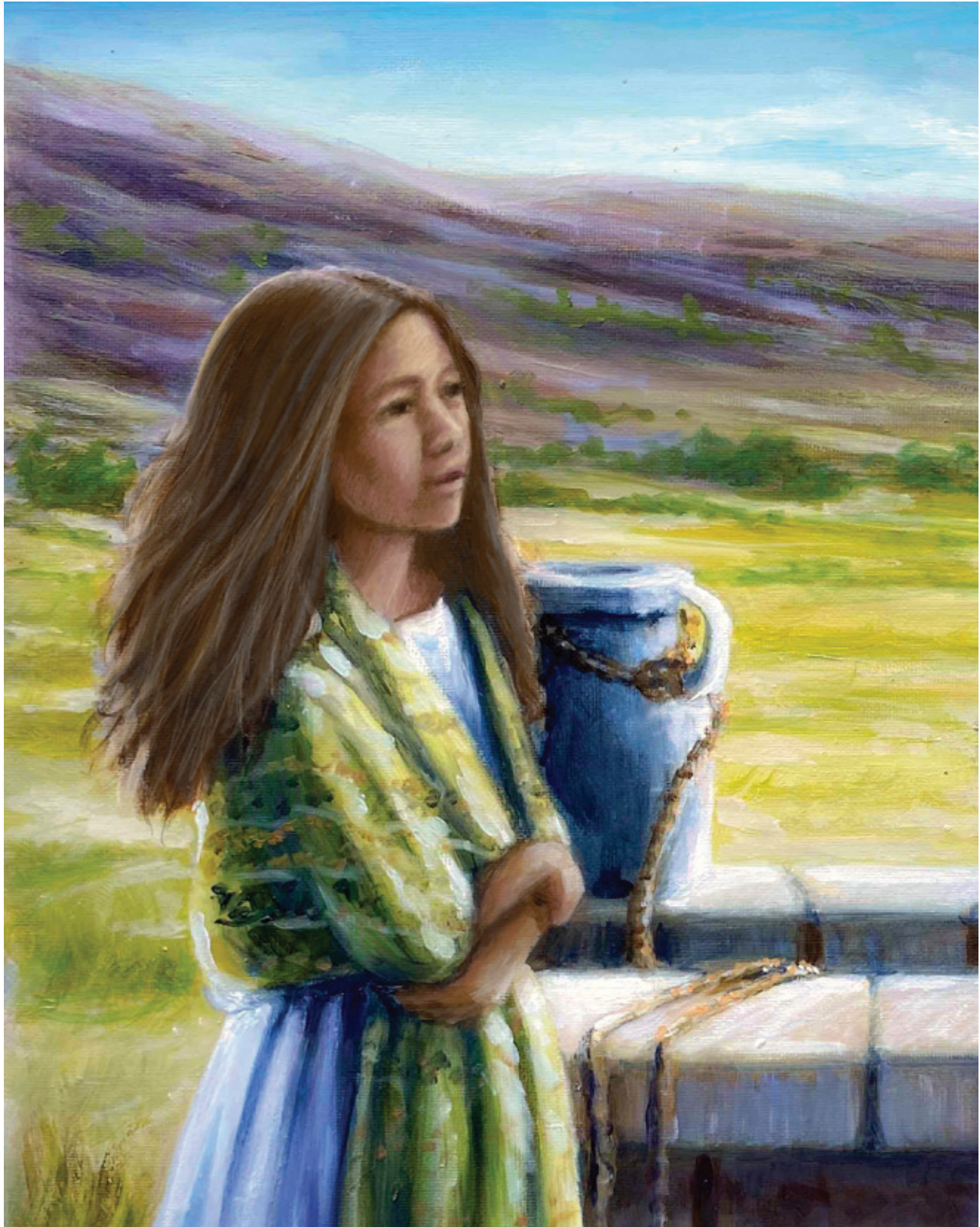


Week # 3



THE LIVING
WATER OF GOD:
THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

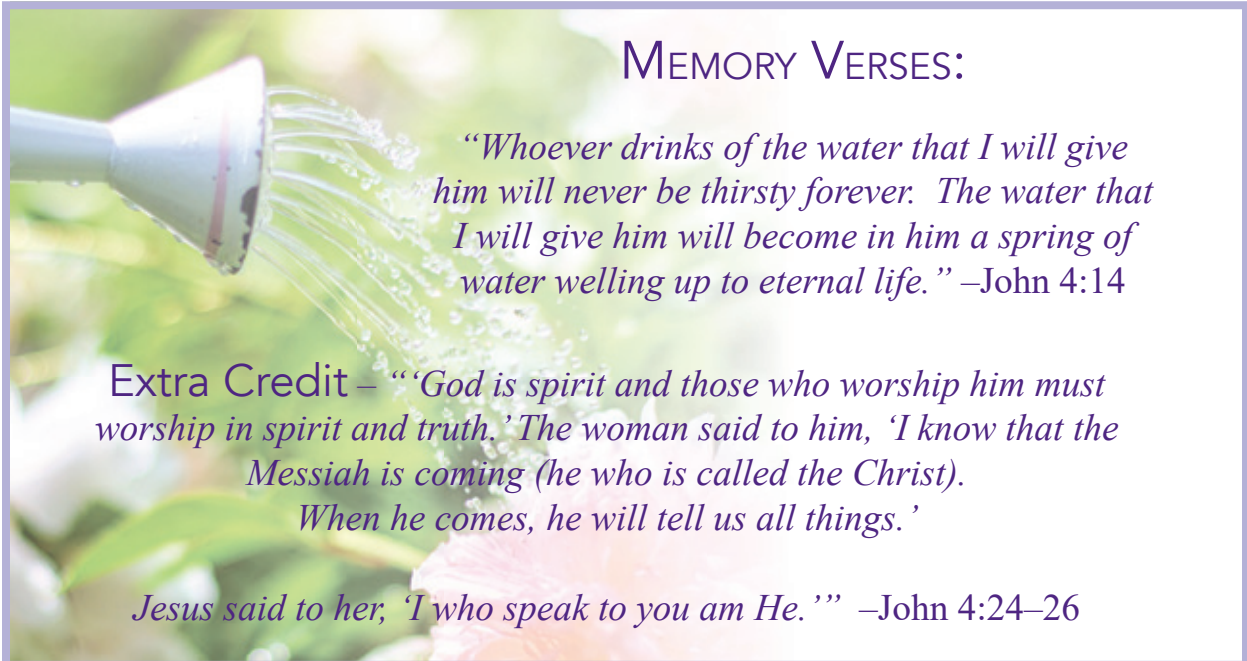
“Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty forever. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” –John 4:14



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WEEK THREE

THE LIVING WATER OF GOD:
THE SAMARITAN WOMAN
THE WHOLE GOSPEL FOR THE WHOLE WORLD



JOHN 4:1–45 – WOMAN AT THE WELL

The context for this story is unusually important and is going to take us deep into the heart of the Old Testament as well as into John’s understanding of human history. We are going to look at the wells of Genesis, the meaning of time in the book of John, and the references to living water in the Old and New Testaments. If this week’s homework seems overwhelming, take it slow and ask Jesus to lead you.

DAY 1

Read Genesis 16:7–14 and Genesis 21:14–21.

Twice the Angel of the Lord meets Hagar by a well. The first time, she is running away from her mistress because she is pregnant, and Sarah has grown jealous and vindictive. The angel of the Lord meets her at a well; he instructs her what to do and he gives her a promise for her son.

What name does she give the Lord in verse fifteen?

How does she explain this name?

In Genesis 21, Hagar is sent away from Abraham's house. A new son has been born, and hers is unwanted. She is rejected, and she goes away into the wilderness to die with her son.

What happens next?

Again, the angel of the Lord gives her instructions and a promise. What does he tell her to do? What does he promise for her son?

