

The Woman at the Well

John 4:7-26 (New American Standard Bible)

⁷ There **came* a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus **said* to her, “Give Me a drink.” ⁸ For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. ⁹ Therefore the Samaritan woman **said* to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.” ¹¹ She **said* to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? ¹² You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?” ¹³ Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”

¹⁵ The woman **said* to Him, “Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.” ¹⁶ He **said* to her, “Go, call your husband and come here.” ¹⁷ The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus **said* to her, “You have correctly said, ‘I have no husband’; ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly.” ¹⁹ The woman **said* to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” ²¹ Jesus **said* to her, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. ²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” ²⁵ The woman **said* to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.” ²⁶ Jesus **said* to her, “I who speak to you am He.”

Introduction

Today we are on the road again with Jesus in the land of Palestine. After walking a few miles, we finally arrive at a village called Sychar in the region of Samaria. It is not a Jewish town. A different race lives in this town. It is mid-day. Very hot. You feel hungry and tired. Especially, after you walked on foot for some time. Jesus sends His disciples to get some food while He is resting at the well. We are sitting next to Jesus. A Samaritan woman comes to draw the water from the well. To her, Jesus asks if she could give Him a drink. And, a conversation ensues.

Let’s check out how the conversation turns out. Once again, I will lead you verse by verse.

Content

Verse 7: ⁷ *There *came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus *said to her, “Give Me a drink.”* ⁸ *For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.*

Please note here that it is Jesus who initiates the conversation, not the woman. He sure has something in mind not just for H₂O for body survival, but something far more important, something that the woman needs.

Keep in mind. Jesus' request “to Give Me a drink” will later turn into the woman's request for living water in verse 15.

Verse 9: ⁹ *Therefore the Samaritan woman *said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?”* (For **Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.**):

A little historical background on Samaritans and Jews. Originally, they were one people, the descendants of Jacob. Exodus took place around 1500 B.C. King David reigned in the Kingdom of Israel around 1000 B.C. His son, Solomon, reigned for the next 40 years. Around 930 B.C., at the time of Rehoboam, Solomon's son, the Kingdom of Israel split into the Northern Kingdom of Israel (ten tribes following) and the Southern Kingdom of Judah (two tribes following, Benjamin and Judah).

The Northern Kingdom lasted for the next two hundred years and fell into the hands of the Assyrians in 722 B.C. After the conquer of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the Assyrians took many Israelites into exile and brought into Samaria (the capital) a different race. Soon, interracial marriage took place between the remnants of the land and the foreigners who were brought in. The mixture in religion and culture ensued for the next several hundreds of years until the time of Jesus. Samaritans were the direct descendants who dwelled in the territory ever since.

The Kingdom in the South lasted another 150 years after the fall of Northern Kingdom. However, in the year of 587 B.C., they met the same fate as its northern neighbor. This time, the Babylonians from the north invaded and carried the Jews into exile (the Babylonian Captivity). After the Jewish descendants of the exile returned 70 years later and settled in their homeland, the Samaritans and the Jews didn't get along. Although both worshiped the LORD as their God, neither of them acknowledged the other's religion as the legitimate faith in the LORD. Jews insisted that Mt. Olive in Jerusalem is the place of worship, yet, Samaritans said, No, Mt. Gerizim in Samaria is the one the Jews must come up to and worship there (v. 20). Jews despised Samaritans as a mixed race. Considered them unkosher both in blood and in faith. Samaritans, on the other hand, resented such treatment from the Jews. Naturally, no transactions or dealings took place between the two races.

Verse 10: ¹⁰ *Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew **the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’** you would have asked Him, and He would have given you **living water.**”*

Isn't it amazing? After two sentences into the conversation, Jesus already talks about the gift of God, the Messiah, and the living water. The woman is intrigued.

Verse 11: ¹¹ *She *said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?”*

She already sized Jesus up. *We are talking about water here, right? You have nothing to draw the water with and the well is deep. How are you going to get water? Furthermore, where are you going to get **that living water**, let alone giving to me?* The woman continues in verse 12.

