

Matthew 15:21-39

Grace for Gentiles



After his categorical contradiction of the scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem (1-20), it seems that it is now unwise for Jesus to stay even in distant Galilee. So he moves for a while to Gentile territory, first of all north and west towards the Mediterranean coast. But even there, he is recognised and sought out. Despite the unpromising start, we soon find that **the Son of David and the God of Israel are gracious to Gentiles, too.**

➤ **Surprising faith** (21-28)

The woman calls Jesus “Son of David” - which he is. But is this to her just a convenient title to use? ... or does she already believe and understand it, to some extent? ... or does she grow in both as Jesus does not immediately react positively to her request?

Would she have come to Jesus if her daughter were not afflicted? And are many people today (or are we) so often so comfortable with our lives that we do not bother to seek Jesus? Could we ever honestly say that we *felt* along with Psalm 119:71?

Jesus only specifically remarks upon the strength of the faith of two people, and both of them are Gentiles (this woman, and the centurion of Luke 7:9). Is this significant?

Would you be happy with Jesus’ “crumbs”?

➤ **Spectacular miracles** (29-31)

Glorifying *the God of Israel* (31) suggests that the recipients of these miracles of healing and food were also Gentiles. Should we be surprised? (Consider Genesis 12:3 and 49:22)

➤ **A replayed miracle** (32-39)

How realistic is the criticism that Matthew here just, not knowing any better, simply includes another version – probably equally unreliable – of the same story already included in chapter 14?