

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Food from the Master's Table

Scripture: Mark 7:24-30

Code: 41-34

Let's open the Word of God to the seventh chapter of Mark...seventh chapter of Mark.

Now remember that Mark is in Rome when he writes this gospel. Mark is writing from Rome and he's writing an account of the life and death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ for Gentile readers, primarily. Obviously it extended to everyone but his primary goal is to write for the Gentile world.

It is then important to Mark that he communicates in his gospel that salvation extends to the whole world. You wouldn't get that message if you just talked to the Jews of New Testament times. They viewed Gentiles as outcasts. They viewed them as aliens from the covenants of God, separated from the life of God, the purpose of God...to borrow some of the language of the Apostle Paul. They saw the Gentile world as cursed, under divine judgment and they alone were the ones who would receive the great benedictions and benefits of salvation.

But that only reflected their misunderstanding of the Old Testament. They had become very isolated from the Gentile world and generally speaking hostile to the Gentiles around them. But that was not the attitude of our Lord and nor was that what the Old Testament promised.

For example, in the book of Isaiah it comes very clear to us that there is only one God for the whole world...only one God for the entire world. Isaiah 42 says, "Thus says God the Lord who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and its offspring, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it." This is God, the only God. "I am the Lord, I have called you, Israel, in righteousness. I will hold you by the hand and watch over you and I will appoint you as a covenant to the people as a light to the nations to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the dungeon, and those who dwell in darkness from the prison. I am the Lord, that is My name. I will not give My glory to another nor My praise to graven images. Sing to the Lord a new song. Sing His praise from the end of the earth, you who go down to the sea and all that is in it, you islands and those who dwell in them. Let the wilderness and its cities lift up their voices, the settlements where Kedar inhabits. Let the inhabitants of Sela sing aloud. Let them shout for joy from the tops of the mountains. Let them give glory to the Lord and declare His praise in the coastlands."

Everywhere in the world, praise the Lord. He is the true God, the only God, the Creator God, the Redeemer God, the One who is to bring the light of salvation to the ends of the earth, to the nations.

In Isaiah 45 verse 5, "I am the Lord, there is no other. Besides Me, there is no God." There is only one God...only one God, no other gods, all the idols of the world are not gods. That is the foundation of the reality of the truth that there is only one God therefore there is only one true religion. The world is full of false religions, they are all false except the true religion which is worshipping the true God who is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and also the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And from the beginning, it is the intention of God to be the God of the entire earth, to ring the globe with the glory of His salvation.

Isaiah 49, "Listen to Me, O islands, pay attention, you peoples from afar. The whole world needs to listen. There is only one true God. There is one Redeemer," verse 7, "the Redeemer of Israel is the only Redeemer, there is no other. There is only one Savior, the Savior of Israel is the Savior of the whole world."

Isaiah is clear on the fact that there is one God who is, according to verse 6 of Isaiah 49, the light of all the nations. The nations of the world throughout their history have always been engulfed in all kinds of false religions. Unless they come to the true God, the God revealed on the pages of Scripture, who is the only true God and unless they come to Him through the one way, the one light, the One who is the source of life, namely the Lord Jesus Christ, there is no salvation, there is no forgiveness of sin, there is no escape from hell. There is no hope of eternal heaven.

But that hope from the Old Testament is the hope of the whole world. The Jews were unwilling to embrace that. They had long been unwilling to embrace that, note the story of Jonah who rather than bring the message of salvation and forgiveness of sin from the true God, went the other way in disobedience for fear that the Ninevites might repent and be benefitted by the grace of God. They hated the idea of Gentile salvation in Jonah's day and they rejected it in the day of Jesus, as well. But Scripture is clear, there is only one God for the whole world and there's only one Savior for the whole world and that is why in John 4:42 and 1 John 4:14 Jesus is identified as the Savior of the world...the Savior of the world. What that means is He's the only Savior the world has....He is the only Savior the world has. That is why the Great Commission says, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." That's a Matthew version of the Great Commission. The Luke 24 version says, "Go and announce to all the nations forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus Christ." He is the only Savior, there is no other Savior, there is no other name given among men whereby you must be saved, then the name of Jesus Christ who is the Way, the Truth and the Life and no one comes to the Father but by Him.

