

MYSTERY & MAJESTY

– 13 –

Even the Crumbs

**All verses use the English Standard Version (ESV)
except where indicated**

- Today's text can be controversial, especially if not understood correctly.
- Jesus was just confronting the religious leaders about tradition above God's word, ritual purity, defilement, washing hands, and the heart.
- This story can seem out of place but it's not.
- What actually makes someone acceptable before God?

Matthew 15:21 And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon.

- Tyre ~ 35 miles from Galilee.
- Sidon ~ 60 miles from Galilee (20ish miles from Tyre).

- These are gentile cities known for paganism, idolatry and enemies of Israel.
- Modern Lebanon.
- Jezebel was from Sidon.
- Prophets such as Isaiah and Ezekiel pronounce judgment against Tyre and Sidon.
- Elijah was in this region in 1 Kings 17
- This is anticipating Matthew 28's make disciples of all nations.

Matthew 15:22 And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon.”

- Canaanites were idolatrous inhabitants of the promised land.
- Matthew uses the term here to simply refer to a non-jewish pagan person in the region.

Reversing History:

1. Old Testament – a Canaanite corrupts an Israelite.

2. This Canaanite woman comes to an Israelite Messiah seeking deliverance for her family.

Shaming the Insiders:

1. Immediately before this, Jesus was rejected by the elite Jewish Pharisees in Galilee.
2. By contrast, this pagan Canaanite woman shows more spiritual insight, humility, and faith than the religious leaders of Israel.

The Messianic Acknowledgment:

1. She addresses Jesus as "Lord, Son of David."
2. A Canaanite woman recognizes Jesus' Jewish messianic identity before most of his own countrymen do.
3. Her theology is not complete.

Matthew 15:23 But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us."

- Jesus is silent but He is present.
- In his silence the disciples are annoyed and speak.

- Get rid of her or give her what she wants.

Matthew 15:24-25 24 He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” 25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.”

- This isn't preference but covenant priority.
- God made a covenant with Israel to come to them first.
- That's why the majority of Jesus' ministry and life is in Israel.
- Romans 1:16
- Gentile women appear in Jesus' genealogy.

Matthew 15:26 And he answered, “It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.”

- The Bread is the spiritual blessings, healings, and kingdom power of God.
- The Children are the people of Israel, who historically have the first claim to the covenant blessings.

- The dogs are (household dogs not wild street dogs) the Gentiles, who are present in the household but are not the immediate priority of the meal.
- Jesus isn't using the derogatory slang term.

Matthew 15:27 She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.”

- She responds with humility and surrender.

Matthew 15:28 Then Jesus answered her, “O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed instantly.