

The Gospel of Mark

Lesson 11

Mark 7:24 – 8:26

Review

- Baptism and temptation (1:1-13)
- Year long ministry in Judea (John 1:19-4:45)
- Galilean Ministry (1:14-7:23)
- Withdrawal with Disciples into Various Gentile Regions (7:24-8:26)

Healing the Syrophenician Woman's Daughter

²⁴Jesus got up and went away from there to the region of Tyre. And when He had entered a house, He wanted no one to know *of it*; yet He could not escape notice. ²⁵But after hearing of Him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately came and fell at His feet. ²⁶Now the woman was a Gentile, of the Syrophenician race. And she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷And He was saying to her, **“Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.”** ²⁸But she answered and said to Him, “Yes, Lord, *but* even the dogs under the table feed on the children’s crumbs.” ²⁹And He said to her, **“Because of this answer go; the demon has gone out of your daughter.”** ³⁰And going back to her home, she found the child lying on the bed, the demon having left.

- The following accounts in Gentile territory are Jesus’ only time outside of Palestine during His ministry.
- Jesus left Capernaum to go to the region of Tyre and Sidon (many manuscripts add Sidon). He did not go there to minister to the Gentiles but to get away from the Pharisees and spend time instructing His disciples. Yet His popularity extended even to the Gentiles.
- A Gentile woman came and begged Jesus to heal her daughter. She was from Phoenicia which was a part of Syria and Mark stresses that she was not Jewish. When Jesus was near this woman her response was to “immediately” fall at His feet.
- This woman “kept asking” – she persisted in her pleading for Jesus to heal her daughter.
- Jesus’ response to the woman’s pleading was **“Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.”** The “children” could be the disciples whom Jesus was desiring to minister to privately, but more likely refers to Jews who were the first recipients of the Gospel (Rom 1:16). “Dogs” is not the common derogatory term used of Gentiles, but little dogs (puppies) used of household pets.
- “The picture indicates that the “little dogs” (Gentiles) had a place in the household of God, but not the prominent one.” MacArthur’s Study Bible, Page 1475
- “Yes, Lord” – This is the only time that Jesus is referred to as “Lord” in Mark. The woman realized her undeserving position before Jesus and humbly asked for a crumb of grace.
- Because of the humble faith that relied on Jesus’ grace, Jesus granted the woman’s request and healed her daughter. “Has gone” indicates that the demon was gone even as Jesus told the woman.
- This healing was 1) immediate, 2) complete, and 3) visible to all.
- This is the only miracle recorded in Mark that Jesus performed at a distance without giving any vocal command. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament

Healing the Deaf Mute

³¹Again He went out from the region of Tyre, and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, within the region of Decapolis. ³²They brought to Him one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty, and they implored Him to lay His hand on him. ³³Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His

fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue *with the saliva*; ³⁴and looking up to heaven with a deep sigh, He said to him, “**Ephphatha!**” that is, “**Be opened!**” ³⁵And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he *began* speaking plainly. ³⁶And He gave them orders not to tell anyone; but the more He ordered them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it. ³⁷They were utterly astonished, saying, “He has done all things well; He makes even the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

- This miracle is recorded only in Mark. Mark included it because it was a miracle on Gentile territory and would have been of particular interest to his Roman readers.
- A man was brought to Jesus who was deaf and spoke with difficulty (□□□□□□□□). This is the only use of this word in the NT and is only used once in the OT LXX in Isaiah 35:6 when speaking of the Millennial Kingdom. The miracles of Jesus during His earthly ministry were only a foretaste of the blessings to come during Messiah’s earthly rule.

⁴ Say to those with anxious heart,
“Take courage, fear not.
Behold, your God will come *with* vengeance;
The recompense of God will come,
But He will save you.”

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind will be opened
And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.

⁶ Then the lame will leap like a deer,
And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy.
For waters will break forth in the wilderness
And streams in the Arabah. Isa. 35:4-6

- Jesus here uses a form of sign language to communicate with the deaf mute. Jesus touched the man’s ears to indicate he would open them. He spat (on the ground) and touched the man’s tongue to indicate that He would restore the man’s speech. He looked up to heaven to indicate that God would heal the man. And a deep sigh indicating that the man should exercise faith.
- Mark interprets Aramaic for his Roman readers. “**Ephphatha!**” (*ehf’ fuh thuh*) means “be completely opened”.
- This word could easily be lip-read by a deaf person. This Aramaic word may indicate that the man was not a Gentile. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament
- This healing was 1) immediate, 2) complete, and 3) visible to all.
- Jesus wanted the news about Him to be contained so the He could still easily accomplish His mission. Jesus wanted them to remain silent yet they would not. **He wants us to proclaim the Good News and yet we remain silent!**
- The people were “utterly astonished” (overwhelmed with amazement beyond all measure – used only here in the NT).

Feeding the 4000

^{8:1}In those days, when there was again a large crowd and they had nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples and said to them, ²“**I feel compassion for the people because they have remained with Me now three days and have nothing to eat.** ³**If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way; and some of them have come from a great distance.**” ⁴And His disciples answered Him, “Where will anyone be able *to find enough bread here in this* desolate place to satisfy these people?” ⁵And He was asking them, “**How many loaves do you have?**” And they said, “Seven.” ⁶And He directed the people to sit down on the ground; and taking the seven loaves, He gave thanks and broke them, and started giving them to His disciples to serve to them, and they served them to the people. ⁷They also had a few small fish; and after He had blessed them, He ordered these to be served as well. ⁸And they ate

and were satisfied; and they picked up seven large baskets full of what was left over of the broken pieces. ⁹About four thousand were *there*; and He sent them away. ¹⁰And immediately He entered the boat with His disciples and came to the district of Dalmanutha.

