

- Videos available on our YouTube channel: [www.htchurch.tv](http://www.htchurch.tv)
  - All notes, etc. available at: [www.htchurch.com/john](http://www.htchurch.com/john)
  - Contact Pastor Nick at: [pastornick@htchurch.com](mailto:pastornick@htchurch.com)
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**Recap**

- We finished John 3 and our discussion on salvation that began with Jesus’ meeting with the Jewish leader, Nicodemus.
- We talked about this season of transition in the ministries of John the Baptist and Jesus, as Jesus had now begun his own ministry. John knew that he must decrease, whereas Jesus’ ministry must increase.
- Some of John’s disciples came to him with jealousy against Jesus. In response, John gave them extremely important teaching about why Jesus was superior.
- The chapter ends with John’s testimony about Jesus and His salvation.

**Where Jesus Needed To Go (John 4:1-4)**

*1 Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John 2 (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), 3 He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. 4 But He needed to go through Samaria.*

- The message of Jesus will be much bigger and broader in its scope, than anything that the disciples could have imagined.

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- The Pharisees realized Jesus was becoming more popular than John the Baptist.
- Jesus probably didn't want to be seen as competing with John the Baptist, nor to face unnecessary harassment from the Pharisees too soon.
- Jesus **needed** to go through Samaria. (Refer to map.)
- Going straight through Samaria was definitely preferable, but some Jews refused to pass through Samaria. They would bypass it completely.
- However, Jesus needed to go that way because he had a divine appointment!
- A great lesson on how we need to pray for God's leading and guidance daily.

**At Sychar (John 4:5-6a)**

*5 So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. 6 Now Jacob's well was there.*

- Note the contrasts between Jesus and Jacob. We've seen Jesus as greater than purification rites, and greater than the Temple, too. Now we'll see that he can give us something better than what Jacob could.
- Jesus is the One to whom all the feasts, and sacrifices, and symbols are pointing.

Understanding Samaria and the region of Shechem

- Recall: Samaria is a city **and** a region, too, as well as an ethnicity.
- Sychar is a mile or so away from the modern city of Nablus, and perhaps less than a mile from Shechem, an important place with a rich biblical history.
- *Shechem* means a shoulder, or a saddle; it sits between two important mountains.

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- Shechem is where Abraham dwelled when he first came into the land. This is where God appeared to Abraham and promised to give his descendants the land.
- Shechem is also where Jacob returned to after being away for 20 years.
- Jewish tradition says Jacob dug the well that's mentioned in our story.
- Jacob gave Joseph some land there, and Joseph's remains were buried there.
- In Moses' time, Shechem was an important gathering place. The people gathered on the two mountains (Gerizim and Ebal). From these two mountains they proclaimed aloud both the curses and the blessings of the Law. (See photo.)

### **No Dealings With Samaritans (John 4:6b-9)**

*6b Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. 7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." 8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. 9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.*

- Jesus was weary and thirsty... He was fully God **and** fully Man!
- The sixth hour was noontime (counting from sunrise).
- Traditionally this woman is known as Photini.
- Placing ourselves into the mindset of John's original audience, there is an immediate problem. Why is this woman coming to draw water in the noonday sun? Women came to wells early in the morning, or in the evening.
- In Mediterranean culture, the quick conclusion one would draw is that something is wrong with this woman: for some reason she is an outcast.

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Jesus is always doing unexpected things!

- Jewish men did not casually speak to women. This was highly unusual behavior, so much so that she might even have suspected Jesus' intentions.
- The absence of the disciples will be an important detail later.
- The woman replies with surprise. Why is he speaking to her? Not only is she a woman, but Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.
- The audience might have heard that Jews and Samaritans don't share cups, etc.

**The Trouble With Samaria – A Thumbnail Sketch**

A problem that began with civil war in Israel around 930 B.C.

- After Solomon died, the nation split into two kingdoms.
- The northern kingdom became known as Israel; the southern kingdom became known as Judah. In Judah there were only three or four tribes.
- The northern kingdom went downhill morally very fast. One of their kings, Omri, built the city of Samaria and made it his capital.
- Around 722 B.C., the Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom, carrying away thousands in a series of deportations. This created the idea of the 10 Lost Tribes.
- The Assyrians resettled people into Samaria, creating a blended population. The transplanted people also brought their foreign gods with them.
- For these reasons, the people of Judah began to look down upon the Samaritans.
- The Samaritans made religious changes to their Judaism, only accepting the first five Books of the Bible. They didn't accept any of the other prophets or books.
- The Samaritans were expecting the "prophet like Moses;" he was perhaps their version of the Messiah.

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- The Samaritans did not accept the worship of the Temple at Jerusalem. They believed that Mt. Gerizim was where God wanted to be worshiped. They ended up building a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, later destroyed by the Jews.
- To sum it up, the Jews saw Samaritans as ethnically impure and heretical. Think of how shocking Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan must have been!
- Despite this difficult history, the Samaritans still exist and have persevered.

