

With everything we studied, do you now see how comforting Jesus' words are in Matthew 11:28-30?

(Matthew 11:28 *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Matthew 11:29 *Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

Matthew 11:30 *For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”)*

PART 2 - DECEMBER 3, 2023

Introduction:

Verses 24-30: Moments in Tyre and Sidon

(Mark 7:24 *From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden.*

Mark 7:25 *For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet.*

Mark 7:26 *The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.*

Mark 7:27 *But Jesus said to her, “Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.”*

Mark 7:28 *And she answered and said to Him, “Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children’s crumbs.”*

Mark 7:29 *Then He said to her, “For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter.”*

Mark 7:30 *And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed.)*

Mark 7:24-30 reveals God's compassion for two individuals, this demon-possessed girl and her mother.

Before we look at this account of God's personal compassion to these two, I want us to see that Mark 7:24-30 is much larger in biblical significance. Read again verse 24,

Verse 24a: A Momentous Shift

(Mark 7:24 From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden.)

The First Sign of the Shift: Use of Words

I want us to look at the first half of verse 24 for the next few minutes. It has great significance to the trajectory of God's plan.

When reading Mark 7:24 in the Greek, this verses's first word is (ὄν **dě**, *deh*), translated in scripture as "now."

Why is that significant? Up until this point, when starting a new paragraph, a new account of Jesus' teachings, acts, or miracles, Mark used the Greek word (καί **kai**, *kahee*), typically translated as "And." For example, Mark 3:1, "**And** He entered the synagogue again." Mark 3:13, "**And** He went up on the mountain to pray." The fact that Mark uses the Greek word (ὄν **dě**, *deh*) instead is noteworthy. Also in Mark 7:24, you see the word, *went*, which is also noteworthy.

The verb for "went" (Gk. *apēlthen*) is somewhat stronger than the normal Greek verb *erchesthai* and in Mark tends to signal a decisive departure.

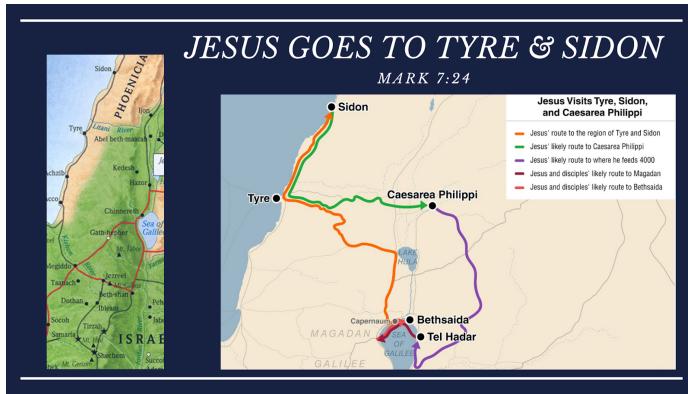
Edwards, James R. [The Gospel according to Mark](#). Eerdmans; Apollos, 2002, p. 216.

The Point: These two Greek words were intentionally placed to reveal a momentous shift in the ministry of Jesus.

- Side note: Here's the thing. While the Greek helps us to see the significant forcefulness by change of words, you don't need to know Greek to understand why these verses are a momentous shift in the ministry of Jesus. It will become obvious with other Biblical truths.

Recall, the events that took place in the previous verses, vv 1-23, occurred in Galilee (in Israel). Now, the events that take place here in vv-30 are in Tyre and Sidon. **Why is that significant?** Tyre and Sidon are Gentile territory.

(Graphic 1)



Ancient Tyre and Sidon were two powerful Phoenician cities. These two ancient port cities are located in modern-day Lebanon. They are close to Israel, still, they are outside of the borders of Israel:

Why is that important?

Matthew records the same account of what we read here. Quoting Matthew helps us in understanding the significance: In speaking to the Phoenician woman Jesus said,

(Matthew 15:24 But He [Jesus] answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.")

Jesus revealed speaking to the woman, that His **primary objective** was to reach the Jewish people, not Gentiles.

It's clear that in Jesus' first coming, at a national level the Jewish people rejected him. This is confirmed in the NT (John 1:11).

Yet as the book of Acts records, there was a remnant of Jews who did believe.

There's another momentous shift in scripture. It's parallel in many ways. It helps us understand what's happening in this moment:

Acts 10: The Similarity with Peter

In Acts 10, a few years after Christ's ascension, God calls the Apostle Peter to open the doors of the gospel to the Gentiles, non-Jews. Before that, the gospel was essentially limited to the Jews and Samaritans. So at the perfect time, it was now time for a momentous shift. The gospel will go and be heard and received among non-Jews!

