

# A Woman of Canaan Besought Jesus

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A Woman of Canaan Besought Jesus  
(*Matthew 15:22*)

It Was a Greek Woman Who Besought Him  
(*Mark 7:26*)

The two scriptures mentioned above are purported to be contradictory by some people. However by combining these two accounts of the same event, the reader will gain a more complete picture of who this woman was.

Then Jesus .... departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. <sup>22</sup>And behold, a woman of Canaan (SGD 5478; name of the ancient inhabitants of Palestine before its conquest by the Israelites; in Christ's time they were called Phoenicians) came from that region and cried out to him, saying, 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed' (Mt. 15:21-22; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

According the Matthew's account the Gentile woman, who asked for Christ to heal her daughter, lived in the area that used to be occupied by the ancient Canaanites. Although she lived in this region, it did not automatically mean she was a descendant of the Canaanites. Due to Mark's account, this woman's ethnic background becomes clear.

The woman was a Greek (SHD 1674; a Greek woman; a Gentile), a Syro-Phoenician (SHD 4949; mixed nation; half Phoenician and half Syrian) by birth, and she kept asking (begging) him (Christ) to cast the demon out of her daughter (Mk. 7:26; Ed. notes in parentheses).

So this woman was a Gentile whose background was from a mixed marriage between Syrian and Phoenician parents. As the Greek empire used to control the area that she and her parents came from (333BCE to 64BCE), she would have been regarded as a Greek more than a Roman. Even after the Romans took over Tyre and Sidon in 64 BCE, the people of Sidon continued to mint their own silver coins proving they were able to remain at least partially autonomous from Rome.

The main reason this Gentile woman is mentioned in scripture is to confirm that salvation was coming to Gentile nations through the sacrifice of Christ. A man called Simeon was aware that Christ would be fulfilling a number of prophecies related to the Gentile nations understanding God's truth.

So he (Simeon) came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, <sup>28</sup>he (Simeon) took him (Christ) up in his arms and blessed God and said: <sup>29</sup>Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; <sup>30</sup>**for my eyes have seen Your salvation** <sup>31</sup>**which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,** <sup>32</sup>**a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,** and the glory of Your people Israel' (Lk. 2:27-32; cf. Isa. 49:6; 60:3; Ac. 13:47; 26:23; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

As with many so-called contradictions in scripture, combining them together provides a more complete picture and background into various aspects of God's truth. The faith that this Greek woman demonstrated was a preview to many other Gentiles who would repent of sin and begin living a new life in accordance with God's law and commandments (Mt. 8:5-10; Lk. 7:1-9).

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