

Lifting our souls, Trusting in God

LENT AND EASTER COURSE FROM THE
DIOCESE OF ABERDEEN AND ORKNEY



John 4:5-42

Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

COLLECT

Almighty God, whose
Son Jesus Christ
gives the water of
eternal life, may we
always thirst for you,
the spring of life and
source of goodness;
through him who
lives and reigns with
you and the Holy
Spirit, one God, now
and for ever.
Amen.

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The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" They left the city and were on their way to him.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour."

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Saviour of the world."

COLLECT
(SCOTTISH PRAYER
BOOK)

WE beseech thee,
Almighty God, look
upon the hearty
desires of thy
humble servants,
and stretch forth
the right hand of
thy Majesty, to be
our defence against
all our enemies;
through Jesus
Christ our Lord
Amen.



Hemryk Siemiradki (1843-1902) *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, Lviv Art Gallery, Ukraine.

“All doors are open to the believer. It is the lesson of the Samaritan woman at the well.” — Patti Smith

“Aliveness, he will teach, is a gift available to all by God's grace. It flows not from taking, but giving, not from fear but from faith, not from conflict but from reconciliation, not from domination but from service. It isn't found in the upper trappings of religion -rules and rituals, controversies and scruples, temples and traditions. No, it springs up from our innermost being like a fountain of living water. It intoxicates us like the best wine ever and so turns life from disappointment into a banquet.” — Brian D. McLaren

There are many reasons that Jesus and the Samaritan Woman at the Well wouldn't normally meet. One is a Jew and the other a Samaritan who do not share things in common. One is male and the other is female, one is gathering water at the well, one would not normally be at the well. The Woman is at the Well in the heat of the day, a time it would normally be quiet and yet she encounters the most important man there.

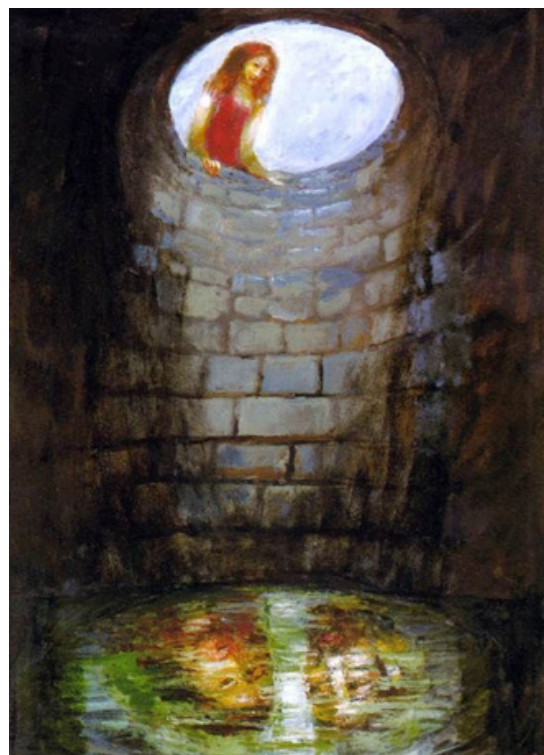
When have you encountered Jesus unexpectedly in your life? This might be a time that you realised you encountered Jesus or looking back you realised you had met with Jesus.

To Listen:

Woman at the Well by Amanda Rassamni

All Who Are Thirsty by Brenton Brown and Glenn Robertson

A playlist of music suggestions for the course can be found at <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/3pJcG5xA1xzhL2Aolau0Q4?si=582cd1f921ae4fb1>



Sieger Köder (German, 1925–2015), *Woman at Jacob's Well*, 1990. Sieger Köder Museum, Ellwangen, Germany.



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“Ghazal: Woman at the Well,” by Carolyn Wright

In this late season, who is the woman at the well
drawing water, reflecting on the woman at the well?

Millennial fissures in the well-rim, weed-choked cracks
where brackish water rises for the woman at the well.

At the bottom of the well shaft, the sky's reflective eye
opens, closes on the shadow of the woman at the well.

Where are the rains of bygone eras? Preterite weather
yields more rusted bucketsful for the woman at the well.

Ancestral well of Jacob, where a weary traveler rests,
where Jesus asks for water from the woman at the well.

Oh plane trees of Samaria, in whose shade a stranger
speaks of artesian fault lines to the woman at the well!

Chaldean fountains, oases of date palms and minarets
—
how they flourish in the dreams of the woman at the well!

Mirages of marble, pomegranate flowers, cedars of Baalbek
shimmer in the sight of the woman at the well.

On the night of destiny, the angel Gabriel descends
and hovers by the footprints of the woman at the well.

Jacob's ladder leans against the door of heaven—
on the bottom rung, the woman at the well.

Women of Sychar, women of Shechem! Draw aside
your veils,
reveal the features of the woman at the well.

Wise ones, why do you weep? Do you fear your fate
tips a mirror toward the woman at the well?

Oh artisan of sorrow, mystery's precision, sit down
beside your sister, second self, the woman at the well.

In memoriam Agha Shahid Ali

From <https://imagejournal.org/2017/03/03/poetry-friday-ghazal-woman-well/>