The Old Testament even gets specific. In Psalm 87 it says things like, "Salvation will extend to Egypt, salvation will extend to Babylon, salvation will extend to Rahab. And it even says in Psalm 87 that salvation will extend to Tyre. That's significant because Tyre, the region of Phoenicia in which Tyre was the city, was the center and source of the worship of Baal. Baal worship polluted and corrupted

the northern kingdom of Israel so severely that they never recovered from the idolatry and the corruption and were assaulted by the Assyrians and taken away into captivity in 722 B.C. from which they never returned. Baal worship was horrific and horrendous with deadly and terminal and permanent consequences, and yet the very place from which it originated, the very home of Jezebel would know the salvation of God. That's the promise of Psalm 87.

Salvation has always intended to be to the world. If you ask the question, "Then why in John 4 did Jesus say, 'Salvation is of the Jews?'" Why...in Matthew 10 verses 5 and 6...did Jesus say, 'I have not come but for the lost sheep of the house of Israel?'" The answer is that Israel was never intended to be the end of God's saving purpose but the means to the end. The reason our Lord came to Israel was to bring salvation to Israel so that Israel could be the means to Gentile salvation. And while the nation rejected, there were enough who believed the Twelve, the 120, the 500 in Galilee who then took the gospel on the heels of the Great Commission to the ends of the earth. We're a part of the fruit of that, aren't we? We're the Gentiles who make up the church, along with those Jews who have come to embrace their Messiah. We're the fruit of that early generation of believers who were the means and the first evangelists were Jewish. The early church was Jewish, three thousand converted on the Day of Pentecost, thousands more as the weeks rolled on, who began to extend the gospel and fulfill the Great Commission.

So when the Bible says salvation to the Jew, it's always to the Jew first, Romans 1, and also to the Gentiles. And there's a statement in the text before us, look at Mark 7 verses 24 to 30, a very important little statement here, verse 27, "Let the children be satisfied first. Let the children be satisfied first." We're going to see the meaning of that but it's the same thing as saying that salvation is to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. Israel was never intended to be the end of God's saving purpose, but the means, the witnessing people. And there were enough of them empowered by the Holy Spirit, as we read from Acts 2, empowered by the Holy Spirit to go out and preach in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost part of the earth. And very soon they turned their world upside down and they reached across oceans to other places and the gospel has moved consistently since then to engulf the globe. And when you look at a glimpse of heaven, in Revelation chapter 5, you will see gathered around the throne of God people from every tongue and tribe and people and nation. And they're all singing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." There's only one true God. There's only one true Savior. There's only one true salvation and it's in that God through that Savior, through His death and resurrection and faith in Him that brings salvation. All other religions are lies. They are damning lies. This is the truth.

If you read the gospels, you say, "Well Jesus went only to Israel. He spent all His times with the Jews. Just briefly did He ever go out of the land of Israel. Are you sure this is the plan for the world?"

This is not an isolated religious experience meant for the Jews and no one else. This is rather the only salvation for the whole world. We get a glimpse of that here in the story in Mark 7 verses 24 to

30. Here Jesus leaves Israel and He goes on a very long foray deep into Gentile territory. He's in to the last year of His ministry. The gospel ministry in Galilee has been going on for over a year. There are not a lot of believers. Most have rejected, the Pharisees and Sadducees hate Him, they're looking to kill Him. There will be a national rejection and a cry for His death soon to come. But there will be enough Jews in the Kingdom to carry the message to the world.

