

## Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

OLD TESTAMENT – Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

**This is what the LORD says: “Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed. <sup>6</sup> And foreigners who bind themselves to the LORD to serve him, to love the name of the LORD, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant— <sup>7</sup> these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.” <sup>8</sup> The Sovereign LORD declares— he who gathers the exiles of Israel: “I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered.”**

**56:1 MAINTAIN JUSTICE** – Sinners can only “maintain justice” after they have experienced God’s form of justice, i.e. justification by grace. Justice is established for God’s people by the ministry of the Suffering Servant in Is 42:1,3,4. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 3)

*justice ... righteousness.* Responding to undeserved mercy and goodness (ch 55), the redeemed find happiness in doing what is right toward their fellow man (righteousness) and toward God (the Sabbath, v 2). (TLSB)

“Keep justice, and do righteousness” are startling commands after the oracles of salvation in chapters 54–55. By drawing upon the promises in 46:13 and 51:5, as well as the admonition in 51:1, Yahweh describes the new life for all who embrace his salvation. The imperatives function as the introduction to chapters 56–66 and spell out the major themes of the book’s last eleven chapters. (CC)

*salvation ... righteousness.* See 45:8; 46:13; 51:5 and notes. (CSB)

Combining active (“doing”) and passive (“receiving”) righteousness for the first time in 56:1, Isaiah maintains that “righteousness” is *both* Yahweh’s gift as well as the ordering of his people’s life according to his Word. God gives both an exhortation as well as a promise of salvation. The gift of passive righteousness, received from Yahweh, empowers a life of active righteousness. The new community, born through the Servant (53:10; 59:21), is established in a life of *doing what is right*, because Yahweh has justified or *declared them right* through his Servant (53:11). Paul follows the same logic in Eph 2:8–10. We are not saved *by* good works, but *for* good works. (CC)

This righteousness is defined by what God loves (v. 4), what shows love for his name (v. 6) and negatively by avoiding what God hates (v. 2 ). Righteousness is brought by the wonderful Son (Is 9:6) and it is the means by which Zion is redeemed (Is 1:27). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 3)

**BE REVEALED** – Often used in a technical sense of “revelation.” No matter how diligently sinners pursue righteousness, it is unobtainable unless the Lord brings it near.

(Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 3)

God asks us, “Have you discovered the power of the future? My victory is near. Nothing in all creation will stop my salvation. Live by this future, every day!” Anticipating Yahweh’s imminent intervention creates the desire to make morally correct choices in life. We begin acting in just and right ways. John puts it this way: “Beloved, *now* [νῦν] we are children of God, and what we will be has *not yet* [οὐκ ἔτι] been made known. But we know that when he appears, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure” (1 Jn 3:2–3). The *now* of God’s salvation in Jesus gives us hope for the *not yet* perfection of paradise, and this sanctifies our lives to live in the present moment in love toward God and our neighbor. James Childs calls this connection between ethics and eschatology “an ethic of anticipation.” The hope for Christ’s final coming proleptically manifests itself at the present moment in holy living. (CC)

And this is the truth that drives 56:1–8. Yahweh places the accent upon what he *will* do. “My salvation is near” (56:1). “I will give to them” (56:5). “I will bring them” (56:7). “I will still gather” (56:8). God’s future action empowers present obedience. We are motivated to act righteously because Yahweh has first lavished his righteousness upon us. “We love because he first loved us” (1 Jn 4:19). (CC)

Isaiah’s message—do justice and righteousness in light of Yahweh’s impending salvation—also comports with the preaching of John the Baptist. “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near” (Mt 3:2), and then he goes on to say, “Bear fruit in keeping with repentance” (Mt 3:8). Paul employs the same theology when he admonishes us to “cast off the works of darkness” because “the day is near” (Rom 13:12). (CC)

