

# Matthew 15:29-31

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/matt/matt-15/matthew-1529-31/>

*Jesus relocates from Tyre to the Decapolis. Crowds of Gentiles come to Him on a remote hillside, bringing this sick and lame to be healed. Jesus heals them and they glorify the God of Israel.*

The parallel gospel account of this event is found in Mark 7:31-37.

Matthew reports that sometime after *His* encounter with the Canaanite woman in the city of Tyre *Jesus* departed *from* that province and *went along by the Sea of Galilee*. This expression indicates the route and manner in which traveled. It does not confirm that *He* returned to the district of Galilee. From the cities of Tyre and Sidon (situated north and east of *Galilee*) *Jesus* had to first head east and cross into the province of Gaulanitis (located north and west of the province of *Galilee*). From there *He went along by the Sea of Galilee*. Mark adds an extra detail that *Jesus* also traveled so far south that *He went* into the province of the Decapolis located along *Galilee's* southeastern shore. (See map in the Additional Resources section)

“Again He went out from the region of Tyre, and came through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, within the region of Decapolis.”  
(Mark 7:31)

The Decapolis was Roman province with a mostly Greek population. Previously *Jesus* traveled to the Decapolis where *He* healed the two demoniacs after being awakened by His fearful disciples during a storm that threatened to sink their boat as the crossed the lake (Matthew 8:28-34). Decapolis comes from two Greek words for “ten” and “cities.”

Matthew does not offer a reason why *Jesus* came to this district, but it is reasonable to suppose that He did so to spend more time alone with His Father and to train His disciples away from the interrupting *crowds*. *He* could no longer find peace in Galilee (Matthew 14:34-36). It was unsafe for *Him* to be in Judea (John 7:1). *He* had been recognized in Tyre (Mark 7:24). Perhaps He thought *He*, might be left alone in the Decapolis, where the Greeks begged Him to leave their region (Matthew 8:34, Luke 8:37).

Soon after *Jesus* arrived, Matthew tells us *He* hiked up a *mountain* and was *sitting* there, presumably to either spend time alone with *His* Father or train *His* disciples.

But even on this remote *mountain*, *large crowds* came to *Him*. *Jesus's* popularity had seemingly increased from when *He* was last here. By this time, these Gentiles of the Decapolis had heard more about *Jesus* and *His* miracles. And *the crowds* were continually *bringing with them those who were lame, crippled, blind, mute, and many others*.

Mark recalled one of these miracles *Jesus* did in the Decapolis in more detail.

“They brought to Him one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty, and they implored Him to lay His hand on him. Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue with the saliva; and looking up to heaven with a deep sigh, He said to him, ‘Ephphatha!’ that is, ‘Be opened!’ And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he began speaking plainly. And He gave them orders not to tell anyone; but the more He ordered them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it. They were utterly astonished, saying, ‘He has done all things well; He makes even the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.’”

(Mark 7:32-37)

Matthew tells us that *He healed them all. So this crowd of Gentiles marveled as they saw the mute speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing.* Because the vast majority of *Jesus’s* ministry was spent in the Jewish district of *Galilee*, the Gentiles (and Samaritans) who surrounded this district, did not have the same opportunities to witness and marvel at *His* miracles or to be blessed by them.

Matthew also observes how these Gentiles *glorified the God of Israel.*

### **Biblical Text**

**15:29-31 Departing from there, Jesus went along by the Sea of Galilee, and having gone up on the mountain, He was sitting there. And large crowds came to Him, bringing with them those who were lame, crippled, blind, mute, and many others, and they laid them down at His feet; and He healed them. So the crowd marveled as they saw the mute speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.**