10 WOMEN OF THE BIBLE
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Additional Resources Included

The Book of Esther Summary
Types of Fasting
Biblical Fasting - It's About Focus
Biblical Reasons for Fasting - Fritz Chery
The Gospel - John Piper
Internet Articles - (on the "women" in the other accounts of the gospels)
- Jews and Samaritans
Printable Bookmarks - Jehovah I AM

Study Material composed by Donna Drisner
Contributions: Carolyn Williamson
Shannon Signaroski

Book Resource: The Holy Bible
Ten Women of the Bible - One by One They Changed the World
By: Max Lucado

TEN WOMEN OF THE BIBLE..... *SARAI*

Waiting for God

PROMISE GIVEN..... GEN 12:1-2

The value of a promise

Can you think of a time a special promise was made to you ....?
How did that make you feel..?
Was that promise kept..??

DISCUSSION TIME.

The idea of "Gods promises" is tossed around a lot in Christian circles, but what does it mean?
What are God's promises?
What do these verses say about the promises of God?

NUMBERS 23:19 _____

1 KINGS 8:56_____

2 CORINTHIANS 1:20_____

2 TIMOTHY 3:16_____

The difficult part of a promise is when we are asked to .....**WAIT.....**

Why is it so hard for us to wait??????

HELPING GOD..... ..... Gen 16:1-5

Sarai steps in ....

This is an incredible story .... of what happens when we decide to do things "our" way

What are the results....

- *Sarai is treated with contempt*
- *Abram is blamed*
- *Hagar is abused*
- *The child is product of self will and will be self willed.*

Read Gen 17:1 .... What is the key to the promise????

_____

_____

We have an enemy who loves to steal away our hope....When we listen to his voice we use words like... FORGOTTEN .... UNLOVED.... UNIMPORTANT.....

DISCUSSION TIME

Read : How do these verses breathe new hope in you ??

1 JOHN 4:4 _____

EPHESIANS 1:4-5_____

ROMANS 8:17_____

... m lucado .... Our trust needs to be in God and in God alone, or we will lose sight of Him and sink into hopelessness when we grow impatient waiting on his plan....

PROMISED FULFILLED.... Gen 21:1-7

What can we learn from Sarah....?

- **God keeps His word**
- **Miracles are timeless**
- **There is a time to laugh**

M. lucado .. God had once asked Abraham, Is anything too hard for the Lord? Gen 18:14
- When God provides the impossible, our understanding of his character and our trust in his faithfulness grow. ..... Remembering how God has provided for us in the past will help us to trust him to be faithful in the present. GOD CAN DO THE IMPOSSIBLE IN OUR LIVES

What are you still waiting for???????

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FIXING A SITUATION BY USING OUR OWN MEANS TO MOVE GODS PLAN FORWARD MAY GIVE US A SENSE OF COMFORT AND CONTROL, BUT THE RESULTS LEAD TO DISASTER. M. Lucado

In many ways, strange as it may seem, Sarai's humanness is refreshing. Should you ever need a reminder of God's tolerance, you'd find it in her story.....

Our humanness is still enough for God!!!
James 3:2
WE ALL STUMBLE IN MANY WAYS....

God gives us forgiveness, knowing that we will step outside of his desired plan, just as Sarai and Abram did. But He also gives us grace to grow in our faith along the way.
Read the following verses ... how does our faith and trust in God grow?

MATTHEW 26:41 _____

MARK 9:23-14_____

ROMANS 10:17_____

PHILLIPIANS 4:6-7_____

PHILLIPPIANS 4:12-13_____

We all have moments when we ask God to scoot over so we can sit in the driver's seat..... This should make us love God even more - for we know that during such times He protected us from ourselves!!! God's forgiveness predates our mistakes and His grace when we fail gives us faith to grow in contentment with His plans.... M. Lucado

STAYING HOPEFUL ..... Gen 17:15-22

25 years later.....

GOD SHOWS UP .....

What are some things that stand out to you in these verses...???

_____
_____
_____

RAHAB

WHEN A CHECKERED PAST MEETS GODS GRACE

Mirror Image....

Mirror mirror in my hand....who is the fairest in the land.....????

Seriously though.... How do you see yourself today??

Joshua 2: The story of Rahab

Read over the chapter and make a note of anything that stands out to you ....

_____

_____

_____

What is the story of your life???

Can you recall something significant in your life that changed the direction of your life?

_____

_____

_____

Dealing with our past .....

.... In his study.. Max Lucado .. points out an interesting note of scripture. When scripture teaches us so much about redemption and the "putting away of the old man" ... and that we are "new creations in Christ" .... yet keeps referring to Rahab as a "harlot"....

Let's look at some verses:

Hebrews 11:30-31

James 2:25-26

Matthew 1:5-6

What does this teach us about our past and also our future?

PSALM 103:10

10 He does not punish us for all our sins;
he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve.

What does this verse say to you...?

QUOTE : M. Lucado ...

Perhaps you come from a lineage of faithlessness. Or maybe your lineage in more of the faithless variety. REGARDLESS aren't you glad we have a God who works according to HIS GOODNESS AND NOT OURS!!!!! Because He is faithful we still have a future. Because He is good we still have a hope. Instead He forgives us and sees us as clean. As a result we, like Rahab, can find ourselves in the lineage of Christ.

PRAYER:

LORD THANK YOU FOR PROMISING US A FUTURE REGARDLESS OF WHAT WE HAVE DONE IN OUR PAST. THANK YOU FOR USING US IN YOUR GREAT KINGDOM PLAN, JUST LIKE YOU USED RAHAB. GIVE US EYES TO SEE OURSELVES THE WAY YOU SEE US ..... FORGIVEN, CLEAN, AND YOURS!!!! AMEN

Write out your own prayer:

_____

_____

_____

_____

STEPS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Joshua 2:1-15

Questions:

1. What actions did Rahab take in these verses to protect the spies?

2. What reason does Rahab give for protecting the spies?

3. Often, doing the right thing requires sacrifice. What all did Rahab sacrifice to hide the spies?

4. What sacrifices are you currently making for the good of someone else or for yourself?

GOD HAS A PLACE FOR YOU

Question: Have you ever felt outside of God's love or forgiveness?

Hebrews 10:12-18

Read these verses and write down what sticks out to you...

_____

_____

_____

QUOTE: We receive your forgiveness not because of anything we have done but all because of who you are....thank you for your promise!

THE SCARLET CORD..... a new beginning and a different ending.....

