

BACKGROUND | JOHN 4:1-6

- Jesus had been overseeing a ministry of Baptism in Judea, and the Pharisees had begun a discussion of purification with the disciples of John the Baptist.
- The Pharisees were upset that Jesus was baptizing more than John, presumably because Jesus and his disciples were not of the Levitical priesthood, thus had no authority for Baptism.
- In order to avoid a political confrontation before the appointed time, Christ “went away again into Galilee.”
- While much speculation has been put forth about Jesus’ journey through Samaria, we are best to take the text at face value: “He had to pass through Samaria.” This was likely necessitated by the location of Aenon (3:23).
- The city of Sychar was near the mountains of Gerazim and Ebal, near land which Jacob purchased and Abraham built an altar (Genesis 33:19-20). This land is one of three purchases of land in which the transaction is included in the Bible.
- The Samaritans were decedents of the lost tribes of Israel, mixed with foreign races. They opposed the rebuilding of the Temple after the Babylonian exile (Sanballat of Nehemiah was a Samaritan). They built a Temple on Mt. Gerizim and observed a quasi-Jewish worship. The Romans renamed the region Sabaste by King Herod (whose wife Mariamme was Samaritan). Sychar was very near the city of Shechem, which was later named Flavia Neapolis by the Romans, and is modern day Nablus.

THE PROMISE OF LIVING WATER | JOHN 4:7-14

- Jesus made the clearest proclamation of His mission and purpose, and its reach.
- The living water of Jesus would soon be offered to all the world, and it was to be water that gushes up from within and has an eternal source (John 7:38).
- Salvation and eternal life offered to all the world was neither unexpected nor something that would only come in the church age. The “mystery” was not salvation of the gentiles, but that they would be saved before the establishment of the promised Kingdom.

THE MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE WOMAN | JOHN 4:15-30

- The woman had a desire for immediate gratification, but Jesus had something else in mind.
- To her credit, when Jesus gives information He could not have known, she immediately asked a theological question.
- Jesus gave a theological answer that is filled with valuable content:
 - A prophecy of coming destruction – v. 21
 - An answer to the woman’s question – v. 22
 - “An hour is coming, and now is” refers to something that is current with Jesus, would be removed, and then would come again – v. 23
 - The woman clearly associated “the hour” with the coming of the Messiah, so our interpretation should also be strongly associated with Messiah’s presence (v. 25)
 - Worship in Spirit and Truth is something that is done when the Messiah is present – v. 23-24
 - Our current worship is 100% “in spirit”
- Jesus gave a clear revelation: I am the Messiah – vv. 25-30

THE MESSIANIC INSTRUCTION | JOHN 4:31-42

- The Father was looking for those who would worship “in spirit and truth” and the field was “white unto harvest”
- The harvest would be seen over the coming months as both Samaritans and Galileans would proclaim “this One is indeed the Savior of the world” (v. 42)