**56:6 AND FOREIGNERS** – Isaiah progressively reveals that foreigners will become part of God’s covenant people and confess the true God. The Suffering Servant will be the one in whom the coastlands trust (v. 42:4); he will be the Light to the Nations (Is. 42:6; 49:6), so Yahweh’s salvation will extend to the ends of the earth (Is. 49:6). Nations will join Israel’s sons and daughters (Is 60:3-4) in an Epiphany procession to the Light. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 3)

*minister*. Bring their offerings and prayers; embrace the covenant. (TLSB)

*servants*. In chapters 56–66 the word “servants” recurs in 63:17; 65:8–9, 13–15; 66:14. Synonymous terms include those who take refuge in Yahweh (57:13b), are crushed in spirit (57:15), are redeemed, holy, and righteous (60:21; 61:3; 62:12), grieve over Zion (e.g., 61:2; 66:10), and tremble at Yahweh’s Word (66:2, 5). They are the offspring of the Suffering Servant (53:10; 59:21; see also 61:9; 65:9, 23; 66:22; and the third textual note on 57:3) and are Yahweh’s disciples (54:13). Their righteousness comes from him alone (53:11; 54:17). (CC)

*serve*. Cf. 60:7, 10. (CSB)

Isaiah employs the verb “serve” (שָׁרַת) to announce that foreigners will assume priestly roles. This all-inclusive priesthood is the point the prophet makes at the end of his book (Is 66:21; cf. 1 Pet 2:5, 9). (CC)

**56:7** *my holy mountain*. See 2:2–4 and note. (CSB)

The theme of the “mountain of the LORD” (Mount Zion) is common in Isaiah; it occurs in passages that depict the coming of both Jews and Gentiles to Jerusalem (Zion) in the last days (see 11:9; 27:13; 56:7; 57:13; 65:25; 66:20; see also 60:3–5; Zec 14:16). The peace described in this passage has been inaugurated through the coming of Christ and the preaching of the gospel, and will be consummated at the return of Christ. (CSB note)

Yahweh brings his servants, whose attributes are described in the previous verse, to his holy mountain, also called his “house of prayer” and “Zion” (e.g., Joel 2:1). This is where Yahweh lives (e.g., Is 8:18) and where he is worshiped (e.g., Ps 99:9). Only the broken and contrite find refuge in this high and holy place (Is 57:15). Since it is a location where righteousness dwells (Jer 31:23), no evil besets it (Is 11:9; 65:25). To live there, then, means to walk in Yahweh’s ways and to learn his Torah (2:2–4). This is his gift to all who trust in him (57:13b; 65:9, 25), for it is a place of supreme goodness (Ps 65:5 [ET 65:4]) and blessing (Ps 84:5 [ET 84:4]). No wonder David wants to dwell there for “length of days” (Ps 23:6) and is glad when people say, “Let us go to Yahweh’s house” (Ps 122:1). (CC)

The holy mountain in the ancient Near East was a place where people encountered the divine. Therefore sanctuaries were typically erected on mountains, which often were thought to have become holy by means of a mythological war. Such is the case in Canaan, where, according to Canaanite religious myth, the mountain of the fertility god Baal became holy when he defeated Yamm (“Sea”), the power of chaos. (CC)

In the OT, mountains became holy not by pagan mythology, but as a result of Yahweh’s historical action upon them. Thus Sinai becomes holy through Yahweh’s theophanies when, for instance, he appears as fire and a cloud accompanied by trumpets (Exodus 19) and provides a divine banquet for Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders (Ex 24:1–2, 9–11). This was also the mountain where Yahweh revealed his plan to deliver his people from Egypt, promised to give them the land of Canaan, and spoke his name to Moses (Exodus 3). However, after this, Yahweh’s work at Sinai was done, and it was no longer a holy mountain. Thus when Elijah sought his presence there, Yahweh asked what he was doing on Mount Sinai. The prophet did not find Yahweh in the forms of fire and earthquake (1 Ki 19:9–13) that had revealed Yahweh to Moses in the same place earlier (Ex 19:18; 24:17). Sinai had been replaced by Zion. (CC)

