

John Chapter 4

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Introduction:

This chapter is a goldmine.

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THE PRESENTATION OF JESUS IN SAMARIA

JESUS AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA

(4:1.) 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.

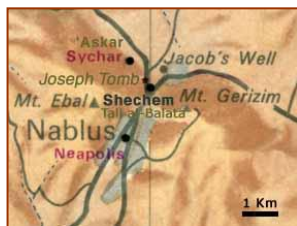
- The story of Jesus' travels moves on following the report about the baptisms by Jesus' disciples and John the Baptist.
- The **Pharisees** might mount a campaign to imprison or even kill Jesus because He was a threat to their institution. So He left the area where they had control, aiming for Galilee.

(4.) He had to go through Samaria on the way.

- Jewish people usually added two days to their trip rather than travel through the hated Samaria. There was little love lost between Jews and Samaritans.

- **Paul Butler** says,

Traveling the Roman road that leads through Samaria, Jesus would come to a fork in the road. this fork in the road there is a well called Jacob's Well. About one-half mile northwest is the village of Sychar.



At

(5.) Eventually He came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

- Nearby is the burial plot purchased by Jacob but given to his son Joseph, perhaps it was controlled by Joseph's heirs.

The bones of Joseph, which the Israelites had brought along with them when they left Egypt, were buried at Shechem, in the parcel of ground Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor for 100 pieces of silver. This land was located in the territory allotted to the descendants of Joseph. (Joshua 24:32 NLT)

(6.) Jacob's well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime.

- Notice the humanity of **Jesus**. He was **tired** from **walking**. His strength was not superhuman.

JESUS BEGAN A CONVERSATION

(7.) Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give Me a drink."

- **Paul Butler** says it well:

Every day she would walk half a mile or so to the well, and as far back again carrying her waterpot either on her head or her shoulder. According to the custom, the women of those days met at a certain time of the day at the public watering place to exchange news and "small-talk" as they drew the next day's supply of water. This woman came alone!

From subsequent information concerning her adulterous situation we assume she was a social outcast. None of the respectable citizens dared associate with her. She was an outcast - an unclean adulteress - a Samaritan - a woman! How would Jesus approach her? How would he overcome these barriers and reach her without raising more barriers?

(8.) He was alone at the time because His disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

- Jesus had been left **alone** and He used the occasion to interact with this total stranger.

(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?"

- The woman was astonished by **Jesus** speaking to her. Saying that the **Jews** have no dealing with the **Samaritans** was so Gentile readers could understand the gravity of the event. Any **Jew** would have understood without the comment.
- Jesus broke several conventions:
 - He was **Jewish** and spoke with a **Samaritan**. That was a no-no. She knew He was **Jewish** either by His speech or His clothing. Because the **Jews** considered the **Samaritans** unclean, they would not drink from the same vessels, but Jesus volunteered.
 - He spoke with a Samaritan woman.

(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."

- She did not recognize the gift of God. She only saw a Jewish male who had spoken. Remember, **Jesus** had said to Nicodemus that "**God gave His one and only Son.**"
- Jesus could provide **living water** that she needed so badly. He is implying a perpetual water supply. His figure of speech points to everlasting life. She did not grasp what **Jesus** was saying.

(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?"

- Jesus kept her interest and whetted her curiosity. How could He supply **living water** without even a water jar? Where does this **living water** come from?

(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?"

- Historically, her claim to the line of **Jacob** may not be valid, but Jesus is not sidetracked with this detail. He would not have been successful if He had diverted to historical issues.

- She raised the question about Jesus being greater than **Jacob**. But Jesus did not get sidetracked on this question, either.

(13.) Jesus replied, "Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again."

- **This water** that she drew from Jacob's well did not permanently quench **thirst**, but the **water** He has will.

JESUS OFFERED PERMANENT SATISFACTION

(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."

- This was an Old Testament idea:
"Is anyone thirsty? Come and drink -- even if you have no money! Come, take your choice of wine or milk -- it's all free! (Isaiah 55:1 NLT)
- **But those who drink** (in vs. 14) shows the **water** was not for just one people group, but worldwide. The **water** comes from Jesus and leads to **eternal life**.

(15.) "Please, sir," the woman said, "give me this water! Then I'll never be thirsty again, and I won't have to come here to get water."

- She really liked the new idea. No more **water**-carrying chores. But she missed the point. Next, Jesus would show her need for this living **water**.

