



The Woman at the Well

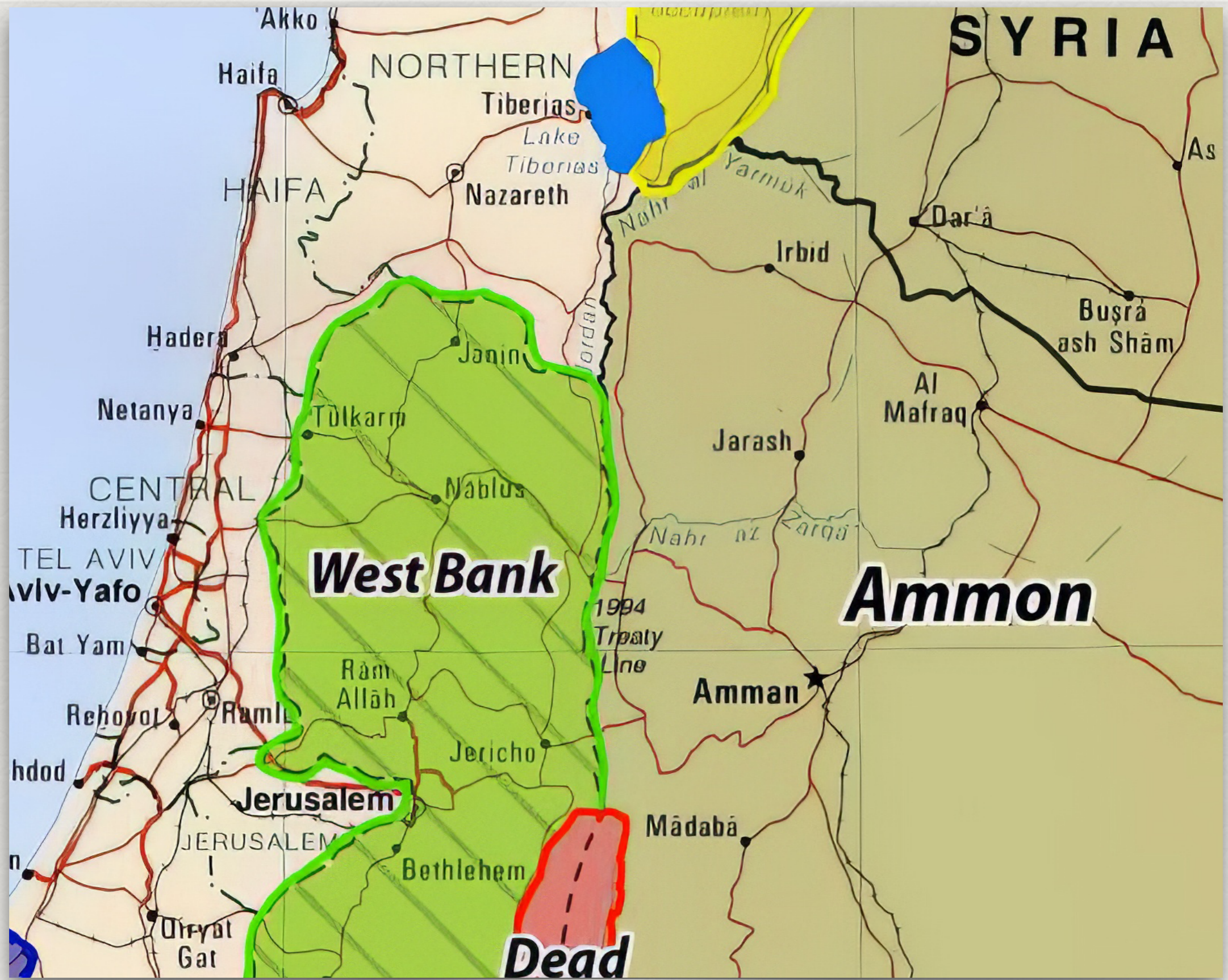
John 4:1-42

Jesus knew that they [the priests and rabbis] would spare no effort to create a division between His own disciples and those of John. He knew that the storm was gathering which would sweep away one of the greatest prophets ever given to the world. **Wishing to avoid all occasion for misunderstanding or dissension, He quietly ceased His labors, and withdrew to Galilee.**

