

# The Sunday School

## BIBLE LESSON.

Abridged from Peloubet's Notes.

Second Quarter, 1904.

APRIL TO JUNE.

Lesson I.—April 3.—Jesus Visits Tyre and Sidon.—Mark 7: 24-37.

EXPLANATORY.

FIRST. THE SYRO-PHENICIAN WOMAN AND HER DAUGHTER.—VS. 24-30. 24. AND FROM THENCE. From Galilee, and probably from Capernaum. HE AROSE AND WENT (away) His reason for leaving Capernaum arose from the increasing opposition of the Pharisees, as described in the earlier part of this chapter, and in John 6: 41-66. This was a temporary retreat to gain greater advantage. "It is difficult for us to imagine the hot indignation which his teaching awakened in the Pharisees." It alienated many who had become his outward followers. Jesus withdrew from "the terribly stormy scenes" which followed the sunny spring of his early ministry. INTO THE BORDERS. The country around TYRE AND SIDON. Not into the great and splendid cities themselves. These were two flourishing seaports and capitals of Phœnicia, a narrow, level district along the shores of the Mediterranean. Sidon was twenty miles north of Tyre. The journey was not long, as Tyre was only about thirty five miles, and Sidon forty-five miles, from the Sea of Galilee. They were a heathen, but active, commercial, and manufacturing people: wealthy, luxurious, and dissolute.

AND ENTERED INTO AN HOUSE, AND WOULD HAVE NO MAN KNOW IT. Because he had gone there both for safety and repose. Farther thinks he who "bore our griefs and carried our sorrows" had seasons not only of "physical weakness, but of spiritual depression." BUT HE COULD NOT BE HID, any more than perfume in the hand.

25. FOR A CERTAIN WOMAN. "By race and language a sort of epitome of all the races of mankind." (1) A Canaanite (Matthew), a descendant in all probability of the blood of Ham. (2) vs. 26 A SYRO-PHENICIAN BY NATION. Rather, "by race." A descendant of the Syrian branch of Phœnicians, a Semitic race. (3) A GREEK. Greek-speaking, under the influence of the manners and customs of the Greeks, descendants of Japheth. Thus she represented the descendants of Shem and

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Ham by descent, and of Japheth by language and civilization, and thus was "a representative of the vast multitude of pagans."

25. WHOSE YOUNG DAUGHTER HAD AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT. Matthew says she was grievously vexed with a demon. It was called an unclean spirit because it produced uncleanness of body and soul.

HEARD OF HIM. A man coming into a house with twelve followers could hardly have escaped notice. The fame of his great miracles must easily have passed over the borders into the neighboring territory. Some from this region listened to the Sermon on the Mount (Mark 3: 8.) FELL (down) AT HIS FEET, in the attitude of an humble suppliant beseeching a favor.

26. AND SHE BESOUGHT HIM. Matthew says she "cried" unto him, wailed, mourned; the same verb in the Greek as the "weeping" in John 11: 33 over the death of Lazarus. CAST . . . THE DEVIL (rather demon) OUT OF HER DAUGHTER.

27. "Now our Lord was generally so quickly responsive to every appeal made to his compassion, that his answer usually came prompt as an echo. It is therefore with deep surprise that we read how, on this occasion, the Lord of mercy seemed deaf to the cry of affliction, and answered her never a word (Matthew 23: 35.) But she continued her wailing so persistently that the disciples came to Jesus and brought him to send the woman away on account of her cries, for Jesus replied to their request by giving as his reason for his treatment of her that he was "not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." His first work must be among the Jews, even as he had commanded the twelve when he sent them out to preach and heal (Matt. 10: 5, 6.) If Jesus, therefore, would not heal her, let him send her away without healing, for her cries might bring them into danger, and they were interfering with all they had come for.