You have then in this story a preview of that ministry to the rest of the world. Now verse 24 begins, "Jesus got up and went away from there to the region of Tyre." The region of Tyre would be in the country known as Phoenicia...Phoenicia has two famous cities, Tyre and Sidon. This account of Mark is paralleled in Matthew 15 verses 21 to 28 and Matthew says, "Tyre and Sidon," they're two coastal cities, twenty miles apart, famous, famous cities...famous in history, famous in the Old Testament, as I told you, quoted in Psalm 87, famous because of the conquering of Alexander the Great. They are the main cities in Gentile country, Phoenicia, north and west of Galilee, pressing against the Mediterranean coast. Jesus went there. He didn't go there for a day. He didn't go there for a few days. He went to Tyre and He was there a while, we don't know how long. And then He went 20 miles and Tyre was 50 miles away from Capernaum, Galilee...Sea of Galilee area. Then He went 20 miles north and He went through Sidon, the sister city. We don't know how long He was there. And then He followed the highway east back across the mountains of Lebanon, a very circuitous route, even going further north than Sidon, and going through the mountains and down to the south, east of the Sea of Galilee and then back toward the Sea of Galilee in the middle of Decapolis which didn't begin until the southern part of the Sea of Galilee, was a Gentile area called Decapolis, a Greek word for "ten cities."

This is a very long trip. He would have walked at least...if He just took a direct route...120 to 150 miles. It took weeks, maybe months. There are no great teaching events in Tyre. There are no great teaching events in Sidon. In all the weeks that He was trekking through the challenging trails of the mountains of Lebanon, there was no indication that anything happened. He had with Him His Twelve Apostles. The assumption is, the rejection of Galilee is fixed, now it's time to turn to these men and train them. He's already reached the point where He only explains the parables to them, not the crowds. Now it's time to intensify their training. And so, He goes on this long circuitous trip.

Mark tells us a little about it. There's a healing of a woman's daughter here. And then when He finally comes down and drops in to Decapolis, there are more healings and there's a specific healing of a blind man and there's the feeding of the four thousand...the Gentile crowd in Decapolis. So this is where we begin to go with Jesus on this long, prolonged trip

"He went into the region of Tyre...it says...and when He had entered a house He wanted no one to know of it." This indicates to me that this is a private tour. This is Jesus with the Twelve. And the focus is going to be on making sure they get it, they understand it. However, He couldn't escape notice.

Jesus coming in to town with twelve guys...they would be noticed. Do you think they knew who Jesus was? This is deep into Gentile territory. This is 50 miles from Capernaum. Yes, absolutely they knew who He was. If you will go back to chapter 3 of Mark and verse 7, it says, "Jesus withdrew to the Sea with His disciples," that's the lake in Galilee. "A great multitude from Galilee followed, also people from Judea, also people from Jerusalem," Mark 3:8, "people from Idumea to the east beyond the Jordan, and people from...where?...Tyre and...what?...and Sidon. A great number of people heard of all that He was doing and came to Him." It says the same thing in Luke 6:17. So they knew about Him. The word about this miracle worker had spread and there were people who came from Tyre and Sidon and were exposed to His ministry. Perhaps this woman was one of them.

She's certainly very familiar with Jesus. She not only knows what He's capable of doing, she even knows who He is. My guess is that she had been there in Galilee, probably for a long enough time to really be sure about this person Jesus. She had been there, in those crowds.

You remember that it tells us in the New Testament that if the miracles that were done in Capernaum had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented. Well this is one of the ladies that would have repented because she did repent. Not because of what she saw in Tyre and Sidon, but because what she must have seen in Capernaum. So Jesus goes into Gentile territory. This is a preview of what is to come when the gospel goes to the ends of the earth. This is a personal affirmation from Jesus that salvation belongs outside Israel.

Let's meet this lady. Verse 25, "After hearing of Him," ah, there we go, she's hearing that He's there. "A woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately came and fell at His feet. Now the woman was a Gentile." Matthew says she was a Canaanite. Bad enough to be a Gentile, worse to be a Canaanite cause the Canaanites were cursed by God and they were supposed to be exterminated, there shouldn't be any Canaanites left. So she's vestiges of a cursed race and a Syrophenician.

