

# The Samaritan woman

When the Samaritan woman discovered that she was facing a prophet, she wanted to know about spiritual issues: worship, and left her personal needs in the background.

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“The woman said to him, Lord, I see that you are a prophet!”  
(John 4:19)

## Introduction

The evangelist John recorded that everything he wrote has intended to lead his readers to believe that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, and believing, they had life in abundance

“These, however, were written so that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, you may have life in his name” (John 20:31).

In particular, there are elements in the story of the Samaritan woman that demonstrate that Christ is the Son of the living God, the Son of David promised in the Scriptures.

The evangelist John recorded that when Jesus found that the Pharisees had heard that He performed many miracles and that He baptized far more than John the Baptist, he left Judea and went to Galilee (John 4: 2-3), and that had to pass through Samaria (Luke 17:11).

Jesus went to a city in Samaria called Sychar, whose territory

was an estate that Jacob gave to his son Joseph (John 4: 5). The place where Jesus went in Sychar had a well drilled by Jacob.

The evangelist highlights Jesus' humanity by describing his tiredness, hunger and thirst. When mentioning that his disciples went to buy food, he gives us to understand that Jesus needs to eat, that he sat down because he was tired and, when asking the Samaritan woman for water, it is implied that he was thirsty.

Although the focus of the evangelist's approach was not to demonstrate that the Lord Jesus was thirsty for water, as what became evident was his need to announce the good news of the kingdom to women, it is clear that Jesus came in the flesh (1Jo 4: 2-3 and 2 John 1: 7).

Jesus sat by the well of Jacob, near the sixth hour (noon) (John 4: 6, 8).

When a Samaritan woman arrives at the fountain to draw water (naming someone by the name of the city was dishonorable, because it demonstrated that such an individual did not belong to the community of Israel), and was approached by the Master who addressed him saying:

– Give me a drink (John 4: 7).

The Lord's attitude toward the Samaritan (asking for water) brought out what noble men and women have most noble: reason, reasoning (Job 32: 8).

The woman must have asked a question based on a range of prior knowledge. She did not formulate the most brilliant thought of humanity, but it did raise an important question for that woman and her people:

– How, being a Jew, do you ask me to drink from me, that I am a Samaritan woman? (John 4: 9).

Jews discriminated against Samaritans, but Jesus, despite being a Jew, did not give importance to this issue, but the woman served his purpose very well at that time.

In the question, the woman points out that she was both a woman and a Samaritan, that is, that there was a double impediment to that man who, apparently, should be more of a jealous Jew of his religiosity.

Many questions arose in the Samaritan's head, as Jesus ignored practices and rules pertaining to Judaism when asking for water. – Did he not realize that I am a woman and a Samaritan? Will he drink the water I give him without fear of becoming contaminated?

## The Gift of God

After awakening the Samaritan's reasoning, Jesus further stimulates the woman's interest:

– “If you know the gift of God, and who is he who says to you: Give me a drink. You would ask him, and he would give you living water.”

The Samaritan woman did not immediately reach the excellence of the words of Christ, because she had no experience in the truth.

“But solid sustenance is for the perfect, who, because of custom, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Heb 5:14).

If the Samaritan had her mind exercised in truth, she would not ask the question:

– Lord, you have nothing to take with you, and the well is deep; where, then, do you have living water?

From the argument, you can see that the Samaritan woman focuses on the impossibility of reaching water without the necessary means, however, she did not contest what Jesus said about having living water.

Not considering Jesus' initial argument about the gift of God, she analyzed:

– Are you greater than or father Jacob, who gave us the well, drinking himself, and his children, and his livestock?

Offering a water alternative other than the water at Jacob's well made it seem to the Samaritan that that unknown Jew was, at the very least, presumptuous, as he placed himself in a position superior to that of Jacob, who left the well as a legacy to his children and, which at that time provided the need for many Samaritans.

The following questions needed answers:

– You do not have to draw water and the well is deep! Where do you have living water?

But Jesus was working so that the "hearing" of that woman would be awakened by the word of God, because his proposal made it known that He was, in fact, superior to the father Jacob himself.

It was at this point that the Samaritan's lack of knowledge was, for if she knew who Jesus was, she would simultaneously know the gift of God, because Christ is the gift of God.

If she knew whom she was asking:

– Give me a drink, I would know that He was greater than the father Jacob was; I would know that Christ was the promised descendant to Abraham in whom all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 28:14).

