

Mark: The Mysterious Messiah

Week 15: Mark 7:24-

Introductory Exercise: What is a prophet?

At this point in the gospel, Jesus travels far outside of Jewish territory into Tyre. What does his path echo from the Old Testament, and what encounter early in today's reading solidifies that echo? What is the compound nationality of the woman of Tyre in Jesus's story, and how does her nationality affect the Old Testament echo here?

When Jesus utters his strange and rude saying about dogs and children, what sorts of things in 1 Kings 17 is he bringing to mind, and how is he changing them? How does the woman's response continue the parallel? How does the woman's mockery affect Jesus?

When Jesus returns to the Decapolis, how do the people there greet him? What is unusual about the healing the people request of him in this story? (Hint: there might be a clue in Deuteronomy 6:4.)

What does the side note on Mark 7:34 indicate about Mark's audience? Why is Jesus speaking Aramaic in Greek territory here? How does Jesus' interactions with Gentiles change in this story?

When Jesus, still in Gentile territory, feeds a Gentile multitude in the way that he feed a Jewish multitude earlier, what signal do his parallel signs send? What does the geography of this scene say about Jesus's ministry?

How does this block of journeys in Gentile territory end in Mark 8:10? As the first-century, Jewish-and-Gentile audience heard these stories, what truths about Jesus and about the Kingdom of God are coming across to them? What do these stories teach us in the twenty-first century?