

THE GOSPEL OF MARK "harsh"

FOREIGN TERRITORY

*Jesus fame has been circulating even in Gentile lands. The city of Tyre and the region was an important trade city and route and exercised considerable economic dominance over the area of Galilee.

*Tyre had a long history of antagonism against Israel. This was also known as Phoenicia, the home of Jezebel in Elijah's day. In the time of Maccabean revolt they fought against Israel. Josephus noted that Tyre was 'notoriously our bitterest enemies'.

*The Jews thought that the coming Messiah would expel and subdue the gentiles not visit and embrace them

THE WOMAN

*Strikes against her:

1. She was a woman – which meant no respectable Jewish teacher would associate
2. She was a Gentile – a double negative
3. She is a member of a resented class of privileged foes
4. Her daughter was demon possessed where we have the unclean and ritual purity issues.



JESUS HARSH WORDS

*The use of dogs were regarded by the Jews along with their neighbors as unclean animals. Dogs were not lovable domesticated pets, they were considered wild scavengers that lived outside the city. To refer to a human in this regard is deliberately offensive and dismissive. They were associated with pigs in Matthew 7:6, and heretics in Philippians 3:2, 2 Peter 2:22, Revelation 22:15, 2 Samuel 16:9, Psalm 22:16.

*"dog" in the Greek is used of a small dog that was kept in the house as a pet. The fact that she takes the use of dog by Jesus and uses it on herself shows she didn't take it as something bad.

*Jesus refers to Israel as the 'biological children' of God.

Exodus 4:22, Deut 14:1, Isaiah 1:2)

Mark 7:24-30 (NIV)

⁽²⁴⁾ Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. ⁽²⁵⁾ In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an evil spirit came and fell at his feet. ⁽²⁶⁾ The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter. ⁽²⁷⁾ "First let the children eat all they want," he told her, "for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs." ⁽²⁸⁾ "Yes, Lord," she replied, "but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." ⁽²⁹⁾ Then he told her, "For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter." ⁽³⁰⁾ She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

JESUS' MISSION PLAN

*He was sent to the Nation of Israel as a fulfillment of a promise that a Messiah would come in the line of David to usher in the Messianic age of Salvation.

*It was God's choice to make Israel as the center from which his blessings will spread out to the other nations. Genesis 12:2-3, Isaiah 2:2-4, 49:6.

*The plan was from the beginning to start with the house of Israel and then move to the gentiles, Matthew 10:6, 15:24.

*This was also the plan for the early church, Romans 1:16.

*This is the glorious fulfillment of ingrafting the gentiles into the kingdom of God, Romans 11:1-24.

THE WOMAN

*We see the woman's Humility and Shrewdness referring to Jesus as "Lord".

*The woman's situation was desperate and her heart is true, even though her credentials are wrong.

*The woman use of 'children' is more inclusive, implying both children and servants of a household. The change indicates the woman understands the mercies of God to extend beyond ethnic Israel.

*She is the Female Jacob – spars with God (Genesis 32:28) and overcomes

*She is the first person that we find who hears and understands the parable without needing to be explained.

"Jesus sent no one away empty except those who were full of themselves."
D.L Moody

JESUS AUTHORITY

***Jesus words have authority.** Jesus does not have to be physically present for his words to have power. (i.e. The word of God, the words of Jesus carry power in and of themselves. That is why reading it is a dangerous thing.)

*There are other stories where Jesus healed from a distance and involve Gentile subject or subjects. Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10, John 4:46-54

*Jesus visit to Tyre universalizes the concept of the Messiah and the coming kingdom of God is not restricted by geography, ethnicity, gender and religion.

*No one likes being called hypocrites, evil generation, brood of vipers, whitewashed tombs, foxes or dogs. So instead we turn to a god of our own making who will not offend us, turn anyone away, because we are convinced we are something special and truly worthy of God's grace and help. Here is the thing, only when we are truly desperate are we willing to do anything it takes, including humbling ourselves before God.

Do we have a correct view of ourselves before God?