

A Mother's Faith

What if someone said that . . .

- we should be like Jesus?
- being like Jesus includes sending away honest seekers?
- He insulted sincere woman in need?

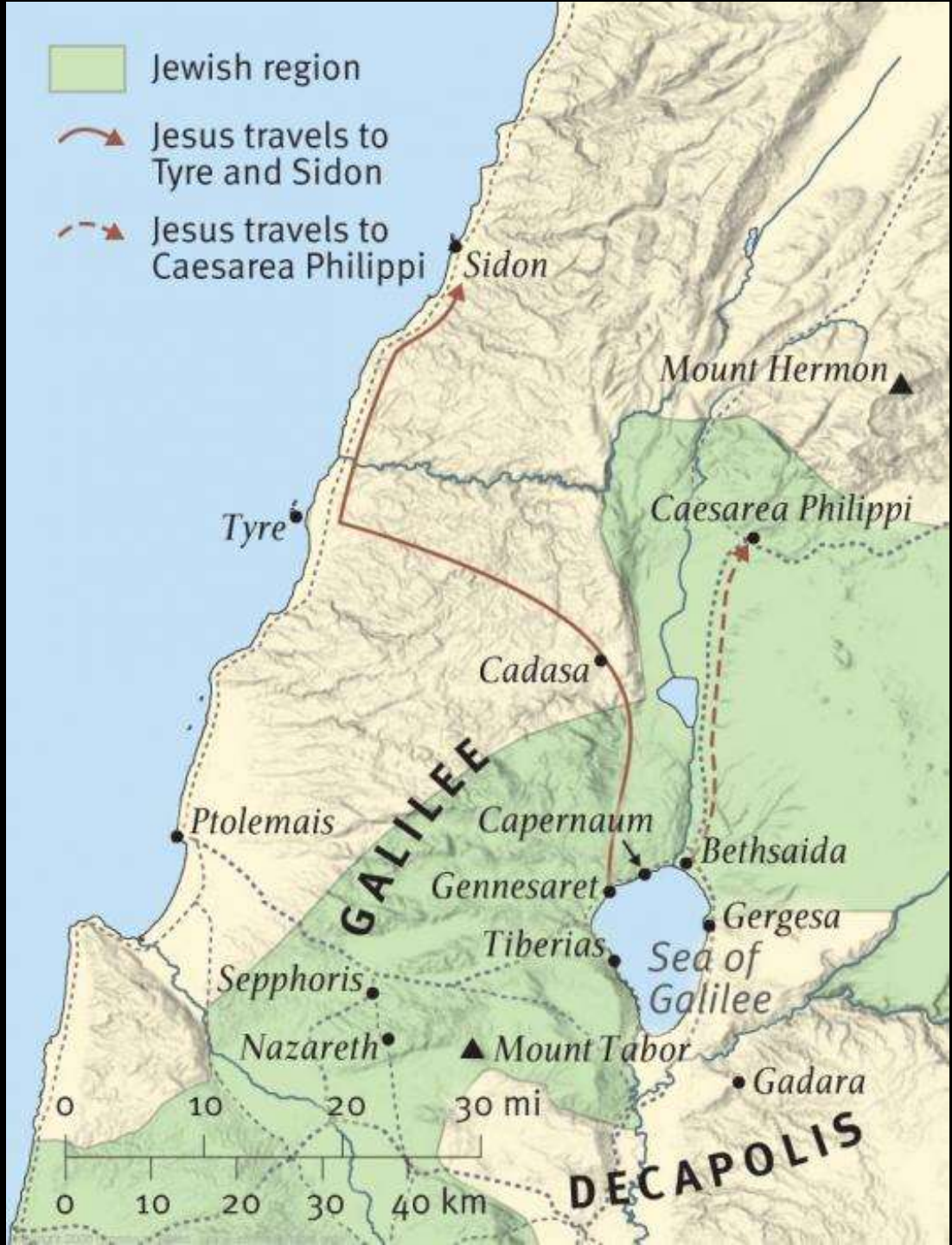
At first glance, He appears to do this to a mother in dire need – Mt.15; Mk.7

I. The Meeting

Mt.15:21-28; Mk.7:24-30

Mt.15:21; Mk.7:24

- Context: Mt.14, Peter's weak faith; 15, hostile scribes / Pharisees
 - Lord takes disciples away from . . .
 - ... Jews spiritually
 - ... Israel geographically
 - ... hypocritical unbelief to plea of faith
- Tyre – Sidon