Then JESUS SAID UNTO HER. He broke his silence, but with strange words. LET THE CHILDREN. The Jews, who were the chosen family of God, who had been taught and trained so that they could be persuaded to belong to the kingdom of God. FIRST BE FILLED. They had the first claim, and through them, filled with the principles of the heavenly kingdom, all the rest could best receive the bread of life. To have worked first among the Gentiles would have made Christ's mission more difficult, if not impossible. IT IS NOT MEET (fitting, reasonable) TO TAKE THE CHILDREN'S BREAD, AND TO CAST IT UNTO THE DOGS. Jesus is probably quoting a familiar proverb. "The Jews in general, the Pharisees with special score, used to speak of all Gentiles as 'dogs,' and 'dog' in the East is the one expression which conveys the deepest contempt and hatred."

28. AND SHE ANSWERED, with the ready wit of earnest desire and of faith. YES, LORD: YET THE DOGS UNDER THE TABLE EAT OF THE CHILDREN'S CRUMBS. All I ask is the crumbs which the children do not eat. I do not ask that anything be taken from them in order to help me. Curing my daughter cannot lessen the number of others cured.

29. AND HE SAID UNTO HER, "O woman, great is thy faith." It was great in its love, its earnestness, its humility, its overcoming great obstacles, its nature. FOR THIS SAYING. Because it proved the greatness of her faith. THE DEVIL IS GONE OUT OF THY DAUGHTER. Jesus did not prolong the agony of her suspense. Her faith had triumphed. From that hour says Matthew, her daughter was healed.

SECOND. THE CURE OF THE DEAF AND DUMB MAN.—VS. 31-37. 31. FROM THE COASTS (borders) OF TYRE AND SIDON. Better as R. V. He went from Tyre through Sidon, not the city, but the district. He went northward, then eastward to the upper Jordan, and thence southerly to the eastern shore of the SEA OF GALILEE, through the borders of DECAPOLIS, the District of the Ten Cities, the western boundary of which ran along the Jordan and the Sea of Galilee.

32. Among the many persons healed on this journey, described in Matthew 15: 29-31 was ONE THAT WAS DEAF, AND HAD AN IMPEDIMENT IN HIS SPEECH. Some trouble with the vocal organs in addition to the deafness which usually affects the speech. THEY SPoke PLAIN (vs. 35) after the cure implies that the impediment would permit him to make only inarticulate sounds. BESeeK HIM TO PUT HIS HAND UPON HIM, probably to aid the faith of the afflicted man, to bring him into sympathy with Jesus and confidence in him, and thus touch his spiritual nature.

33. HE TOOK HIM ASIDE FROM THE MULTITUDE (privately). That the man apart from the distracting crowd might receive deeper spiritual impression. There seems to have been some peculiar need of aiding and inspiring faith in this man who seems to have come not of his own accord, but only when urged by others. Moreover, he could not hear any spoken word, and must be taught by signs. Hence, Jesus not only laid his hands on him, but PUT HIS FINGERS INTO HIS EARS AND HE SPoke (spat) AND TOUCHED HIS TONGUE.

34. AND LOOKING UP TO HEAVEN. Still teaching the deaf man, by signs, the source of the healing, and the value of prayer. He

stighed. Groaned, an expression which the man could perceive of genuine grief at the human suffering produced by sin, and the difficulty of making men realize it. EPHRAIM. The Aramaic, the modified Hebrew, spoken by the people, meaning, BE OPENED.

35. AND STRAIGHTWAY. The miraculous cure was instantaneous, showing that it was produced by divine power.

36. HE CHARGED THEM. Not only the man, but those who brought him. THAT THEY SHOULD TELL NO MAN, "lest he should be thronged with the curious and idle," and he and his disciples be unable to have the rest and quiet teaching which they were seeking. It may also be that there was some need of this from something in the man's character. SO MUCH THE MORE . . . THEY PUBLISHED IT. They looked upon the charge as a wish rather than a command, and their wonder and gratitude urged them to honor God and Jesus by making his great work known, and to open the way for others to be cured. Hence, probably the throngs that came to Jesus and were healed, as described in Matt. 15: 29-31.

37. THEY WERE BEYOND MEASURE ASTONISHED. Very few of Christ's miracles had been done in this region. Restoring the Gadarene demoniac is the only one recorded. HE HATH DONE ALL THINGS WELL. All was worthy of God's love, and expressed his good-will and loving-kindness toward man.



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