

JESUS HEALS

CORE PASSAGE: MARK 7:24-37

CONTEXT

In Mark 7, Jesus journeyed to locations most Jews would not step one toe in. The regions of Tyre and Sidon were Gentile territories. The Decapolis too was comprised of ten Greek cities. These places, and the people in them, would have been viewed as unclean and therefore avoided by Jews. Mark, however, highlighted Jesus's perspective that differed greatly from the traditions of mere humans. Even in this stage of His ministry, Jesus was revealing His fulfillment of the law, and that meant correcting people's understanding of what was clean and unclean.

KEY CONCEPT

Jesus's willingness to heal all people points to His desire to bring salvation to all people.

As you examine Mark 7:24-37:

- Recognize that while Jesus first came to the Jews, His message and gift of salvation would be for all who believe in Him.
- Contemplate that people who encountered Jesus proclaimed all the miracles that He did, even though Jesus told them not to.



TIMELINE

Jesus Teaches with Many
Parables (Mark 4:1-34)

Jesus Walks on Water
(Mark 6:45-52)

Jesus Raises Lazarus from
the Dead (John 11:1-44)

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand
(Mark 6:30-44)

SESSION STUDY: Jesus Heals in
Gentile Regions (Mark 7:24-37)

Daily Readings

☐ **Day 1:** Mark 7:1-37

☐ **Day 2:** Mark 8:1-38

☐ **Day 3:** Matthew 15:1-39

☐ **Day 4:** Matthew 16:1-28

☐ **Day 5:** Luke 15:1-16:31

☐ **Day 6:** Psalm 117



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Scripture passages.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

MARK 7:24-30

JESUS'S MESSAGE OF SALVATION, HOPE, AND HEALING IS FOR BOTH JEW AND GENTILE.

Circle the words of Jesus, noting specifically how Jesus treated the Syrophenician woman.

24 He got up and departed from there to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it, but he could not escape notice. **25** Instead, immediately after hearing about him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit came and fell at his feet. **26** The woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth, and she was asking him to cast the demon out of her daughter. **27** He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, because it isn't right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." **28** But she replied to him, "Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." **29** Then he told her, "Because of this reply, you may go. The demon has left your daughter." **30** When she went back to her home, she found her child lying on the bed, and the demon was gone.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

DOGS: In Jesus's day, dogs were half-wild scavengers. Yet domesticated dogs would sit under the table and eat what fell to the floor.¹ In using this term, Jesus was not denigrating the Gentile woman but emphasizing His ministry priority for the lost children of Israel. After Jesus's death and resurrection, the gospel of salvation would be extended freely to all who believe, both Jew and Gentile (cf. Acts 13:46; 26:23; Romans 1:16; 2:9-10).

Key Concept: Jesus's willingness to heal all people points to His desire to bring salvation to all people.

Jesus did the unthinkable! Rather than travel around the Gentile region of Tyre or quickly through it, Jesus intentionally made His way to this region and even entered a house there, contrary to all Jewish expectations of faithfulness to God's law. Gentiles didn't have to do anything "unclean" to offend the Jews. The Jews considered them unclean for simply not being descendants of Abraham.

Jesus was becoming increasingly popular, even in this Gentile area. Unsurprisingly, then, the Syrophoenician woman came searching for Him. Not only did the woman enter the same room as a Jew, she fell at Jesus's feet, no doubt getting extremely close to Him. But she was desperate—her daughter was demon-possessed. Don't miss how "unclean" this woman was: She was a Gentile woman, ethnically Syrophoenician, and she had a demon-possessed daughter!

How do you think Gentiles might have felt around Jews in Jesus's day?

Jesus's response to the woman's plea for help wasn't shocking to the original readers of Mark's Gospel. Jesus's ministry was first to Israel, "the children" (v. 27). He was the Jewish Messiah, who came to set free the Jewish people from the curse

of their broken covenant. The woman's response to Jesus, however, was shocking. She accepted and affirmed the priority of the Jews in Jesus's ministry, but she appealed to His mercy nonetheless.

The woman understood that Jesus's ministry was to the Jew first, but that didn't mean He couldn't serve the Gentiles too. Jesus had fed (6:30-44) and would feed again (8:1-10) the Jews with bread, yet this Gentile mother believed that even a crumb of the blessings God had for the Jews could save her daughter, and her faith in Jesus was rewarded. Jesus healed the woman's daughter of the unclean, demonic spirit.

How has God revealed His care for the Gentiles throughout the Scriptures?