Joshua 2:17-18

....bind this line of scarlet cord in the window... so they could identify her house...

A new identity!!!

Sarai - Sarah
Rahab - A Scarlet Cord

What do you think is a "new identity" God has given you ???

_____

_____

_____

AND THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER..

Joshua 6:20-25

- What happens to Rahab and her family?

- Why did Joshua say they must rescue her?

QUOTE : We don't drop scarlet cords from our window. But we trust the crimson thread of Christ's blood. .....

REFLECTION

How have you allowed God's grace to give you a fresh start?

In what ways are you embracing your fellow believers in Christ?

ABIGAIL

RECOGNIZING GOD IN YOUR LIFE

Max Lucado: People who choose to make a difference....

....Ernest shares a cot with flies and bedbugs and awaits a lonely death in a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp. How harsh the war has been on him. He entered WW 11 in his early twenties, s a robust Highlander in Scotland's Argyle and Sutherland Brigade. But then came the capture by the Japanese, months of backbreaking labour in the jungle daily beatings, and slow starvation. Scotland seems forever away. Civility, even farther.

The Allied soldiers behave like barbarians, stealing from each other, robbing dying colleagues, fighting for food scraps. Servers shortchange rations so they can have extra for themselves. The law of the jungle has become the law of the camp. Ernest is happy to bid it adieu. Death by disease trumps life in Chungkai.

But then something wonderful happens. Two new prisoners, in whom hope still stirs, are transferred to the camp. Although they are also sick and frail, they heed a higher code. They share their meager meals and volunteer for extra work. They cleanse Ernest's ulcerated sores and massage his atrophied legs. They give him his first bath in six weeks. His strength slowly returns and with it ... his dignity.

Their goodness proves contagious, and Ernest contracts a case. He begins to treat the sick and share his rations. He even gives away his few belongings. Other soldiers do likewise. Over time, the tone of the camp softens and brightens. Sacrifice replaces selfishness. Soldiers hold worship services and Bible studies.

Twenty years later, when Ernest serves as a chaplain of Princeton University he describes the transformation with these words..... "Death was still with us... no doubt about that. But we were slowly being freed from its destructive grip....Selfishness, hatred.... and pride were all anti-life. Love, self-sacrifice... and faith, on the other hand, were the essence of life... gifts of God to men.... Death no longer had the last word at Chaungkai.

The background to our story.....

David was not yet King..... Samuel who had anointed David as the King had died. David and his band of misfit's journey from place to place as they avoid the soldiers King Saul had sent to kill them. Eventually, they find themselves in the Desert of Paran where they settle in and start protecting the land. But David is not the only powerhouse in the region, for, as it turns out, much of the property is owned by the wealthy Nabal

1 Samuel 23:13-14
1 Samuel 24:1-2

How do these verses describe David?

_____

_____

_____

ABIGAIL.... Women of character and wisdom

Let's read her story.....

1 Samuel 25:1-22

What are some things you learn about Abigail from reading this passage??

-
-
-

How would you describe her husband Nabal?

-
-
-

What is David's reaction to Nabal?

-
-
-

What is Nabals reaction to David?

-
-
-

ABIGAIL ... WOMEN OF CHARACTER

1 Samuel 25: 23-38

Quote:
Godly character, discipline and training make us effective leaders - especially during times of conflict....

CHARACTER: describe in your own words what "character" means to you

_____

_____

_____

CHARACTER: describe in your own words what "character" means to you

_____

_____

_____

Look up these verses and make note of what it says about our "character"

2 TIMOTHY 2:15-16

-
-

2 TIMOTHY 2:1, 3-5

-
-

TITUS 1:7

-
-

TITUS 1:8-9

-
-

What do you think caused Abigail to act on behalf of her husband?

_____

_____

The power of an apology.... vs. 24, 28
What does it take to say "I am sorry" ... or "forgive me"

_____

_____

Vs 29-31 what does Abigail "see" about David that others cannot?

_____

_____

Vs. 32-35
What is David's response?

_____

_____

Is there a situation that God is asking you to act as "peacemaker"?

_____

_____

Who is someone in your life that you can encourage today? Write down what God puts on your heart and share it with that person.

_____

_____

Which traits of the "wife (women) of noble character" do you wish to model more in your own life?

_____

_____

PROVERBS 31 ... is a great chapter centered on women ... maybe a little over the top for some of us ... but what if you were to write a chapter about yourself ... what would you write....???

ABIGAIL ... WOMEN OF WISDOM AND HUMILITY

Max Lucado Quote: Abigail didn't fear her foolish husband. She didn't fear David's 400 person army. **She feared the Lord.** How else would she have had the clarity of mind and guts to do what she did? And because she feared God, when tempers were flaring, she reflected the peace of God. When words were cutting, she spoke in the grace of God. If you are struggling to do the same, remember the promise in James 1:5. " if any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God , who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you " Even in asking for wisdom, you will demonstrate you fear God and desire to place him above your heart.

PROVERBS 1:7
THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE BUT FOOLS DESPISE WISDOM AND INSTRUCTION

5 Steps of Wisdom

1. __Know what you are up against - Proverbs 9:10
2. _Avoid Conflict - Proverbs 14:16
3. _Work quietly to resolve problems - Proverbs 29:11
4. _Put your understanding into action - Pro verbs 10:5
5. _Reap the rewards - Proverbs 3:35

And now for the rest of the story...

1 Samuel 25:39-44

How does our story end.....
... sitting on a white horse (donkey) riding into the sunset .....

DISCUSSION TIME ....

??? Just because we do what is right ...does that guarantee us "happy endings"

..... the camp had been transformed with the arrival of two prisoners who held to a higher code than just "survival of the fittest." Their goodness and mercy proved contagious, and soon all the prisoners were displaying these traits. The, one evening after work detail a Japanese guard announced that a shovel was missing. The officer kept the Allies in formation, insisting that someone had stolen it. Screaming in broken English the guard demanded that the guilty man step forward. He shouldered his rifle, ready to kill one prisoner at a time until a confession was made. Just then a Scottish soldier broke ranks, stood stiffly at attention and said, "I did it". The officer unleashed his anger and beat the man to death. When the guard was finally exhausted, the prisoners picked up the man's body and their tools and returned to camp only then were the shovels recounted. The Japanese soldier had made a mistake. No shovel was missing after all.
Gordon, To End all Wars, pp 101-102

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

THE BOOK OF ESTHER

Background to the book of Esther

The story of Esther takes place in the Persian Empire during the reign of Ahasuerus, known more familiarly to us by the Greek form of his name, Xerxes I. He was the son of Darius the Great and reigned from 486-465 B.C. He ruled over a vast empire that extended from India to Ethiopia (Esther 1:1).

