

LESSON 11



FAITH BRINGS ACTION

Scripture Text: Mark 7:24-37

Today we see Jesus, a Jew but the Savior of the whole world, showing forth His concern to non-Jewish people. The events of this lesson are not easy to understand, but when understood by the Spirit's help, they are a great spiritual blessing of God's love and concern for people of all races. Today we see the beginning of the Gospel of Christ being spread to the Gentile people. We find the importance of faith and perseverance when one seeks something from Jesus. We find that Jesus comes down to where man is in order to bring mankind up to where He is.

MEMORY VERSE: *And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.* *Mark 7:28*

A Woman With a Need

Jesus was often in conflict with the Pharisees and other religious leaders. This was because of their misinterpretation of the law and their failure to understand its deep spiritual meaning. Jesus declared that He had come not to destroy the law but to fulfill it.

Mark 7:24-27 Now Jesus moves **into the borders of Tyre and Sidon**—Gentile cities. He tried to keep His Presence secret but **could not be hid**. This has been true through the ages. In spite of men's attempts to hide our Lord behind ritual, under creeds, and in the clutter of ecclesiastical organization, He has been found by all who seek Him openly by faith as the only One able to supply their deepest needs. The news of His miracles had spread far over the whole country. Rightfully so, because there was work to be done there also. A woman, **whose young daughter had an unclean spirit**, a demon within her body, came. The need was actually her daughter's, but mother love made it her own. What a great need there is today for parents to have this kind of burden for their children! She **fell at his feet** in reverence, submission, and beseeching His help. She **was a Greek**—a Gentile woman. She belonged to a race that was non-Jew and was hated by all Jews. She desired for the devil to be cast out of her daughter. Jesus met her plea for help with a discouraging reply: **Let the children first be filled**—the Jews. The Jews were to be given the Gospel first (Matthew 15:24; Romans 1:16). **The children's bread** should not be **cast . . . unto the dogs**, implying that this woman was a dog, or one shut out from the privileges of the Gospel. Matthew 15:22-24 tells that Jesus had before this ignored her, not answering her. Her pleas irritated the disciples into asking Him to send her away.



Faith Reaches Jesus

Mark 7:28-30 Although the woman had received much trial of her faith she still persisted. She had a need that she knew Jesus was able to supply. **Yes, Lord: yet the dogs . . . eat of the children's crumbs**. The dogs lay under the table while the family ate. It would have been as shocking then as it would be now for a dog to jump up on the table and take food intended for the children. But in those days, as today, the children and adults liked to feed dogs at the table, and the way they usually did it was to wipe their fingers—which they used as we now use knives and forks—on pieces of bread and throw the pieces under the table. Now Jesus knew her faith was not to be shaken. She would accept the place of a

dog if she might have but the leftover blessings. She would take the crumbs if they fell from the Master's table (Matthew 15:27). Why did she do this? Because of her faith in Jesus and her love for her daughter. **For this saying . . . the devil is gone out of thy daughter.** Going home, the woman **found the devil gone out.** Her daughter was **laid upon the bed,** calm and resting. This is typical of Jesus. He alone can bring peace and rest to the souls of men. The Gentiles were not to be blessed fully until a later time, but here was a Gentile woman who received a blessing early, out of due time. Because of her great faith, Jesus would not refuse her any longer (Matthew 15:28).

Jesus Healed the Deaf Man

Mark 7:31-35 Turning from Tyre and Sidon, Jesus traveled to another region. They brought to Jesus a man who **was deaf, and had an impediment . . .** If he could talk at all, it was with great difficulty. The friends who brought him asked Jesus **to put his hand upon him.** They did not know much about Jesus, but they knew there was power in His hand to heal. Since this man could not hear, Jesus used a form of sign language to communicate with him. He **put his fingers into his ears,** as much as to say, "I am going to heal your deafness." Then, because the man was ignorant and had faith in certain customs that were supposed to be necessary for healing, Jesus spat on His fingers and touched the man's tongue. But while He went down to the man's level temporarily, He insisted that the man come up to His. He did not let him think that fingers pushed into the ears could cure deafness or that a finger touching the tongue could drive away an impediment in speech. Jesus **looked up to heaven.** The man must know that by the power of God he was to be healed. He **sighed, and saith unto him . . . Be opened.** The work was done. The man heard and spoke plainly. Why did Jesus sigh? Because of the suffering in the world, because of a deafness far worse than the deafness of this man—that stopping of the ears against the truth which the religious men of His day practiced and which millions of people today continue to practice. He was sighing over unbelief and sin—then and now. "Be opened," He cried. He says that today to spiritual ears that have been made deaf or dull by the clamor of life's many activities (Matthew 13:15-16; Acts 28:27). Jesus commands this so that each one can hear the will of God plainly set forth.

JUST A THOUGHT

**Christianity is not a philosophy of life,
it is the way of life.**