAT CROWD (15:29-39)

St. Hilary of Poitiers on Christ mercifully feeding His people:

The Lord has compassion on this hopeful following of believers and says they have been with Him for three days! Lest they weaken in the course of their worldly lives, in their workaday world, He wants now to feed them with His food and fortify them with His bread. In this way they can complete the formidable task of the entire journey.

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Quote Sources: Manlio Simonetti, editor. *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Matthew Ia and Ib* (IVP)

Blessed Theophylact. *The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel According to St. Matthew* (Chrysostom Press)

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