



A just weight
and balance



are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- **The Faith of a Canaanite Woman**

- **Matthew 15:21**

Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

- **15:22 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.**

- **15:23** But he answered her not a word.
- **And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.**
- **15:24** But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

- **15:25** Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.
- **15:26** But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to **dogs**.

- **15:27** And she said, Truth, Lord:
yet the dogs eat of the crumbs
which fall from their
masters' table.
- **15:28** 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.

- It doesn't sound like Jesus was acting very Christian in this passage.
- This is one of those hard sayings of the Bible.

- How are we to understand what Jesus says here in light of everything else He says
- Because this seems to be the exact opposite of everything He elsewhere teaches.

- We are not to take his words literally,
- As He is speaking the exact opposite of what He means in order to make His point .

- Have you ever said
the exact opposite
of what we mean
in order to make
the exact opposite point?
- We have all done that.

- Let us understand the words of Jesus to this **Canaanite woman**, in that way.

- Matthew's gospel has been called “the disciple-making gospel.”

- It's a disciple-making gospel because it's all about making disciples.

- **Matthew 28:19-20**

is the capstone
of everything that's taught and
said in the book of Matthew.

- **“Go and make”** **what?**

- **“Disciples.”**

- After all Jesus is
the master Disciple.

- He sets the example for all disciples. .
 - He presents Himself to be baptized.
 - He then faces temptation and succeeds
 - And then He goes and preaches the Gospel.
 - Jesus is making His disciples.

- Who does He want His disciples to be like?

- What does He want us to know?

- How does He want us to live?

- And He teaches us this in opposition to what group of people.

- To the Pharisees.

- His whole point is:
- “Don’t be like the Pharisees!”
- In the Sermon on the Mount,
He says,
 - “Don’t pray like them.
 - Don’t give like them.
- Don’t have an attitude like them.”

- But most **importantly**, what Jesus teaches us about not being like the Pharisees is:
 - Don't be as **hard-hearted** as they are.

- Remember all those times
Jesus says,
 - **“Go and learn
what this means:
I desire mercy and not sacrifice”**
(Matthew 9:13)
 - **Matthew’s gospel**
is showing us
that Jesus is the
Master Disciple.

- He is showing us that we are not to be like the Pharisees
 - But we are to be like Jesus who is the exact opposite of the Pharisees.
- So one purpose of the book of Matthew is to teach disciples how to be like Jesus.

- The second thing we learn is:
- The book of Matthew is the most Jewish, of the gospels.
- And it's also the most anti-Jewish books, of the gospels.

- In order to understand this we must remember that Matthew was **a tax collector.**
- So the Jews didn't like him **for that reason.**
 - And when he converted to being a Christian **they liked him even less.**

- But we also find that Matthew holds the Gentiles up in very high esteem.

- When the gospel of Matthew opens it opens in a very Jewish way with a genealogy.
 - But it is not very Jewish because there are four Gentile women in that genealogy.
 - Two of them are Canaanite women,
 - Then a Moabite
 - And finally the wife of Uriah, the Hitite.

- Throughout the book of Matthew the Gentiles are portrayed in a positive light while the Jews are portrayed in a negative light.
- For example, the first people to come and worship and recognize Jesus Christ is who?
 - “Wise men from the East”
or Magi.
(Matthew 2:1)

- What contrast does Matthew present?
- When the Magi showed up in Jerusalem, they announced:
 - “We’ve come to worship the King who has been born”.
 - What happens?

- **“We saw His star in the East,”**
 - **“And all of Jerusalem was troubled.”**
 - And when they **worshipped the child.**
 - They did so **“with exceedingly great joy,”**

- While at the same time
Herod was
extremely disturbed.
 - The “wise men”
gave Him gifts.
 - Herod’s response:
“We’ve got to
kill this challenge
to my authority.”

- Now when is the last time that Jewish children were being killed by a king?
 - In Egypt.
- The irony in the book of Matthew is that Jesus must seek protection among the Gentiles in Egypt.
 - Israel is dangerous;
 - Egypt is safe

- When Jesus is brought back by His father and mother they want to settle in Bethlehem
 - But they dare not, because, Archelaus, the son of Herod the Great, is there and he's worse than his father.
- So they have to go up to Galilee.

- How is Galilee described in the book of Isaiah?
- “Galilee of the Gentiles.”
(Isaiah 9:1)

- And it's just

not the place

that good Jewish people

want to be

but it's the

only safe place

for Jesus to hide.

- And instead of Jerusalem being the city that welcomes it king, what does Jesus say?
- "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it!
(Matthew 23:37) (ESV)
 - Jerusalem is a dangerous place and it will prove to be just that.

- As you read through the book of Matthew it's the Gentiles that have "great faith".
- Who are the Gentiles mentioned:
 - A Roman centurion.
 - The Canaanite woman
in our story.