If she knew who the Christ was, she would see that through the water that Christ was offering, in fact and by law, she would become one of the children of Abraham. If she knew Christ, she would see that the children according to the flesh are not the children of Abraham, but the children of the Faith, the descendants of the last Adam (Christ) who was manifesting himself to the world (Gal 3:26 -29; Rom. 9: 8).

If she knew Christ, she would see that despite being part of the last she could take part among the first, because through the Seed it is possible for all peoples to be blessed as the believer Abraham (Mt 19:30).

If she knew the One who asked for a drink and who was offering him living water, she would see that He is the gift of God, for it is Christ who gives life to the world (John 1: 4). She would see that He is the high priest according to the order of Melchizedek, by whom all men, of any tribe or language, can offer gifts and be accepted by God.

“You ascended on high, you took captivity captive, you received gifts for men, and even for the rebels, that the Lord God might dwell among them” (Ps 68:18).

God testified to the offering (gifts) that Abel had offered because of him who would ascend high and take captivity captive, the high priest made up of God without beginning and (eternal) end of the day (Heb 7: 3)

Who offered himself to himself as a lamb unsullied to God, and only through Him are men accepted by God (Heb 7:25).

## **Daily necessities**

The woman's question:

– Are you bigger than our father Jacob?

was pertinent, however, it still did not allow him to identify who was that man who asked for water from the source of Jacob and, at the same time, offered living water.

“Whoever drinks this water will thirst again; But whoever drinks the water that I give him will never be thirsty, because the water that I give him will become a source of water in him that leaps into eternal life” (John 4:14).

It is surprising that the Samaritan woman, who had an elaborate, thought when she realized that Jesus was implying that she was greater than Father Jacob was, accepted his proposal, that he had water that would prevent him from being thirsty, nevertheless asking you water by the well of Jacob.

Jesus' proposal was clear:

– ‘Whoever drinks the water I give him will never be thirsty’, and what did he want water for, if he had superior waster?

The woman was interested in Jesus' offer, but her understanding was blurred.

What made the woman want the water Jesus offered her, even though the Master was thirsty?

The answer has found in the Samaritan's request:

– Lord, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty again, and do not come here to draw it.

Nowadays it is almost unimaginable the work that that woman had to acquire some water. It was the sixth hour when the woman went to fetch water to supply her basic needs.

While in our day what many understand by basic, essential, is different from what that woman needed, it is possible to measure how much what man understands as essential muddies reasoning. If what is essential compromises the understanding

of what is proposed in the gospel, what about the affairs of this life?

A man the Samaritan woman did not know asked for water, and now he offered water with unimaginable properties: he would quench his thirst so that he would no longer need to drink water again.

When the woman showed interest in 'living water', Jesus said:

- Go, call your husband, and come here.
- The woman replying, I do not have a husband. Jesus replied:
  - You said well, I have no husband; because you had five husbands, and what you now have is not your husband; this you said with truth.

Note that Jesus did not issue a judgment of values on the condition of the woman, for He Himself said that He judges no one according to the flesh, for He came not to judge the world, but to save (John 8:15; John 12:47).

At this point, the woman recognized Jesus as a prophet:

- Lord, I see that you are a prophet! It is interesting that the Samaritan woman recognized that Jew as a prophet at the same time and, at the same time, surprisingly, asked the following question: Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you say that Jerusalem is the place to worship.

When the Samaritan woman discovered that Christ was a prophet, she set aside her basic needs and began to inquire about the place of worship.

As a Samaritan, she knew very well the story that led Jews to not communicate with Samaritans.

The book of Ezra contains one of the misunderstandings that existed between Jews and Samaritans because the Jews did not allow the Samaritans to help build the second temple under Cyrus' order (Ed 4: 1-24). The sedition started because the king of Assyria installed in the cities of Samaria people from Babylon who came to inhabit the region, replacing the people of Israel who were previously taken captive and who adopted the Jewish religion (2Ki 17:24 comp. Ed 4: 2 and 9- 10).

The question as to the place of (worship) was millennial and, before a prophet, his daily quarrels were no longer important, because the opportunity was unique: to discover the place of worship and how to worship.

Is it curious to know what the reaction would be, in our day, if a Christian discovered that he was before a prophet? What would be the questions for someone who presented himself as a prophet?

I imagine that if today's Christians found a prophet, the questions would be – When will I buy my house. When will I have my car? When am I getting married? Whom am I going to marry? Will my child be male or female? When will I pay off my debts? Will I get rich? Etc.

However, the Samaritan, upon discovering that she was before a prophet, wanted to know about spiritual matters, leaving her earthly needs in the background. It was not important to know whether she would have a husband, or whether she would stop, walking to Jacob's well to draw water. Now, the question of the place of worship had been going on for generations and could not miss that opportunity.

