

Matthew 15:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

Analysis

And he sent away the multitude, and took ship (καὶ ἀπολύσας τοὺς ὄχλους ἐνέβη εἰς τὸ πλοῖον)—The verb ἀπολύω (apolyō, 'to send away, to dismiss, to release') indicates orderly dismissal, not abandonment. Jesus controlled both gathering and dispersing—sovereign over crowd dynamics. He didn't cling to popularity but purposefully moved according to His Father's agenda. Taking ship (ἐμβαίνω εἰς τὸ πλοῖον) marks transition to His next ministry location.

And came into the coasts of Magdala (καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς τὰ ὅρια Μαγδαλά)—Magdala (Μαγδαλά, Hebrew Migdal meaning 'tower') was a fishing town on Galilee's western shore, home of Mary Magdalene (27:56, 61; 28:1). Mark 8:10 calls it 'Dalmanutha.' The movement from Gentile Decapolis back to Jewish territory shows Jesus's balanced ministry. He neither exclusively focused on Jews nor Gentiles but ministered to both, breaking down the dividing wall (Ephesians 2:14).

Historical Context

Magdala was a prosperous first-century fishing village (excavations reveal fish-processing facilities, synagogue, harbor, markets). Its prosperity contrasts with the wilderness just left, yet Jesus found spiritual poverty in prosperous places and faith in desolate regions. The return to Jewish territory led to confrontation with Pharisees and Sadducees (16:1-4), showing that proximity to Jesus doesn't

guarantee acceptance—the Decapolis Gentiles showed more faith than Magdala's religious elite.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's willingness to send away crowds challenge modern success-metrics focused on numbers?
2. Why did Jesus find more receptivity among marginalized Gentiles than religious Jewish leaders?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἀπολύσας	τοὺς	ὄχλους	ἐνέβη	εἰς	τὸ	πλοῖον
And	he sent away	G3588	the multitude	and took	into	G3588	G4143
G2532	G630		G3793	G1684	G1519		

καὶ	ἦλθεν	εἰς	τὰ	ὅρια	Μαγδαλά
And	came	into	G3588	the coasts	of Magdala
G2532	G2064	G1519		G3725	G3093

Additional Cross-References

Mark 8:10 (Parallel theme): And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.