Verse 12: ¹² ***You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?”***

Greek grammar: *You are surely not greater than Jacob.* She is expecting to hear such admission from Jesus. She is telling Him that Christ cannot be greater than Jacob. How often we fall into this wrong assumption that Christ is not that great? We all are guilty of putting God in our own box, are we not? Of course, the lady has no clue who she is talking to or what He is talking about. So, He explains:

Verse 13: ¹³ *Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall **never thirst**; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to **eternal life.**”*

Jesus is talking about the living water that will lead us to eternal life. It got her attention when He said you never go thirsty if you get this water. So, the woman says,

Verse 15: ¹⁵ ... *“Sir, **give me this water**, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.”*

Notice here the request for water is reversed. Now, she is the one asking Jesus to give the living water. That's usually how it works with God. E.g. In the beginning of our journey as believer, we think God asking too much of us, such as 'pray,' 'read the Bible,' and so forth. But in the end, we ask God for more of the things that we have avoided. E.g. Prayer time. In verse 16,

Verse 16: ¹⁶ *He *said to her, “Go, call your husband and come here.” ¹⁷ The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus *said to her, “You have correctly said, ‘I have no husband’; ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your*

husband; this you have said truly.”¹⁹ The woman *said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that **You are a prophet.**”

Jesus already knows everything about her life, doesn't He? That convinces her that He is a prophet. But He is much more than a prophet. Greater than any other prophets. All prophecies in the Bible point out to Christ (Revelation 19:10).

Note here: the woman had five husbands and is living with another man. She has been looking for some kind of meaning and satisfaction in her marriage relationships yet, she could find none even after 5 husbands. It tells me that no human can satisfy the needs in our soul. Only God can. E.g. Blaise Pascal. “God shaped-hole” in human heart can be filled only by God Himself. That's what Jesus is talking about here. The woman continues--

Verse 20: ²⁰Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” ²¹Jesus *said to her, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. ²²You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for **salvation is from the Jews.**”

You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know. Salvation is from the Jews, Jesus says. Once again, God sent the Savior in the Jewish line. Nothing against any other races. Just that's whom the LORD God has chosen to be His people, to be His treasured possession (Deuteronomy 7:6-8) and from this line the Messiah came. Such God's salvation plan was made before the creation of the world. Jesus continues--

Verse 23: ²³But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. ²⁴God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” ²⁵The woman *said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.” ²⁶Jesus *said to her, “**I who speak to you am He.**”

At the end of the conversation, the woman says, *I know when Messiah comes, He will make all things clear to us.* Jesus says, lady, you are talking to that Messiah. Christ is the Messiah. It is quite surprising that Christ reveals His identity plainly to her. He often hid His true identity from His disciples and the crowd. But, here, He reveals Himself to this lady.

Two Lessons: Christ for All, Holy Spirit for All

Christ for all: Not just for Jews, but Christ also came to die for Samaritans. Both Jews and Gentiles. Both the righteous and the unrighteous. For Americans and Chinese. Russians and Koreans. Christ **died for all, for the sins of the world:**

Holy Spirit for All:

Let's look at verses 13-14 again.

¹³ Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”

Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit who dwells in our heart. From the Holy Spirit in us, we will have a well of living water that will quench our spiritual thirst (John 7:37-39).

You do have the Holy Spirit in you as long as you believe in Jesus as Savior and Lord and publicly confess (Romans 10:10), because *no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the **Holy Spirit*** (1 Corinthians 12:3).

Conclusion

I recommend you studying today’s text. Go slow and pay attention to the words Jesus such as ‘living water,’ ‘eternal life,’ and ‘the Messiah.’ Christ is talking about your salvation. Your eternal life. He is talking about the Holy Spirit in you. The same Spirit of God will fill your emptiness and quench your thirst. Walk with the Spirit of God. You will never thirst. Amen.