With the statement:

– I see that you are a prophet! We can consider that the woman understood what was really happening.

Unlike other Jews who were fixated on their religiosity,



legalism and ritualism, Israel's prophets were not Jews tied to such bonds.

It was like saying: – Ah, now I understand! You are like Elijah and Elisha, prophets who were not pleaded with other peoples, since both went to other nations and even entered the home of orphans, widows, etc. Only as a prophet to communicate with a Samaritan woman, since Elijah went to the home of a widow who lived in Sarepta, in the lands of Sidon and asked him for water to drink:

“Bring me, I ask you, a little water to drink in a vase”  
(1Ki 17:10).

Elisha, in turn, used what was offered to him by a wealthy woman who lived in the city of Sunem, who was similarly named after the city name as was the case with the Samaritan woman (2 Kings 4: 8).

It is extremely important to analyze Nicodemus' history in comparison with that of the Samaritan woman, because before God a man with all moral and intellectual qualities as was the case with Nicodemus is equal to someone without any merit, as was the case with the Samaritan woman.

## **Worship**

That is when Jesus replied:

– Women, believe the hour is coming, when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem you will worship the Father.

Jesus taught the Samaritan woman that the time had come, because worship was no longer tied to a mountain, be it the mountain of Jerusalem or that of Samaria.

Jesus asked the Samaritan woman to believe in him and to

follow his teaching – “Woman, believe me...” (v. 21). Then he addresses a question common to Jews and Samaritans: – “You adore what you do not know; we love what we know because salvation comes from the Jews”.

Although the Samaritans understood that they worshiped God, yet they worshiped Him without knowing Him. The condition of the Samaritans is that which the apostle Paul portrayed to Christians in Ephesus:

“Remember, therefore, that you were formerly Gentiles in the flesh, and called uncircumcision by those in the flesh called circumcision made by the hand of men; That at that time you were without Christ, separated from the community of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world ” (Eph 2:11-12).

Having a willingness to worship God does not give man the status of a true worshiper, because the Jews also worshiped, and worshiped what they knew, for salvation comes from the Jews (John 4:22), however, such worship was not in spirit and in truth (v. 23). The prophets protested about this fact:

“For the Lord has said, For this people come near me, and with their mouth, and with their lips, honor me, but their heart turns away from me, and their fear for me consists only of commandments of men, in which he was instructed ” (Is 29:13).

Jesus’ statement equals Jews and Samaritans, as both believed they worshiped God; however, their worship was something that came only from the mouth, but away from the ‘kidneys’

“You planted them, and they took root; they grow, they also bear fruit; you are at your mouth, but far from your kidneys” (Jer 12: 2).

Jesus presents the true concept of worship when he says:

“But the hour is coming, and it is now, when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth; because the Father seeks those who worship him” (v. 23).

Worship of God is only possible in spirit and in truth, unlike worship with the lips, which refers to an ‘approach’ to God only with the lips; it has an appearance, however, the heart remains alienated from God.

What is the Father looking for? True worshipers, that is, those who worship in spirit and in truth. According to the Scriptures, the eyes of God seek the righteous; the faithful on the face of the earth, for only those who walk the straight path can serve him “My eyes will be on the faithful of the land, which they may sit with me; he who walks in a straight path will serve me” (Ps 101: 6), which contrasts with the condition of the people of Israel: “Yet they seek me every day, they take pleasure in knowing my ways, as a people who do justice, and do not leave the right of their God; they ask me for the rights of justice, and they delight in reaching out to God ” (Isa 58: 2).

That is, God is close to those who call on Him, however, to those who call on Him in truth “The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth” (Ps 145: 18). Only by invoking God ‘in truth’ is enmity broken and fellowship re-established to the point that man settles with God “And he raised us up with him and made us sit in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2: 6).

How to call on God in truth? Entering the door of righteousness. Only those who enter the door of righteousness earn true praise to God (Ps 118: 19). Only those who enter the door of the Lord are faithful and righteous (Ps 118: 20), and only on these, the eyes of the Lord are.

Jesus makes it clear that: “God is a Spirit, and it is important that those who worship him worship him in spirit and

in truth", why, God is Spirit, and Jesus adds that the words He said are spirit and life (John 7:63).

Wherefore, in order to worship in spirit and in truth it is necessary for man to be born of water and the Spirit (John 3:5), to be born of the words spoken by Christ.