Then, the Lord opened her eyes and what did she see?

What does verse twenty say about her son?

How does this story remind you of the woman at the well in John 4?

DAY 2

Read Genesis 24 and Genesis 29:1–14.

Both encounters at a well are the beginnings of a love story. Genesis 24 is the longest chapter in the book of Genesis, and it is the search for a bride for Isaac. Genesis 29 is the beginning of the Jacob story and the twelve tribes of Israel. Both happen at a well.

Unlike the Hagar story, these are joyful stories in which God is putting His plan in place for the redemption of Israel and the world through a love story that begins by the side of the well. As you read, think about the woman at the well and her encounter with Jesus. If you think of it in terms of God's love story with her and with Samaria, it begins to take on a new meaning. Last week, we learned about God's nuptial view of history, and this week we are finding the same things in the images that John uses to tell Jesus' story.

1. If we think of the woman at the well's encounter with Jesus as the beginning of a love story, what thoughts stir in our minds? She has been wounded, hurt, abused, rejected—and then Jesus. Read the story in John 4 and look for five specific ways that Jesus shows her the love of God for her.

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

Take some time to think about your own encounter with Jesus in terms of a love story. Your personal love story with Jesus and the larger love story that God is writing with His church.

1. What are some love notes in your own story with Jesus?

2. What are some of the ways He has shown up in your story and made Himself known to you? Be as specific as possible. If you have trouble thinking of many, take some time and ask Him to show you where He has shown up in your life and how His love has been present even if you have not had eyes to see it. Do not be afraid to see His good gifts as evidence of His love.

Finally, begin to think about this encounter as a love story with the people of Samaria. What is God doing to woo these people back to Himself?

How does He do it?

What is the role of the woman in God's larger love story with this estranged group of people?

DAY 3

Read John 4:1–4 and Genesis 33:15–20.

The well in John 4 is called Jacob's well because it is in the field that Jacob bought from the people of Shechem after he arrived back home. He met Esau by the brook of Jabbok, and then he journeyed to Shechem which is called Sychar in the New Testament. He bought this land from the sons of Hamor for one hundred pieces of money. It is here that Jacob builds an altar and declares God to be his God.

What does Jacob name that altar?

The story that comes immediately after Jacob purchases this land is the story of Dinah, his daughter. She is assaulted by the son of Hamor and in revenge, her brothers kill the men of the town. Sexual sin and violence are the first story of this land to which Jacob has come (Genesis 34).

Read John 4:1–19.

Jesus comes to the woman at the well and He offers her living water. When she eagerly asks for it, He instructs her to bring her husband.

Why do you think He asks her this?

Does it matter that this place has seen sexual sin?

Is Jesus trying to redeem a history of abuse and pain as well as redeem one woman's heart? There is no way to read the story of Jacob's well and not read the story of Dinah.

The story in Genesis 34 also includes radical racial violence as God's people terrorize those who have harmed their sister.

Jesus confronts the woman at the well in her pain, her rejection, and her sin. He places Himself right in the middle of the messy and painful places in her life, and it is from there that He begins to offer her salvation. From this point of full disclosure, He makes known to her that He is the Savior. How does this apply to our own stories?

DAY 4

Read John 4:1–45.

Write out five things that surprise you from this text.

Why do you think Jesus inquired about her husband?

What is the connection between living water of God and our real-life relationships?

Their conversation about worship led to His admission that He was the Messiah. Why do you think this matters?

Why did He tell her first—not the disciples nor the Jews nor the leaders? Why would she have been entrusted with this good news?

When she heard who He was, what did she do?

The villagers she was trying to avoid become the very people she runs to tell. What caused her change in confidence and security? What caused her excitement?

By honoring her with conversation, an offer of salvation, and His own identity, Jesus establishes her as the first missionary to those outside the Jewish circle.

DAY 5

Read these passages on the living water and write out the characteristics of living water in each passage and apply these to your own life.

Read Ezekiel 47:7-12

John 7:37-39

Revelation 22:1-2
