

אִשָּׁה שַׁמְרוֹנִית וּמַיִם חַיִּים

A Samaritan Woman & Living Water

One day, Yeshua and His talmidim were travelling from Judea back to the Galil, and were going through the cities of Samaria. They came to one city called Sychar (סִיכָר) which was in the region that Ya'acov had given to Yosef, and where Ya'acov's well was located. Jacob's well was a common place for travelers to stop, rest, and eat a meal. So while the talmidim



went into the village to buy food, Yeshua sat down by the well to rest. While He was sitting there, a Samaritan woman came to draw water from the well. Jacob's well is quite deep, so it required a rope and a container that one would lower down, and when it filled with water, draw it back up. Since Yeshua had neither a rope nor a container, He asked the woman if she would draw some water for Him to drink. The woman was very surprised that He would



accept water from her! She said, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" She asked this because she knew that the Jews considered the Samaritans to be always unclean, and that their pots were also unclean. And this was even more true for a Samaritan woman! But

how do you suppose the woman knew that she was speaking to a Jewish man?

At any rate, Yeshua responded to the woman by telling her that if she knew to whom she was speaking, instead of Him asking her for water, she would have asked Him for water, and He would have given her running water. That is, He would have given her water that flowed from a stream. Now water that flowed from a stream was never considered unclean, so the fact that she was a Samaritan would not have made any difference. The woman thought that such an idea was incredible! She asked Yeshua, "How do you expect to get that much water from the well? You don't have a rope or a container, and the well is very deep!" But Yeshua was not talking about water to drink. He was using water as an illustration of salvation that comes by the work of the Spirit. You see, in Hebrew the word for "running water" is actually "living water" (מַיִם חַיִּים, *mayim chayim*). Yeshua was using a play on words. He was talking about water that gives spiritual life, and even eternal life. In the Prophet Jeremiah (2:13; 17:13) God had described Himself as the fountain of "living water" from Whom Israel derived her salvation. But the woman did not understand Yeshua's words. She thought He was talking about water to drink and use for washing and cooking, so she said, "Please, give me this water so I won't be thirsty and have to always come to the well for water!"

So Yeshua needed to demonstrate to her exactly who He was. He said, "Go, get your husband, and then I'll give you the water." Well, the woman had been married and divorced five times, and her divorces were not righteous. So the man she currently called her husband was actually not her husband at all. She said to Yeshua, "I have no husband." Then Yeshua said, "You are right! You've been married five times, and the man you presently call you husband is not legally your husband at all!" Well, the woman was astounded! How could this man know all about her when they had never met before? She said, "Sir, you must be a prophet! Tell me, are the Samaritans right, or the Jews, about where we should worship God?" Yeshua told her that there was coming a day when both Mt. Gerizim (where the Samaritans worshipped) as well as Jerusalem (where the Jews worshipped) would be overrun by their enemies. But that God is a Spirit, and thus those who worship Him in spirit and truth can worship Him anywhere. The woman responded, "Well, we believe the Messiah is coming, and that when He comes, He will tell us where the proper place of worship really is!" Then Yeshua said to her, "I am the Messiah for whom you are waiting!" Well, the woman finally understood what Yeshua was saying about "living water." She went into the village and began to tell everyone, "I've seen the Messiah! He has come! Having never met me, He told me all about myself. Surely He is the Messiah!" And many Samaritan people believed in Yeshua as a result.