

**Jesus and the Gentiles—Part 1**  
**Matthew 15:21-28**

**Context, Context, Context: Gentiles** (Matt. 2:1-12; 8:5-13; 28:19-20)

I. **Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ the Canaanite Woman** (vs. 21-23a)

- a. **Jesus went away from** Capernaum and Gennesaret to have time from the crowds and the Jewish leaders to prepare His disciples for his eventually death, burial, and resurrection.
- b. **Tyre and Sidon** were once powerful city states 40 to 65 miles north of Capernaum.
  - i. The Greeks called them Phoenicians, but they were basically sea-going Canaanites who spread colonies all over the Mediterranean Sea, the most famous of which was Carthage (1200 BC to 322 BC)
- c. Matthew calls her **a Canaanite woman** for his Jewish audience while Mark calls her a “<sup>26</sup>...a Gentile, of the Syrophenician race.” (Mark 7:26 cf. 1 Kings 17:17-24; Luke 4:25)
  - i. This highlights Jesus message that the Gospel knows NO barriers (cf. Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 2:11-3:6)
- d. **began to cry out, saying** is in the imperfect tense
- e. **Have mercy on me** means she came humbly to Jesus
- f. **Lord, Son of David** was clearly a Jewish Messianic title (cf. 2 Sam. 7; Matt. 1:1; 9:27; 12:23; 20:30-31; 22:42)
- g. **But He did not answer her a word** = Jesus’ way of teaching His disciples that it was always God’s plan to bless the Gentiles (cf. Gen. 12:2-3; 28:13-15; 32:28; Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:16; 1 Tim. 2:4)

II. **Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ His Disciples** (vs. 23b-24)

- a. **"Send her away, because she keeps shouting at us."** = the context infers that they were asking Jesus to grant her request

- i. It also reveals the disciples had selfish motives (cf. Luke 18:1-8)

- b. **"I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."** = which is true, but Jesus is still teaching His disciples that the Gospel was always meant for the Gentiles too; especially since Israel has rejected their King! (Matt. 10:5-6; 11:21-22ff; cf. Isa. 11; Hosea 11:1-5; Micah 6:3-5; Jer. 31; Micah 4:1-5)

III. **Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ the Canaanite Woman** (vs. 25-26)

- a. **proskyneō (προσκυνέω)** = “to prostrate oneself before, to bow down and worship, to worship”
- b. **"It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs."**
  - i. **kyōn (κύων)** = “a wild dog, or a street dog, capable of violence and filthy habits”
  - ii. **kynarion (κυνάριον)** = “house dog, little dog”
- c. But Jesus words are still harsh, because He is teaching His disciples that they don’t see their spiritual blind spots of their pride and their prejudice (cf. Luke 15:11-32; Matt. 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19)

IV. **Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ the Canaanite Woman** (vs. 27-28)

- a. Instead of being offended by the truth, this woman agreed with Jesus and asked for the spiritual **crumbs which fall from their masters’ table** (Eph. 2:12ff)
- b. This Gentile woman, like the Roman Centurion had Great Faith and said **Yes, Lord!** (cf. Matt. 8:10; Luke 7:9)
- c. Jesus taught His disciples that we must not judge whom He decides to call to faith (cf. John 20:28-29ff; Luke 15:32)