

Mark Chapter 7 Continued

Verses 7:24 – 8:26: Jesus cares for and corrects various people.

Mark 7:24 "And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into a house, and would have no man know [it]: but he could not be hid."

“Tyre” (see note on 3:8).

“Would have no man know it”: Jesus did not seek a public ministry in the area. It is likely He wanted time to rest from the pressure of the Jewish leaders and an opportunity to further prepare the disciples for His coming crucifixion and their ministry.

Jesus and the disciples seek the privacy that has already eluded them twice (6:32-33, 53-54).

This was immediately after He had explained to the disciples about the wicked heart. The "He" here is Jesus. He left Galilee for a short time. Tyre was the capital of Phoenicia near Judea. This appears to be when Jesus had left the Jews and had gone to the Gentiles.

He possibly went to a friend's home to rest for just a little bit, and perhaps, He thought the scribes and Pharisees would not follow Him there. His fame had already spread here as well, and there would be no way for Him to get away where no one knew Him.

Mark 7:25 "For a [certain] woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:"

“Unclean spirit”: A demon (see note on 1:23; Matt. 15:22).

The woman's behavior indicates both reverence and desperation.

This woman was not a Jew. She loved her daughter more than she feared being run off. Most mothers would have been terribly concerned about a daughter with an unclean spirit. This woman humbled herself by falling at the feet of Jesus.

Mark 7:26 "The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter."

“Greek”: A non-Jew in both her language and religion (see note on Rom. 1:14).

“Syrophenician”: The region of Phoenicia at that time was part of the province of Syria. (Matthew 15:22), adds that she was a descendant of the Canaanites.

This is one of Jesus' few known dealings with a Gentile. The woman is from Phoenicia.

We see from this, that this was a Gentile; a Syrophenician. She knew what she wanted: Jesus to cast out this devil from her daughter.

Mark 7:27 "But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast [it] unto the dogs."

“First”: The illustration Jesus gave was in essence a test of the woman’s faith. Jesus’ “first” responsibility was to preach the gospel to the children of Israel (Rom. 1:16; 15:8). But that also implied there would come a time when Gentiles would be the recipients of God’s blessings.

“The children’s bread, and to cast it unto the dogs”: “The children’s bread” refers to God’s blessings offered to the Jews. This picture indicates that the “dogs” (Gentiles), had a place in the household of God, but not the prominent one (see note on Matt. 15:26).

“Dogs”: This reference is to dogs that were kept as pets. Jesus was referring to the Gentiles, but He did not use the derisive term the Jews usually employed for them that described mangy, vicious mongrels.

Jesus’ reply is not a cruel dismissal but a test of the woman’s resolve, persistence, and faith.

“Children” would be either Israel (See Matt. 15:24), or the disciples. If the latter, Jesus is saying “Can you not leave us in peace? The disciples are weary.”

“Dogs” is literally “doggies,” household pets that would spend mealtimes beneath the table.

Jesus was speaking to her about coming to the Jews first. He didn't come out and say no, but He told her that He was to take care of the Jews first. Every non-Jew was thought of by the Jews as a dog at the time of this writing. He was just saying, "I can't neglect the chosen children to help those away from God".

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

“Yes, Lord”: Indicative of the woman’s humble faith and worshipful attitude. She knew she was sinful and undeserving of any of God’s blessing. Her response was characterized by a complete absence of pride and self-reliance, which Jesus answered by granting her request (verses 29-30).

The woman responds with insight into Jesus’ patient grace. She turns His own words back on Him.

This was a very wise woman. She did not argue with Him, she in fact agreed. Then she admitted to being unworthy. She was humble. She was willing to take the crumbs that fell from the table, knowing that even this would be the most powerful food she had ever eaten.

She was saying: "Lord, in the face of all the wonderful miracles, this is just a crumb compared to that". Her humbleness and faith won Him over. In another Scripture He said, "Woman your great faith". Here we see Jesus moved by this.

Mark 7:29 "And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter."

Her reply was evidence of the quality of her faith.

This Scripture tells us so much. First, that one person can stand in for another to be prayed for. The one being prayed for does not have to be there. We see here also, that devils dwell within people and sometimes must be cast out.

The Scripture nowhere says that the daughter prayed. You can pray for another's deliverance. There need not be any great lapse of time, this was done immediately.

Mark 7:30 "And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed."

The devil had no choice, he had to leave. The daughter was free but exhausted and resting on the bed. The mother expected a miracle and got one. It was almost as if Jesus came there to do just this one miracle.