Esther was a descendant of the tribe of Benjamin, which had been part of the kingdom of Judah. Her ancestors were among the Jews who had been carried captive to Babylon nearly 100 years earlier. There were many Jews who didn't return to Jerusalem when it became possible, preferring to continue living where they had settled around the Persian Empire. After the death of Esther's parents, she was raised by Mordecai, an older cousin (Esther 2:7), who served in the Persian ruler's palace.

The book of Esther tells a compelling story, dramatic and exciting, with clearly defined heroes and villains. It also reveals deep and abiding spiritual truths about God's power to deliver us from danger and oppression, even when cruel,harsh rulers plan to do evil to God's people. Though God's name or a direct reference to the divine does not appear in the entire story, nonetheless, God's presence and deliverance of His people is clearly felt and implied throughout this story.

Summary of the story

Chapter 1 sets the scene in the Persian court. The king was offended when his wife Vashti refused to appear before him when he ordered her to do so. There was a great feast taking place at the time, and they were all merry with wine (Esther 1:10-1) The Queen was requested to come to the Kings Banquet but she denied his request.

When the queen didn't appear, the king, egged on by his advisers, removed her as his queen. They then advised him to seek out a new queen by searching for the most beautiful virgins in the land. Then the

king would select one to become his queen.

Chapter 2 introduces one of the women taken for this competition, a beautiful Jewish girl named Hadassah. Her name was changed to Esther when she was brought to the king's court.
Esther received favor from everyone who saw her, especially the king (verses 15-17). The king selected Esther to be his new queen, but Mordecai counseled her to not reveal the fact that she was a Jew, because Jews were still held in some suspicion throughout the Persian Empire.
Shortly after she became queen, a seemingly unrelated incident is recorded in Esther 2:21-23. Two men plotted to kill the king, but Mordecai became aware of the plot and had Esther reveal it to the king. The two men were hanged, and the incident was recorded in the king's personal history. This incident turns out to have a great deal to do with the rest of the story

Chapter 3 introduces us to Haman, the villain in the story, who became second in command in the empire. He was an arrogant man, and he demanded that everyone bow down to him. Everyone did, except Mordecai (verse 2). This so angered Haman that he succeeded in getting the king to issue an command that all the Jews in the land should be destroyed (verses 8-15)

Chapter 4 Mordecai implored Esther to intervene on behalf of her people or they would all be killed. Esther reminded Mordecai that anyone who came before the king without being called, even the queen, would be subject to death. The only exception to this would be if the king extended mercy by holding out the golden scepter (verses 10-12).
Mordecai then uttered the most famous line from the book when he said, "For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. *Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"* (4:14, emphasis added throughout).
Esther then agreed to risk her life for her people. She asked Mordecai to have her people fast for her success, and she put her life on the line by going to the king for help (verses 15-16).

Chapter 5 tells us that the king not only held out the golden scepter to save her life, he also said that he would grant anything she asked of him, even to half the kingdom (verses 2-3). She invited the king and Haman to a banquet that day. At that banquet, she told the king that she would inform him of her desire at another banquet the next day, and she again asked that Haman should be invited to hear her request (verses 7-8).

Chapter 6 brings back to our attention the incident of the conspiracy to kill the king in chapter 2. The king was unable to sleep that night and asked for his history to be read to him. It seems he just "happened" to hear the part about the plot to take his life and how Mordecai had saved his life. He asked what had been done to reward Mordecai. His servants replied that nothing had been done.

Who should be outside waiting to see the king that morning but evil Haman, who was plotting to kill Mordecai! So when the king called Haman to come in, the two men had totally opposite plans in mind.

The king asked Haman what should be done to someone the king wanted to honor. Of course, in his pride, Haman thought the king was talking about him. So he said that such a person should be treated like royalty and honored by a high official announcing, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor!" (verse 9).

Imagine Haman's surprise when the king assigned him to honor his archenemy Mordecai (verse 10-12)!

Chapter 7 recounts the events of the second banquet that Esther had requested, where she would make known what she wanted from the king. She revealed the plot to destroy her and her people, then dramatically named the mastermind: "This wicked Haman!" (verse 6).

The king was so shocked and incensed by this turn of events that he had to leave the room to calm down. But when he returned, he saw "Haman had fallen across the couch where Esther was," pleading with her to spare his life (verses 7-8). The king accused Haman of trying to assault his wife, the queen, and he ordered Haman to be hanged on the very gallows that Haman had built to kill Mordecai (verse 10).

Chapters 8 through 10 recount the rejoicing of the Jews for their deliverance and the celebration that was set on the 14th day of the month Adar to commemorate this great event. It has been celebrated by the Jews ever since as a great day of deliverance and is known as the Feast of Purim. Purim derives its name from the word *pure,* meaning lot, as in the casting of lots. Haman had cast lots to find the best day to destroy the Jews.

Lessons of the book of Esther

The book of Esther may not have God's name stated directly, but His involvement is felt in many ways throughout the story, especially when Esther implored the people to seek help through fasting (4:15-16). Students of the Bible know that fasting was done to draw closer to God and was accompanied by heartfelt prayers (Daniel 9:3; Acts 14:23). Esther is clearly a story of God's intervention and deliverance.

Esther is also an inspiring story about a remarkable woman who was willing to risk her life to save her people. She was a woman of principle who was willing to put the lives of others ahead of even her own life. She was an outstanding example of serving others even under the most stressful circumstances. Jesus Christ said, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Most of the time our lives may be pretty routine, but all of us have a few defining moments when we may be called on to put godly principle above personal benefit. What will you do when you encounter those defining moments in your life? What will you do when you face "such a time as this"? Will you choose to do the right thing as opposed to what might give you some personal benefit?

Esther shows all of us the way, and we can be inspired by her example.

10 Women of the Bible - Esther

As you can see ... this is quite a story. A story of a young women who rises up to the occasion.
Beautiful young women, who with no manipulating of her own, becomes Queen.
A Queen who risks her own life to save the lives of others.

Esther 1:10-20
The removal of Queen Vashti

As you read over these verses you can get a picture of the time in which Esther lived. Women were not respected and expected to blindly obey their husbands. Even the Queen. The scene these verses paint is not pretty .. The King was drunk ... his friends were drunk... In calling for the Queen , they were expecting her to perform for them... she refused.
By refusing she risked the wrath of the king and we see that he sends her away and then by verbal and written decree makes sure that everyone knows that he... men .... are in charge !!!

