

Read: Matthew 15:21-28

The Faith of a Foreign Woman

Matthew 15:28

Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

A few years ago, I had the most wonderful experience. It was in a hut. That's right, a hut. It was a small building with tree branches for walls with grass and leaves for a roof. This hut was so small I could barely stand up inside of it, and only about 10 people could fit inside. It was located in the middle of nowhere in Zambia, a country in Africa. What was I doing in a hut in Africa? I was going to church!

As I visited this small village, I found out that their normal church building had burned down. So for the time, this small hut served as their church. We sat on little benches and logs as we worshiped. I didn't understand a lot though—the service was in a different language. However, that day I saw clearly with my own eyes something very wonderful—Jesus is the Savior of all people of all nations and all languages.

Today we hear Jesus talk about the faith of a woman. But she was not an ordinary Israelite woman. She was a Canaanite, a foreigner from a different place. She came to see Jesus and asked him to help her daughter who was suffering. At first, Jesus tested her. He said that he came just for his own people, the Israelites. But the woman responded in true faith. She said that even the leftovers, even a little bit of grace, would be more than enough for her.

Jesus was so pleased. The woman understood that he came to be the Savior not just for the Israelites, but for the whole world. She understood that Jesus was *her* Savior. To prove this to her, Jesus showed his mighty power and healed her daughter right away.

Sometimes we get so busy in our lives that we forget there are other people out there in the world—people outside of our neighborhood, people who don't look like us or talk like us, people outside of our country in very different places around the world. This story today is a wonderful reminder that Jesus is Savior of all. Jesus came for his people in Israel, for people in America, in Africa, in Asia, and all over.

Won't it be so wonderful? Someday soon we will be in heaven, and we will meet this Canaanite woman and the disciples and believers from all over the world. There we will be gathered together with our one Savior, Jesus Christ. Oh what a worship service that will be!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for Younger Children

- What lesson did Jesus teach to the foreign woman and the others watching in the story today?
- Of all the people in the Bible, whom will you be most excited to meet in heaven? Why?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Why did Jesus test the woman before helping her? Wasn't that mean of him to do?
- The disciples were there when Jesus spoke with this woman. What lesson did they learn that day?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Why do you think Satan tempts people to think that Jesus is only for people "just like me" instead of for all people?
- Identify ways that you can share Jesus with other people around the world, even if you aren't a missionary.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Lord, thank you for coming to be the Savior of the whole world. Help me find ways to share you with others so that they can join all believers in heaven one day. Amen.

Hymn: CW 391:1,2 – God Loved the World So that He Gave

God loved the world so that he gave His only Son the lost to save
That all who would in him believe Should everlasting life receive.

Christ is the solid rock of faith, Who was made flesh and suffered death.
All who confide in him alone Are built on this chief cornerstone.