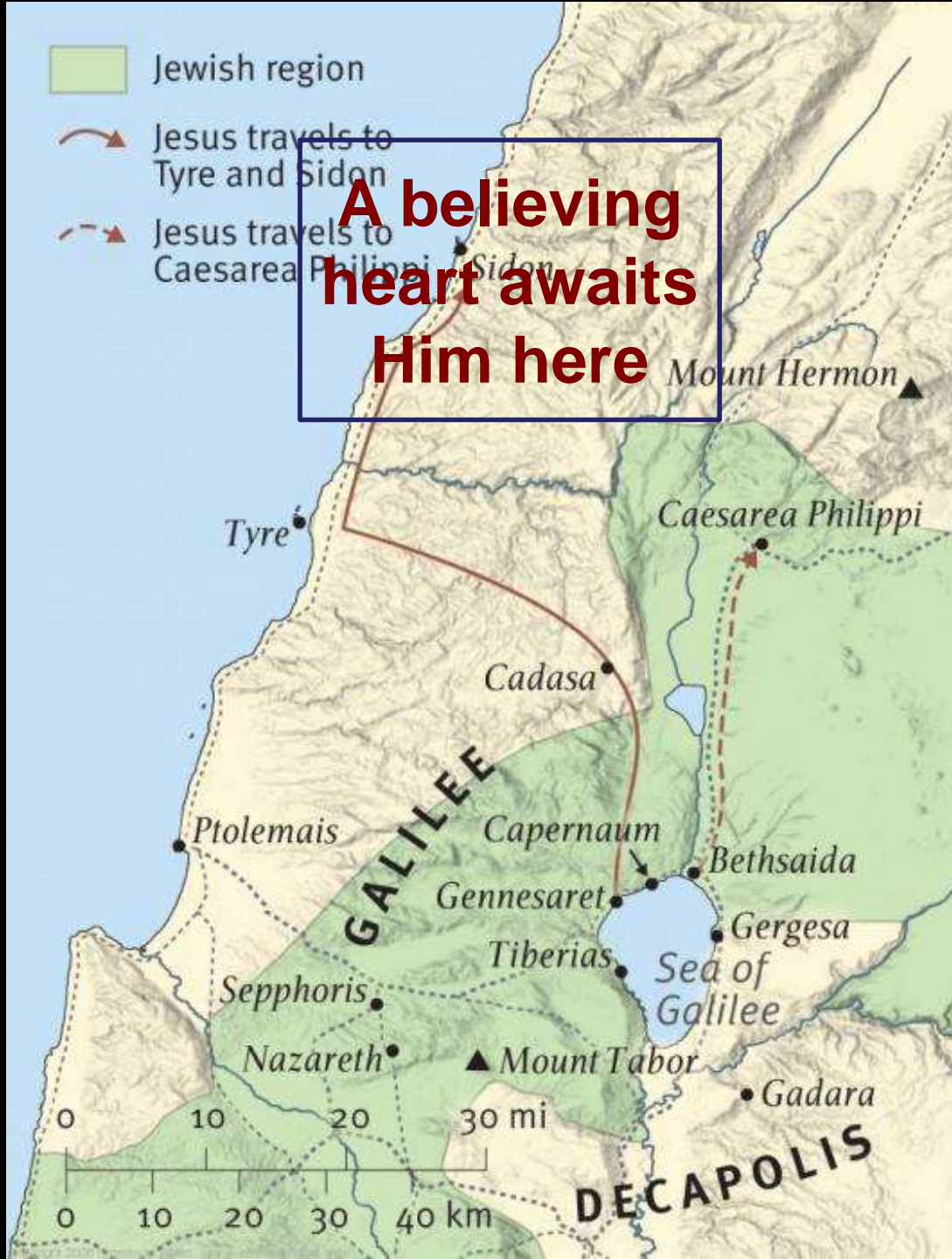


Jewish region

Jesus travels to Tyre and Sidon

Jesus travels to Caesarea Philippi

A believing heart awaits Him here



Mt.15:21; Mk.7:24

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 - Lord takes disciples away from . . .
 - ... Jews spiritually
 - ... Israel geographically
 - ... hypocritical unbelief to plea of faith
- Tyre – Sidon
 - He cannot hide or rest . . . even in foreign country

Mt.15:22; Mk.7:25-26

- Woman of Canaan / Greek, Syrophoen.
 - ‘Greek’ – heritage, or ‘alien’ (Gentile...)
 - Foreigner knows about Jesus

⁷ But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. And a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea ⁸ and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and those from Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how many things He was doing, came to Him – Mk.3

Mt.15:22; Mk.7:25-26

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17 And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, **18** as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. **19** And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all – Lk.6

Mt.15:22; Mk.7:25-26

- Woman of Canaan / Greek, Syrophoen.
 - ‘Greek’ – heritage, or ‘alien’ (Gentile...)
 - Foreigner knows Jesus. Mk.3:8; Lk.6:17-19
- Cried out – (‘kept crying out’); not calm
- Have mercy on me – (‘me’?)
- Lord / Son of David
- Little daughter – (as Mk.5:23)
- Severely demon-possessed (Mt.9:32; 12:22)

32 As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed.

33 And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke...

- Foreigner knows Jesus (Mt.9:18; Lk.6:17-19)
- Cried out – ('kept crying' – not calm)
- Have mercy on me – ('me')
- Lord / Son of David
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Mt.15:22; Mk.7:25-26

- Woman of Canaan / Greek, Syrophoen.
 - ‘Greek’ – heritage, or ‘alien’ (Gentile...)