How does that make you feel?

_____
_____
_____

Have you at times in your life felt less than others?

_____
_____
_____

Every situation needs a hero ...
In comes Esther.....

The summary of Chapters 2 and 3 tell us the story of how Esther comes to be Queen and of the circumstances the Jews are facing.....

Let's move to a key verse.....
KEY VERSE
FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS....
Esther 4:14
If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place. But you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made Queen for SUCH A TIME AS THIS.

Take a few moments and write down what "such a time as this" means to you.

_____
_____
_____

Can you recall a time in your life where you experienced a "such a time as this"?

_____

_____

_____

Taking the Plunge

Look up 1 John 3:16
JESUS CHRIST LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US. AND WE OUGHT TO LAY DOWN OUR LIVES FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Esther 4:1-17

1. How would you respond to a request like the one made to Esther from Mordecai?

_____

_____

2. How would you react if you were asked to put your neck on the line to save someone else?

_____

_____

3. How do you feel or react when you have to put something personal aside that you really want or have for the sake of someone else. Someone you may not even like?????

I.e. A favourite TV Show
A night out
A planned holiday

_____

_____

_____

QUOTE ; M. LACADO
The truth is that even when the circumstances are less dire, we don't always like to obey God. Sometimes we disagree with the intent behind what God is asking us to do. We don't want God to show mercy to someone we don't think deserves God's mercy.

Jonah 1: 1-17

The story of "disobedience"

1. In what ways are Gods call to Jonah and His call to Esther similar?

_____

_____

2. In what ways is it different?

_____

_____

3. Read Jonah 3:1-6
   How did the people of Ninevah respond to Jonah's message?

   _____

   _____

4. What does this say about the way God will use us for his purposes in spite of what we want.

   _____

   _____

DISCUSSION TIME

What is the biggest faith risk that God has asked you to take?
Were you able to respond as Esther.... or more like Jonah?
Take some time to share your stories.....

FASTING

Esther 4:15- 5:8

Mordecai's words cause Esther to spring into action, but notice her first plan of action is to FAST

We find that people often went to a time of fasting and prayer before making important decisions.
Look up these verses

Daniel 10:1-3
Matthew 4:1-2

(You can look at the handouts for more verses)

1. What does this tell you about Esther's view of God?
2. What was the very real danger that Esther faced in approaching the King?
3. How did King Xerxes respond when Esther approached Him?

How is this similar to the way we approach God?
How this is similar to the way God responds to us?

_____

_____

_____

Hebrews 4:16
LET US THEN APPROACH GODS THRONE OF GRACE WITH CONFIDENCE SO THAT WE MAY OBTAIN MERCY AND FIND GRACE

M. Lacado

When God calls us to do something, we have a choice of running from Him like Jonah or obeying like Esther. When God calls us, let's consider why. As Mordecai said to Esther, "If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place..... 4:14 Mordacai knew that God didn't need Esther to work out His sovereign plan and He doesn't need us to fulfill His purpose either. But God, in His mercy extended an invitation to Esther to join in His work, trust in Him completely, and do something truly courageous that would forever be remembered by Gods people. God does the same when He extends invitations for us to join in His work. And He always provides the help and support we need. Like Xerxes He extends His sector of authourity to us and gives us the power and strength we need to accomplish the task before us.

Points to remember:

- God will fulfill His purposes in spite of what we do, but He invites us to participate in what He is already going to accomplish.
- When we see Gods greater purpose and accept the tasks He has called us to undertake, we will experience His favour and His protection
- As Gods beloved children, we can approach Him with confidence, knowing that He is ready and willing to listen to our requests.

PRAYER

LORD GOD, THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES YOU GIVE US EACH DAY TO PARTNER WITH YOU IN THIS WORLD AND ACCOMPLISH YOUR PURPOSES. THANK YOU THAT BECAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST WE CAN APPROACH YOUR THRONE WITH CONFIDENCE IN MAKING OUR REQUESTS. TODAY WE PRAY THAT YOU WOULD GIVE US THE EARS TO HEAR YOUR VOICE AND RESPOND WITH FAITH.

IN JESUS NAME AMEN

Types of Fasting

by Susan Gregory on December 13, 2007

The Daniel Fast is just one type of fasting that's modeled after accounts in the Bible. Biblical fasting is the restriction of food for spiritual reasons. And we find followers fasting throughout the Old and New Testaments.

The Scripture speaks of three types of fasting:

1. **Partial Fasting** – Daniel engaged in a partial fast as recorded in Daniel 10:2, 3, *"In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled."* We don't know for sure why Daniel didn't totally abstain from food, because it appears that he did so in the fast recorded in Chapter 9. However, for some reason, Daniel engaged in a partial fast to seek the Lord's wisdom.
2. **Normal Fast** – This is the fast that Jesus did when he went into the wilderness. He ate no food and appears to have had only water. The reason scholars conclude that he drank water while on this fast was because the Scripture says he was hungry, but did not say he was thirsty. The devil tempted Jesus with bread, but not with water. So we assume this was a water only fast.
3. **Absolute Fast** – This is when no food and no liquids are consumed. It's the rare fast and only mentioned a few times in the Bible. Paul, during his Damascus Road experience *"was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank."* We can't tell for sure if this was because he was so shocked by what was happening with him or if it was for spiritual purposes.

In Ezra 10 we find the prophet so distraught over the actions of the people that he went into great mourning and praying before the Lord. At this time he neither ate nor drank for at least one night and perhaps longer. There are a few examples of 40-day absolute fasts where the men must have been sustained supernaturally. Moses, on two separate occasions when he was before God, neither ate nor drank. Elijah seems to have traveled across the desert for 40 days while eating no food nor drinking any water. He was ministered to by an angel who gave him water and cakes. These are just some accounts of the fasting recorded in the Bible. There are many more, and not necessarily a standard. Daniel fasted for 21 days, Jesus for 40, Ezra for one night, Cornelius for 4 days, Paul for 3. It seems that all these people were seeking God through their fasting and perhaps the Lord led them in the "design" of their fast.

Biblical Fasting - It's About Focus

http://www.AllAboutGOD.com/biblical-fasting.htm

Biblical Fasting - Is fasting necessary for today's Christian church?
Biblical fasting is a spiritual discipline which was encouraged by Jesus, Himself, while He was on earth. When questioned as to why the Pharisees and the disciples of John the Baptist fasted while Jesus disciples did not, Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast" (Matthew 9:15).