Humm, what does that mean? Well Phoenicia was the name of the country, but under a Roman general, Ptolemy, who ruled there for a while. He had annexed Phoenicia to Syria, so Syria and Phoenicia became one and she was a Syrophenician. Her influences were all to be rejected by the Jews. First of all, she was a woman, that was bad enough. And then she was a Canaanite, the general category of Gentile, of course. But being a Syrophenician identified her, of course, with the Romans. She was therefore as a Canaanite corrupted by Baal worship and as somebody in a Romans influence culture corrupted doubly by the gods of the Romans. And in the city of Tyre, of course, that's where Jezebel lived, and that's where Baal worship originated. But they also had the Roman gods and there's some evidence that they worshiped a god named Astarte. Astarte was the goddess of beauty and the moon goddess and Astarte is a Greek name for Ashtoreth and you will remember that Baal and Ashtoreth were worshiped by Israel of old. So they made a transition from Baal and Ashtoreth to the Astarte version, so they were just engulfed in idolatry. The Jews had been

cleansed of idolatry when they came back from the Babylonian captivity.

So this woman had everything going against her. She was an outcast, a reject. She would have been lower than a Jewish tax collector who sold his soul to Rome to buy a tax franchise to extort money out of his people and he would be the lowest of all the Jews. She would be lower as a Gentile, Canaanite, Syrophenician woman. For her to come to Jesus would, in the minds of the Jews, be a discredit to Jesus for even allowing a woman like that in His presence. But the Lord is going to show that this is the story that gives us an example and a model of the Gentile salvation to come.

So she comes. Now she has a problem. She kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. She kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. Matthew says the demon was an unclean spirit...an unclean spirit.

In a sense, all demons are unclean. Demons are fallen angels who operate in the kingdom of darkness. They indwell unbelievers. This is a little girl. This is a young girl, an unmarried girl under the age of twelve, thirteen, when people got married. Who knows? Eight, nine, ten...seven...who knows? A demon-possessed child. Horrific experience for a mother. I think much more common in the world today than we understand or the demons want us to understand.

Well Jesus arrives in Tyre. Tries to find some privacy but can't hide. She hears that He's there. She shows up. Her heart is broken because she has a little daughter, Mark tells us it's a little daughter, yes, and this daughter has an unclean spirit. The unclean aspect would probably mean that the demon was manifesting itself in some kind of immoral conduct in a child. Horrible, horrible situation, and her heart is grieved and broken and she has nowhere to turn.

Do you think she had gone through whatever ceremonies her idol gods required? Probably. Do you think she had tried to appeal to whatever deities she had been taught existed?

Sure. Whatever she had done in the past, she had lost all confidence in them. She is now doing what 1 Thessalonians 1:9 says the Thessalonians did, "They turned from idols to the living God."

Whenever you talk about idols and the living God, it's because there's a contrast between a living God and dead idols. Read Isaiah 44 and watch how foolish it is to make a god out of a piece of wood. She's done with that. She would have repented if Jesus had been in Tyre and Sidon and done what He had done because she's now here repenting from what she experienced, or what she heard about that He had done in Galilee. She now knows that she's the one who can help her and He's the only one who can help her.

In fact, her faith is so amazing that in Matthew's account, Matthew 15:21 to 28, the last verse, verse 28, Jesus says, "You have great faith." You don't just have faith, you have mega faith, you have big faith, strong faith, great faith. So she comes to Jesus. We don't know how all of that came about, but she comes to Him.

Now, at this particular point I want you to see that faith...let's just talk about this woman's great faith...faith has to be placed in the right object. It has to be placed in the right object. You hear people today say, "I believe...I'm a believer, I have great faith." In whom? In what? Faith has to have an object. You have to put your trust in something valid, something true, someone true. You can't put your faith in yourself. People say, "I have faith in myself. I have faith that things are going to work out." Faith in what? Faith in chance? She had faith in Him. He's the only legitimate object of faith, there's no salvation in any other.

So, she goes to Him, verse 26, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. She kept asking Him and asking Him. What does that tell you? He didn't respond. Now, you say, "Is He lacking in compassion?" We know better than that, right? "Is He lacking in affection?" We know better than that. "Is He lacking in sympathy?" We know better than that. What is the delay?

