

28.57 A Canaanite Daughter and a Deaf Man Healed (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-37)

✓ “Check” it out: opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher, not the student. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and/or visual aids found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check also “Activities” and “Handwork” below for additional suggested items.
- Accent Publications (#KT1B, Lesson 5, p. 53) has an excellent rendition of this story the teacher might want to use for younger children. This curriculum was published in the early 1990s and perhaps is not now available.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *Tyre and Sidon:* cities known for wickedness and deserving of judgment [locate on a map]. These two cities are within 20 miles of each other in Phoenicia, just north of Galilee of Israel. Being on the coast of the Great Sea, they were great trading ports and were also known for their purple dye made from murex shells.
- *deaf:* unable to hear
- *mute:* unable to speak or unable to speak well. If you hear the phrase, *deaf and dumb*, do not think it means a deaf person is stupid. *Dumb* is an old-fashioned way to say *mute*. Use the polite term, *mute—deaf and mute*—when speaking of a person who cannot speak.

Scripture: (ESV)

Matthew 15:21 And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. 22 And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon.” 23 But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, “Send her away, for she is crying out after us.” 24 He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” 25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” 26 And he answered, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” 27 She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” 28 Then Jesus answered her, “O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.” And her daughter was healed instantly.

Mark 7:24 And from there he arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And he entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet he could not be hidden. 25 But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of him and came and fell down at his feet. 26 Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27 And he said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” 28 But she answered him, “Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” 29 And he said to her, “For this statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter.” 30 And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone.

31 Then he returned from the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. 32 And they brought to him a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment, and they begged him to lay his hand on him. 33 And taking him aside from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. 34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” 35 And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. 36 And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. 37 And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

Introduction/Review:

The Pharisees had challenged Jesus about not following the traditions of the fathers. Jesus turned this charge back on them by saying, “You forsake the commandments of God for the sake of your traditions. What tradition did Jesus use for an example? It is called Corban. [A gift dedicated to God allowed them to disobey “Honor your father and your mother.”] The Pharisees were hypocrites, looking righteous on the outside but having hearts far from God on the inside. Jesus gave a short parable: What comes out of a person’s mouth, not what goes in, defiles a person.

Story:

[Teacher, on a map locate the cities mentioned in this story. The map found below will be hard for students to see, but it will help you find Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee and Tyre and Sidon on the east shore of the Mediterranean Sea.]

Being in the north of Israel in Capernaum, Jesus went further north, outside Israel, to the area of Tyre and Sidon. You may not remember, but we have mentioned these two cities before—when Jesus denounced “the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent.” He had proclaimed, “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you.”

Jesus at Tyre and Sidon

Well, now Jesus went to these wicked cities, Tyre and Sidon themselves, 35 miles from Capernaum—a full two days’ worth of walking (https://www.bible-history.com/map_jesus/MAPJESUSNew_Testament_Cities_Distances.htm). Will He do “mighty works” here? No. ✓ Perhaps Jesus was hiding from King Herod, who, you remember, wanted to see Jesus after he executed John the Baptizer. The Bible says Jesus “withdrew” and “did not want anyone to know.” But could Jesus get away from the crowds? Hardly ever. Even when He entered a house, He could not be hidden.

What happened next drew even more attention to Him, for a Canaanite woman whose nationality is called Syrophenician, the nationality of the region, followed Jesus, crying over and over, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon”; “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon”; “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon.” I repeated her plea three times. Did you find it annoying? Imagine hearing many more times.

This noise was getting unbearable, but Jesus continued ignoring the desperate woman. The disciples had had enough and came, begging Jesus, “Send her away, for she is crying out after us.”

Jesus and the Canaanite woman

So Jesus addressed the woman, declaring, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, not to the Gentiles.” In other words, Jesus was saying that “at that time, His duty was to the people of Israel, not to the Gentiles” (<https://www.gotquestions.org/Canaanite-woman-dog.html>).

✓ Encouraged that Jesus had addressed her condition, the despondent woman came closer to Jesus and, kneeling before Him, begged, “Lord, help me!”

Still, Jesus would not heal the woman’s daughter. Instead, He answered, “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.”

Now, this statement sounds totally insulting in our ears, but let’s look at it in light of Jesus’ time and the actual meaning of the word *dog* used here. Jesus was not saying, “You dog!” in the sense of a wild scavenging dog. Rather, Jesus meant that “taking His attention from Israel, in violation of His mission, would be like a father taking food from his children in order to throw it to their pets (Matthew 15:26). The exact Greek word Jesus used here was *kunarion*, meaning ‘small dog’ or ‘pet dog’” (*Ibid.*).

