

Jesus Talks with a Samaritan Woman!

Key Verse:

“With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”

Isaiah 12:3

Read: John 4:1-29 and Isaiah 12:1-6

DECISION

Jesus decided to leave Judea and go north into Galilee. Verse 4 of our reading today, tells us, “He **had** to go through Samaria.” Why was that? We know Samaria lay between the two places, but there was a route up the eastern side of the Jordan River which Jewish travellers usually took to avoid contact with their despised neighbours, the Samaritans. So Jesus didn’t have to go through Samaria. No, Jesus had another reason; it was to meet the spiritual need of a lost, sinful woman.

To avoid travelling through the burning mid-day heat of the Eastern sun, Jesus left early one morning, arriving at mid-day at ‘Jacob’s Well.’ He sat there, tired and hot, knowing that very soon this woman would be coming with her pot to draw water. Sure enough, she soon arrived, and ignoring Jesus, was about to drop her pot into the well, when He spoke to her.

ATTENTION

“Will you give me a drink?” He asked. Now He had her attention! “How is it that you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman for a drink?” she asked Him, surprised. If He had not spoken first, she would never have spoken to Him: she was not only a woman, but also a Samaritan and the Jews did not associate with Samaritans (v9).

INTEREST

The Lord then changed the subject from His need to her need. He told her of “living water”, which she would have asked Him for, had she known what it was (the gift of God), and who He was! Even though she didn’t quite understand what Jesus meant, she was interested. “Sir,” she replied, “You have nothing to draw with... from where can you get this living water?”

She wondered further: could it be better than the beautiful water from their forefather Jacob’s famous well? Jesus told her that even that water would never satisfy, but the ‘living water’ that He could provide, would instead do so: in fact, it would be a supply within her, “springing up to everlasting life” (v14)

DESIRE

Drawing water from wells was hard work, which in Bible times was usually left to women. If this “living water” could somehow quench her thirst forever, would it mean an end to this daily chore? She exclaimed, “Sir, give me this water, so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here!” Jesus could see her desire was still for physical blessing and benefit alone: she needed to see He was able to help her with her deep spiritual need.

ACTION

“Go and call your husband,” He told her. The woman’s gaze dropped, guiltily. “I have no husband,” she replied. Jesus displaying His godly omniscience, answered her, “That’s true. In fact, you’ve had five husbands, and the man you are living with at the moment is not your husband!” Shocked that this Jewish stranger seemed to know all about her, the woman tried to change the subject to worship. Jesus showed her she really knew little of this subject; she admitted this, stating that when the Messiah came, He would explain everything.

Jesus then made this stunning revelation, “I who speak to you am He” (v26) At this point the disciples of the Lord arrived, but this did not distract her from taking action and ‘drinking’ of the “living water.” She believed Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, her Saviour.

Leaving her water-pot at the well, she hurried into town and said to the people, “Come see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”

Extra: How do we ‘drink’ of this living water, too?

Level 5 lesson 37

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Why did the Lord go through Samaria on this occasion?
2. What do you think of the way Jesus got the woman’s attention?
3. What did the woman say in her desire for the living water?
4. How did she ‘drink’ of the living water?
5. What do you think of Jesus’ claim in v26?

My Name is Age

Jesus Heals the Nobleman's Son

Key Verse:

“Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ.”

Romans 10:17

Extra: How does anyone get true satisfaction in life?

Level 5 Lesson 38

Read: John 4:39-54 and Matthew 8:5-13

A POWERFUL TESTIMONY

Continuing the story from our last lesson... A large crowd soon gathered in the village, listening intently to what the Samaritan woman had to say. They all knew her well; her sinful life-style was no secret to them. Despite this, the people of the city were so impressed by her testimony about this man who had revealed Himself as Messiah, that they went out and invited the Lord Jesus to come into their city and stay with them. Jesus did so and a blessing soon followed His teaching. We read, “Many more believed because of His own word.” (v41)

These people then went to the woman and said to her, “Now we believe, not just because of what you said; we have heard Him ourselves, and we know that this man is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world!” This is a tremendous testimony and a real reminder to each of us. Christians who know Jesus should tell others about Him! Our testimony of what Jesus means to us and what He has done for us, could lead many others to discover the same ‘living water’ we have discovered!