Zion became Yahweh’s holy mountain when David defeated the Jebusites in Jerusalem and brought the ark of the covenant there (2 Samuel 5–6). As with Sinai, there was a theophany on Zion when the priests brought the ark of the covenant into the Holy of Holies in Solomon’s temple (1 Ki 8:1–11). (CC)

It is the Lord who brings the saved to his holy mountain, gives them joy in his house of prayer, and regards favorably their sacrifices on his altar. This is a gracious call to all people. Although Israel at times ignored this aspect of the covenant, it was present throughout. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 3)

*offerings ... accepted on my altar.* Cf. 60:7; contrast 1:11–13. (CSB)

The worship of all peoples (cf v 3), here described in OT forms, will be acceptable to God. (TLSB)

**WILL BE ACCEPTED** – The Hebrew for “accepted,” is literally, “for favor, good will.” By God’s grace sinners are brought into a favorable relationship with God. Anticipating Christ’s sacrifice, the OT sin offerings rendered the Israelites acceptable to God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 3)

*house of prayer for all nations.*† Solomon may have anticipated this in his prayer of dedication for the temple (1Ki 8:41–43). See the words of Jesus in Mk 11:17. (CSB)

Cf 1Ki 8:41–43 for Solomon’s dedicatory prayer of the temple and the anticipated prayer by Gentiles that God will hear. (TLSB)

The movement in the first half of 56:7 begins at Yahweh’s holy mountain, continues into his house of prayer, and concludes with Yahweh’s “altar.” This “altar” was likewise the means by which Isaiah’s sin was atoned for, so that he could stand in Yahweh’s presence and carry out his prophetic ministry (6:6–7). By faith all may claim this gift of sacrificial atonement (by Christ’s “guilt offering” [53:10]), for his house is a house of prayer for all people. (CC)

**56:8 gathers the exiles.** See 11:11–12 and notes. (CSB)

The gathering of people from all nations is a continual theme in Is (cf 19:25; 49:6–7; 51:5; 55:5). (TLSB)

The Lord gathers both the exiles of Israel and others not of this fold (John 10:16). We are lost in our sins, unable to find God. The Good News is that the Good Shepherd comes looking for us and gathers us, as Luther declares in his explanation of the Third Article in the Small Catechism. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 3)

The promise of imminent salvation (56:1) brings with it Yahweh’s desire to “gather” (קָבַץ, three times in 56:8) his people together. Who are the additional ones whom Yahweh “will still gather” (56:8)? Are they Israelites or Gentiles drawn from the nations? The use of “still” (עוֹד) signals an addition to “its [the temple’s] ones already gathered” (56:8). This, along with the fact that Yahweh gathers (קָבַץ) all the nations in 66:18, points to his incorporation of Gentiles in 56:8. Gathering the nations is a continual theme in Isaiah (e.g., 11:12; 19:24–25; 49:6–7, 22; 51:5; 55:5). In Jeremiah, God says, “Behold, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and I will gather them [קָבַצְתִּים] from the farthest parts of the earth. Among them [are] the blind and

the lame, the pregnant woman and she who is in labor—together. As a great assembly they shall return here” (Jer 31:8). Yahweh longs to assemble outsiders. A homecoming of universal scope is coming soon. (CC)

*gather still others.* Including Gentiles (see v. 3 and note; cf. Jn 10:16). (CSB)

Jesus is the greatest Gatherer (e.g., Mt 8:8–12). He bids all who are weak and burdened to come to him (Mt 11:28). Christ promises, “I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. Them also I must bring” (Jn 10:16). Through the appointed means of grace, God’s Word and Sacraments, the Spirit and the bride join in the chorus and say to the Bridegroom, “Come” (Rev 22:17). Let all who hear swell the ranks and say, “ ‘Come!’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever desires, let him receive the free gift of the water of life” (Rev 22:17; cf. Is 55:1). (CC)

