



Bible Heroes

Canaanite
woman

Teachers
Story notes

Essential Teachers notes:

This passage is sometimes shied away from in ministry circles because it seems Jesus' actions are derogatory, he appears to insult the woman and those who do not come from the Jewish nation. It's certainly a discussion older children may want to have as to why Jesus chooses to use this soft insult. But this passage is contains a much bigger challenge for churches today, the challenge to include the outsider, to allow God's abundance to spill over the edges of the table we set.

Tell this story or a similar one of your choice from a favourite bible translation or story book.

Main Passage : Matthew 15

Jesus and his friends had left the crowds behind and gone for a walk somewhere different. Jesus hadn't done any miracles in this gentile area, so the people didn't know him - or that's what the disciples thought.

They hadn't been walking for long when a woman rushed towards them. "Lord" she called, breathing heavily as she ran "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me"

The disciples looked uncomfortable. This local woman wasn't one of the chosen people, she wasn't an Israelite. Why was she bothering Jesus?

"Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me, My daughter is suffering terribly." Now she was alongside them but Jesus still didn't say anything. He was watching the disciples.

"Jesus, send her away" called one the disciples, "Yes, do send her away" said another. "She won't stop, we don't want this woman crying out at us all day" Jesus stopped walking and turned around.

"I was sent for the lost of Israel" said Jesus but before he could say another word the woman had pushed through the people and knelt at his feet. "Lord help me" she begged.

Jesus looked around him, he was going to teach his disciples something very important and he wanted to make sure they were listening.

"Is it not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs?" said Jesus. None of the disciples had a chance to answer because the woman at the feet of Jesus answered first.

"Yes Lord it is" she said as loudly as she could manage. The whole gathering grew quiet. She wasn't insulted, she was fighting for her daughter the only way she knew. Jesus smiled and nodded, "go on" he whispered

"Even the dogs get the crumbs from under the table", said the woman her voice now shaky. Jesus reached down to help the woman up, "You have great faith" Jesus said, "Go home, your daughter is well."

Jesus looked at his friends. Did they realise what the woman had shown them? Did they realise how God's love was bigger than just one people? That's God love for the world was so huge it would overflow just like the crumbs would fall from the table.

Today's heroes is the Canaanite Woman because she shows us the gift of Abundance

