

## PASSING GOD'S TESTS!

Matthew 15:21-28

INTRODUCTION: As we study this passage of Scripture tonight do you see Jesus as being very rude to this Canaanite woman? She came to Jesus crying out with a very legitimate need: Matthew 15:22-24. Our Lord Jesus is the greatest teacher who ever lived. A great teacher does not just dispense information but seeks to change lives. A great teacher knows that truth is most powerful when students have to work to discover it. A great teacher is able to teach more than one less at the same time. A great teacher's methods are not always clear to their students at the time of the lesson: Luke 24:1-8. Great teachers often deliberately induce frustration in their students. Great teachers are always testing their students to see where they are on their learning curve. This encounter with Jesus is a test of both His disciple's faith and of this Canaanite woman's faith. Matthew 11:20-24; Luke 12:47-48. This Canaanite mother has to pass a test she doesn't even know she is taking to get the blessing she is seeking.

### I. JESUS TESTS THE DISCIPLES!

Part one of the disciples' test. Jesus deliberately ignored this woman and waited to see what they disciples will do: Matthew 15:23. The disciples' failure here reminds us of another test the disciples failed: Mark 10:13-16. Part two of the disciples' test: Matthew 15:24. Now Jesus had already said He came for the whole world: John 3:16-18. Notice Jesus does not send the woman away. He waits to see if any of His disciples will stand up for this gentile woman and her daughter. Matthew 7:12.

### II. PART TWO OF THE WOMAN'S TEST!

At the same time Jesus disciples think they have the Lord's agreement with them, the Canaanite woman is hearing Jesus say to them "I am sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." Here is her test: "Is her love for her child so strong and her belief in Jesus' compassion and ability to heal so great that she will persevere in her petition, even as Jesus seems unwilling to grant her request?" Matthew 15:25. Now Jesus speaks to the Canaanite woman for the first time: Matthew 15:26. The disciples' third test: will any of them intercede for this woman. Sadly the disciples fail their test totally. Good news, a failure of one of God's test is not the end. They will be tested again and do better. We also are being tested in this same area. How are we doing? John 13:34-35.

### III. PART THREE OF THE WOMAN'S TEST!

This Canaanite woman is no dummy. She knows Jesus has given her an opening. He used the word for a puppy dog instead of a scavenger dog. When Jesus gave this loving mother an opening she chooses to walk through that opening to get her blessing. Matthew 15:26-27. This by the way is the third time this Canaanite woman has called Jesus her Lord. How many times in this portion of Scripture did Jesus' disciples call Him Lord? Hebrews 10:35-36. Our story here reminds us of another wrestler with God: Genesis 32:22-31. Why didn't God just bless Jacob? Why wrestle all night? Our God treasures the greatness of the man or woman who will not give up on needing God's blessing. Luke 18:1-8. Remember the neighbor who needed bread: Luke 11:5-10. The whole idea of this story is to keep on knocking, keep on seeking and keep on asking until you know Jesus has definitely said no, or yes! This Canaanite woman was not the disciple's inferior, she related to Jesus in a fashion none of them ever had. Her understanding, her humility, her trust put all of the disciples to shame. Jesus gave her final grade: Matthew 15:28. This Canaanite woman had Mega faith! Do you have mega faith? I John 5:1-5.