

BIBLE EXTENSION COURSE PROGRAM

The Woman of Samaria

Lesson No.4

Required Reading
John 4:1-38

Jesus in Samaria – **SSS Series**
by Clifton H Carpenter

- **Racial Prejudice**
- **Religious Prejudice**

Memory Verse: Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

I**NTRODUCTION** The Divine Compulsion – Jesus leaving Judea and his travel through Samaria is filled with many important implications. John provides the setting and the background in **verses 1-6**

The Controversy – There was a growing rivalry between the Pharisees and Jesus. The issue surrounded the “*Baptism of John*” and the “*Baptism of Jesus*” though Jesus himself did not baptize. **John 3:23; 4:2** Perhaps, Nicodemus could have directly or indirectly fueled the controversy as he gave report of his night visit with Jesus. However, to avoid any premature conflict with the Pharisees, Jesus **left** Judea. Lit “*to leave to one’s fate*”

The Country – The Palestine in Jesus’ day included Three Main Regions: **Judea** (South) **Samaria** (Middle) and **Galilee** (North) When traveling from North to South it was customary for the Jews to travel along the Jordan River to avoid contact with the Samaritans. **See Map on Page Three** This route was “*much longer*” “*much hotter*” “*much more dangerous*” than the direct route through Samaria. John gives us a glimpse into the long history of hostility between the Jews and the Samaritans – The modern West Bank City of Nablus in Israel.

NOTE: Jesus overleaps the barriers of Racial and Religious Prejudice. His radical approach in winning the Woman to himself is an example for the Church to follow in the ministry of Cross-Cultural Evangelism.

1. Racial Prejudice – The history of social prejudice between the Jews and Samaritans is long standing. Much of what we read in today’s headlines is a result of the bitter rivalry between the Jews and the Arabs.

Since the days of Nehemiah, 450 years earlier, after the Assyrians removed the wealthy Jews from their land, leaving only the poorest of Jews, Gentiles from neighboring countries were imported to populate the land. Results – a divided nation

The Samaritans are a mixed-race of poor Jews and Gentiles. Because of their racial mix, the Jews considered the Samaritans as “*unclean apostates*” “*perpetually unclean*” “*half-breeds*”

Therefore, the Jews believed that any association with the Samaritans would defile them and make them ceremonially unclean.

2. Religious Prejudice – The Jews and Samaritans view of Holy Scriptures:

- The Jews recognized the 39 books of the Old Testament as Canonical
- The Samaritans accepted only the first 5 books (also known as the Pentateuch) of the Old Testament as Canonical

The “*different view*” and “*different interpretation*” of Scripture increased the hostility between the two races of people.

The Woman of Samaria – Lesson No.4

I. Desire for Water: John 4:4-12

Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman is another example of the need for spiritual change in a person's life. The Samaritan woman is a timeless figure, not only a typical Samaritan, but a typical human being. Her testimony represents that of every person – for all have sinned and come short of God's glory. **Romans 3:23**

Jesus' evangelistic method starts where the woman was, with something material that they both had in common, *the desire for water*.

Jesus being wearied from his journey stops in the city of Sychar **verse 5** Now Jacob's well was there and it was at the sixth hour that a woman of Samaria was drawing water. **Genesis 33:19**

Scholars differ on interpretation of the time. **verses 6-7**

- Jewish time 12 Noon
- Roman time 6 PM

Jesus puts himself in a dependent position.

1. Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for water. In speaking to the woman in public Jesus as a Rabbi was in violation of Jewish Law. The Rabbis were forbidden to hold a conversation in public with a woman, even with their wife or daughter. **verse 7**

NOTE: the woman was amazed by the approach of Jesus, for the Samaritans have no **dealings** with the Jews. Lit "*do not share from the same vessels*" **verse 9**

2. Jesus offers the Samaritan woman a gift, without the presence of her husband, assuming that she was married. This too was a forbidden practice for the Rabbi under the Law. **verse 16**

II. Desire for Worship: John 4:13-26

Jesus as with Nicodemus knows the heart's desire of individuals. The Samaritan woman, willing to continue in conversation indicated her desire to know Jesus. Jesus meets the spiritual needs of the Woman of Samaria.

1. Jesus confronts the woman with her sinful past – Go, call thy husband. **verse 16-18**

2. Jesus introduces the subject of "*Living Water*" **verse 14** Old Testament metaphor of God. **Psalm 36:9; Isaiah 55:1** "*Living Water*" "*Running Water*" "*Moving Water*"

Living Water refers to the cleansing and refreshing grace that the Holy Spirit brings as a result of proper relationship with God. The woman attempts to divert from the subject of Ethics to the subject of Theology. **verse 20**

The Twin Mountains: Deuteronomy 11:29

Sychar set in the valley between the Twin Mountains. Samaritan's Temple was on Mount Gerizim.

- Curses read from Mount Ebal
- Blessings read from Mt Gerizim

Spiritual Worship: verse 21-24

- Its Basis – a result of the spiritual atoning work of Jesus Christ
- Its Source – from the new spiritual life from within the person
- Its Object – God who himself is Spirit
- Its Place – True Worship transcends any particular time or place

III. Desire for Witnessing: John 4:27-38

An effective witness for Christ is a person who tells what you have experienced.