- In contrast to their great faith, what does Jesus say about the faith of the Jews?
- That they have no faith.
- “You demand a sign.”
(Matthew 12:38)
- But they don't believe.

- In contrast to the great faith of the Gentiles. the disciples are often described as people of “little faith.”
(Matthew 8:26)

- The Gentiles have this very positive role in the book of Matthew,
- Whereas it's negative when it comes to the Jewish people.

- Also what we find in the book of Matthew is that Jesus' teaching is universal.
- He is always teaching about the kingdom of heaven.
 - While Luke and Mark refer to it as the kingdom of God.

- It may be that Matthew does not want God's kingdom to be confused with an earthly kingdom because,
- Most Jews believed that the Messiah was going to establish and earthly kingdom through them.

- Matthew says in essence,
“**No, this is not about
your earthly kingdom.**
- This is about
a heavenly kingdom!
- And the
kingdom of God
**has no ethnic
dimension to it.**

- What did **John the Baptist** say to the **Jews**?
- **God doesn't need you** as sons of Abraham.
 - **If God wants sons of Abraham, He will raise them up from these stones.**
(**Matthew 3:9**)

- Throughout the book of Matthew we find that Jesus' call has no ethnic dimension.
- In the Sermon on the Mount, the beatitudes say nothing about where one comes from.
- “Blessed are those who mourn.
- Blessed are the peacemakers.
 - Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.”

- When He calls His disciples, there's no ethnic dimension to His call.

- He says,

“I will make you fishers of men.”

- He talks about good fruit and bad fruit.
(Matthew 7:20)

- He tells of the **net** that's thrown into the sea **and it catches all kinds of fish.**

- The call to **take up the cross** and follow Christ is to **all** whether Jew or Gentile.

- There's **no** ethnic dimension to the new people of God.

- And Jesus actually destroys the idea that the Jews are special because of the blood that runs in their veins.

- Let us note Mark 12:48-50.

- You will remember in **Mark 12:48-50** when Jesus is preaching in a little house and it's full and Jesus' mother and brothers and sisters are outside and they send word to Jesus that, **“Your mother and brother and sister are outside and they want to speak with you.”**

- Now, why did they do that?
- You see, they believed that because they were related to the preacher they'd have front row seats; they've had backstage passes.
 - They've have some type of special access to Jesus Christ.

- But what does Jesus say?
 - “ Who is my mother?
and who are my brethren?
 - For whosoever shall do the will of my Father
which is in heaven,
the same is my brother,
and sister, and mother.

- And in the day of judgment, Israel has no special place. (Matthew 12:50)
- In fact, all Jesus says is that the nations will be called before Him and He's going to do what?
 - Separate the sheep from the goats. (Matthew 25:33)

- So the most radical part of this teaching is the thing that **we take most for granted.**
- We say it all the time **in the Lord's Prayer** when we call God **“our Father.”**
- You see, Jesus said, “We all have one God who is our Father **and we all are brothers and sisters.**”

- Whatever we may encounter in our life, if we can humbly meet it with a certainty that God loves us,
- That God wills our salvation and that humility enables us to have our prayers answered before God (like the Canaanite woman,)
 - That will make us strong with His strength, and that we will have “great faith”.

- After the woman bows her head in humility at this stunning and unbelievable rebuke, the Lord pronounces her blessed and says:

- **“O woman, great is your faith! Be it unto you even as you desire and her daughter was made well.”**
(Matthew 15:28)

- Christ loved her enough
 - to test her,
 - to humble her,
 - to make her see her own inadequacy
in dealing with
the issue at hand.
 - How might you
stand up to the test?

- When we are crushed and when it seems that sorrow after sorrow and difficulty after difficulty fall upon us, we must persevere in our faith in the Lord.

- It is only through this that we will be given the strength to overcome, and to grow through them

- **We must not**
nor can we ever despair
by thinking that
God will abandon us
- And that He is
unmerciful
and does not love us.

- The Christian message is opposite of that of the world.
- When we think that the Canaanite woman should have given up. She find her answer.
- And the answer is within herself, it is her faith.

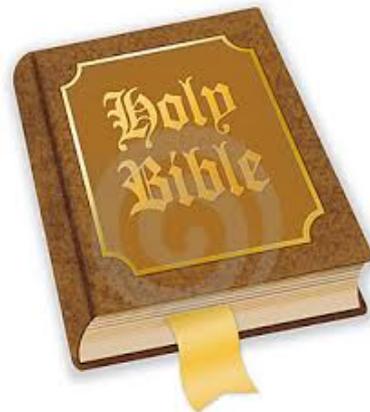
- Two faiths
- **O ye of little faith**
(**Matthew 8:26**)
- **Great is thy faith**
(**Matthew 15:28**)
 - **One** choice!
- **Which** shall it be?

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say**

“Come”.

Revelation 22:17



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