(DA 181.4)

On the way to Galilee Jesus passed through Samaria. It was noon when He reached the beautiful Vale of Shechem. At the opening of this valley was Jacob's well. Wearied with His journey, He sat down here to rest while His disciples went to buy food. (*DA* 183.1)





The Bible says that Jesus “must needs go through Samaria” (John 4:4).

There was a divine appointment he had to keep.



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Both Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal lie west of the Jordan River, Gerizim south of Ebal. The peaks of the two mountains are about two miles apart. The Valley of Shechem, which runs between them, is about three miles long and 1,600 feet wide. At the opening of this valley is Jacob's well.



Ferrell Jenkins

Mount Gerizim rises about 2,840 feet, while
Mount Ebal stands about 3,650 feet tall.

Jacob's well is now located within a church connected with a monastery. The well is accessed by entering the church and descending stairs to a crypt in which the well stands, along with a small winch and a bucket and with paintings on the walls.

The well is not fed by a spring, nor is water conducted to it. It is fed by rainfall and percolation.

The water usually lasts till about the end of May, when the well becomes dry till the return of the rain.





1895



1900



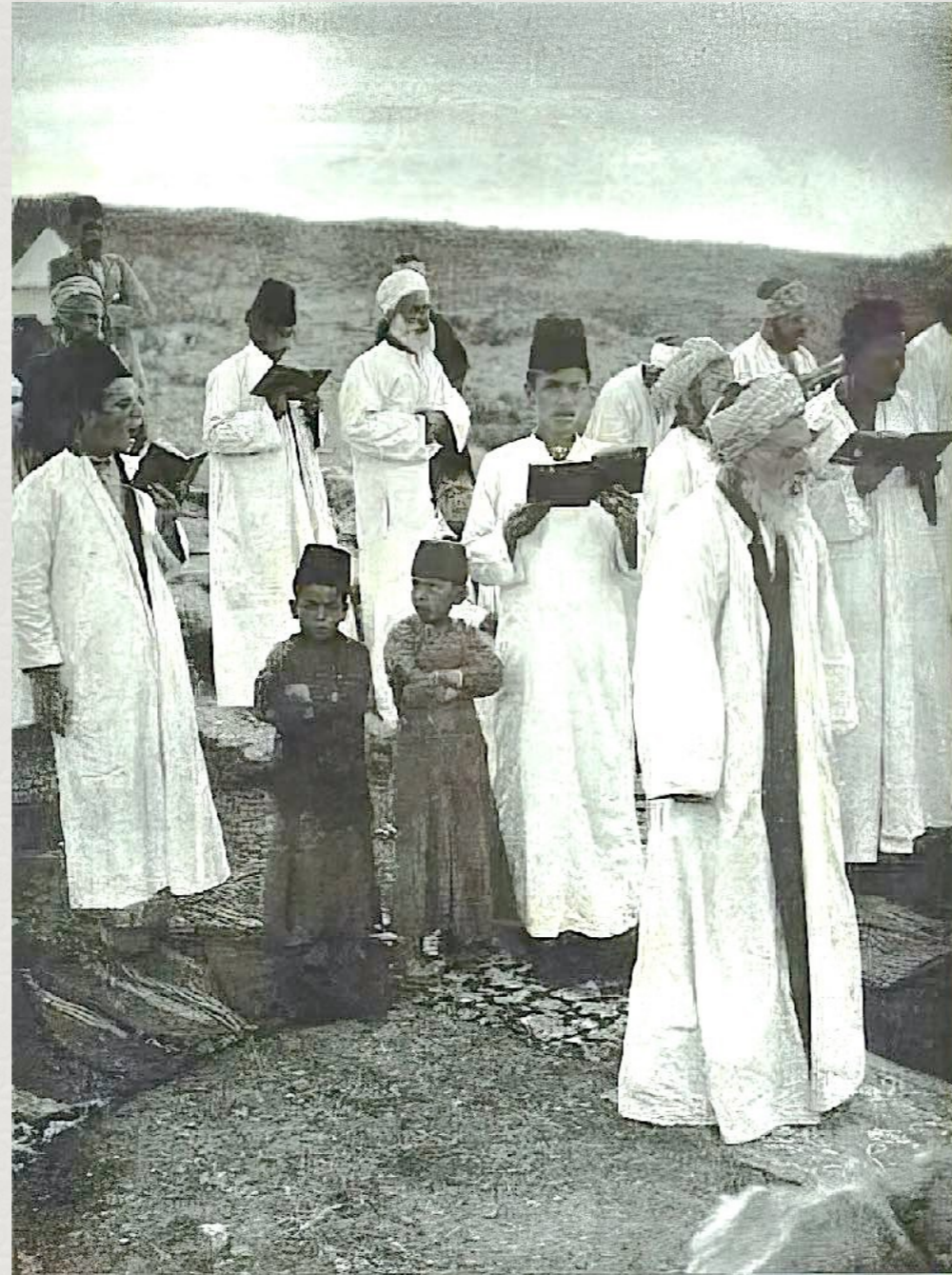




When the temple at Jerusalem was rebuilt in the days of Ezra, the Samaritans wished to join the Jews in its erection. This privilege was refused them, and a bitter animosity sprang up between the two peoples. The Samaritans built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim. Here they worshiped in accordance with the Mosaic ritual, though they did not wholly renounce idolatry. But disasters attended them, their