Imagine the scene: Here is the family at the table. Father sits at the head of the table. Instead of passing the food to his children, he gives it all to the pet dogs under the table. That was what Jesus said He would be doing if He was distracted from working for the sake of the Jews in order to help this Gentile woman.

But this persistent mother was not easily put off. She came back with a wise argument: “Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” In other words, “I just want a crumb; I’ll take only a crumb from the children when You help me.”

Jesus heals the daughter

Jesus would no longer argue. He answered her, “O woman, great is your faith! You may go your way; the demon has left your daughter.”

The daughter was healed instantly. When the woman got home, she found her daughter in bed; the demon was gone.

Jesus in Decapolis

That is the only “mighty work” we read about at this time in Tyre and Sidon, for Jesus then departed that land and traveled, perhaps going across the bridge at Bethsaida and walking along the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee to Decapolis, a region of ten Greek cities, south and east of the Sea of Galilee. ✓One source states it was “some 120 miles” from Tyre to the Decapolis

(<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/healing-deaf-man/>). At twenty miles’ walking per day, how many days would this journey take? [Six.]

Even here people knew Jesus and followed Him. Some of them brought to Jesus a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment. Having the double difficulty of deafness and muteness is generally the case. Because a deaf person cannot hear, he cannot pronounce words as those can who hear. (An aside: I have a deaf friend. When she writes on Facebook, her sentence construction is tangled simply because she doesn’t hear basic sentence structure. When she “likes” something, she writes, “Sweet smile.” I love it!)

Jesus heals the deaf/mute man

This deaf man’s friends begged Jesus to lay His hand on the man to heal him. Taking the man apart from the crowd privately, He put his fingers into the man’s ears and, after spitting (the Bible doesn’t say where Jesus spit; ✓we might assume it was on the man’s tongue), Jesus touched the man’s tongue. Then, looking up to heaven, Jesus sighed and said to the man but also to the ears and mouth, “Be opened.”

The ears and mouth were opened! The man could hear, and, never having heard before, he now could speak plainly. What a miracle!

Remember, Jesus had taken this man aside privately so that His work might not arouse the attention of the crowds. Now He charged those nearby not to tell anyone what they had just seen. However, the more he urged them, the more zealously they proclaimed Him and His wonderful works. Not surprisingly, they were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”*

Although Jesus had reported to John’s disciples that “the deaf hear,” this is the first story actually to show Jesus’ healing of a deaf/mute person.

*“*Mogilalos*, the Greek term used to describe the deaf man’s condition, appears only one other place in the Bible: Isaiah 35:5–6. . . . After the destruction of [Tyre, Jerusalem, and Edom], Isaiah 35 explains, there will be a great restoration accompanied by everlasting holiness and joy. Among the wonders to occur are the healing of the deaf and mute, those who suffered the condition of *mogilalos* (vv. 5–6). By healing the deaf and mute man, Jesus proved that the era of restoration had come, salvation was at hand, and that God would be restoring all things through His Son” (<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/healing-deaf-man/>).

Lessons from This Lesson:

- The Canaanite woman knew Jesus is the Messiah as evidenced in her calling Him *Lord* and *Son of David* and in her belief that He could heal her daughter. Do you believe
- Like the woman who came to Jesus, we should persevere—keep on when things look grim.
- Our prayers will be answered if we persevere.
- This method of healing (using spittle) may seem perplexing to us, and we might ask, “Why did Jesus do it that way?” The guiding principle is that God always does right, no matter what we may think of what He does. Someday He might explain this method to us, or He might not. He is in charge. We can trust Him. He doesn’t always do things the way we think they should be done, but He does right.
- Let us use our ears to listen to things that edify, not tear down; to things that glorify God, not man.
- Let us use our tongues to praise the Lord and speak for Him.

