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~ *The Thirsty Woman – Part 1* ~

You can learn much more about this story by doing these three things:

1. Read John 4:1-24.
2. Discover key cultural and historical insights.
3. Answer the reflective questions.

1. Read the text of the story from the New American Standard Bible and from the Easy Read Version

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John 4:1-24 - NASB	John 4:1-24 - New Living Translation
<p>¹ Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John ² (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were), ³ He left Judea and went away again into Galilee. ⁴ And He had to pass through Samaria. ⁵ So He *came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; ⁶ and Jacob’s well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.</p> <p>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.”</p> <p>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</p>	<p>¹ Jesus knew the Pharisees had heard that he was baptizing and making more disciples than John ² (though Jesus himself didn’t baptize them—his disciples did). ³ So he left Judea and returned to Galilee.</p> <p>⁴ He had to go through Samaria on the way. ⁵ Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob’s well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. ⁷ Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Please give me a drink.” ⁸ He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.</p> <p>⁹ The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, “You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?”</p> <p>¹⁰ Jesus replied, “If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.”</p> <p>¹¹ “But sir, you don’t have a rope or a bucket,” she said, “and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? ¹² And besides, do you think you’re greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?”</p> <p>¹³ Jesus replied, “Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. ¹⁴ But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.”</p> <p>¹⁵ “Please, sir,” the woman said, “give me this water! Then I’ll never be thirsty again, and I won’t have to</p>

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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.”

come here to get water.”

¹⁶ “Go and get your husband,” Jesus told her.

¹⁷ “I don’t have a husband,” the woman replied.

Jesus said, “You’re right! You don’t have a husband—¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and you aren’t even married to the man you’re living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!”

¹⁹ “Sir,” the woman said, “you must be a prophet.”²⁰ So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where our ancestors worshiped?”

²¹ Jesus replied, “Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem.”²² You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews.”²³ But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way.”²⁴ For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

2. Discover key cultural and historical insights.

- A Jewish ruling in the first century said that “the daughters of the Samaritans are menstruants from their cradle,” and therefore always unclean.
- The Samaritans were probably survivors from the northern ten tribes who had clung to the true worship of God and who had survived the Assyrian conquest in 722 BC.
- During the time of Alexander the Great, there was a great uprising against Hellenism but this was severely repressed and a group went from the city of Samaria to Shechem to settle. These may have also been joined by a group of priests from Jerusalem who left Ezra and Nehemiah and who claimed to be the true priesthood of Israel.
- They built a temple on Mt. Gerizim and believed that the Books of Moses had ordered them to sacrifice to the Lord on Gerizim. The passage is in Deuteronomy 27.
- In 128 BC John Hyrcanus, the leader of the Jewish nation in Judah, captured Shechem and destroyed the temple. This caused the Samaritans to become even more focused in their beliefs that they were following God in the right way and created much more animosity between them and the Jewish people.
- Between AD 6 and 7 some Samaritans littered the Temple in Jerusalem with bones.
- In AD 52 Samaritans massacred Galilean pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem.

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- They believed that a prophet like Moses would arise. A man by the name of Dositheus connected with an earlier reform movement in Samaria claimed to be this prophet. Another prophet-like figure in AD 36 claimed that he would reveal sacred vessels hidden by Moses and he assembled a crowd on Mt. Gerizim.
- They believed in one God, in Moses, in the Law, in the place of sacrifice on Mt. Gerizim, and the return of a prophet or a Taheb – a restorer.
- Living water was water in a lake, river, or stream that had been untouched by human hand. It was required for religious ceremonies to make people pure

These insights have been gleaned from Encounters with Jesus by Gary M. Burge and The Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels.

3. Answer these reflective questions.

The woman of Sychar lived in a man's world and was a Samaritan in a part of the world predominantly Jewish. How do you think this affected the way she thought about herself?

The woman of Sychar had five husbands and was living with a sixth man who was not her husband. Why do you think she had not bothered to marry the sixth man? How do you think she felt having been with so many men in her life?

What do you think her greatest needs were?

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**Jesus said that God was looking for people who would worship Him in spirit and in truth?
What does it mean to worship God in spirit? What does it mean to worship God in truth?**

Are you a worshipper of the true God in spirit and in truth?