temple was destroyed by their enemies, and they seemed to be under a curse; yet they still clung to their traditions and their forms of worship. They would not acknowledge the temple at Jerusalem as the house of God, nor admit that the religion of the Jews was superior to their own. (*DA* 188.3)



Ruins on summit of Mount Gerizim on the site of the Samaritan temple, 1880



During the entire week following the Feast of the Passover, the Samaritans remain encamped on Mount Gerizim. On the last day of the encampment, they begin at dawn a pilgrimage to the crest of the sacred mount. Before setting forth on this pilgrimage, however, the men spread their cloths and repeat the creed and the story of the Creation in silence, after which, in loud voice they read the Book of Genesis and the first quarter of the Book of Exodus, ending with the story of the Passover and the flight from Egypt. (John Whiting, *The National Geographic*, January 1920)



Edward Karpov

- ✦ There is one God, YHWH, the same God recognized by the Hebrew prophets.
- ✦ The Torah was given by God to Moses.
- ✦ Mount Gerizim, not Jerusalem, is the one true sanctuary chosen by Israel's God.
- ✦ Many Samaritans believe that at the end of days, the dead will be resurrected by the Taheb, a restorer (possibly a prophet, some say Moses). They accept the resurrection of the dead on the basis of Deuteronomy 32.
- ✦ The priests are the interpreters of the law and the keepers of tradition; scholars are secondary to the priesthood.
- ✦ The authority of post-Torah sections of the Tanakh, and classical Jewish Rabbinical works--the Talmud, comprising the Mishnah and the Gemara--is rejected.
- ✦ They have a significantly different version of the Ten Commandments (for example, their 10th commandment is about the sanctity of Mount Gerizim).