Interestingly, in Acts 10, God uses the same truth in Mark 7 to explain this shift: Look at what God tells Peter in,

(Acts 10:15 And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common.")

After this, the Holy Spirit commands Peter to go with Gentile men sent by Cornelius to share the gospel to Cornelius and his household. After Cornelius and his family believe in Christ, **everything changes**. The doors of salvation open to the Gentiles.

Initially, this was shocking to the early church. In response to all of this, look at what the early church leaders said:

(Acts 11:17 If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?)

Acts 11:18 When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.")

In God's providence, for the years by the point of Acts 11, Paul was born-again and undergoing personal discipleship by Jesus Christ Himself. Shortly after the door opens to the Gentiles through Peter, Barnabas, an early church leader, goes to find Paul. It is then the momentous shift in the book of Acts takes place. The accounts of the Apostle Paul and others become the focus of the book of Acts, for Paul became the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Now coming back to Mark 7, go back and consider Mark 7:18-19, two verses in last week's study. Jesus re-reveals the truth that the purity of a man's heart is not determined by food.

(Mark 7:18 So He said to them, "Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him,

Mark 7:19 because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?")

Here's the comparison to see that is clear:

Jesus in Mark 7 establishes again the truth that salvation is by faith alone. Salvation is a matter of the heart. In response to this revelation, He goes to Tyre and Sidon!

Peter in Acts 10 is shown by Jesus again that salvation is by faith alone. Using the same metaphor of clean and unclean food, He shows Peter that the gift of

salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit is not exclusive to the Jewish race, it is also available to the Gentiles. In response to the vision of Acts, the Holy Spirit sends Peter to Cornelius in Caesarea.

Already here, Mark is pointing out that Jesus is indicating Israel's final rejection of their Messiah and indicating that the ministry and salvation of the Gentiles is God's will.

So, when you read Mark 7:24 that Jesus went to Tyre and Sidon after His revelation of "faith alone," you see the **MOMENTOUS SHIFT**. **You start to see the plan of God unfold**: That He was opening the doors of salvation to non-Jews, people like you and me.

Back to the text:

In what personal way is all of this unfolded? Jesus ministering to one Gentile woman.

- This woman had no idea that her personal story not only had personal significance, it had cosmic-level significance with reference to God's plan of salvation for the Gentiles.
- So now, let's shift to the personal miracle of Jesus for this one Gentile woman:

Verse 24b: The Secrecy

(Mark 7:24 From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden.)

A good question that any of us can have is, "Why the secrecy?" Why did he not want the Gentiles to know where he was?

Another good question is, "Whose house did Jesus enter?" Was he in the house of a Jew or Gentile? With whom and what was he sharing among the Gentiles before the Syro-Phoenician showed up in the account?

- Interestingly, the Bible is silent on all our questions. So, we keep moving forward.

Verses 25: The Request And Issue

(Mark 7:25 *For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet.*

Mark 7:26 *The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter.*

Mark 7:27 *But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.")*

What does the woman request of Jesus? That her daughter be delivered from this demonic-possession.

How Old Was This Girl?

How old was the daughter of this woman?

The Greek word here, *thygatrion*, was also used in reference to Jarius's daughter in Mark 5, verse 23. So, it could be safe to imagine that this girl was around 12 years old.

Before we study Jesus' response, I think it's valuable to think about demonic possession for a moment by answering 2 questions:

(1). Can people still be demon-possessed today? Answer: Yes.

- Not just based on experiential evidence, but more certain is the Bible makes it clear that demon-possession still exists today.
- Jesus said in Mark 16:17 that believers, the Church of Christ, will receive power from God to deliver people from demonic possession.
 - Look at the book of Acts. You will see that after Christ ascended, demonic possession was present; and people were delivered by those early church believers.
- Yes: People are still demon-possessed today.
- And, understand that God will use some of us as His tools to deliver people from demonic possession and oppression.

(2). Can children be demonic-possessed? Yes.

- Soon, in Mark 9 we will study another account of a demon-possessed boy. So here in Mark 7 and then in Mark 9, it is crystal clear that children can be demonically-oppressed and demonically-possessed.

Before we look at the response of Jesus, I want to give an application for the parents in this room:

Application for Parents:

Be careful what you allow into your home. Be careful what you allow your children to see. Be careful what you allow your children to participate in.

Sometimes, the demonic-realm is opened to a child because of doors their parents opened. Other times, the demonic-realm is opened by the child. In some cases, the parents did not protect their children. And in other cases, the parents were simply unaware.

