

STORY 5: WATER

One day, Jesus and his followers were travelling through Samaria. Most Jews avoided going through Samaria because they didn't like the Samaritans. Along the way, they came to a village and stopped at a well. Jesus was tired from the journey so he sat down by the well to rest.

Soon after, a Samaritan woman came to get some water from the well. When she got close, Jesus asked her, "Will you give me a drink?" "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman," she said, "How can you ask me for a drink?" Jesus answered her, "You don't know what God wants to give you, and you don't know who is asking you for a drink. If you did, you would ask me for living water."

"But, sir," the woman said, "you don't even have a bucket, and the well is deep. Where are you going to get this living water? Our ancestor Jacob dug this well for us, and his family and animals got water from it. Are you greater than Jacob?"

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again. But whoever drinks the water I give him will never get thirsty again. The water I give is like a flowing fountain that gives eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, please give me a drink of that water! Then I won't get thirsty and have to come to this well again."

So Jesus told her, "Go and bring your husband." But the woman said, "I don't have a husband." "That's the truth," Jesus said, "for you've had five husbands and the man you now live with is not your husband."

The woman was astonished and said, "I can see that you are a prophet!" But quickly she challenged him by saying, "My ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews say Jerusalem is the only place to worship."

Then Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you won't worship either on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You Samaritans don't really know the one you worship. But we Jews do know the God we worship, and by using us, God will save the world. Yet a time is coming when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. These are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks." The woman said, "I know that the Messiah will come. He is the one we call Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus declared, "I am the Messiah."

The woman left her water jar and ran back to town to tell the people, "Come see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could he be the Messiah?" So people came out of the town to see Jesus and begged him to stay with them a few days. Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in Jesus because of the woman's testimony. But others said, "We have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."