Jesus was indicating that fasting would become a necessity when, the bridegroom (Jesus) was taken away. While Jesus, who was God manifested in human form, was still on earth, His followers enjoyed a close fellowship and friendship with Him. Jesus bestowed power and authority on them to the extent that they had limited power to preach, heal the sick, and cast out devils. Similarly, when Jesus sent them out to minister to the populace, He instructed them to take few provisions. "Then Jesus asked them, 'When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?' 'Nothing,' they answered. He said to them, 'But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one'" (Luke 22:35-36).

Jesus was teaching that after His departure, the entire dynamic would change and the disciples would need a different type of preparation and provision. Fasting was to be a vital part of this new preparation. The new covenant is based on the truth that we have received everything in Christ, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

Nevertheless, we cooperate with the Spirit in the working out of our salvation with much prayer, meditation, and the study of God's Word. In addition to all these spiritual practices, Christians should also employ the humbling discipline of fasting.

Biblical Fasting - Is there a proper method to fasting?
Biblical fasting, unlike fasting for medical or health reasons, must be done with an attitude of seriousness and sincerity. When we fast, we willingly deprive the body of nourishment and the pleasurable taste of food. The body requires food for sustenance; therefore our hearts and minds must be totally focused and directed towards God so that He may be the full source of our strength during our period of fasting.

Fasting must also be done in an attitude of humility. It is not necessary for others to know we are fasting; it is directed towards God. "But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you" (Matthew 6:17-18).

In addition to our attitudes towards God and our stance before man, our motives must also be correct. We should fast in order to further the building up of God's kingdom by seeking to minister to others. The prophet Isaiah received from the Lord the acceptable motives for our fasts: "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter -- when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?" (Isaiah 58:6-7).

Fasts may last for varying lengths of time -- one day, three days, seven days, and more. We should prayerfully seek the Lord about the length of our fast. Fasting should have an object in mind; we should have a clear idea of the need and purpose. One of the most pressing reasons for Christian fasting may be revival -- "Will you not revive us again..." (Psalm 85:6).

Biblical Fasting - What are the benefits of Christian fasting?
Biblical fasting brings us into a closer union with God. While our bodies are being deprived for the purpose of drawing near to God, He has promised in return to draw near to us. This is a spiritual certainty. As we decrease, the Spirit increases. As individuals we are strengthened and renewed. "...Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day" (2 Corinthians 4:16).

While this verse applies to our eternal destiny, the principle applies to our daily sojourn; as we humble and deprive our bodies through fasting, our spiritual man is made stronger and our senses more acute. This principle served the apostles well during the early church days. Their decisions were made through

fasting and prayer; God gave them instructions and directions. "While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off" (Acts 13:2-3).

Wicked kings, destined for destruction, received mercy from humbling themselves and fasting (1 Kings 21:29). The entire city of Nineveh, including animals, fasted upon hearing the pronouncement of judgment from the prophet Jonah -- and God spared them (Jonah 3:10). Jesus received divine preparation for His earthly ministry while fasting and enduring temptation. Moses waited upon God forty days and received the divine revelation of God's commandments.

While we await the return of the bridegroom, our Lord Jesus Christ, fasting exemplifies our attitude of spiritual hunger -- the promise is that we will be satisfied. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled" (Matthew 5:6).

Learn More!

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Followers of Christ fast as a spiritual discipline. We don't fast to manipulate God and appear more righteous than others. You are not required to fast, but it is very beneficial on your walk and highly recommended. Prayer and fasting has helped me cut off many sins and things of the world that I was clinging on to.

Fasting separates you from the distractions of this world and it brings us into a closer union with God. It allows us to hear God better and fully rely upon Him.

1. Jesus expects us to fast.

Matthew 6:16-18 "And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

2. Humble yourself before God.

Psalm 35:13 Yet when they were ill, I put on sackcloth and humbled myself with fasting. When my prayers returned to me unanswered.

Ezra 8:21 And there by the Ahava Canal, I gave orders for all of us to fast and humble ourselves before our God. We prayed that he would give us a safe journey and protect us, our children, and our goods as we traveled.

2 Chronicles 7:14 if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

3. Distress and grief

Judges 20:26 Then all the people of Israel, the whole army, went up and came to Bethel and wept. They sat there before the Lord and fasted that day until evening, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord.

2 Samuel 3:35 Then they all came and urged David to eat something while it was still day; but David took an oath, saying, "May God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if I taste bread or anything else before the sun sets!"

1 Samuel 31:13 Then they took their bones and buried them under a tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and they fasted seven days.

4. Repentance

1 Samuel 7:6 When they had assembled at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before the Lord. On that day they fasted and there they confessed, "We have sinned against the Lord." Now Samuel was serving as leader of Israel at Mizpah.

Joel 2:12-13 "Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments." Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.

Nehemiah 9:1-2 Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads. And the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.

5. Spiritual strength. Overcoming temptation and dedicating yourself to God.

Matthew 4:1-11 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple."If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test. Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only. Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

6. Discipline

1 Corinthians 9:27 But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

7. Strengthen prayers

Matthew 17:21 "But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Ezra 8:23 So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.

8. Express love and worship to God.

Luke 2:37 and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day.

9. Guidance and help making important decisions.

Acts 13:2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

10. Drawing closer to God and separating yourself from the world.

James 4:8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Romans 12:1-2 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Mary, the Mother of Jesus- Ten Women of the Bible

By Max Lucado – October 18, 2016 –

Stars

1. Mary: Normal and Unnoticed:

Read Luke 2:1-7.

a) What details in this story point to Mary and Joseph's humble state?

b) Read Matthew 1: 20-21 and Luke 1: 31-33, 35. How is Jesus described?
Bonus: Read Jeremiah 23:5-6 to see what the Jews were expecting.

c) After the reading the above description of Jesus, why do you think that God chose two very normal and humble people to be the parents of the King of Kings? Why did He chose the Christmas story to look so humble?

d) How could knowing this truth encourage your everyday, ordinary life?

"The most earth-shattering miracle of the Bible is also the quietest; God becoming a man. When accepted, this miracle changes our identity, our hearts, our future – everything. (pg. 100)

2. Talent or Faith?

a) Read Luke 1: 38 and Luke 1:11-22. Compare the two reactions to the angel's news?
Mary: What does she call herself? What does it imply about her heart towards God?