THE SICK BOY

After a couple of days in Samaria, Jesus travelled back to Galilee and came to Cana. Soon a Nobleman who lived at Capernaum (about 20 miles away) heard of His arrival. This man's son had become dangerously ill; in fact, he was nearly dead! Naturally, the Nobleman didn't want to lose his son; he loved him dearly and had done everything possible to save him.

Yet, despite everything he had tried, it seemed all in vain, because his son would soon be dead. Death is a cruel thing: it comes to young and old, and it frequently happens when we least expect it. We need to be ready and accept Jesus Christ as Saviour while we can!

So this man in his distress, travelled from Capernaum to Cana to find Jesus. When he found Him, he begged Him to come to Capernaum and heal his son.

THE SAVIOUR'S HELP

In reply to his request, Jesus said: “Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will never believe.” This was a test of the man's motive and faith. Both were seen to be genuine: “Sir, come down before my child dies,” he humbly pleaded. Possibly, he never thought that Jesus didn't need to ‘come down’ in order to heal his son.

Jesus said kindly, “You may go. Your son will live.” Thankfully, the Nobleman departed and began the trip home. The Lord's word was effective. The next day, as the Nobleman approached his home, his servants met him and told him the joyful news, “Your son is alive and well!” “What time did he begin to get better?” enquired the Nobleman. “Yesterday at the seventh hour,” (i.e. 1pm) the servants replied. This was the very time at which Jesus had said to the man, “Your son will live!” Not surprisingly, the official and his whole family became believers.

A BIG LESSON

There is a lesson for us here, friends. The Lord meets our needs in His way and not always in our way. The Nobleman was willing to trust Jesus completely, even if he didn't know how Jesus would heal his son from afar. He didn't argue with Jesus, or angrily say, “That will never work!” He simply took Jesus at His word, and in obedience went home and left the healing to Him.

We too, must come to Jesus in faith, conscious of our distress and need, and humbly pray for His help and provision. We must leave the result in His hand. Our job is to live and walk by faith, in obedience to His Word.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. What was the chief reason the Samaritans believed in the Lord?

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2. Where can we find out about Christ for ourselves today?

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3. What did the Nobleman ask the Lord Jesus to do?

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4. What did the Lord tell the Nobleman to do?

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5. What message did the servants bring to the Nobleman?

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Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

Key Verse:

“He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him.”

John 1:11

Extra: How do you think Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of verses 18-19?

Level 5 Lesson 39

Read: Luke 4:16-30 and Mark 6:1-6

After visiting Cana, Jesus once more returned to His home-town of Nazareth. The townspeople there had watched Him grow up from a small boy, and had always considered Him a good man and an exemplary citizen. He was well liked and respected. However, something was about to happen which would change their opinion of Him forever!

THE SAVIOUR'S CLAIM

On the Sabbath day, Jesus went as usual to the synagogue in Nazareth, where He was asked to read publicly from the Scriptures. Jesus took the scroll, opened it at Isaiah 61 and began to read, “The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour” (Luke 4:18-19)

Of course, all those listening recognized this prophecy as a clear reference to the Messiah, the Saviour whom all the Jews were waiting for. The Old Testament Scripture was full of prophecies concerning Him, and each generation was taught to await His coming with great expectation. Having read these words, Jesus shut the book, handed it back to the Synagogue official, and then sat down.

Everyone’s eyes were ‘glued’ on Him at this point, wondering what He would say. Jesus looked slowly round the room and in a strong, clear voice declared, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing!” The Jews straightaway knew exactly what He meant: Jesus was claiming to be their Messiah, the long-promised Saviour! This was a huge claim to make. He was saying He was God!

THE PEOPLE'S UNBELIEF

The Jews were doubtful and puzzled. Although they marvelled at His gracious words, they found His claim hard to believe. How could Jesus be the Messiah; “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they muttered to one another. The people wanted to see Him do some more miracles to prove He was the Messiah, just as He had done up in Capernaum. However, Jesus never performed miracles in response to a challenge from an unbeliever. He knew these people’s hearts were far from Him and He refused, simply saying, “No prophet is accepted in his home town.”

THE NAZARENES' REJECTION

He reminded them of two occasions where this had happened previously. Elijah was sent to help a widow outside the land of Israel, although there were many widows in Israel needing help. Elisha cleansed Naaman the Syrian, but not the many lepers in Israel. Why? Because both these famous prophets were not accepted in their own country.