- During Jesus ministry in the Decapolis a large crowd gathered and had been with Him for three days without anything to eat. Jesus felt compassion for the crowd and did not want to send them away to get food because they were weak. The crowd had been with Him to be fed by His words, now Jesus will provide for their physical need as well.
- When Jesus started “giving” the bread and fish to the disciples, He literally “kept on giving”.
- The “seven large baskets” are the same type of basket used to lower Paul in Damascus (Acts 9:25). The seven large baskets here are probably more leftovers than the 12 baskets full in the feeding of the 5000 (Mark 6:43).
- 4000 men were fed here (Matt 15:38) so the total could have been ~16,000.

³⁸And those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. Matt. 15:38

- After dismissing the crowd, Jesus left the Decapolis with His disciples (contrast Mark 6:45). Crossing the Sea of Galilee He came to the district of Dalmanutha or the region of Magadan (Matt 15:39).

³⁹And sending away the crowds, Jesus got into the boat and came to the region of Magadan. Matt. 15:39

- The location of Dalmanutha is unknown, but “Recent archeological work in the area, when the water level of Galilee was at an all-time low, revealed several heretofore unknown anchorages. One small harbor has been found between Magadala and Capernaum (near Tiberias – the site of Herod’s palace) which may be Dalmanutha.” MacArthur’s Study Bible, Page 1476

Pharisees Seek a Sign

¹¹The Pharisees came out and began to argue with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, to test Him. ¹²Sighing deeply in His spirit, He said, “**Why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation.**” ¹³Leaving them, He again embarked and went away to the other side.

- After reaching Galilee the Pharisees again come to Him – this time seeking a sign. “Sign” is different than “miracle”. The Pharisees were seeking something independent of Jesus as their sign.
- Jesus “sighs deeply” – grieved and disappointed at their unbelieving hearts. He then answers that “**no sign will be given to this generation.**” – “**except the sign of Jonah.**”

⁴“**An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah.**” And He left them and went away. Matt. 16:4 (NASB)

- Jesus then leaves Galilee and heads to the northeastern shore of the sea (v22).

Disciples do not Understand

¹⁴And they had forgotten to take bread, and did not have more than one loaf in the boat with them. ¹⁵And He was giving orders to them, saying, “**Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.**” ¹⁶They *began* to discuss with one another *the fact* that they had no bread. ¹⁷And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “**Why do you discuss *the fact* that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a hardened heart?**” ¹⁸“**HAVING EYES, DO YOU NOT SEE? AND HAVING EARS, DO YOU NOT HEAR? And do you not remember,**” ¹⁹“**when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces you picked up?**” They said to Him, “Twelve.” ²⁰“**When I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of broken pieces did you pick up?**” And they said to Him, “Seven.” ²¹And He was saying to them, “**Do you not yet understand?**”

- The disciples had forgotten to bring enough bread for the journey – only one small loaf for the 13 of them. Jesus however was not concerned with the physical but the spiritual so He began to teach them using the Pharisees as an illustration of the sin of unbelief.
- “Leaven in the NT is an illustration of influence and most often symbolizes the evil influence of sin.” MacArthur’s Study Bible, Page 1476

- The Pharisees rejected Jesus, but supposed that a sign would convince them. Herod also had longed to see Jesus perform a miracle, yet would not believe Him to be the King.

⁸Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him. ⁹And he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing. ¹⁰And the chief priests and the scribes were standing there, accusing Him vehemently. ¹¹And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate. Luke 23:8-11

- If one has a hardened heart in unbelief, then even a sign will not convince them.

²⁹“But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ ³⁰“But he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!’ ³¹“But he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’” Luke 16:29-31

- The disciples were still stuck on the bread and discussed who was at fault for not bringing the bread. They lacked spiritual understanding. Matthew indicates that they finally got it.

¹²Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Matt. 16:12

Healing Blind Man

²²And they came to Bethsaida. And they brought a blind man to Jesus and implored Him to touch him. ²³Taking the blind man by the hand, He brought him out of the village; and after spitting on his eyes and laying His hands on him, He asked him, “Do you see anything?” ²⁴And he looked up and said, “I see men, for I see *them* like trees, walking around.” ²⁵Then again He laid His hands on his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and *began* to see everything clearly. ²⁶And He sent him to his home, saying, “Do not even enter the village.”

- This is the second of two miracles recorded only in Mark. (The deaf mute in 7:31-37 was the other.)
- Jesus established a one-to-one relationship with the blind man.
- Spit on his eyes – The reason is not given. Perhaps the problem with the man’s eyes caused the eyelids to be stuck together by hardened secretions. This would have allowed the man to open his eyes.
- This is possibly the only multi-stage miracle recorded in the Gospels. However, if what the man saw when Jesus enabled his eyelids to open with His spittle was actually what the man would normally see, then this is really a “one-stage miracle”.
- Probably our Lord did not “at once” restore him fully to sight, that he might strengthen his faith. Seeing that Jesus had partially restored him, it was evidence that he could “wholly,” and it led him to exercise faith anew in him, and to feel more strikingly his dependence on him. Barnes Notes on the New Testament
- The cure was wrought gradually, which was not usual in our Lord’s miracles. Christ showed in what method those commonly are healed by his grace, who by nature are spiritually blind. At first, their knowledge is confused; but, like the light of the morning, it shines more and more to the perfect day, and then they see all things clearly. Slighting Christ’s favours is forfeiting them; and he will make those who do so know the worth of privileges by the want of them. Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible
- Jesus again desired the man to be silent to allow Him to continue His planned activity unhindered.