**56:1–8** The Lord’s salvation will come not only for the chosen people of Israel but also for foreigners and outcasts. Today, pray for the Lord’s strength so that you believe and do not abuse His grace. Keep your hands from evil, keep justice, and do righteousness. Those who repent are not cut off from the Lord’s salvation. The deliverance revealed in Jesus’ death and resurrection is for you and for all peoples. • Lord Jesus Christ, thank You for gathering us into Your kingdom, and for giving us Your holy name in our Baptism. Gather more people of every nation into Your house of prayer. Amen. (TLSB)

EPISTLE – Romans 11:1-2a, 13-15, 28-32

**I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. <sup>2</sup> God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. <sup>13</sup> I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry <sup>14</sup> in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. <sup>15</sup> For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? <sup>28</sup> As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies on your account; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, <sup>29</sup> for God’s gifts and his call are irrevocable. <sup>30</sup> Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, <sup>31</sup> so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God’s mercy to you. <sup>32</sup> For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.**

**11:1** *reject.* Totally reject. There has always been a faithful remnant among the Jewish people. (CSB)

Greek grammar requires a negative answer. The idea that God should push aside or repudiate His people is unthinkable (Ps. 94:14; 1 Sam 12:22). (TLSB)

TRIBE OF BENJAMIN – He was the beloved son of Jacob and Rachel; Jacob’s only son born in the Promised Land (Gn 35:16-18). The tribe of Benjamin gave Israel her first king (Paul’s namesake, Saul; 1 Sam 9:1-16) and was regarded highly by the

Jews. Within the borders stood Jerusalem and the temple (jgs 1:21). To belong to this tribe was a privilege that Paul stresses (Php 3:5). (TLSB)

**11:2** *whom he foreknew*. See note on 8:29. (CSB)

God chose Israel to be His people through whom He would carry out His saving purpose. (TLSB)

**11:13** YOU GENTILES – They were probably the majority in the congregation. (TLSB)

*apostle to the Gentiles*. See 1:5; Ac 9:15; Gal 1:16; 2:7, 9. (CSB)

This was Paul's call. (TLSB)

MY MINISTRY – This is Paul's apostolic office as Christ's servant for the Gospel sake (cf 1 Co 3:5; Eph 3:7) (TLSB)

**11:14** SAVE SOME OF THEM – Paul does not envision a mass conversion of the nation of Israel. This is important for the interpretation of "all Israel" in verse 26. (TLSB)

**11:15** *their rejection*. God's temporary and partial exclusion of the Jews. (CSB)

Paradoxically, through the Israelites' rejection of the Messiah, God brought reconciliation (cf 5:10-11; 2 Cor 5:18-20). However, God's rejection of unbelieving Israelites was temporary, for some would be accepted through faith and receive a new life to be consumed in the resurrection from the dead (cf Ezk 37:1-14). (TLSB)

*reconciliation of the world*. Somewhat equivalent to "riches for the world" (see note on v. 12). (CSB)

*life from the dead*.† Equivalent to "greater riches" in v. 12. The sequence of redemptive events is: The "transgression" and "loss" (v. 12) of Israel leads to the salvation of the Gentiles, which leads to the jealousy or envy of Israel, which leads to the "fullness" or "full number" (v. 12) of Israel, which leads to even more riches for the Gentiles. But what are the "greater riches" (v. 12) for the Gentiles, which Paul describes here as "life from the dead"? Three views have been suggested: (1) an unprecedented spiritual awakening in the world; (2) the consummation of redemption at the resurrection of the dead; (3) a figurative expression describing the conversion of the Jews as a joyful and glorious event (like resurrection)—which will result in even greater blessing for the world. Of these three views the first seems less likely, since, before Israel's assumed general spiritual rebirth, the fullness of the Gentiles will already have come in (see v. 25). Since the Gentile mission will then be complete, there seems to be no place for a period of unprecedented spiritual awakening. The third view is also unlikely, since v. 14 speaks specifically of merely "some of them" (Jews) being saved (see note on v. 26). (CSB)