The Nazarenes ‘got the picture’ loud and clear, and they were furious! They grabbed hold of Jesus and pushed and shoved Him out of the Synagogue and right out of town to the edge of a cliff. They planned to push Him over and kill Him, but Jesus passed through them miraculously and escaped.

Jesus was, after all, God in human form, and it was impossible for Him to be killed until the time appointed for Him to die. This was not the time or the way of His death foretold in Scripture, and so their efforts failed. When His time to die did arrive, He made no attempt to escape from His enemies, but delivered Himself into their hands (as we will see in later lessons). In conclusion, may you never reject the Lord Jesus Christ like these people did.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. Mention one of the things that this Scripture shows the Messiah would do.

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2. Why would the Lord not perform miracles in Nazareth?

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3. Why do you think the people became angry?

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4. Why could they not carry out their plan to throw Jesus over the cliff?

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5. Jesus was rejected by His own people. What should WE do concerning Him?

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Wonders in Capernaum

Key Verse:
“...He went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with Him.”

Acts 10:38b

Extra: Research “Repentance” to find out what it means, and why, when and how it’s done!

Level 5 Lesson 40

Read: Mark 1:21-44 and Luke 4:31-37

Leaving Nazareth, Jesus went back to Capernaum. There, He again performed many miracles, showing His power and authority over both the devil and disease.

DEMON CAST OUT

One day Jesus was teaching in the Jewish synagogue in Capernaum, astonishing all who heard His doctrine, with His power and authority. While He was speaking, a man in the crowd suddenly cried out, “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who You are, the Holy One of God!”

Jesus immediately saw that this poor man was possessed by a demon, or evil spirit. He rebuked it and ordered it to come out of the man and be quiet. The demon had to obey, but in a last display of anger, it shook the man and threw him violently to the ground. The people were amazed at Jesus’ authority: even the demons obeyed Him!

What relief it must have been for that man to be delivered from his terrible state. Jesus’ fame soon spread around Galilee with news of this miracle.

Sadly, much of our western society today has an increased interest in demons and the occult. It is often portrayed as harmless fun, and seems to offer power and knowledge, making it attractive to many people. Friends, do not be fooled! The devil has not changed; he and his demons are real!

The devil still “prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). This is no idle warning! Don’t be tempted to have anything to do with him and his evil ways. His sole purpose is to thwart God’s work of salvation in Christ, and to drag men and women to eternal damnation. Don’t give him any opportunity in your life!

SICK HEALED

Leaving the synagogue, our Lord went to a house where Simon Peter’s mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. He went to where she lay on the bed, took her by the hand, lifted her up, and she was instantly healed! She was immediately able to serve them all food, and help in the house, which she was no doubt glad to do (v13).

Of course, word of this soon spread like wildfire and by evening, a great crowd of people were assembled at the door of the house. People had brought all their sick to be healed! Some were possessed with demons; others were sick with disease. The Lord went out to them and healed them all.

Jesus cast out the demons and forbade them to say a word, even though they said He was the Christ, the Son of God. He did not want the demons to testify about Him, sarcastically in unbelief. The demons obeyed the Lord, another testimony to His authority over them!

PEOPLE UNREPENTANT

As you can imagine, Jesus became very popular! The next day when He had gone to a quiet place for prayer and rest, a huge crowd found Him and begged Him to stay. However, Jesus told them that He must leave and preach His message of the Kingdom to other cities in Galilee. So we read that “He healed many who had various diseases, and drove out many demons.” He knew too, that sadly, most people were only interested in His miracles; not His message of repentance from sin and having faith in Him.

We read later on, that the people of Capernaum (where Jesus did so many wonderful miracles and good works) largely ignored His message! It is sad to see people still like that today. Although, it has not been our privilege to see such works, it is our opportunity to repent and be saved from our sins, which is an even greater blessing!

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. What did the evil spirit say about Jesus?
2. What was the effect of the miracle on the people around Galilee?
3. How did Peter’s mother-in-law show her gratitude for what the Lord had done for her?
4. Why did the Lord refuse to allow the demons to speak about Him?
5. How are people today like the people of Capernaum?

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