

vs. 1-26

The reason that Jesus departed from Judea is twofold. One reason would be to prevent the Pharisees from succeeding in their plot to cause misunderstanding between His disciples and John. The second reason was that John had been arrested by Herod and Jesus knew that the time had not yet come for Him.

Jesus took the shorter road from Judea to Galilee that went through Samaria (Bethany to Samaria to Sychar to Galilee), rather than crossing the Jordan river in Judea, going north of Samaria and then recrossing the Jordan. This shorter road through Samaria was the most common for Galileans to take on their way to the capital. Jesus being a Galilean would naturally take this route.

The meeting of Jesus and the woman at the well probably took place in the early evening of a summer day. There, Jesus is waiting at the well of Jacob when a woman arrives. [The disciples had gone to town to get food.] She had come, as customary, to draw water from the well. Jesus asked her for a drink. She then questioned Him as to why a Jew would ask a Samaritan woman for a drink. [The main reason for her question would be the known hatred the Jews had for the Samaritans. This hatred stemmed back to 722 B.C. when Israel was taken captive and were never to return to their homeland. The Samaritans came into being when people were placed in Israel by the King of Assyria. Since these new people did not know the God of the land, God sent lions in to devour them. A Jewish priest was then sent back to instruct the people about the God of Israel. The Samaritans combined their beliefs about God with the Jewish religion and practiced that. The Jews in Judea, did not accept these "foreigners" and the hatred began.]

Jesus offered the woman, living water, which would prevent her from ever thirsting again. This water was, and still is the Holy Spirit.

The woman thought that Jesus was a prophet because he related to her the events of her life. The fact that she had, had five husbands and was living with a sixth man, was shown to her as evidence that He knew all about her. She then quickly changes the subject to where they worship as Samaritans compared to where the Jews worship. Christ then goes on to tell her that she did not know what she worshipped, whereas the Jews knew what they worshipped. He then goes on to say that it will someday no longer be where people worship as long as they worship in spirit and in truth. The woman then tells Him that she knew that the Messiah would come and would answer all these questions. Jesus then informs her that He is that Messiah.

vs. 27-38

After the disciples return with food, she leaves and goes into the city to tell the people that she has found the Messiah. The disciples then tried to persuade their Master to eat. He responded, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." While the disciples wonder where Jesus got His food, He goes on to explain. His food is to do the will of the Father. Jesus then challenges His disciples to see that the will of God for them is to reap the harvest that many have worked to prepare. He says that those who have sown and those who reap will rejoice together.

vs. 39-42

Many of the Samaritans believed because of the woman's testimony. When Jesus stayed for 2 days, many more came to believe because of what He said.

vs. 43-54

When Jesus arrived in Galilee, He was greeted by the people. They had also been at Jerusalem and had seen all that He had done. A man from Capernaum came to Cana (20 mile trip) to have Jesus come and heal his son. Because the man believed Jesus could heal, Jesus performed the miracle. Because the healing took place at the same time as Jesus speaking the words, the nobleman and his entire household all believed.

COMMENTARY

Gospel of John Chapter 5:

vs 1-15

The people believed that the pool of Bethesda was entered by an angel, this caused it bubble up and only the first one who stepped into the pool would be cured. The man whom Jesus healed had been paralyzed for 38 years. Jesus told the man to, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." Immediately the man was healed and he took up his bed and walked. The man had broken the law that a man can not carry his bed on the Sabbath.

The Sabbath began at 6 p.m. on Friday and ended on Saturday at 6 p.m. The Sabbath was to be a day of rest and complete dedication to God. The people were to protect the poor, needy, and the oppressed. They were told that on this day, no work was to be done. To ensure that, religious leaders had added amendments to the Sabbath law. The Pharisees and the Sadducees evaded the laws concerning the Sabbath, however, they were not lenient to others who tried to avoid the many rules and regulations that they had set up. With the additions made to God's law, the Sabbath became impossible to keep.

Because of the healed man's obedience to Jesus, he would now be required by Jewish law to offer a sacrifice. If he did not offer the sacrifice, he could be stoned for his disobedience to these regulations of men.

vs. 16-30

Because of the healing and the leaders and Jews finding out who had healed on the Sabbath, they began to persecute Jesus. Jesus was, in the eyes of the Rabbis, a non-traditionalist and a baitual Sabbath breaker. Jesus was actually working with the Father, to heal the man. Because of this claim, He was also accused of blasphemy, because He had made Himself equal with God [which in reality, He is!] Jesus also claimed that He had the power of life and that judgement was also His prerogative.

Those who believe in Jesus have passed from death into life. This life being an everlasting life. Jesus was going to prove His statement by raising the dead at His second coming.

vs. 31-47

Jesus called the following to substantiate His claim: 1. John the Baptizer, 2. His own works, 3. God, 4. Old Testament writings, and 5. Moses' writings. The Jews did not accept Jesus because they loved the darkness more than the Light. They had no real love for God so when they found the one that God and the Scriptures spoke of, as recognized earlier by Nicodemus, they refused to accept Him. Moses, whom the Jews believed and hoped in, will now be their accuser at the Judgement. This will happen because the one they claim to believe in, they did not actually believe or follow. Moses will bring this to their attention, but unfortunately, it will be too late.

STUDY GUIDE

Gospel of John Chapter 4:

1. What did the woman say to Jesus when He asked her for a drink?
2. What did Jesus reply to her in verse 10?
3. What did Jesus say about the water He offered in verse 14?
4. What convinced the woman that Jesus was a prophet?
5. What does Jesus say about "true" worshipers?
6. What did the woman do when she returned to town?
7. What did Jesus say "His food", was?
8. According to verse 39, why did many of the Samaritans believe in Jesus?
9. Why did many more become believers?
10. What did the royal official beg of Jesus?
11. Why did the father and all his household believe?

BONUS:

1. What can we learn from the incident of Jesus and the woman at the well?
2. What do we learn from verses 34-38 about the importance of working together?
3. What can we learn from the woman about evangelism? (see vs39-42)

STUDY GUIDE

Gospel of John Chapter 5:

1. How did the invalid expect to be healed according to verse 7?
2. What did Jesus tell the man to do and what was the result?
3. After the man found out that it was Jesus who had made him well, what did he do?
4. According to verse 18, why did the Jews try all the harder to kill Jesus?
5. What does Jesus say about, "honoring the Father and the Son"?
6. What time did Jesus say, "is coming and is now come"?
7. In verse 28, what time does Jesus say is coming?
8. Why did Jesus say, "nor does His Word dwell in you"?
9. What does Jesus say is not in their hearts? (see verse 42)
10. Who did Jesus say that the Jews accuser would be?

BONUS:

1. How does the incident at the pool of Bethesda, apply to us today?
2. How can Christians imitate the attitude of Christ, shown in the last half of verse 30?
3. Name all that Jesus says, "testifies about me". What importance should that have made to the Jews? How important is it to us, today?