**11:28** *they are enemies.*† As long as they reject the gospel. (CSB)

*on your account.* Explained in v. 11. (CSB)

The Jews are objects of God's hostility as far as the Gospel is concerned because they oppose it. But in God's plan this was for the Gentiles' benefit. (TLSB)

*loved on account of the patriarchs.*† Not because any merit was passed on from the patriarchs to the Jewish people as a whole, but because God in love chose Israel. (CSB)

With respect to His choice of Israel and for the sake of the patriarchs, God loves the Jewish people. They are objects of God's love and of His wrath at the same time. (TLSB)

**11:29** *God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.*† God does not change his mind with reference to his call. Even though Israel is presently in a state of unbelief, God's purpose will be fulfilled in all who believe. (CSB)

God still has His gifts (9:4–5) and His gracious invitation for His people to receive the salvation offered through His Son. God remains faithful to His promises. (TLSB)

**11:30-31** The experience of the Jews and of the Gentiles are parallel. Both have received mercy in the face of disobedience. Because of Israel's disobedience (1:18-32), undeserving Gentiles received mercy. Because of the mercy to the Gentiles, disobedient Jews will receive mercy (cf v. 11) (TLSB)

**11:32** *all men.*† Both groups under discussion (Jews and Gentiles). There has been a period of disobedience for each in order that God may have mercy on both groups. Paul is in no way teaching universal salvation. (CSB)

Paul summarizes not only vv 30–31 but also the overriding purpose of God's mercy in chs 9–11. All people—Jews and Gentiles—are imprisoned in their disobedience, with no possibility of escape unless God in His mercy releases them. “We should not reach conclusions about our election to eternal life based on reason or God's Law.... <The true judgment about predestination> must be learned alone from the Holy Gospel about Christ” (FC Ep XI 9–10). (TLSB)

#### GOSPEL – Matthew 15:21-28

<sup>21</sup> **Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon.** <sup>22</sup> **A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession.”** <sup>23</sup> **Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.”** <sup>24</sup> **He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”** <sup>25</sup> **The woman came and knelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said.** <sup>26</sup> **He replied, “It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs.”** <sup>27</sup> **“Yes, Lord,” she said, “but even the dogs eat**

the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.”<sup>28</sup> Then Jesus answered, **“Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.”** And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

**15:21-28** Matthew paints a stark contrast between the religious leaders and the Canaanite woman. At the beginning of ch 15, the Pharisees and Sadducees reject Jesus, and he condemns their hypocrisy of using tradition to overturn God’s Word. At the beginning of ch 16, the leaders again react negatively to Jesus’ teaching, and he condemns the leaven of their heresy. Sandwiched between these two hostile exchanges with leaders of Israel are times of mercy and miracles for those in great need. Jesus restores the demon-possessed daughter to her mother, heals many who are brought to him as he teaches, and feeds the four thousand. Faith (of a Gentile! woman!) and praise from those healed stand out all the more because they are found within the context of rejection and denigration. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 18, Part 3)

Tyre, Sidon, and a Canaanite woman all signal that Jesus is in pagan lands, and these places have the connotation of everything dangerous to those of Israel. Jesus is definitely in foreign territory. In v 22, the woman’s call to Jesus as Lord and from the royal line of David borders on worship. When she names the enemy as demonic possession, she pits Jesus against Satan in a preview of the cross and resurrection. The dogs (*kunaria*, literally “little dogs,” a diminutive of *kuōn*) appear to be house dogs, not the strays that roamed the streets, especially since they are near enough to the table to feed on any leftover scraps. Still, dogs were considered lowly and even contemptible, and thus the boundary between Jew and Gentile is maintained. On the other hand, that Jesus names her as a dog is progress as the woman now sees herself in the house with Jesus! (See Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew, A Commentary: The Churchbook, Matthew 13–28*, revised and expanded edition [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990, 2004], 97–103.) (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 18, Part 3)