The Powers At Work Today:

The Bible says in the Tribulation to come on the earth after the Church is raptured that demonic activity and witchcraft will reach its highest level of engagement. We are told in Revelation 9 that all of humanity in the Tribulation will be engaged in witchcraft.

And so, leading up to that time, we can presume that there will be a massive increase of witchcraft and sorcery in these last days. And that's not just a presumption anymore. That's our current reality. And adults aren't the only ones engaging in witchcraft and sorcery in these last days... It's also children.

Again, speaking to the parents with underage children:

Are you aware of what your children are doing on their cell phones, computers, social media, etc.? Are you aware of their online activity? Are you aware of the movies, shows, and videos they are watching, possibly behind your backs? Because children can be demonically oppressed and possessed, it is your duty to do your best to protect your children from opening demonic doors.

Think about this girl in Mark 7. I'm curious about her origin story. I'm curious why she became demon-possessed?

- Was it her mom's negligence? Was it a door her mom opened? Was it the daughter's fascination with the realm of spirits? Was it a door the little girl opened which her mother was unaware of?

With that said, I want to remind you of another truth:

You can be the best and most godly parent, and still your child can turn out to be like this girl.

Now, again, none of us are perfect. Some of you parents converted years after the birth of your children. Some of you parents converted after your children become adults. Maybe some of you introduced your children to witchcraft and sorcery which you now regret since Christ redeemed you. Maybe some of you never introduced your children to witchcraft and sorcery but your underage or adult child is now under the influence of other spirits.

Whether your children were raised in a Christian home or not, there are regrets and self-infliction that any loving parent has when they see their children come under any other influence besides the Holy Spirit.

Let's expand this a bit more:

- When your young or older children are under the influence of the demonic.
- When your children are under the influence of alcoholic or drug substances.
- When your children are slaves to sins like anger, homosexuality, adultery, covetousness.

Biblically-speaking, just because someone is not possessed by demons does not mean that they are not under demonic influence. The Bible teaches us this valuable truth: Comparing the believer and non-believer, the Bible says in, *(1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.)*

And speaking of the non-believer, the Bible says:

(2 Corinthians 4:3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 2 Corinthians 4:4 whose minds the god of this age [the devil] has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.)

Whether your underage unconverted children who have now reached that age of accountability or your unconverted adult children, if they are not born-again, under the leading and control of the Holy Spirit, they are blinded and controlled

by demonic entities, PERIOD.

Remember, that every human being has a free will of their own, including our children, no matter how perfect of a Christian home they may find themselves in.

The Woman's Desperation:

We don't know the background of this woman. We don't know if she had or did not have something to do with her daughter's demonic possession. But what's crystal clear is that this woman is desperately hurting, hurting because her daughter is losing her youth, losing her life, losing her future, losing her eternal soul.

Some of you can truly sympathize with this woman. Losing your children to witchcraft, to drugs, to alcohol, to unnatural sexual lifestyles, to cults, etc.

- There is a depth of sadness and pain a Christian parent goes through when they see their children use their free will to sin and consequently suffer.
- Some of you are in that season. Your kids are wayward, sinning and suffering. And it burdens you deeply. Let Jesus encourage you this morning with what we read.

Verse 26: She Kept Asking

(**Mark 7:26** *The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and **she kept asking Him** to cast the demon out of her daughter.*)

I love that phrase. *She kept asking.* She just wanted her daughter to be healed!

This is a picture for us of the type of prayer that God calls effective:
persistent prayer.

Verse 27: Jesus' Response

(**Mark 7:27** *But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."*)

What did Jesus mean by this statement?

I will quote Matthew 15:4 again because it reveals why Jesus said this:

(Matthew 15:24 *But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*)

Jesus was revealing the obvious fact that His mission was to the Jews, not the Gentiles. He used a common metaphor and reality that she was well aware of to understand what he was saying.

Look at how she responds.

Verse 28: Her Response

(Mark 7:28 *And she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs."*)

The Heart of Jesus:

People have misinterpreted this passage to imply that Jesus was trying to make this woman feel worthless; that was being mean; that was trying to push her away. Any critic of the Bible can misinterpret this passage. As believers, we know the character of Jesus. And when you intently look at this account, Jesus was actually saying the opposite.

He wanted the woman to see how special, how valuable, how much he considered her worth. He wanted her to come to the realization that He was merciful and considered her special and her daughter special.