Well let's go to Matthew's account and we'll fill in the blanks, this is really interesting. Matthew 15...Matthew 15 in verse 22, picks up the story. She comes, she says, "Have mercy on me, Lord. Have mercy on me, Lord." Oh, that's good. "Lord, Son of David." Oh, now we get the picture. She believes in someone she knows to be the Lord and the Son of David. Wow! And the dispenser of mercy. There's so much in that, it's really amazing.

If you need mercy, then you're not asking for justice, right? She's not saying, "I'm worthy of this. I deserve this. I should receive this." She's saying, "I'm not worthy." This is sheer mercy. "I need mercy, Lord, on behalf of my horrendously, tragic life with a demon-possessed little girl. Be merciful to me." This is like the Publican in the temple beating his chest in Luke 18 saying, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." Mercy assumes unworthiness. This woman's theology is pretty sound, at that point. She comes to the right object and she comes with the right attitude, okay? She comes to the right object for her faith, who is the Lord. She comes with a right attitude, an attitude of humility, brokenness and penitence. And she says, "Lord," she acknowledges Him as Lord, identifying who He is. He is, in fact, Lord. "If we confess Him as Lord and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, we're saved."

She knows He's the Messiah. She gives that messianic title, "Son of David," the very title that the crowds shouted at Him when they threw the palm branches at His feet when He entered the city of Jerusalem in Passion Week, they called Him "Son of David," and cried "Hosanna to the Son of David." She has a sound understanding of her own unworthiness, her own sinfulness, her own need for mercy. She understands that He is therefore righteous and He is gracious, He is the righteous standard, He is the gracious dispenser of mercy, He is the Lord, He is the Messiah, the Son of David.

By the way, the Jews mingled in that area of Phoenicia from time to time and the Gentiles traveled into Israel from time to time, so they were familiar with each other's religion. This is more than that.

We don't know how she received this information but it was crystal-clear. Her plea then is that her daughter is cruelly demon-possessed. And it says in Mark, as we just read, "She kept asking...kept asking." Why? Verse 23 here explains why. "He didn't answer her a word....He didn't answer her a word." He said nothing to her.

Now that's a little bit startling, isn't it? There's some speculation about why. Some people say, "Well, look, He only came for the Jews. That's all and that's consistent with His purpose." Some people say, "He had other things on His mind. He was occupied with other more important things with regard to the disciples, and He was seeking seclusion and didn't want the interruption." I don't think those things are the reason.

I think the reason that He didn't answer her was to demonstrate to her and everybody else what saving faith looks like...what saving faith looks like. It is penitent, have mercy. It is reverent, Lord, Son of David. And it is persistent, it is relentless.

So you remember the words of our Lord in Luke's gospel where He said that the Kingdom of God is available to those who seize it? You don't just sort of easily loaf your way into the Kingdom. You seize the Kingdom. You grasp the Kingdom. You battle your way through that narrow door. This is a kind of faith that is a true saving faith.

Of course He had compassion on her. Of course He Himself said, "Whoever comes to Me, I will not turn away," John 6:37. He was just letting that saving faith be displayed. This is what it looks like. It can't be disappointed. It will not accept anything but the embrace of the one in whom it has placed its trust. She is what good soil looks like.

Well, the disciples needed to learn this...they needed to learn this because if you're still in Matthew, look at this. Verse 23, "His disciples came and implored Him." They come and beg Him and they say, "Send her away, she keeps screaming at us." Boy, there about as sensitive as a brick. They wouldn't know what saving faith looked like. You think this lesson would be necessary then? You need to learn something here. You're going to be on duty and you're going to be out ministering and you need to know what saving faith looks like, and this is it. It is humble, it is broken, it is desperate, it is penitent, it is reverent, it is respectful and it is persistent. All they could say was, "Get rid of this woman, she's screaming and if she keeps screaming you're going to have the whole town here and then where does our privacy go?"