Mark 7:31 "And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis."

“Departing from the coasts of Tyre ... Sidon ... Sea of Galilee”: Jesus traveled 20 miles north from Tyre and passed through Sidon, which was deep into Gentile territory. From there He went east, crossed the Jordan, and traveled south along the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Peter's home was next to the Sea of Galilee. He went near there often. Whether to rest or because it was familiar territory, I cannot say. It seems He didn't go straight back but took a little side trip.

Mark 7:32 "And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him."

This person was not totally dumb but, because of the impediment in his speech, we know that he had been deaf for a long time and had what we call tongue tied.

Just one touch of Jesus' hand would make him whole. These people were aware of Jesus' ability to heal. His fame had spread throughout the land; and they knew for sure that if the Lord would touch him, he would be made whole and able to hear and speak clearly.

Mark 7:33 "And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue;"

“Put his fingers into his ears”: Because the man could not hear, Jesus used His own form of sign language to tell him that He was about to heal the man’s deafness.

“And he spit and touched his tongue”: Also a form of sign language in which Jesus offered the man hope for a restored speech.

This was a very dramatic healing. Jesus, in each instance, touched the problem area. This healing was not for the others, this was for this one individual. Jesus heals one at a time. He deals with us on an individual basis. In this, Jesus recognized where the problems were and dealt with the problems one at a time. This prepared the man to receive in both these areas.

Mark 7:34 "And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened."

“Ephphatha”: An Aramaic word that Mark immediately defines.

The word for “sigh” appears also (in Romans 8:23 and 2 Cor. 5:2). It reflects Jesus’ inner emotional and spiritual fervor as He beseeches God to undo this evil.

This "looking up to heaven" lets this man know where his help came from. Perhaps, the "sigh" was to let the man (and all who read of this in the years to come), know that Jesus truly had compassion for those who were suffering for any reason. He suffers with us.

We know that Jesus is Lord of lords and King of kings and that everything in earth must bow to Him. He commanded these ears and tongue to be opened and not stammer.

Mark 7:35 "And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain."

“String” would be simply that which had inhibited his speech.

We see here, that whatever kept this person deaf and dumb had to obey the voice of Jesus, and this person was made whole.

Mark 7:36 "And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published [it];"

“Tell no man”: Although Jesus ministered to Gentiles as the need arose, His intention was not to have a public ministry among them (see note on 1:44).

There was no possible way this man could keep it a secret that he was made totally whole. Suddenly he could hear the birds chirp and the rustling of the leaves when the wind blew. He could hear a baby cry or hear a mother sing a lullaby. His tongue was loosed as well, and you know he talked without stopping.

His praises of the God who did these wonderful things for him had to keep him talking constantly. Those who knew him before constantly asked how this all happened; and of course, he was so proud that he spread the word.

Mark 7:37 "And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."

Here we see the reaction of those who saw and heard of the wonderful miracle performed in someone they knew. Possibly, many of these people had been going to worship regularly, but had never seen anything like this before.

This one miracle here could cause thousands to flock to Jesus to bring their sick and deformed to be healed. There would certainly be no place for Him to go now where they had not already heard of Jesus' miracles.

Mark Chapter 7 Continued Questions

1. In verse 24, where did Jesus go?
2. Why did He go to this house?
3. What country was this near?
4. What faith background did these people have?
5. What was wrong with the woman's daughter that came to Jesus?
6. When the woman fell at Jesus' feet, what did it show her as?
7. What was the woman's nationality?
8. What did the woman want Jesus to do?
9. What did Jesus answer her at first?
10. What were non-Jews thought of at this time?
11. What humble remark did the woman make to Jesus calling herself a dog?
12. What caused Jesus to answer her prayers?
13. What did Jesus tell her that He had done for her daughter?
14. Does the person being delivered have to be there?

15. What condition did the mother find her daughter in?
16. Where did Jesus go by when he went back to the Sea of Galilee?
17. Who lived near the Sea?
18. What was wrong with the man brought to Jesus?
19. What did they want Jesus to do?
20. What two visible things did Jesus do before He prayed for him?
21. What expression did Jesus make when He looked toward heaven?
22. What does Ephphatha mean?
23. How soon was the man healed?
24. What did Jesus tell them not to do?
25. What did they do?
26. Name some things that he could hear that he had not heard before?
27. How was the astonishment of the people described?
28. What effect would all this fame have?