Activities:

- Play dough: bed, ears
- Sing, “Oh, Be Careful, Little Ears, What You Hear” (Salvation Songs, No. 2, Child Evangelism Fellowship, #35).
- Have younger students make sounds with their hands, feet, voices, tongues.
- Make noise makers: rice, popcorn, or dried beans in a various-sized jars; aluminum pie tins struck together; oatmeal carton drum; jingle bells, *etc.* Students may make noise as long as teacher does not, as a music conductor, bring his/her hands down as signal to stop.
- Sing first two stanzas of the song, “Jesus Healed . . .” found below.
- Do some sign language:
 1. “Jesus” (Touch the tip of the middle finger of your dominant hand into the center of the palm of your non-dominant hand; then touch the tip of the middle finger of your non-dominant hand into the palm of your dominant hand);
 2. “love” (Form hands into fists, and bring arms across chest. Combine these first two signs for “I love Jesus.”)
 3. “God” (Displaying your dominant hand sideways, swipe hand in front of your face, pulling downward. Combine “Jesus” with “God” for “Jesus is God.”)
- For background discuss the murex shell dye of Tyre. (Find a picture of the murex shell below.) Here are a few points on this subject:
 1. In ancient times, extracting this dye involved tens of thousands of snails and substantial labor, and as a result, the dye was highly valued.
 2. The **dye** was greatly prized in antiquity because the colour did not easily fade, but instead became brighter with weathering and sunlight. Its significance is such that the name Phoenicia means 'land of purple.
 3. The dye substance is a mucous secretion from the **hypobranchial gland** of one of several species of medium-sized **predatory sea snails** that are found in the eastern **Mediterranean Sea** (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tyrian_purple).
- Sword drill on hearing:
 1. Deuteronomy 6:4— “**Hear**, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.”
 2. Judges 5:3— “**Hear**, O kings; **give ear**, O princes; to the LORD I will sing; I will make melody to the

LORD, the God of Israel.”

3. 2 Kings 20:16—Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “**Hear** the word of the LORD.”
 4. Proverbs 1:8—**Hear**, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching.
 5. Jeremiah 13:15—**Hear** and **give ear**; be not proud, for the LORD has spoken.
 6. Matthew 7:24— “Everyone then who **hears** these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”
 7. John 5:25— “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will **hear** the voice of the Son of God, and those who **hear** will live.”
 8. Romans 10:17—So faith comes from **hearing**, and **hearing** through the word of Christ.
 9. Ephesians 4:29 —Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who **hear**.
 10. James 1:19—Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to **hear**, slow to speak, slow to anger.
- Review questions: (Game: After printing the ears found below, back with flannel and cut out. Students will place one on the flannel board for each correct answer.)
 1. Locate on the map the place Jesus went where He had not been before, a place on the coast of the Great Sea. [Tyre and/or Sidon.]
 2. What did Jesus say to the annoying woman? [He had come to the lost sheep of Israel; it wouldn't be right to take food from them to give to Gentiles.]
 3. How did the woman respond to Jesus' illustration of the dogs? [“Yet, the dogs eat crumbs from the children.”]
 4. What happened to the woman's daughter? [She was healed.]
 5. After Jesus left the region of Tyre and Sidon, where did He go? [The Decapolis.]
 6. What two things were wrong with the man brought to Jesus? [He was deaf and mute.]
 7. How did Jesus heal this man? [Put His fingers in the man's ears; spat and touched the man's tongue; lifted His hands to heaven and said, “Be opened.”]
 8. What was remarkable about the man's speech? [He could now speak plainly even though he had not been able to hear speech before.]
 9. What did Jesus tell the people not to do? [To make His healing known.]
 10. How well did the people heed what Jesus charged? [Not well; they zealously proclaimed Him.]

Handwork:

- Print the ears found below on cardstock. Cut out one pair of ears for each student. Loop a 6-inch piece of string and tape it to the back of each printed ear. Students hang the string over their ears to wear these ears.

Memory Verse:

- Romans 10:17—So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Tyre and Sidon

deaf

mute

Hear, ye
children, the
instruction of
a father
(Prov. 4:1).

Hear, ye
Children, the
instruction
of a father
(Prov. 4:1).

Hear, ye
children, the
instruction
of a father
(Prov. 4:1).

The LORD
will hear
me when I
call
(Psa. 4:3).

The LORD
will hear me
when I
call
(Psa. 4:3).

The LORD
will hear
me when
I call
(Psa. 4:3).





Jesus
answered
and said...

**I was sent
only to the
lost sheep of
the house**



of Israel

Matthew
15:24



Knowing-Jesus.com

EVEN THE DOGS EAT THE
CRUMBS
••• THAT FALL FROM
••• THEIR MASTER'S TABLE.

MATTHEW 15:27





https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tyrian_purple