Zechariah: What was his reaction?

b) When you are presented with an seemingly impossible task or situation, is your response more like Mary's or Zechariah's?

c) Read Luke 1:45, Galatians 3:9, John 20:29. What is in store for those with faith?

"If Mary is our measure, God seems less interested in talent and more interested in trust." (pg. 107)

3. Pregnant with Life:

a) Read 2 Corinthians 13:5, Galatians 2:20, Colossians 1:27, John 14:20, Ephesians 3:17, 1 John 3:24, Revelation 3:20. What is the common theme of these verses?

b) When Christ dwells in us, our ordinary life become extraordinary.
Read John 1:12, 1 Corinthians 12:27 and 1 Peter 2:9. How does our life change?

c) What special things do pregnant women do to care for their growing child? What can happen if special care is not taken?

d) What special things can we do/ should we do for Christ to grow in us?

4. Running out of Wine:

a) Read John 2:1-11. What are your initial observations about Mary in this story – her words, her personality, her actions?

b) Jesus chose for His first miracle to be at a wedding feast among his friends and family. What does this tell us about the kind of God we serve?

c) Read Jesus' response in verse 4. Why do you think Mary's response in verse 5 was to instruct the servants in spite of Jesus' response?

"Mary believed Jesus would respond." Do you likewise trust that Jesus hears your requests? Do you trust that He will respond?

Suggesting plans to God is a normal human response. It's normal because we just naturally want to be in control. Our desire for control stretches all the way back to Adam and Eve. But God wants to break this Adam nature in us and remind us of our Christ nature." (pg. 111)

e) Read Isaiah 55:8-9 and 1 Corinthians 1:27. What do these verses say about God's plans?

f) Read Psalm 139: 2-4, and 1 Peter 5:7. What kind of anxieties does this verse say we can bring to Jesus? How does Mary obey the words of this verse through her actions?

g) Do you ever keep concerns from God that you feel are too small? What is the danger of not sharing your small concerns with God – in believing you can only go to Him with the "big issues" in life?

"Notice in this story that when Mary brought her request to Christ, she wasn't bossy, she wasn't critical, and she didn't try to blame herself for the problem. " (pg. 115)

h) When you are stressed out with a problem, do you tend to follow her example? If not, which of the tendencies in the above quote (or others you can think of) best describe the way you handle problems?

i) What is one problem you need to take to Jesus right now?

Where do you have problems trusting God's plans? "We can ask Him to help us think with the mind of Christ... He will begin turning our desire for control into trust, just as He turned the water into wine." (pg. 111)

5. The Sacrifice of a Mother:

Read Matthew 19:23-30

Jesus was saying that if we put our trust in riches, or in people – even if that is our own family – we've missed the 'eye of the needle'.

a) What sacrifices did Mary have to make for her son, for her God?

b) Read Luke 9:24, John 15:12-14, Philippians 3:8, Hebrews 13:16. What do these verses say about the sacrifice that comes from following Jesus?

c) Read Romans 12:1. What does God think about our "sacrifice"?

Summary:

A. Birth of Jesus:

1. Christ came to ordinary people (Mary/Joseph). No fanfare in His birth.
2. God is more interested in our trust than our talent. Mary said yes, quickly. She had no special abilities. She was highly favoured by God.
   Trusting in God means putting Him before everything we hold dear.
3. As Christ lived, grew in Mary, He does the "same" in us. When Christ dwells in us, our ordinary identity becomes extraordinary. As He grew in Mary, He had to come out.
   Christ will grow in us until the same occurs. (pg. 120)
   What special things do you need to do to "grow Jesus in you"?

B. Wedding at Cana:

1. God does not work according to our plans, – His perspective is far beyond our ability to dictate His plans.
2. When problems arise, we need to take them immediately to Jesus – for He delights in caring for us. (no blaming, complaining, ranting, etc.). Then do what Jesus tells us to do.

C. At the cruxifiction:

1. Mary said many good-byes. At the start of His ministry, at His cruxification.
2. We too have to say good-bye – give up – for the sake of Christ (Matt. 19:29-30)
3. Sacrificing in the name of Jesus is an act of worship, that is pleasing to God.
4. Sacrificing in the name of Jesus draws us into intimate relationship with Him.

TEN WOMEN OF THE BIBLE **THE SAMARITAN WOMEN**

John 4: 1-42

The Story.....

TWO PERSPECTIVES...

The journey from Judea to Galilee

JESUS - A GOD MAN ON A MISSION

John 4: 1-15
Read over this section of the story

Background:

a. Galilee was special to Jesus. Jesus was from Galilee

John 4: 43-54 tell us of the great things that happened in Galilee.

People were now receptive to Him
Jesus first miracle had been in Cana - Water to wine
Another miracle was awaiting Jesus .....the healing of a young boy

b. The difficult relationship between the Jews and the Samaritans – (LAST PAGE)

PERSPECTIVE #1 - JESUS

1. **JESUS IS THIRSTY - HUMAN MAN / LED BY THE FATHER**

Why do you think Jesus stopped at the well?

_____

_____

Does the Holy Spirit actively direct us in our everyday life?

_____

_____

Why do you think Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for a drink? Was he just seeking to quench his own thirst, or do you think there was a greater purpose behind his request?

_____

_____

How does Jesus describe the water? Vs 10-14

_____

_____

Do you ever feel overwhelmed or that you really don't have anything to offer someone who is hurting or discouraged?

_____

_____

2. JESUS - SPEAKS THE TRUTH

The truth hurts.....

Vs. 15-25

THE TALK.....

Jesus offers the women New Life ... but still addresses the present sin in her life.
It is significant to notice that Jesus points out the sin in the women's life without shame. There is no name labeling ... or degrading....
Jesus points out the sin in our lives without causing us to feel unloved or devalued.

Does sin, past and/or present , in our lives.... define who we are?

_____

_____

Why is it then, so hard for us to be truthful or to see the truth about our own lives?

_____

_____

What place does SHAME have in our lives?

_____

_____

How has the Holy Spirit revealed sin in your own life that has caused you to personally repent and be changed?