So they needed some lessons. So He turns to talk to them before He responds to her. That's why He delayed. Verse 24, "He said to them, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'" He reiterates that fact, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." That is to say, a wide-open door, right now, to the Gentiles is still future, okay? A wide-open door to the Gentiles is still future. Still a matter for the future. I'm still dealing with Israel. Matthew 10:5 and 6, "I came for the lost

sheep of the house of Israel. Not as an end, but as a means to an end. You're right about that. You're right about that. I have come only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

They needed that lesson. They needed to have that reiterated. But given that that is true, He has to turn a corner with them as well, and illustrate that that is not the goal in mind, that is only the means to the goal. So here's this humble, begging, desperate woman acknowledging His lordship, acknowledging His messiahship. Verse 25 in Matthew says she bows down, her head is on the ground, proskuneo, worshiping. And she even drops the Jewish identification of His title and just says, "Lord, help me. Lord, help me." He's the Creator. He's the Sovereign. Because who else could heal like He did? Who else could dominate demons like He did and she knew He could. She's full of hope in the power of Jesus. She's like a Beatitude person, she's hungering and thirsting and humble and she's saying, "There's no hope except You, only You."

Now let's go back to Mark and we'll pick up the story, just that little interlude there was very helpful from Matthew. Finally He answers her, verse 27 of Mark, He was saying to her, "Let the children be satisfied first." What does that mean? "To the Jew first and also to the Gentiles." So this is simply an analogy. He draws...He loved to use parables, this is a parable, analogy, like a meal. You have the food on the table, you feed the children first. It's not good, it's not appropriate, it's not proper to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs. That's His little parable, His little analogy. You feed the kids, you don't take the kid's food and feed the dogs. There's a priority here. That's all He's saying, there's a priority here. And the priority is, the right thing to do is to feed the family.

Why does He say this to her? Because it's critical that she understand that the open door to the Gentiles is still future...still future. And that's why there's no great teaching going on in Tyre and no great teaching events going on in Sidon. She's a dog, in that sense. You really don't think that that probably is the best word to use to describe anybody, particularly a lady, particularly a lady in distress. But Jesus used it. There's two words in the Greek for dog. One used in Matthew 7:6 means a big dog, big cur, you know, a big street garbage eater dog, and that's the kind of dogs that existed in those days. And the other is a little diminutive dog that might run around the house and eat scraps. There were no sort of lap dogs in those days, but at least he used the diminutive word. He is saying, "Look, this is not the time for the bread of salvation truth to go to the Gentiles. The Jews liked to use the word "dog," they used it contemptuously and despicably, mean-spiritedly toward Gentiles, the rabbis used it often. It's commonly used in the Old Testament, by the way, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 2 Kings in a derogatory way. It's kind of an epithet of contempt cause dogs were scavengers and wouldn't be entitled to come to the table and be eating the food of the family.

But this kind of a test of her humility and she's amazing, she's witty, she's insightful. Her response is not to say, "Oh, that's very offensive." Her response, she answered in verse 28 and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yes, Lord," He's still Lord, "Yes, Lord." Here's her wit, "But even the dogs under the table feed on the children's crumbs." I mean, that's a great response, isn't it? "You're not going to get rid of me

with that analogy. Okay, okay, I'm a dog, I buy...I'm a dog, I'll buy that, I'm a dog. I don't have a right to the covenant promises of Israel, I'm a Gentile, I come from an idol-worshiping people. All right, I'm a Canaanite. Okay, we should have been exterminated, but I'm here and this is the situation. And whatever falls off the table, can't I have that?" You know, she's got such sound theology, she's a...she understands the difference between Israel and the church...not fully but she knows that God has a plan for Israel and she's not a part of that plan. She knows she's not at that table. I love this about her. She's not offended at all.