22 Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw

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 - ‘Greek’ – heritage, or ‘alien’ (Gentile...)
 - Foreigner knows Jesus. Mk.3:8; Lk.6:17ff
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- Severely demon-possessed (Mt.9:32; 12:22)
- Kept asking Him – begging

Mt.15:23

- Not a word – 1st test of her faith

‘The silence of God
is faith’s bitterest trial’

- ‘Disciples . . . Send her away!’
- ‘Cries out after us’ (as v.22)

Mt.15:24

- 'But' – adversative
 - Who is she to rewrite His mission?
 - He finally speaks: shuts the door (worse than His silence)
- 'Israel only' – Mt.10:5-6
 - 2nd test of faith

Mt.15:25; Mk.7:25

- She came
- She worshipped
 - Fell at His feet, Mk.7:25 – Jew
 - She increased her pleas
- She acknowledged: ‘Lord’
- She begged for help – ‘come to the aid of’

His silence does not silence her

She does not lose hope, or leave

Mt.15:26; Mk.7:27

- 3rd test of faith – most severe
- Not good to take... (*take away, deprive*)
- Sheep are one thing, dogs another
 - Canaanites are not members of chosen family any more than dogs are
- Harsh words; kindest intentions – feed children first
- Many would have stormed away...
 - Jesus is the only way...
 - Ph.4:2-3

Mt.15:27

- Quick wit
 - Pieces of bread = napkins
 - Lk.16:21
 - If she is a dog...**give her the scraps**
- Jesus tested her faith, taught His disciples

They will need her faith in
dark days that lie ahead

Mt. 15:28

- Then (90x in Matthew)
- Woman (Jn. 19:26)
- Great 'faith' (not 'love')
- Let it be . . . [Faith is Lord's opportunity]
- Healed . . .

1 At request
of another

2 A Gentile,
woman

3 At a
distance

4 No vocal
command

Mt.15:28

- Then (90x in Matthew)
- Woman (Jn.19:26)
- Great 'faith' (not 'love')
- Let it be . . . [Faith is Lord's opportunity]
- Healed . . .
- To her house... Left Him without seeing answer to her prayer. Hb.11:1

I. The Meeting
Mt.15:21-28; Mk.7:24-30

II. The Meaning
What is great faith?

1. Great faith is produced by tests

- Abraham: Gn.12, 22
- Job
- Devout Jewish sinners: Ac.2:37
- Persecuted Christians: 1 Pt.1:6-9

2. Great faith knows Jesus cares
even if He does nothing

- Though He appears not to care, she believes the best in Him

3. Great faith blooms in unexpected people

OT parallel: Elijah / widow in Sidon, 1 K.17

- Foreigners; both live in same region.
- Linked to man of God / Son of God.
- Both women in great need.
- Humble themselves before prophet / Lord.
- Trusted prophet / Lord.
- Receive the reward (miracle), for their faith.
- Both outdo children of Israel. Lk.4:25-26

4. Great faith continues even when Lord delays

- Abraham / Sarah: waited for Isaac, Gn.15
- Jacob: Gn.32:26
- Jairus: delay getting to daughter, Lk.8
- Widow: would not quit, Lk.18
- Lazarus: delay getting to him, Jn.11
- Woman's faith triumphed in spite of ...

Delay / silence of Lord

Comparison to dogs

Rejection as foreigner

Indifferent disciples

5. Great faith believes Jesus can do anything

- The woman knew little of Lord – probably hearsay
- BUT her faith surpassed most in Israel
 - Jn.1:11
 - Mk.9:22-24

6. Great faith pleases Jesus

- He found Israel in unbelief, Mt.23:37
- Gentiles outdid Jews – Mt.8; 15; Jn.12:20

7. Great faith is greatly rewarded

- ‘Great is your faith...’
- What if our reward depends on size of our faith?

8. Great faith is contagious

- Mt.11:21
- Ac.21:3-5
 - Tyre – disciples – prophets – Jerusalem
 - Syro-Phoenicia poses no threat to gospel; Jerusalem does
 - Wives and children – no longer puppies under the table...

The woman compared to Jews

Woman merely heard of His works	Jews were eye-witnesses
She possessed great faith	Jews disbelieved
She worshipped Jesus	Jews hated Him
She wanted what He alone could give	Did not want anything from Him
She begged Him	Jews blamed Him
She thought of another: daughter	Jews thought only of themselves

The woman compared to Christians

- A Gentile with fewer privileges –
 - Had this great faith
 - What is required of us with our multitude of privileges?
- If modern parents love children as this woman did, what blessings would follow?