

*The Canaanite Woman*, from the *Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry* (15th-century Book of Hours)

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A non-Israelite woman (in Mark, a Syrophenician; in Matthew, a Canaanite) approaches Jesus, begging him to heal her daughter. Jesus replies that it is improper to give the “bread of the children” (Israelites) to the “dogs” (gentiles). The woman responds that even the “small pups under the table” (Amplified Bible) eat the crumbs that fall from the table. After this brief repartee, Jesus tells the woman to go home because the demon has left her daughter. In Matthew, Jesus informs the woman that the healing was a result of her faith (Matt. 15:28), but the Markan Jesus simply says, “Because of this answer [*logos*, literally “word”], go; the demon has gone out of your daughter” (Mark 7:29, NASV). It is not just her cleverness that Jesus admires; it is the word (cf. Mark 7:13) that she proclaims, the word that the mercies of God should be made available to the gentiles now and not at some point in the distant future. The scene is illustrated in the *Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*, a devotional book of hours made by the Limbourg brothers in the early 15th century. The upper panel depicts the woman pleading with Jesus, who has turned away from her; the woman’s possessed daughter is visible through a window on the right. In the lower scene, the woman is still pleading on behalf of her daughter (now out of view), but now Jesus offers a gesture of consent and healing—the reward for a desperate mother’s persistence.