You know, our Lord seems to sometimes drive offensive statements at people who are expressing faith in Him that you might say, "Wait, you don't want to say something like that." Somebody comes and says, "You know, I'm ready to be a Christian," you don't want to say to them, "Oh, I'm sorry, you know, we can't give a dog food that's supposed to go to..." What? I mean, somebody is going to turn, spin on their heels and be gone. But our Lord knew exactly what He was doing in driving at the reality of manifesting the character of relentlessly true saving faith, it just can't be discouraged, it can't be dissuaded. And she's just...she's just got a sweet wit about her and a humility. "Yes, Lord," no offense, no defense, no resistance. "Even the dogs get to eat the children's crumbs that fall off the table. I know I'm not a Jew. I know I'm not part of the covenant people. I know I'm on the outside. I know I belong to an idolatrous country, an idolatrous race. I know all that. I know You're in the privileged position, the Jews are in the privileged position, I know that. But don't the benefits spill off of them to the rest of us?"

She's absolutely right...absolutely right. And by the way, if I may extend that metaphor, crumbs from the table, a little bit. Keep this in mind that the message that saves the Gentiles is the message that saves the Jews, it's not a different message, not a different bread, it's not a different table, it's not a different meal. Okay? Gentiles are not given a separate revelation, a separate object of faith or a separate way of salvation. All Gentile salvation is the gospel that has overflowed from the bounty given to Israel. Romans 9, the covenant, the adoptions, the scriptures, the Messiah all came to Israel and we get the overflow. That's what Romans 9 says. "Through Israel comes the blessing of salvation to the world."

The Lord then is not ignoring the lady. He is simply eliciting out of her the evidences of this quality of faith that He calls mega faith, great faith. She's really good soil.

So, He said to her in verse 29, "Because of this answer," He saw that answer which was evidence of true faith, still penitent, still broken, still knowing she deserved nothing, she calls Him Lord. She has confessed with her mouth Jesus as Lord, even though He hasn't yet died and risen from the dead, and He says, "Because of this, go...go, leave. The demon has gone out of your daughter."

He had such control over the demon world, He didn't have to be present, right? He didn't have to be there. His power was omnipresent. His power was everywhere. And the demon was dispelled out of

that little girl and He wasn't even there. "Go now because the demon has gone out of your daughter, and going back to her home she found the child lying on the bed, the demon having left."

Why do you think the little girl was lying on the bed? I'll tell you why. That precious little life must have been exhausted, probably exhausted because of the demon's activities and probably exhausted even further because of the demon's convulsions when he left. Mark 1, "They were amazed at His teaching, He taught as one having authority. There was a man in the synagogue with an unclean spirit, Jesus said, 'Come out of him...' verse 26...throwing him into convulsions. The unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out."

Traumatic event for the little girl, no doubt. Demons don't leave easily. In chapter 9 there was a boy demon possessed and the man brought him to Jesus. Verse 20, "And when he saw Jesus, the spirit threw him into convulsion. Falling to the ground, he began rolling around and foaming at the mouth." Horrific. And the little girl by the time her mother got home is lying in bed exhausted from the very deliverance she had experienced.

It's a beautiful picture of faith, isn't it? Fights through the barriers of religion, rejects idolatry, humbles itself, it's penitent, it's respectful, it's relentless. It will not let go. It's a magnificent story of this saving faith, this good soil. It condemns false religion and exalts the true. It condemns the proud and exalts the humble penitent. It condemns the superficial and exalts the persistent. And I see it in contrast to the Pharisees. The woman cries, "Help me, Lord, help me, Lord, help me Lord." The Pharisees cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him, crucify Him."

This Gentile lady living in an idolatrous place gave honor to the Lord Jesus Christ, something the leaders of Israel refused to do. How about you? How about you? Do you stand in the great line of converted Gentiles like this? Put your trust in Christ and in Christ alone.

Father, thank You for Your Word again, as always. We feast on it with great joy and blessing. We're so deeply grateful for its profound truths, its joyous realities, its hopeful promises, its comforting blessings. We're so rich because of it. And we pray, Lord, for those who are here today that have never had the wonderful reality of this lady, who have not yet come to say, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me, a sinner." Lord, may You grant to them that persistent faith that will not let go, that will seize the Kingdom, that will press through the hindrances and the barriers and lay hold of Christ. Work that work in hearts, we pray, to Your glory. Amen.

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