_____

_____

PERSPECTIVE #2 - THE SAMARITAN WOMEN

John 4: 7 - SHE MEETS JESUS

Most likely this woman would not have come **boldly** to the well.... but rather she would have come quietly seeking no attention.
For one thing... she was a Samaritan ... and this man was an obvious Jew
Women were insignificant in those days, so Jesus being there would have caused her to come only to get what she needed and leave.
She came alone to the well , which was normally a gathering place for the women, indicates that she an outsider and was most likely not part of the "women's club".
Scripture says that she had 5 husbands which would indicate that she had 5 different relationships, as well as the present one. Divorce was more a possibility than death of these men as death would have meant that family would have responsibility for her continued care .
She top, apparently, is presently living with someone who is not her husband. This continued lifestyle would have brought her shame.

1. SHE HEARS HIS VOICE

Vs 9- 15

As you read this verses what do you see about the heart of this women?

_____

_____

Why do you think she was so eager to receive "this water"?

_____

_____

We see in verse 15 that the woman is very excited about this "water" that Jesus is offering. But very quickly is not so sure about how "thirsty" she wants to be!!!
Why do you think that is????

_____

_____

Vs 16-26

How does Jesus handle the "sin" in her life?

_____

_____

Ephesians 4:32
Ephesians 5:1-2

What do these verses tell us about how we are to handle sin in the lives of others as well as ourselves?

_____

_____

What excuses do we give to God as to deflect what He is saying to us?

_____

_____

DISCUSSION TIME

Vs 19 - The women is still unsure of who Jesus is.... She challenges Him on some of the teachings she has heard.....
Vs 21-24 Jesus explains WHO HE IS .....

Verse 24:
FOR GOD IS SPIRIT, SO THOSE WHO WORSHIP HIM MUST WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH.

What does that verse mean to you ????

:

2. VS 26 SHE BELIEVES - in the " I AM "

Exodus 3:14

And God said unto Moses, **I AM** THAT **I AM**: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of **I**srael, **I AM** hath **sent me** unto you

JEHOVAH "I AM"	Jehovah Shammah	-	Ezekiel 48:35	-	I am THERE
	Jehovah Raphinah	-	Ex. 15:26	-	I am your HEALER
	Jehovah Rohi	-	Gen 16: 13-14	-	I am your SHEPHERD
	Jehovah Makaddesh	-	Lev 20:8	-	I am your SANCTIFIER
	Jehovah Nissi	-	Ex. 17:15-16	-	I am your BANNER IN BATTLE

DISCUSSION TIME

Who is He to you???

1 John 4:13-16

Think of a time when you were in need and God came and met you.....
How did He touch and change your life and show you that He is your "I **AM** "!

_____

_____

3. HER ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS CHANGES HER and HER COMMUNITY

Vs 27-28

The disciples are stunned silent..... the reaction of not understanding ....
The Women leaves her water pot behind..... the reaction of belief !!!!

What is the significance of that?

_____

_____

What happened to the village of Sychar? Vs. 39-42

_____

_____

What value do you have on your relationship with Jesus?
Are we willing to leave`our pots`behind ..... or are we still `holding on to pots` that weigh us down?

_____

_____

WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!!!!

1. Have you had a "well" encounter with Jesus?

_____

_____

2. Are you willing for God to "interrupt" your life ? -

_____

_____

3. Who have you **met** on your journey that has impacted your life for Christ?

_____

_____

4. Who are **you** meeting on your journey and their lives are being impacted for Christ?

_____

_____

Jews and Samaritans

Hatred between Jews and Samaritans was fierce and long-standing. In some ways, it dated all the way back to the days of the patriarchs. Jacob (or Israel) had twelve sons, whose descendants became twelve tribes. Joseph, his favorite, was despised by the other brothers (Gen. 37:3-4), and they attempted to do away with him.

But God intervened and not only preserved Joseph's life, but used him to preserve the lives of the entire clan. Before his death, Jacob gave Joseph a blessing in which he called him a "fruitful bough by a well" (Gen. 49:22). The blessing was fulfilled, as the territory allotted to the tribes of Joseph's two sons, Ephraim ("doubly fruitful") and Manasseh, was the fertile land that eventually became Samaria.

Later, Israel divided into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom, called Israel, at the hilltop city of Samaria.

Meanwhile, the southern kingdom of Judah fell to Babylon in 600 B.C. Its people, too, were carried off into captivity. But 70 years later, a remnant of 43,000 was permitted to return and rebuild Jerusalem. The people who now inhabited the former northern kingdom—the Samaritans—vigorously opposed the repatriation and tried to undermine the attempt to re establish the nation. So walls of bitterness were erected on both sides and did nothing but harden for the next 550 years. There are countless modern parallels to the Jewish-Samaritan enmity—indeed, wherever peoples are divided by racial and ethnic barriers.

Perhaps that's why the Gospels and Acts provide so many instances of Samaritans coming into contact with the message of Jesus. It is not the person from the radically different culture on the other side of the world that is hardest to love, but the nearby neighbor whose skin color, language, rituals, values, ancestry, history, and customs are different from one's own.

NAMES OF GOD

JEHOVAH

"I AM"

Jehovah Shammah
"I am There"
Ezekiel 48:35

Jehovah Raphinah
"I am your Healer"
Ex 15:26

Jehovah Jireh
"I am your Provider"
Gen 22:13-14

Jehovah Rohi
"I am your Shepherd"
Gen 16: 13-14

Jehovah Shalom
"I am your Peace"
Judges 6:24

Jehovah Makaddesh
"I am your Sanctifier"
Lev. 20:8

Jehovah Nissi
"I am your Banner in Battle"
Ex. 17:15-16

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10 WOMEN OF THE BIBLE - THE CANAANITE WOMEN

This is a story about a woman who was seeking Jesus. Unlike our story of the Samaritan Women... whom Jesus approached and from that encounter her life changed.... we now see a women desperately seeking Jesus..... She had **HEARD** of Jesus.... and she determined to find Him.

Jeremiah 29:13(NKJV)

[13] And you will seek Me and find *Me,* when you search for Me with all your heart.

Our story: A short story with big impact!!!

Matthew 15: 21-28
Mark 7: 24-30

What stands out to you as you read this story?

_____

_____

Background:

A. Who were the Canaanites???

The Canaanites are mentioned over 150 times in the Bible. They were a wicked, idolatrous people descended from Noah's grandson Canaan, who was a son of Ham (Genesis 9:18). Canaan was cursed because of his and his father's sin against Noah (Genesis 9:20–25).

B. Jesus

John the Baptist - Jesus cousin - had just been beheaded.
Jesus had "rescued" his disciple Peter from the stormy sea by walking on the water.
Jesus was dealing with vast crowds who had heard about his miracles

Matt 15:22
Mark 7: 25

What do these verses tell us about the woman?