**15:21-22** Tyre was a Gentile city in Phoenicia (modern-day Lebanon), 30 miles northwest of Capernaum. A Canaanite woman approaches Jesus with a desperate need. The Canaanites were ancient, pre-Israel inhabitants of Palestine. In the parallel passage (Mk 7:24–30) Mark tells us she was a Greek (Gentile), born in Syrian Phoenicia. She addresses Jesus as “Lord, Son of David,” which implies she is a “God-fearer” who recognizes Jesus as the promised Messiah. She is “crying out” to Jesus (*ekrazen* is imperfect, indicating she kept on crying out), begging him to have mercy on her. Her urgent plea is for Jesus to help her daughter, who is “suffering terribly from demon-possession.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 12, Part 3)

**15:21** WITHDREW TO THE REGION OF TYRE AND SIDON – One of the few times that Jesus ventured beyond the borders of Galilee. (TLSB)

This Gentile territory, a coastal region northwest of Galilee that had never been part of Israel and had been dominated by Phoenicians in OT times. (CC)



**15:22** ESV has “and behold.” At the start.” With “Ilo” Matthew draws attention to the approach and the words of the Canaanite woman. (CC)

A CANAANITE WOMAN – Descendant of the OT race that Israel was ordered to exterminate because of their idol worship (Dt 20:17). (TLSB)

kai idou denotes something noteworthy, in this case that a Gentile woman would approach Jesus with such confidence. By language this woman was Greek, by birth a Canaanite, a heathen, by allegiance a Roman subject, a Syrophenician, of Syria, as distinguished from a Phoenician of Carthage; and by faith of that harvest which was to spring up in Phoenicia, in Greece, in Carthage, and in Rome. It was through the reports that she heard of the great deeds of Christ, which had been broadcast across the borders of Israel into the surrounding lands of the heathen, that she had come to faith.

*Have mercy.* Typical cry for help in a desperate situation (17:15; 20:30). (TLSB)

*Son of David.* This Gentile woman addressed Jesus in the same way as did two Jewish blind men (9:27). In contrast to the Pharisees who were spiritually blind, she was not (v 14). (TLSB)

*oppressed by a demon.* Cf 4:24; 12:22. The daughter’s ailment is not further specified. (TLSB)

**15:23** JESUS DID NOT ANSWER – 15:23-24 Jesus is silent at first in response to the woman’s cries. He is not only testing her faith, but also testing the disciples’ understanding of his universal mission. The woman annoys the disciples by following them and disturbing the peace. They ask Jesus to “dismiss her,” *apoluson autēn*, which may imply, “Do what she asks, so she will go away.” Jesus’ reply to the disciples, which seems on the surface to be rather cold and unfeeling, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel,” is likely meant for the woman to overhear and further test her faith. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 12, Part 3)

SEND HER AWAY – When Jesus remained silent, making no response to the woman’s cry for mercy, the disciples begged Him to help her and so get rid of her. (TLSB)

**15:24** SENT ONLY TO THE LOST SHEEP OF ISRAEL – Jesus’ sending to Israel did not exclude that he showed grace to the heathen and received those who came to him in faith. As soon as the divine plan had been worked out, it would be carried to all the world. The rule is laid down in Romans 2:9, 10. The Samaritan woman (John 4:7ff), the centurion of Capernaum (Matthew 8:1-13) and the Syrophenician woman are the exception, not the rule.

Jesus reminded His disciples that His mission was limited to the people of Israel. (TLSB)

**15:25** *knelt.* Same Gk word translated “worship” in 14:33. (TLSB)

LORD HELP ME – This woman would simply not be turned away. (TLSB)

Apparently overhearing Jesus' words, the woman is moved to action. She humbles herself completely, worshipfully kneeling before Jesus and pleading, "Lord, help me." This is more than a frantic request from a desperate mother. It is a prayer of faith. Following her example we should come to Jesus with our requests as beggars before the Master with a humble, worshipful, and trusting heart. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 12, Part 3)

