

Recognized by a Canaanite Woman

Key Verse: “*Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.*”
—Matthew 15:28

A MAJOR PURPOSE OF

Jesus’ miracles was to prove he was Israel’s Messiah. Although most of these signs were given to the Jewish people, a few of them were not. One exception was when Jesus was approached by a Canaanite woman in the region of Tyre and Sidon who asked him to heal her demon-possessed daughter.—Matt. 15:21,22

Selected Scripture: **Matthew 15:21-25**

She addressed the Master as the Lord, the Son of David; but as a Gentile who was not in covenant relationship with God, Jesus did not initially respond to her. Additionally, his disciples urged him to send her away. (vs. 23) Subsequently, there was an interchange between this heathen woman and Jesus, who indicated, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”—vs. 24

In a parallel account, the Master stated, “Let the children first be filled.” (Mark 7:27) This implied that Gentiles would have a ray of hope in the future, but at that time the benefits of the Gospel were meant exclusively for the Jewish ‘sheep.’

Going back to the Matthew account, “He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and

cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." (Matt. 15:26,27) It is evident by her response that the woman understood the spirit of the Lord's reference to 'dogs' as being house pets that Jewish families frequently would esteem and care for.

Our Key Verse reflects the Master's appreciation of her humility in acknowledging that she was not one of the 'children' who would be favored with receiving God's special blessing. Nevertheless, the Lord's mercy was extended because of her great faith and earnestness. This resulted in her petition being granted and her daughter healed.

An important lesson can be gained by considering our Lord's mercy towards this Canaanite woman. Since we have received the Holy Spirit and an abundance of "exceeding great and precious promises" (II Pet. 1:4), how much greater should be our appreciation of God's dealings with us who are his spiritual children. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—I John 3:2

May we thus act upon the special favors we have received and add the various fruits and graces of the Spirit to our characters so we may obtain the great reward that is offered to all of the Father's children during this Gospel Age. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—II Pet. 1:10,11

The prospect of helping to bless all the families of the earth, and restoring mankind to the perfection that was lost because of Adam's fall in Eden, should inspire us to faithfulness in our Christian walk. ■