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~ **The Thirsty Woman – Part 2** ~

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

1. Read John 4:25-42.
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 4:25-42 - NASB	John 4:25-42 - New Living Translation
<p>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 <i>He</i>.”</p> <p>²⁷ At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why do You speak with her?” ²⁸ So the woman left her water pot, and went into the city and *said to the men, ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I <i>have</i> done; this is not the Christ, is it?” ³⁰ They went out of the city, and were coming to Him.</p> <p>³¹ Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” ³² But He said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” ³³ So the disciples were saying to one another, “No one brought Him <i>anything</i> to eat, did he?” ³⁴ Jesus *said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. ³⁵ Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and <i>then</i> comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. ³⁶ Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. ³⁷ For in this <i>case</i> the saying is true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ ³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.”</p>	<p>²⁵ The woman said, “I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”</p> <p>²⁶ Then Jesus told her, “I AM the Messiah!”</p> <p>²⁷ Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked to find him talking to a woman, but none of them had the nerve to ask, “What do you want with her?” or “Why are you talking to her?” ²⁸ The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, ²⁹ “Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?” ³⁰ So the people came streaming from the village to see him.</p> <p>³¹ Meanwhile, the disciples were urging Jesus, “Rabbi, eat something.”</p> <p>³² But Jesus replied, “I have a kind of food you know nothing about.”</p> <p>³³ “Did someone bring him food while we were gone?” the disciples asked each other.</p> <p>³⁴ Then Jesus explained: “My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work. ³⁵ You know the saying, ‘Four months between planting and harvest.’ But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest. ³⁶ The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike!³⁷ You know the saying, ‘One plants and another harvests.’ And it’s true.³⁸ I sent you to harvest where you didn’t plant; others had already done the work, and now you will get to gather the harvest.”</p>
<p>The Samaritans</p>	
<p>³⁹ From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified,</p>	<p>³⁹ Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus</p>

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“He told me all the things that I *have* done.” ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. ⁴¹ Many more believed because of His word; ⁴² and they were saying to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.”

because the woman had said, “He told me everything I ever did!” ⁴⁰ When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay in their village. So he stayed for two days, ⁴¹ long enough for many more to hear his message and believe. ⁴² Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world.”

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.
- 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.

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

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3. Answer these reflective questions.

Jesus broke down gender barriers, social barriers, and religious barriers to reach the woman at the well. Are there any barriers in your life that need to be broken down in order to be one with Christ? What barriers in your family, community, or nation could Jesus break down with his love?

When the woman left her water pot at the well and ran into the village to talk with the men about her conversation with Jesus, what do you think she said?

Rather than eat the food the disciples had bought and prepared, Jesus said He had other food to eat. How would you describe this kind of food? Have you ever had a time in your life where work was more fulfilling and satisfying than food?

Jesus talked about people sowing, reaping and rejoicing together? Do you have relationships with other Christians where some may be sowing and some may be reaping, but all are pulling toward the same goal of reaping a spiritual harvest?

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Jesus said that a spiritual harvest could come a lot quicker than a normal spiritual harvest? Have you been planting seed in the spiritual world and have you been reaping a spiritual harvest?

Jesus spent two days with the men at the Samaritan village. What do you think he talked about with them?