**15:26-27** Jesus answers her plea with what again seems like a cold, uncaring response. He says it is not right to take the food meant for the children and throw it to their "dogs," *kunariois*. *kunarion* literally means "little dog" and probably refers to a pet dog in the home. The testing of this woman's faith reaches a level where someone of lesser faith might have given up in disgust. However, it is likely that Jesus speaks these words not with a cold, unkind tone of voice, but in a warm, caring manner. The woman seems to understand Jesus' point that the promised blessings of God's kingdom must first be shared with the Jews. But she is more than willing to settle for a few crumbs from the master's table. She believes it would take just a few crumbs of his power and kindness to make her daughter whole again. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 12, Part 3)

**15:26** *children's*. "The lost sheep of Israel" (v. 24). (CSB)

Jesus answered the mother with a pithy statement expressing a general truth or rule of conduct. Because of the proverbial nature of His statement, He may not be calling her a dog. (TLSB)

Now Jesus wants to know this: does the Canaanite woman really know who He is, or are the things that have come out of her mouth been just words and no more? (CC)

*their dogs*. The Greek says "little dogs," meaning a pet dog in the home, and Jesus' point was that the gospel was to be given first to Jews. The woman understood Jesus' implication and was willing to settle for "crumbs." Jesus rewarded her faith (v. 28). (CSB)

**15:27** YES LORD – For the third time she addresses him as Lord. Nai denotes complete assent.

EVEN THE DOGS – Luther states: "She catches the Lord with his own words. Yes, still more, with the rights of a dog she gains the rights of a child. Now where will he go? He has caught himself and must help her. But know this well, he loves to be caught in this way. If we only had the skill of this woman to catch God in his own judgment and say, 'Yes, Lord, it is true, I am a sinner and not worthy of thy grace, but you have promised forgiveness and didst not come to call the righteous, but like Paul says in 1 Timothy 1:15, to save sinners.' Behold, the Lord must then through his own judgment, have mercy on us."

How did she know? Who had taught this Canaanite woman about Israel's Messiah? We simply do not know. Matthew's hearers/readers do know, however the ultimate answer to the question of how this woman came to know and believe. The Father revealed it to her. She is, like the Magi and the centurion before her, an unlikely candidate for such faith. (CC)

This astute woman matched Jesus' maxim with one of her own: Pets get the scraps that fall from the table. (TLSB)

**15:28 YOU HAVE A GREAT FAITH** – Second time Jesus commended the faith of a Gentile (cf 8:10). In contrast, Jesus repeatedly chided His disciples for their lack of faith (8:26; 14:31; 17:20). (TLSB)

Jesus commends the woman's "great faith." We are reminded of the faith of another Gentile, the centurion from Capernaum who asked Jesus to heal his servant. Jesus said of him, "I have not found such great faith even in Israel" (Lk 7:9). Then Jesus tells the woman that her prayer of faith has been answered, and we learn that "her daughter was healed from that very hour." This is not only a great miracle, but also a great message for the 12 disciples and for Jesus' disciples in every age. God's salvation is for all people. Just as the Gospel spread in the first century from Jerusalem and Judea to "Samaria and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8), so in our day the Gospel is moving out from Europe and North America, where many are ignoring or rejecting it, and spreading rapidly through Africa and Asia and to the ends of the earth. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 12, Part 3)

In what does greatness of faith consist? Two things. She knew Jesus is "Lord" and "Son of David." And she knew that Israel's Messiah had come to give such an abundance that there would be something left over even for her. (CC)

**15:21–28** This persistent Canaanite woman gains Jesus' praise for believing that He will help her sick daughter. In time of need, we often either fail to pray with such determination or only ask hesitantly. Instead, we ought to "pray without ceasing" (1Th 5:17). Jesus hears all prayers offered in His name, and He will answer in His own time and way as is best for us. Therefore, we can pray with confidence. • Lord, sometimes I have not because I ask not. Move me to pray with confidence. Amen. (TLSB)