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~ **SMOOS: The Thirsty Woman – Part 1** ~

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

1. Read John 4:1-24.
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 4:1-24 - NASB	John 4:1-24 – Easy-to-Read Version
<p>¹ Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John ² (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were), ³ He left Judea and went away again into Galilee. ⁴ And He had to pass through Samaria. ⁵ So He *came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; ⁶ and Jacob’s well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.</p> <p>⁷ There *came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus *said to her, “Give Me a drink.” ⁸ For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. ⁹ Therefore the Samaritan woman *said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.” ¹¹ She *said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? ¹² You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?” ¹³ Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”</p> <p>¹⁵ The woman *said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.” ¹⁶ He *said to her, “Go, call your husband and come here.” ¹⁷ The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus *said to her, “You have correctly said, ‘I have no husband’; ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband;</p>	<p>¹ Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard the report that he was making and baptizing more followers than John. ² (But really, Jesus himself did not baptize anyone; his followers baptized people for him.) ³ So he left Judea and went back to Galilee. ⁴ On the way to Galilee, he had to go through the country of Samaria.</p> <p>⁵ In Samaria Jesus came to the town called Sychar, which is near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob’s well was there. Jesus was tired from his long trip, so he sat down beside the well. It was about noon. ⁷ A Samaritan woman came to the well to get some water, and Jesus said to her, “Please give me a drink.” ⁸ This happened while his followers were in town buying some food.</p> <p>⁹ The woman answered, “I am surprised that you ask me for a drink! You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman!” (Jews have nothing to do with Samaritans.)</p> <p>¹⁰ Jesus answered, “You don’t know what God can give you. And you don’t know who I am, the one who asked you for a drink. If you knew, you would have asked me, and I would have given you living water.”</p> <p>¹¹ The woman said, “Sir, where will you get that living water? The well is very deep, and you have nothing to get water with. ¹² Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob? He is the one who gave us this well. He drank from it himself, and his sons and all his animals drank from it too.”</p> <p>¹³ Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. ¹⁴ But anyone who drinks the water I give will never be thirsty again. The water I give people will be like a spring flowing inside them. It will bring</p>

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this you have said truly.”¹⁹ The woman *said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.”²⁰ Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you *people* say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”²¹ Jesus *said to her, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.”²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.”²³ But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.”²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

them eternal life.”

¹⁵ The woman said to Jesus, “Sir, give me this water. Then I will never be thirsty again and won’t have to come back here to get more water.”

¹⁶ Jesus told her, “Go get your husband and come back.”

¹⁷ The woman answered, “But I have no husband.”

Jesus said to her, “You are right to say you have no husband.”¹⁸ That’s because, although you have had five husbands, the man you live with now is not your husband. That much was the truth.”

¹⁹ The woman said, “Sir, I can see that you are a prophet.”²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain. But you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where people must worship.”

²¹ Jesus said, “Believe me, woman! The time is coming when you will not have to be in Jerusalem or on this mountain to worship the Father.”²² You Samaritans worship something you don’t understand. We Jews understand what we worship, since salvation comes from the Jews.”²³ But the time is coming when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. In fact, that time is now here. And these are the kind of people the Father wants to be his worshipers.”²⁴ God is spirit. So the people who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

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

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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.

If you would like more information about the source of these insights, contact us at the address in the footer.

3. Answer these reflective questions.

The woman of Sychar lived in a man's world and was a Samaritan in a part of the world predominantly Jewish? How do you think this affected the way she thought about herself?

The woman of Sychar had five husbands and was living with a sixth man who was not her husband. Why do you think she had not bothered to marry the sixth man? How do you think she felt having been with so many men in her life? Do you think she was happy or full of turmoil?

What do you think her greatest needs were?

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Jesus said that God was looking for people who would worship Him in spirit and in truth? What does it mean to worship God in spirit? What does it mean to worship God in truth?

Are you a worshipper of the true God in spirit and in truth?
