

The Woman at the Well

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

⁷ A woman of Samaria *came to draw water. Jesus *said to her, “Give Me a drink.”⁸ For His disciples had gone away to the city to buy food. ⁹ So the Samaritan woman *said to Him, “How is it that You, though You are a Jew, are asking me for a drink, though I am a Samaritan woman?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus replied to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who is saying 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 no bucket and the well is deep; where then do You get this 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 be thirsty again; ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never be thirsty; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up to eternal life.”

¹⁵ The woman *said to Him, “Sir, give me this water so that I will not be thirsty, nor come all the way here to draw water.” ¹⁶ He *said to her, “Go, call your husband and come here.” ¹⁷ The woman answered and said to Him, “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 which you have said is true.” ¹⁹ The woman *said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and yet you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one must worship.” ²¹ Jesus *said to her, “Believe Me, woman, that a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, because salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But a time is coming, and even now has arrived, 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 am He, the One speaking to you.”

Introduction

One day Jesus was traveling from Judea to Galilee, passing through the region of Samaria. They arrived at a village called Sychar. It was not a Jewish town where a different race lived there. ‘Samaritans,’ they were called. It was mid-day. Very hot. Jesus and His disciples had walked all morning, so they were hungry and tired. To get some food, Jesus sent His disciples to the town and He was resting at a well. A Samaritan woman approached the well to draw water. To her, Jesus asked if she could give Him a drink. And a conversation ensued.

Let's check out how the conversation turned out. Once again, I will lead you in today's text verse by verse.

Content

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

Note here that it was Jesus who initiated the conversation, not the woman. He surely had something in mind: more than to quench His thirst with H₂O for body. Something far more important, something that matters eternally. Something that the woman needed.

Keep in mind. Jesus' request "to Give Me a drink" later turns into the woman's request for living water in verse 15.

Verse 9: ⁹ *So the Samaritan woman *said to Him, "How is it that You, though You are a Jew, are asking me for a drink, though I am a Samaritan woman?"* **(For Jews do not associate 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. About 500 years later, King David reigned in the Kingdom of Israel. Solomon, His son, reigned for the next 40 years. Around 930 B.C., at the time of Rehoboam, Solomon's son, the Kingdom was split into two kingdoms: the Northern Kingdom of Israel (ten tribes following) and the Southern Kingdom of Judah (two tribes following, Benjamin and Judah).

In 722 B.C., the Northern Kingdom fell into the hands of the Assyrians who took many Israelites into exile and brought a different race into the region whose capital was Samaria. Soon, interracial marriage took place between the remnants of the land and the foreigners who had been 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 the Northern Kingdom. In 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 (a.k.a. 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 races worshiped the LORD as their God, neither of them acknowledged the other's religion as the legitimate faith in the LORD. For instance, the Jews insisted that Mt. Zion (Temple Mount) in Jerusalem is the place of worship. Yet, the Samaritans said, No, Mt. Gerizim in Samaria is the most sacred mountain where the Jews must come up and worship (v. 20). Jews despised Samaritans as a mixed race and 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 replied to her, “If you knew **the gift of God**, and who it is **who is saying 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 talked about the gift of God, the Messiah, and the living water. The woman was intrigued.

Verse 11: ¹¹ *She *said to Him, “Sir, You have no bucket and the well is deep; where then do You get this living water?”*

She has already sized up Jesus. 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 it 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 surely are not greater than Jacob. By saying so, she expected an admission from Jesus. In fact, she was telling Christ that He is not 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 had no clue who she was talking to or what He was talking about. So,

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

Jesus talks 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,

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

Notice here the request for water is reversed. Now, she is the one asking Jesus to give the living water. That's how it usually works with God. E.g., When we first believe in Jesus, we think that God asks too much of us, such as ‘obey His voice,’ ‘worship,’ ‘pray,’ ‘read the Bible,’ and so forth. But in the end, we want more from the same God the things that we used to avoid. E.g., Worship, Prayer time, and the Word of God. In verse 16,

Verse 16: ¹⁶ *He *said to her, “Go, call your husband and come here.” ¹⁷ The woman answered and said to Him, “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 which you have said is true.”¹⁹ The woman *said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that **You are a prophet.**

Jesus already knew everything about her life, didn’t He? That convinced 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 meaning and satisfaction in marriage relationship yet, she could find none even after 5 husbands. It tells me that no human can satisfy the need of our soul. Only God can. E.g., Blaise Pascal said that there is a “hole shaped by God” in human heart that can be filled only by God Himself: “What else does this craving, and this helplessness, proclaim but that there was once in man a true happiness, of which all that now remains is the empty print and trace? This he tries in vain to fill with everything around him, seeking in things that are not there the help he cannot find in those that are, though none can help, since this **infinite abyss** can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words, by God himself.” - Blaise Pascal, *Pensées* VII (425).

That’s what Jesus is talking about here. The woman continues---

Verse 20: ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and yet you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one must worship.” ²¹ Jesus *said to her, “Believe Me, woman, that a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, because **salvation is from the Jews.**

You worship what you do not know, Jesus says. We worship what we know. Salvation is from the Jews. Once again, God sent the Savior in the Jewish line. Nothing against any other races. Just that’s the people the LORD God has chosen to be His own, 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: ²³ But a time is coming, and even now has arrived, 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 am He, the One speaking to you.**”

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 identity from His disciples and the crowd. But, here, He reveals Himself to this lady.