(16.) "Go and get your husband," Jesus told her.

- Before men and women can be saved, they must know they are lost. This question addresses that need.

(17.) "I don't have a husband," the woman replied. Jesus said, "You're right! You don't have a husband --"

- She tried to conceal her past from the Lord by saying that she was not married. He did not say that she was lying, but said she was **right**.

(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!"

- How do the **five** husbands differ with man number six? The five were legal marriages in their society. Man number six was simply a live-in. Jesus makes a clear distinction between being married and just living together. This discredits the view that marriages are made in heaven and the first mate is the only mate.

(19.) "Sir," the woman said, "You must be a prophet.

- **The woman** was shocked. She saw supernatural power in this man because He knew about her marriages. She called Him a **prophet**.
- The supernatural knowledge of Jesus was convincing to her just as it had been to Nathanael in 1:48-49.
- The best way out of this was for her to ask a question that would turn the conversation away from her men.

(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?"

- **Samaritans** had long worshiped on nearby **Mt. Gerizim**. She thought of **worship** as taking place at a certain locale. She wanted an answer from Jesus. Or was this a diversion?

THE KIND OF WORSHIP GOD WANTS

(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.

- The system is changing. **Worship** will not be focused at certain locations.

(22.) You Samaritans know very little about the One you worship, while we Jews know all about Him, for salvation comes through the Jews.

- The **worship** of the Samaritans was in ignorance. They only accepted the first five books of the Old Testament and that

document contained a number of errors when tested against the Hebrew version.

(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.

- Times are changing now. There will be two parts to **worship**. **The Father** is seeking **worship** from those who understand. This is so like what Nicodemus heard: that one must be born of water and the **spirit**.

(24.) For God is Spirit, so those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth."

- **Paul Butler** says,
Thus, to worship in spirit and truth is (a) to make it a matter of the heart, the will, the spirit and the emotion and not merely a matter of physical atmosphere, and, (b) to worship in accordance with the revealed will of God in the New Testament.

(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."

- The woman's perception of Jesus is rising.
 - First He was a Jew. Verse 9
 - Then He was Sir. Verse 19.
 - Then He was a Prophet. Verse 19.
 - Finally He was the Messiah. Verse 25.
- The Samaritans accepted only Genesis through Deuteronomy as inspired by God. Where did they get the **Messiah** idea? Deuteronomy 18:18 and earlier passages predicted that someone would be coming from God. Through interaction with the Jews, they had a label for the One: **Messiah**. But in their idea, the **Messiah** would be a prophet-like person, not a ruling prince as the Jews expected.

(26.) Then Jesus told her, "I AM the Messiah!"
(27.

John Records Jesus Claiming "I AM" Seven Times		
1.	"I AM the Messiah!"	John 4:26

(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?"

- The returning **disciples** noted that He was **talking** to a **woman**, but did not question Jesus. In their mind He should not have been doing this.

(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?"

- The **woman** was so excited she left her **water jar** and headed for **the village**. The insight of Jesus into her marital affairs caused the **woman** to report that Jesus knew everything about her (and He may have.) She didn't say that He was **the Messiah**, but raised the question so others would come and check out the claim.

(30.) So the people came streaming from the village to see Him.

- We can see a long string of **people** coming out to see Jesus. And Jesus could see them, too.

(31.) Meanwhile, the disciples were urging Jesus, "Rabbi, eat something."

- **The disciples** have prepared the food. They are hungry and want Jesus to **eat** as well.

(32.) But Jesus replied, "I have a kind of food you know nothing about."

- **Jesus** is so engrossed in the great opportunities in Samaria that He has only the appetite for a **food** which the disciples do not comprehend. He is anxious for the crowds to arrive so that He

may begin imparting living water to them also. His whole being is immersed in His mission of saving souls.

(33.) "Did someone bring Him food while we were gone?" the disciples asked each other. (34.) Then Jesus explained: "My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent Me, and from finishing His work.

- It's like saying that "Jesus eats and sleeps" His work for God.

(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.

- It was about **four months** from the planting of grain until the **harvest**, but no need to wait this time, the **harvest** is already here. They could see the people streaming out to the well.

(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.

- Other men had **planted** the word. No doubt these people had heard John the Baptist preaching at the crossing of the Jordan. Jesus had **planted** also as He led the lone woman to a greater understanding of who He was. Now the disciples were going **harvest**. They all rejoiced together.

(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."

