

Syrophoenicia

The name *Phoenicia* was from the Greek, meaning land of purple, for the area was famous for its purple dyes made from shellfish

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Syro

was a prefix given to the region after it was annexed to the Roman province of Syria. Phoenicia was a narrow coastal territory, corresponding to much of the Lebanon of today, stretching from Mount Carmel in the south to Acco in the north, roughly 200 miles in length.

Like Israel, much of it is mountainous inland, but with a very fertile coastal plain and uplands. Phoenicia was famous for its lush plant life, flowers, fruit and trees. The cedars of Lebanon were shipped to most parts of a land largely devoid of trees suitable for timber. Thus, there were many land and sea trade routes with northern Israel. But with these contacts came pagan religious influences and idolatry.

[Hosea 14: 5-10](#)

The people of Phoenicia were originally Canaanites, living on the seacoast, who traded with the Greeks. By 1250 B.C. the Phoenicians were well established as navigators and traders in the Mediterranean. Their communities were organized into city-states; the greatest of these were Tyre and Sidon. Here Greek culture flourished, gradually absorbing the last traces of Phoenician civilisation. Mark and Matthew describe the Phoenician woman somewhat differently. [Mark 7: 24-31](#) , [Matthew 15:21-28](#) .

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