- Gentile
- From a land of Idolatry
- she had "heard" about Jesus
- sick child
- she was seeking Jesus

Matthew 15: 1-9
In these verses what was the Pharisees issue with Jesus?

_____

_____

Matthew 15:12
What is the response of the disciples?

_____

_____

Matthew 15:22
What is the action of the women?

_____

_____

Matthew 15:23
What is the disciple's response to this woman?

_____

_____

When you think about the response of the disciples....and the Pharisees.... what similarities do you see?

_____

_____

We have seen how the disciples reacted to this desperate woman..... It is easy for us to place judgement on them ... but do we always react the way we should when we are placed in circumstances where we feel our personal boundaries are being challenged or our "traditions" have been slighted.?

_____

_____

HAVE A LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS!!!

This is a very interesting conversation that takes place between Jesus and the Women. It is good to note that this was not just a conversation between the Woman and Jesus. The disciples were there..... The women was there... and perhaps others ... Jesus had spent much of His time ... teaching the disciples ... showing them.... that He indeed was the Messiah. The One the Jews were waiting for... but Jesus had also taught them ...that although the Messenger had come for the Jews.... the Message was for EVERYONE! This was an INCLUSIVE GOSPEL.... Did they truly understand??

Matt 15: 24
Mark 7:27

- What is Jesus response to the Women?
- Jews first????
- Do you understand the response?

Romans 1: 16-17
Romans 2: 9-11

JEWS FIRST.....

The Torah had taught the Jews that the Messiah would come. They, however, had began to teach and believe their own traditions on just how and what that coming of the" Messiah" would look.... they envisioned a great KING COMING TO A GREAT THRONE .... When Jesus, the Messiah, did come, He came humbly and as a child ... the religious Jews were unable to receive Him. So scripture tells us ... that because they rejected the GOSPEL... and their responsibility of spreading the GOOD NEWS.... the message of the Messiah was then given to the Gentiles..... Not to separate Jew and Gentile but to join them together as one... one body.

READ JOHN PIPERS SERMON NOTES . ROMANS 1:16

Discussion Time

"DOGS"

We see this term used several times in scripture.....

Jesus calls the woman a "dog" after the manner of the Jews, who considered the Gentiles "dogs" on account of their idolatry
The word for dogs here refers to small dogs, perhaps children's pets who are harmless and somewhat helpless. She accepts Israel's historical privilege over the Gentiles, but she will also take what the Jews do not want. And that attitude played out again and again in Paul's missionary journey when he turned to Gentiles because the Jews did not want their Messiah, but the Gentiles did.

Labels.....
The Jews, and religious leaders of the day ... Pharisees and Sadducees, were all quick to label others who were different.....
Talk about these two questions....

- Do we too, often quickly label someone or something we don't understand or is different from us?
- Why do you think that is?

Matt. 15:27
Mark 7:28

HER RESPONSE.....
"Even the dogs eat scraps"

Why does this response tell you the women understood and believed who Jesus was?

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Now compare Matthew 15: 2 and Matthew 15:22

Both the Pharisees and the Women make a request to Jesus.....
What differences do you find between them?

Matthew 15:28
Mark 7:29-30

YOUR FAITH IS GREAT...

This women did not come from an "experience" with Jesus .... She had not sat under his teaching or perhaps even seen any of His miracle.... BUT SHE HAD HEARD!!! SHE BELIEVED !!!!!

Look up and read the following passages.....

- What do you think they say about FAITH?
- What aspect of faith are these passages challenging?
- As you think about your "faith".... what story do you feel you most relate to at this time of your faith life?

Matthew 8: 25-27
Jesus Calms the Storm
...**25**The disciples went and woke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" **26**"You of little faith, Jesus replied, "why are you so afraid?" Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it was perfectly calm. **27**The men were amazed and asked, "What **kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey Him!"...**

Matthew 6:30
Do Not Worry
29Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was adorned like one of these. **30**Ifthat is how God clothes the grass of the field,which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? **31**Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'...

Luke 18:18-23 (NLT)
The Rich Man
18 Once a religious leader asked Jesus this question: "Good Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?"
19 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked him. "Only God is truly good.20 But to answer your question, you know the commandments: 'You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. Honor your father and mother.'[a]"
21 The man replied, "I've obeyed all these commandments since I was young."
22 When Jesus heard his answer, he said, "There is still one thing you haven't done. Sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."
23 But when the man heard this he became very sad, for he was very rich.

Job 13:13-16 (NKJV)
The Surety of Job
13 "Hold your peace with me, and let me speak,
Then let come on me what *may!*
14 Why do I take my flesh in my teeth,
And put my life in my hands?
15 Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.
Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him.
16 He also *shall* be my salvation,
For a hypocrite could not come before Him.

Matthew 17:14-20 (NLT)
Jesus Heals a Demon-Possessed Boy
14 At the foot of the mountain, a large crowd was waiting for them. A man came and knelt before Jesus and said, 15 "Lord, have mercy on my son. He has seizures and suffers terribly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. 16 So I brought him to your disciples, but they couldn't heal him."
17 Jesus said, "You faithless and corrupt people! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me."18 Then Jesus rebuked the demon in the boy, and it left him. From that moment the boy was well.
19 Afterward the disciples asked Jesus privately, "Why couldn't we cast out that demon?"
20 "You don't have enough faith," Jesus told them. "I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.[a]"

Luke 8:43-48 (KJV)
43 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,
44 Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stopped.
45 And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?
46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.
47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.
48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

QUOTE : M. Lacado

A good definition of faith is that it is "the belief that God is good and will do what is right." Faith is making a choice to believe that the One who made it all hasn't left it all and that he still works in our midst today.

Faith is not the belief that God will do what we want him to do.....but that he will do what if right.

God acts through the abundance of His power, not the abundance of our faith.....

Healing begins when we do something.

Healing begins when we reach out

Healing starts when we take a step

Gods help is near and always available, but it is only given to those who SEEK IT.

Matthew 15:28

Mark 7:30

The women received what she came for.

The Canaanite Women woke up that morning with purpose. She knew what she believed about Jesus to be true and she set herself to accomplish what she needed. It didn't matter to her if there would be some opposition.... she would not back down. She would do whatever it took ..... She would get who and what she came for !!!

Personal Reflection:

Do we have that same focus – determination - in our lives?

Do we hear what God is saying to us?

Are we willing to engage in the conversation?

Are we willing to do whatever is necessary?

Is our faith making a difference to our people of influence?