Two Lessons: Christ for All, the 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 Ukrainians. 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 be thirsty again; ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall **never be thirsty**; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain 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: *If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;* (Romans 10:9), 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 of Jesus such as 'living water,' 'eternal life,' and 'the Messiah.' Christ is talking to you 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 that no others can. Walk with the Spirit of God. You will never thirst. Amen.

Notes:

Christ also initiates salvation among Gentiles by Himself. It was long before the disciples reached out to other races after they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, it is unusual of Christ to initiate a conversation with a non-Jew. E.g., The Syrophoenician woman. ²⁴ Jesus got up and went away from there to the region of Tyre. And when He had entered a house, He wanted no one to know of it; yet He could not escape notice. ²⁵ But after hearing of Him, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately came and fell at His feet. ²⁶ Now the woman was a Gentile, of the Syrophoenician race. And she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ And He was saying to her, "Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." ²⁸ But she answered and *said to Him, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table feed on the children's crumbs." ²⁹ And He said to her, "Because of this answer go; the demon has gone out of your daughter." ³⁰ And going back to her home, she found the child lying on the bed, the demon having left. (Mark 7:24-30). Another thing noteworthy: Jesus stayed there for two days, in Samaria! (John 4:40). Many came to believe in Him.

ΚΑΤΑ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΝ 4:7-26

1550 Stephanus New Testament

⁷ ερχεται γυνη εκ της σαμαρειας αντλησαι υδωρ λεγει αυτη ο ιησους **δος μοι πειν**

⁸ οι γαρ μαθηται αυτου απεληλυθεισαν εις την πολιν ινα τροφας αγορασωσιν

⁹ λεγει ουν αυτω η γυνη η σαμαρειτις πως συ ιουδαιος ων παρ εμου πειν αιτεις ουσης
γυναικος σαμαρειτιδος **ου γαρ συγχρωνται ιουδαιοι σαμαρειταις**

¹⁰ απεκριθη ιησους και ειπεν αυτη ει ηδεις την δωρεαν του θεου και τις εστιν ο λεγων σοι
δος μοι πειν συ αν ητησας αυτον και εδωκεν αν σοι **υδωρ ζων**

¹¹ λεγει αυτω η γυνη κυριε **ουτε αντλημα εχεις και το φρεαρ εστιν βαθυ** ποθεν ουν εχεις το
υδωρ το ζων

¹² **μη συ μειζων ει του πατρος ημων ιακωβ** ος εδωκεν ημιν το φρεαρ και αυτος εξ αυτου
επιεν και οι υιοι αυτου και τα θρεμματα αυτου

¹³ απεκριθη ο ιησους και ειπεν αυτη **πας ο πινων εκ του υδατος τουτου διψησει παλιν**

¹⁴ **ος δ αν πιη εκ του υδατος ου εγω δωσω αυτω ου μη διψηση εις τον αιωνα** αλλα το υδωρ
ο δωσω αυτω γενησεται εν αυτω πηγη υδατος αλλομενου εις ζωην αιωνιον

¹⁵ λεγει προς αυτον η γυνη **κυριε δος μοι τουτο το υδωρ** ινα μη διψω μηδε ερχωμαι ενθαδε αντλειν

¹⁶ λεγει αυτη ο ιησους υπαγε φωνησον τον ανδρα σου και ελθε ενθαδε

¹⁷ απεκριθη η γυνη και ειπεν **ουκ εχω ανδρα** λεγει αυτη ο ιησους καλως ειπας οτι ανδρα ουκ εχω

¹⁸ πεντε γαρ ανδρας εσχες και νυν ον εχεις ουκ εστιν σου ανηρ τουτο αληθες ειρηκας

¹⁹ λεγει αυτω η γυνη κυριε θεωρω οτι **προφητης ει συ**

²⁰ οι πατερες ημων εν τουτω τω ορει προσεκυνησαν και υμεις λεγετε οτι εν ιεροσολυμοις εστιν ο τοπος οπου δει προσκυνειν

²¹ λεγει αυτη ο ιησους **γυναι πιστευσον μοι** οτι ερχεται ωρα οτε ουτε εν τω ορει τουτω ουτε εν ιεροσολυμοις προσκυνησετε τω πατρι

²² υμεις προσκυνειτε ο ουκ οιδατε ημεις προσκυνουμεν ο οιδαμεν οτι η σωτηρια εκ των ιουδαιων εστιν

²³ αλλ ερχεται ωρα και νυν εστιν οτε **οι αληθινοι προσκυνηται προσκυνησουσιν τω πατρι εν πνευματι και αληθεια** και γαρ ο πατηρ τοιουτους ζητει τους προσκυνουντας αυτον

²⁴ **πνευμα ο θεος και τους προσκυνουντας αυτον εν πνευματι και αληθεια δει προσκυνειν**

²⁵ λεγει αυτω η γυνη οιδα οτι **μεσσιας ερχεται ο λεγομενος χριστος** οταν ελθη εκεινος αναγγελει ημιν παντα

²⁶ λεγει αυτη ο ιησους **εγω ειμι** ο λαλων σοι