- Perhaps Jesus and the woman at the well were the ones right here that had sown seed and the disciples of Jesus were going to **gather the harvest**.

(39.) Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, "He told me everything I ever did!"

- Results: many **Samaritans believed** in **Jesus**. Their racial differences were not a problem.

(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.

- The team traveling with Jesus **stayed** among these Samaritans for two days, teaching what they knew. This lay-over led to even more **believing** in Jesus.

(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."

- At first, these people had a secondary kind of faith because they **believed** what the **woman** had told them, but after a while their faith became based on their own experience.
- In this story, Jesus modeled personal evangelism.
 - We must contact others socially. Verse 7.
 - We must be prepared to cross cultural barriers. 9
 - We must ignore irrelevant controversy. 12
 - We must establish a common interest. 11, 13-15
 - We must arouse curiosity. 15
 - We must "get them lost." 17 - 18
 - We must avoid condemning them. 18
 - We must stick with the main issue. 21
 - We must acknowledge the truth. 22
 - We must bring the person face-to-face with Christ. 26
 - We must allow them to network with their friends. 28-30

THE PRESENTATION OF JESUS PUBLICLY IN GALILEE

(43.) At the end of the two days, Jesus went on to Galilee. (44.) He Himself had said that a prophet is not honored in his own hometown.

- The travels resume. **Jesus** went where His reception would be quiet.

(45.) Yet the Galileans welcomed Him, for they had been in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration and had seen every- thing He did there.

- All males in Israel were required to attend the three main **feasts** each year in **Jerusalem**, so **Galileans** had **seen** Jesus and were aware of His miracles and His claims. He had driven the merchants out of the Court of Gentiles (John 2:13-25), predicted His resurrection (John 2:18-22) and done other unspecified signs. (John 2:23-25).

HEALING THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL'S SON

(46.) As He traveled through Galilee, He came to Cana, where He had turned the water into wine. There was a government official in nearby Capernaum whose son was very sick.

- He had performed His first miracle at **Cana** as recorded earlier in John. Word made its way the twenty miles to **Capernaum** that the Man of Miracles was back **in Galilee**.
- **Galilee** was ruled by King Herod Agrippa at this time, so the official may have belonged to his government. This **official** had **a son who was ill**.

(47.) When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged Jesus to come to Capernaum to heal his son, who was about to die.

- As would be expected of a desperate parent, the official asked for **Jesus** to come and **heal his son**.

(48.) Jesus asked, "Will you never believe in Me unless you see miraculous signs and wonders?"

- **"You"** is plural and not singular. The statement was directed to the crowd, not the official. The crowd wanted to see a **sign**. Compare this with the response of the Samaritan people who believed **without signs and wonders**.

(49.) The official pleaded, "Lord, please come now before my little boy dies."

- The **official** believed in Jesus enough that he wanted Him to come right now. It hadn't occurred to him that Jesus did not need to be present in order to heal the **little boy**.

(50.) Then Jesus told him, "Go back home. Your son will live!" And the man believed what Jesus said and started home.

- His faith was elevated. **Jesus** made it clear that He did not need to be present. He **started home**. Obedience.

(51.) While the man was on his way, some of his servants met him with the news that his son was alive and well.

- The **son** had recovered. Now they compare the times.

(52.) He asked them when the boy had begun to get better, and they replied, "Yesterday afternoon at one o'clock his fever suddenly disappeared!"

- There is no wrong in testing a miracle.

(53.) Then the father realized that that was the very time Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." And he and his entire household believed in Jesus.

- The outcome was that the **father believed** in Jesus and so did the rest of his **household**.
- Some have speculated that the official was Chuza, treasurer of King Herod Antipas. This healing could be why Chuza's wife Joanna traveled with the disciples and helped finance the work of our Lord. Luke 8:

Soon afterward Jesus began a tour of the nearby towns and villages, preaching and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom of God. He took His twelve disciples with Him, along with some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases. Among them were Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons; Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's business manager; Susanna; and many others who were contributing from their own resources to support Jesus and His disciples.
(Luke 8:1-3 NLT)

(54.) This was the second miraculous sign Jesus did in Galilee after coming from Judea.

Seven Miraculous Signs		
1	Changing Water to Wine	John 2:1-11
2	Healing Government Official's son	John 4:43-54
These were the first two miraculous signs recorded in any of the Gospel accounts. There will be 15 miracles recorded in the other accounts before John records the next miracle for his readers. The others will be filled in later.		