## The certainty of the Samaritan woman

Despite the daily necessity of having to fetch water, which indicated that woman's humble condition, as she did not have a slave, she had hope. Although she does not belong to the Israeli community, she was certain:

– I know that the Messiah (who call Christ) comes; when he comes, he will announce everything to us.

Where did such certainty come from? Now, such assurance came from the Scriptures. Her confidence was firm, as she did not expect to have a private well, or a husband of her own. The Scriptures did not promise financial or family improvement, but it indicated that Christ, the mediator between God and men, was to come, and that He would make known to men everything that pertains to the kingdom of God.

In view of the woman's trust in the Scriptures, Jesus reveals himself: – I am, I speak to you! Why did Jesus reveal himself to that woman, if in other biblical passages he directs his disciples not to reveal to anyone that He was the Christ? (Mt 16:20) Because the true confession is that which stems from the testimony that the Scriptures give about Christ (John 5:32 and 39), and not from miraculous signs (John 1:50; John 6:30).

At that moment the disciples arrived and were perplexed that Christ was talking to a woman

“And in this came his disciples, and marveled that he was speaking to a woman; yet none said to him, what questions? On the other hand: Why do you talk to her? ” (v. 27).

The Samaritan woman abandoned her intent, ran to the city, and called on the men to investigate whether the Jew at the source of Jacob was the Christ.

“So he left the woman his jar, and went into the city, and said to those men, ‘Come, and see a man who has told me all that I have done. Is this not the Christ? ” (P. 28 and 29).

As a woman at the time was a second-class citizen, she did not impose her belief, rather she urged men to go to Jesus and to analyze his words. The townspeople left and went to Christ

– “So they left the city and went to him” (v. 30).

Again, the marks of a true prophet became evident:

“And they were offended in him. But Jesus said to them, “There is no prophet without honor, except in his homeland and in his house” (Mt 13:57). Among foreigners Jesus was honored as a prophet, different from his homeland and home (Mt 13:54).

The disciples pleaded with the Master:

– Rabí, eat. Jesus answered them: – I have food to eat that you do not know.

Their conception was still focused on human needs. That was when Jesus declared to them that he was ‘hungry’ to do his Father’s will, and to do his work. What work would it be? The answer is in John 6, verse 29:

– “This is the work of God: believe in him whom he sent”.

While his disciples knew how to read the times when this world was planted and harvested (John 4:34), Jesus was ‘seeing’ the

white fields for the Father's harvest. From that moment when Christ was manifesting himself to the reapers were already receiving their wages in the world, and the harvest for eternal life had already begun, and both the sower and the reaper were rejoiced by the work accomplished (v. 36).

Jesus quotes a saying: "One is the sower, and the other is the reaper" (v. 37), and warns his disciples that they were being commissioned to reap in fields that they did not work (v. 38). What fields are these? Now the fields that Jesus saw as ready for harvest were the Gentiles. They had never worked among the Gentiles, now they were commissioned to work among the Gentiles, as others had already done this mister, that is, some prophets like Elijah and Elisha had gone to the Gentiles foreshadowing the mission they were to perform (v. 38) .

Because of the woman's testimony, he said:

– He told me everything I have done, many of the Samaritans believed in Christ. Because she said: – He told me everything I have done, Jesus went to (the Samaritans) and stayed with them for two days, and they believed in him because of his words (John 4:41).

They did not believe in Christ only by the testimony of the woman, but they believed because, hearing Christ announce the kingdom of heaven to them, they believed that He truly was the Savior of the world (John 4:42).

## **Distortions**

While the purpose of Scripture and Christ was for men to believe that He is the Savior of the world, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, etc., in our day there are different types of gospels that do not promote the true work of God, that is: that men believe in Christ as the envoy

of God.

Their hope is not for the world to come, in which Christ will come and take those who believe with Him (John 14: 1-4), but fixate on the things and desires of this world.

Many false teachers draw the attention of the unwary by pointing out their daily needs. Why? Because the needs of men cloud the reasoning and do not let them, analyze essential logical questions. The speech of false teachers always points to the needs of everyday life to confuse the unwary, as their speeches are vain.

There are those who will surround themselves with teachers according to their interests and who turn to fables (2 Tim. 4: 4). Others consider Christ to be a source of profit, and co-opt those who want to get rich (1 Tim. 6: 5-9).

However, there are also those who have the appearance of godliness, which is just another religion, because their message is aimed at orphans and widows, fighting for the cause of the poor and in need of material goods, but they deny the effectiveness of the gospel, because they contradict essential truths such as the future resurrection from the dead and the return of Jesus (2 Tim 2:18 and 3: 5)

“Why, what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glory? Are you not also before our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? ” (1Th 2:19).