The Woman's Answer:

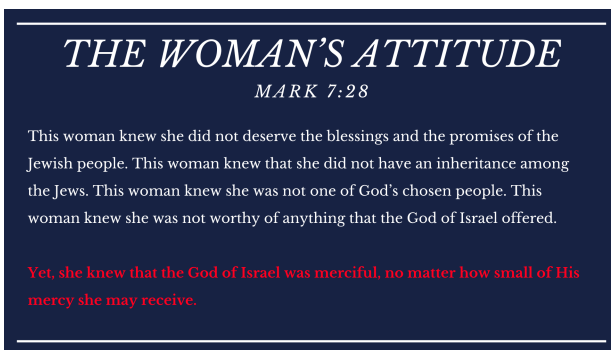
She responds to Christ by putting herself in the metaphor. Within the metaphor, she is without realizing it in her own words, saying Ephesians 2:21, "As a Gentile, I am a stranger to the covenant of promise. But you Jesus, are merciful to the Gentiles too."

(Graphic 2)



This is the heart of Romans 11. You and I, as Gentiles (non-Jews), we were grafted in. This is the metaphor that God uses to describe our special privilege. We are not the chosen people. But God was merciful to adopt us into the family of God. The attitude that this woman had is the attitude of faith that Jesus Christ wants us to have.

(Graphic 3)



Have we forgotten that God saves us, delivers us, blesses, helps, works in our lives, does miracles for our lives, does miracles for our loved ones when we pray, simply because He is merciful?

A good question: Do we have the same heart as this woman?

Verse 29: Jesus' Response

(Mark 7:29) *Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter."*

Mark 7:30 *And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed.)*

(Graphic 4)

JESUS' RESPONSE

MARK 7 & MATTHEW 15

Mark 7:29 Then He said to her, "For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter."

Matthew 15:28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

It's worth pointing out Mark's response and Matthew's response. Looking at Matthew's response first,

- Matthew reveals Jesus praising her faith and answering the desire of her heart, her heart's prayer request.
- Also, Matthew points out that Jesus answers prayers of faith, even prayers that are the desires of the heart.
 - It's worth meditating on the words of Jesus that the Holy Spirit inspires Matthew to write. Truly, we can spend the rest of our time looking at Jesus' words in Matthew. Nevertheless, our series is in the book of Mark and we want to look at the words of Jesus that the Holy Spirit inspires Mark to highlight.

So, what phrase of Jesus does Mark uniquely highlight?

"For This Saying Go Your Way."

In other words, as the CSB translates this, "Because of this reply," I have fulfilled your request: Your daughter is delivered from this demon.

Let me repeat this statement!

"Because of this reply (v28), I have fulfilled your request."

Which should then cause us to close with the revelation of verse 28.

Application:

This woman knew that God would simply answer her prayer, that God would simply do this miracle, not because she deserved it, but because **God is merciful.**

There's is an unbiblical tendency in all of us to think that,

- (1). God owes us good health.
- (2). God owes us wealth and prosperity.
- (3). God owes us the perfect children.
- (4). God owes us the best job.
- (5). God owes us a life without suffering.
- (6). God owes us long life or long life for our children.
- (7). God owes us converted children.
- (8). God owes us miracles.

Always remember: God owes us nothing.

Sometimes, after years of being God's child, we struggle with thinking. I deserve this answered prayer request, I deserve this miracle, I deserve the ideal "_____ fill in the blank _____" because,

- (1). I have been faithful to the Lord for "x" amount of years.
- (2). I have served the Lord in this ministry and that ministry.
- (3). I have served the Lord "x amount" of hours in ministry over the years.
- (4). I have tithed and given "x amount" of my finances to the local church, missions, and charities.
- (5). I have devoted myself to be godly.
- (6). I have devoted myself to raising a godly family.

Always remember: God owes us nothing.

What do we learn from Jesus in this account: You are special to Him. Your loved ones are special to Him. And He wants you to know that this morning. What does Jesus pull from this woman in her response to teach us concerning Himself?

Jesus will answer your prayers. Jesus will do miracles in your life. Jesus will do miracles in the lives of your loved ones:
Not because He owes you anything, but because **He is merciful.**

How many of you can praise the undeserved mercy of God in your life? How many of you can praise the Lord daily for His mercies that are new every morning? Hallelujah!

*Some of you are like this woman. You have children and loved ones who have chosen to reject Christ and who are truly suffering without Christ. Their unknown eternal destiny deeply saddens you. Now, we are going to pray for them. For those who want prayer for their unsaved children and loved ones, please stand up. And for those around, extend your hand. Let's lift up our wayward loved ones.