**Living Water! (John 4:10-12)**

*10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." 11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? 12 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"*

- Jesus, as always, refocuses on the woman's real need.
- Notice the Lord revealing himself more openly than he has to anybody before.
- **Living water** described water that was moving, and not stagnant. Perhaps for that reason it's a beautiful symbol of the Spirit and his work in our lives.
  - Jeremiah 2: God said his people had abandoned him, the fountain of living waters, and had made for themselves broken cisterns.
  - The Bible says God would make streams in the desert. In the age to come, Zechariah said living waters would flow out from Jerusalem.
  - Ezekiel talked about the river that would bring life everywhere it went.

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- Here Jesus claims to be able to give this living water to someone! Understood properly, it's another claim on his part to be God.
- She misunderstands, as many in John's Gospel.
- Jesus needs no bucket, despite the deepness of the well.
- Notice the woman softening to Jesus a little.

**A Fountain Of Water (John 4:13-14)**

*13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."*

- Jesus can give you living water, but he does it by putting that limitless Holy Spirit within you. He gives us something much better than what Jacob gave his family.
- This is one of a number of pictures in *John* that portray what it means to have eternal life and live in fellowship with him.
- Compare this with John 3:16.
- Jesus gives us something that's like a limitless fountain of life. That's why he compares it "living water." This image continues to be seen in the rest of the New Testament. We all need to drink of this eternal life. See Revelation chs. 21 and 22: "I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts."

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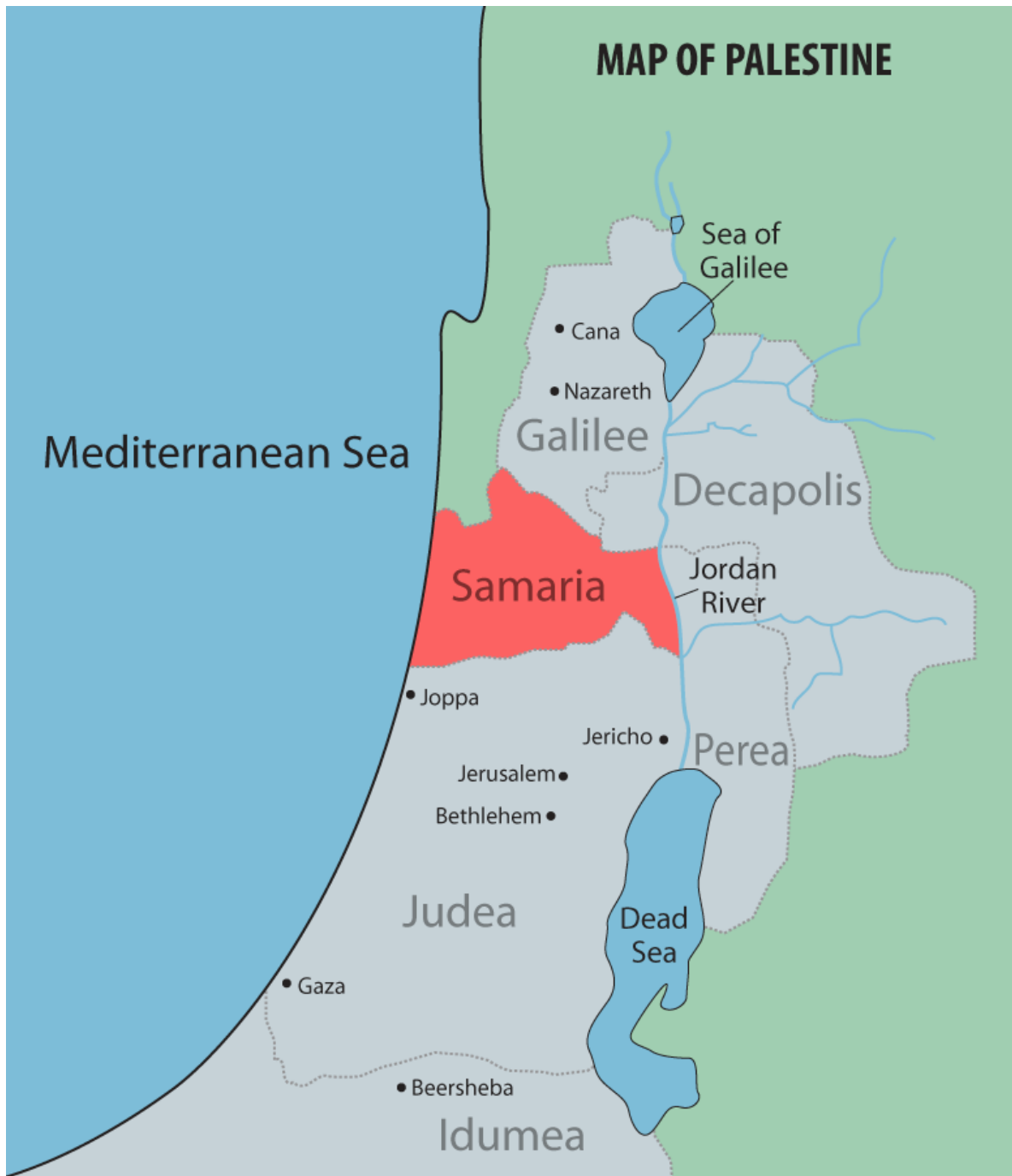
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“Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim”

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(Mt. Gerizim on the left; Mt. Ebal on the right)