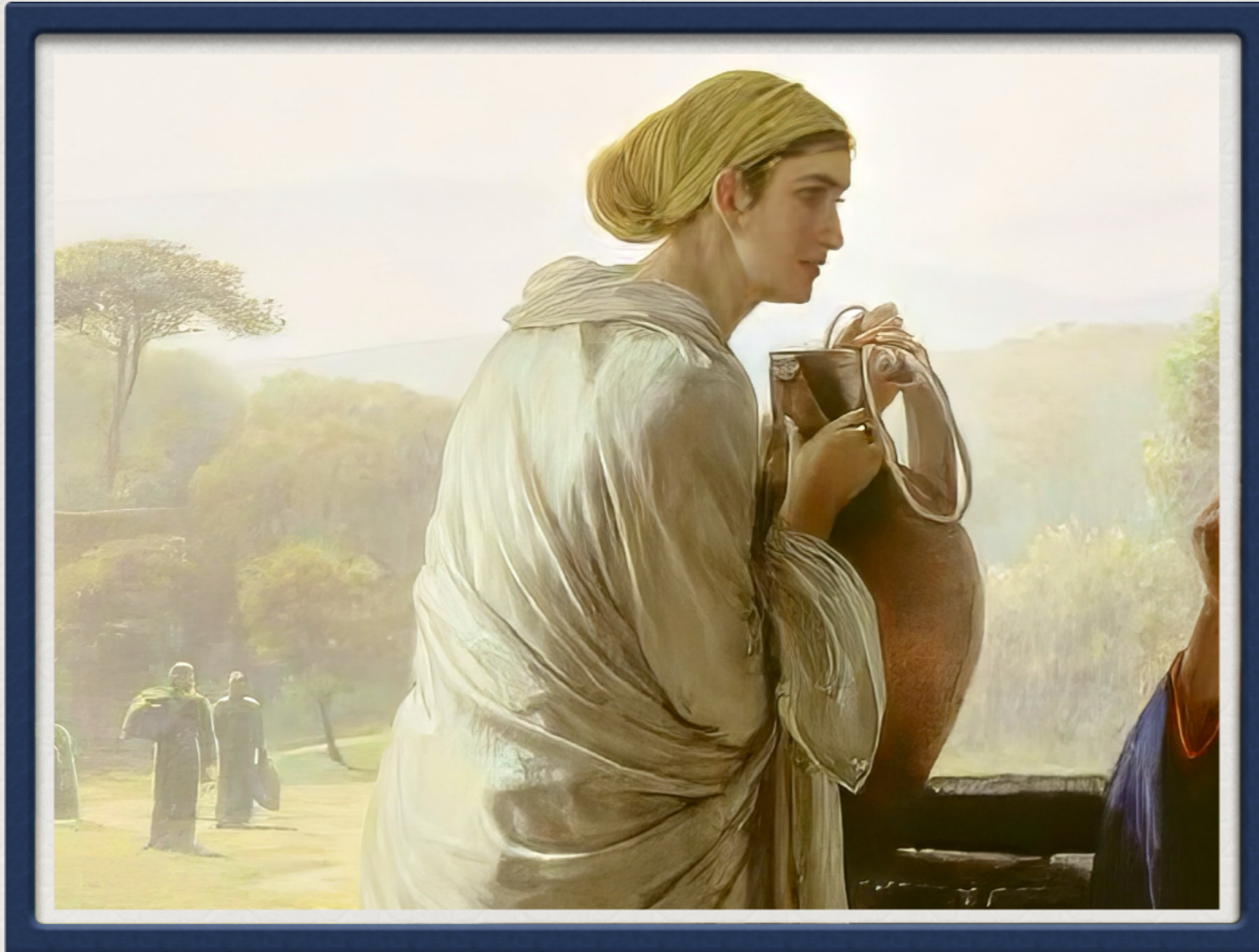
Samaritan

- ✦ 2 Kings 17:29—Samaritans made high places
- ✦ 2 Chronicles 28:8–15—Returned captives
- ✦ Matthew 10:5–6—Go not to any city of Samaria
- ✦ Luke 10:33—A certain Samaritan had compassion
- ✦ Luke 17:16—One of the 10 lepers healed was a Samaritan
- ✦ John 4—Jesus at Jacob's well
- ✦ John 8:48—Jews accused Jesus of being a Samaritan
- ✦ Acts 8:14, 25—Peter & John preached in Samaria

