



Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

Advanced Study AS014: The Woman at the Well

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Read John 4:4-42

Introduction. Samaria divided Judea in the South and Galilee in the North. Jesus travelled through it on His journey between the two. He came to a well at Sychar where He met a woman drawing water. Attempt to answer the questions below and consult commentaries if you are unsure.

1. The conversation (vs 7-26).

v7 Jesus asked for a drink, What does this tell us about the humanity of Jesus? (See also Mark 4:38; John 11:33).

v9 What puzzled the woman about this encounter, and why?

v10 What did Jesus mean by "living water"?

vs 11-12 Jews and Samaritans believed this well was dug by the Patriarch Jacob. Maybe the woman's question was said scornfully. But is it true and why?

vs 13-14 Jesus tells her two things about the Living Water. What do they mean? Can you see similarities here to Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus in John 3?

vs 15-16 Jesus' response to her question seems to be an abrupt change of subject. What do you think was the reason for this?

vs 17-18 Notice the insight to the woman's private life that Jesus revealed. What effect do you think this had on the woman?

vs 19-24 This time it is the woman who changes the subject. Why would she do this? The Samaritans had built their own temple as they were not allowed in the Jewish one. Jesus explains that true worshippers can worship anywhere. How would you define 'true worship ... in spirit and truth'? Where is the Temple today (see 1 Cor 3:16)?

vs 25-26 This is the first recorded incidence of Jesus directly stating He is the Messiah. Why do you think He revealed this to a foreigner and not to the Jews?

2. Jesus' hidden food (vs 27, 31-34). What do you think He meant by this?

3. The outcome (vs 28-30, 39-42). The woman told other Samaritans that she had met someone who might be the Messiah, and many of them believed. Her knowledge of Jesus was very limited, but her witness was effective in bringing others to Jesus. What might this tell us about the strength and effect of *our* witness?

For Further Thought and Study: Find out all you can about 'Living Water' and consider to what extent you are receiving it and spreading it (see John 7:38).