

“Lord, Help Me”
Matthew 15:21-28

Introduction: After having controversies with the Jerusalem Pharisees the Lord left the lake and headed to the coast to Tyre and Sidon. Matthew was the writer to the Jews, but he is now recording Jesus’ movements from the Jews to the Gentiles. There was something symbolic and prophetic in this deliberate move to the sea. It was in this Gentile region that our Lord met a paganistic woman that was desperate and determined. This woman that met Jesus represents countless millions who have reached out to the Lord for mercy and found it.

Body: Jerusalem delegation had locked horns with Jesus and had gone home filled with indignation. Therefore, our Lord sought out a Gentile to manifest His grace toward. His spirit was longing for that faith which He could not find in Israel. Therefore, we now come to our text that reveals two types of individuals, the helpless and the helper.

I. The Helpless

- A. Her Request v. 22- *“And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.”*
1. This woman was not just a Gentile woman, but was a Canaanite. She was a member of the accursed race whom God had commanded Joshua to exterminate.
 2. The woman had a devil possessed child, which was not uncommon among those involved in the religious system of the Canaanites.
 3. It was obvious that this was a serious case. This devil was creating many problems both for the woman and the daughter.
 4. The greatness of the problem would reveal the greatness of God’s power.
 5. Once the woman had heard that Christ was in the area, she came for help. She was a good steward of opportunity.
 6. This woman did not approach Christ on the basis of money, but of mercy.
 7. She recognized Him as:
 - a. Master- *“...O Lord...”*
 - b. Messiah- *“...thou Son of David...”*
 8. How did she know that Jesus was the Messiah?
 9. The Pharisees knew that the Messiah was the Son of David. Matthew 22:41-42
 10. I Kings 5:1
- B. Her Rejection v. 23- *“...And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.”*
1. Coming to Christ for help may be challenged by many. However, the challenging of one’s faith in Christ will only strengthen one’s faith in Christ.
 2. These men were the closest followers of Jesus. However, they did not want to be bothered with this woman nor her needs.
 3. Notice the rejection of these disciples. Matthew 14:15 and Matthew 15:23
- C. Her Response v. 25- *“Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.”*

1. Compare to Matthew 12:18-21
2. In spite of the difficulties in this woman's life (the devil and the disciples), she still worshipped the Lord.
3. This is a great example to us. We still need to worship God even though things seem to be going against us.
4. Faithfulness in worship will bring blessings.
5. This woman would not quit, but called out, "*Lord, help me.*" Though Christ did not answer her at first and the disciples tried to run her off, she still cried out for help.
6. A Gentile had no claim on the "Son of David". Therefore, she dropped the title "Son of David" and simply said, "Lord, help me."
7. Help is a cry of desperation.
 - a. It is a cry for aid and assistance.
 - b. It is a cry for a cure and a calm.
 - c. It is a cry for relief and a remedy.
 - d. It is a cry for strength and succoring.
8. This was a better plea and to Jesus an irresistible plea.
9. Notice who God helped in the Bible:
 - a. Joseph Genesis 49:25
 - b. Eliezer Exodus 18:4
 - c. Judah Deuteronomy 33:7
 - d. Israel Deuteronomy 33:29
 - e. Psalms 20:2- "*Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion*"
 - f. Psalms 33:20- "*Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield.*"
 - g. Psalms 37:40- "*And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.*"
 - h. Psalms 40:17- "*But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.*"
 - i. Psalms 124:8- "*Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.*"
 - j. Hebrews 4:16- "*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*"
- D. Her Reasoning v. 27- "*And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.*"
 1. This woman acknowledged the truth of the Word of God even though it was not in her favor. She was not like many church members who reject Scripture when it speaks out against them.
 2. Those who want great blessings from God must honor the Bible as truth, even if Bible truths hurt.
 3. She did not get upset and walk away mad, but she considered the humility of her condition. However, she knew that even though she was a dog she still could eat a few crumbs from the Master's table.

4. Look at Matthew 14:19-21. Did this woman think that Jesus had a few crumbs left over?
 5. Or what about Luke 15:17- *“And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!”*
- II. The Helper Psalm 121:2- *“My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.”*
- A. His Strategy v. 21- *“Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.”*
 1. From Mark 7:24, it was apparent that Jesus was trying to remain hid.
 2. Mark 7:24- *“And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it: but he could not be hid.”*
 3. Our Lord may have seemed insensitive to this woman’s need, but there is a little secret. Our Lord had just left Jewish territory to visit a Gentile area.
 4. In Luke 2:32, Simeon described our Lord like this, *“A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”*
 - B. His Silence v. 23- *“But he answered her not a word...”*
 1. Why was Jesus silent? Could it be that he was marveling at her faith? Matthew 8:5-10
 2. It is certain that Jesus was not trying to destroy her faith, but develop it.
 - C. His Seclusion v. 24- *“But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”*
 1. Compare to Matthew 10:5-6
 2. The Lord was moved by her determination and therefore put her to the test. His first words to her was chilling.
 - D. His Statement v. 26- *“But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.”*
 1. Christ had equated Gentiles to dogs.
 2. This woman had none of the religious persuasions of the Jews; she was not raised on the Scriptures; she had no roots in Abraham and David. She was only a lost pagan who had heard of Jesus and had no hope apart from Him.
 - E. His Sovereignty v. 28- *“Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.”*
 1. This woman believed in spite of:
 - a. Difficulties of Devils
 - b. Discouragement from Disciples
 - c. Delays in Prayers
 - d. Demotion in Position
 2. Hebrews 11:6- *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”*

3. The Jews had been offered everything and believed nothing. This Gentile was offered nothing and believed everything.
4. Notice the repeated words in verses 23, 24, and 26. *“But he answered”*
5. Now notice the phrase in verse 28. *“Then Jesus answered...”*

Conclusion: God reveals to us in the story of the Canaanite woman that if we come to Him calling for help, He will answer. Help may not arrive immediately, but if we continue to pursue after God, it will come. May we look on our Lord with an eye of faith and ask Him for help today. If God has done it before, He will do it some more!