The Jews and the Samaritans were bitter enemies, and as far as possible avoided all dealing with each other. To trade with the Samaritans in case of necessity was indeed counted lawful by the rabbis; but all social intercourse with them was condemned. A Jew would not borrow from a Samaritan, nor receive a kindness, not even a morsel of bread or a cup of water. The disciples, in buying food, were acting in harmony with the custom of their nation. But beyond this they did not go. To ask a favor of the Samaritans, or in any way seek to benefit them, did not enter into the thought of even Christ's disciples. (*DA* 183.2)

As Jesus sat by the well side, He was faint from hunger and thirst. The journey since morning had been long, and now the sun of noontide beat upon Him. His thirst was increased by the thought of the cool, refreshing water so near, yet inaccessible to Him; for He had no rope nor water jar, and the well was deep. The lot of humanity was His, and He waited for someone to come to draw. (*DA* 183.3)

The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the LORD: And
he delighteth in his way. (Psalm 37:23)



Jesus saith unto
her, Give me to
drink. (John 4:7)

The hatred between Jews and Samaritans prevented the woman from offering a kindness to Jesus; but the Saviour was seeking to find the key to this heart, and with the **tact born of divine love**, He asked, not offered, a favor.

(DA 183.4)

He who made the ocean, who controls the waters of the great deep, who opened the springs and channels of the earth, rested from His weariness at Jacob's well, and was dependent upon a stranger's kindness for even the gift of a drink of water. (*DA* 183.4)

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. (John 4:21)

He desired to lift the thoughts of His hearer above matters of form and ceremony, and questions of controversy. “The hour cometh,” He said, “and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” (*DA* 189.1)

Here is declared the same truth that Jesus had revealed to Nicodemus when He said, “Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3, margin. Not by seeking a holy mountain or a sacred temple are men brought into communion with heaven.

Religion is not to be confined to external forms and ceremonies. The religion that comes from God is the only religion that will lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. (*DA* 189.2)

This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship. It is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit.

By the Spirit every sincere prayer is indited, and such prayer is acceptable to God. Wherever a soul reaches out after God, there the Spirit's working is manifest, and God will reveal Himself to that soul. For such worshipers He is seeking. He waits to receive them, and to make them His sons and daughters. (*DA* 189.2)

The plain statement made by Christ to this woman could not have been made to the self-righteous Jews. Christ was far more reserved when He spoke to them. That which had been withheld from the Jews, and which the disciples were afterward enjoined to keep secret, was revealed to her. Jesus saw that she would make use of her knowledge in bringing others to share His grace.

(DA 190.3)

Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. (Matthew 5:6)

Our Redeemer **thirsts** for recognition. He **hungers** for the sympathy and love of those whom He has purchased with His own blood. He longs with inexpressible desire that they should come to Him and have life. As the mother watches for the smile of recognition from her little child, which tells of the dawning of intelligence, so does Christ watch for the expression of grateful love, which shows that spiritual life is begun in the soul. (*DA* 191.1)

- ✿ Broke down the barriers of racism and gender discrimination
- ✿ Taught how to meet the needs of the soul
- ✿ Taught the important lesson of worshipping God in spirit and in truth and not by seeking a particular edifice or place or in external forms and ceremonies
- ✿ Taught that he was the living water
- ✿ Taught the important lesson of what true “meat” is

- ✦ Taught the important lesson that one sows and another reaps, one scatters seed and another gathers the harvest, but all rejoice together and all are in service together to God
- ✦ She was hungering and thirsting for truth. She had never heard such truths from the priests. She had studied the prophecy of Deut 18:15 but did not understand it. She believed Jesus when he said he was the Messiah. As she listened she was filled with joy. She imparted to others what she had received.
- ✦ And Jesus tarried two days in the area.