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Jesus ushered in a kingdom that would fix what was broken by sin, including illnesses, diseases, and disabilities. He healed both Jew and Gentile in His earthly ministry, which pointed to His death and resurrection that brings salvation to all who believe.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

MARK 7:31-37

JESUS HEALED THOSE WHO WERE DEAF AND MUTE, A SIGN OF HIS MESSIAHSHIP.

Circle Jesus's actions and underline the results of His actions.

31 Again, leaving the region of Tyre, he went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, through the region of the Decapolis. **32** They brought to him a deaf man who had difficulty speaking and begged Jesus to lay his hand on him. **33** So he took him away from the crowd in private. After putting his fingers in the man's ears and spitting, he touched his tongue. **34** Looking up to heaven, he sighed deeply and said to him, "Ephphatha!" (that is, "Be opened!"). **35** Immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was loosened, and he began to speak clearly. **36** He ordered them to tell no one, but the more he ordered them, the more they proclaimed it. **37** They were extremely astonished and said, "He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

MIRACLES: A miracle is an event in which God makes an exception to the natural order of things, or supersedes natural laws, for the purpose of demonstrating His glory and/or validating His message. Miracles are recorded throughout Scripture; miraculous signs and wonders were oftentimes evident when a prophet or an apostle was speaking God's message to the people. Because we believe God to be all-powerful and personally involved in this world, we believe He can and does perform miracles.



Once again, Jesus was in Gentile territory. The Decapolis, a region comprised of ten or more cities, was a center for Greco-Roman thought and culture and was no friend to Judaism. Yet even in this region, the Gentiles were aware of Jesus and what He could do (Matthew 4:25). Perhaps they had heard of His power from the man whom Jesus had freed from a legion of demons some time before (Mark 5:20). Despite being Gentiles, the people of this region had heard that Jesus healed everyone who came to Him. So like the Syrophoenician woman seeking help for her daughter, some Gentiles brought to Jesus a deaf man and begged Him for healing.

What must the Gentiles have believed about Jesus to bring the deaf man to Him?

Instead of healing the man then and there, Jesus took him to a private place. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus often performed miracles in private or at the very least requested that the healed individual tell no one what happened. There would be a time for people to spread the good news of Jesus's healing and power—after His resurrection.

Mark here described Jesus's healing technique in great detail. Jesus often healed with touch, but here He healed by touching the organs affected. Moreover, it seems Jesus even put His spit in the man's ears and/or on his tongue. Mark also recorded Jesus's attitude and declaration to accomplish this miracle. Jesus looked up, demonstrating His attitude of prayer toward His Father. Mark said Jesus "sighed deeply" (7:34), referring to the intense emotions He felt toward this man and his condition. And finally, Jesus uttered this Aramaic word: "Ephphatha!" This was not a magic incantation; rather, Jesus accomplished this healing with an authoritative command: "Be opened!"

Instantaneously the man was healed! The man who could not hear and who struggled to speak now spoke clearly in the presence of many witnesses. The Gentiles were amazed by Jesus's abilities, and they wanted to tell everyone what they had seen and heard. More than just an account of Jesus's miracle of healing the deaf and mute man, the people shared their evaluation of Jesus: "He has done everything well" (v. 37). We too should share of Jesus's work on our behalf and praise Him for His holiness and perfection and salvation.

What will it mean for you to believe that Jesus "has done everything well"?

FROM HOPE TO HEALING

Read Mark 7:24-37. Compare and contrast the circumstances surrounding the Gentile man and woman, and see the breadth of Jesus's love for all.

	SYROPHOENICIAN WOMAN (vv. 24-30)	MAN IN THE DECAPOLIS (vv. 31-37)
THE NEED		
THE BARRIERS		
JESUS'S RESPONSE		

How does seeing Jesus cross cultural, social, and physical boundaries challenge the way you think about the church's gospel mission?

Key Concept: Jesus's willingness to heal all people points to His desire to bring salvation to all people.



HEAD

How has Jesus crossed cultural, social, and physical boundaries to minister to you?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

✕ ————— ✕
Read and pray through Psalm 117. Like the Gentile crowds, praise God for all that He has done in your life. Thank God that He reaches all nations. And because the Lord's faithfulness endures forever, ask God to heal you of whatever is ailing you spiritually or physically.



HEART

How do you need to grow in your persistence and humility in prayer and faith?

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



HANDS

How will you lead people to Jesus this week so they might find the healing and salvation only He can provide?

