

# The Woman, The Well & The Wilderness

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## 1. Two Women:

- 1.1. One at the well: The Samaritan woman in John 4.
- 1.2. One in the wilderness: Hosea's wife in Hosea 2.
- 1.3. The woman = us: the Church corporately & **each one of us individually.**

## 2. The Woman At The Well: John 4:1-26

- 2.1. The woman had "five husbands" + "the first husband".
- 2.2. Revelation 2:1-4: "You have left your first love".
  - 2.2.1. Who left who? Did the Ephesians leave, or did the "first love" leave?
  - 2.2.2. Who left who? Did the Samaritan woman leave, or did the "first husband" leave?
  - 2.2.3. "left" = (Greek) "apohieimi": "apo" = away + "hieimi" (an intensified form of) "eimi" = to go.
    - 2.2.3.1. "hi" = to allow or to permit or to release or to let (go). i.e. "You have let go of your first husband". As in Colossians 2:19 "...not holding fast to the Head..."
    - 2.2.3.2. "hi" = to send (away) or dismiss or reject. i.e. "You have rejected your first husband." As in I Peter 2:4-8:
      - 2.2.3.2.1. "To you who believe (trust in, depend upon, lean upon), He is precious...(He) has become the Chief Cornerstone."

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2.2.3.2.2. “But to those who disbelieve (trust in, depend upon, lean upon **something other than Him**), (He is) the Stone which the builders rejected...a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense.”

2.2.3.3. “You have rejected your first husband in the sense of **having replaced Him with a substitute.**” As in Jeremiah 2:13: “For My people have committed two evils: They have **forsaken Me**, the Fountain of Living Waters, and hewn for themselves (i.e. substituted in place of Me) cisterns - broken cisterns that can not hold water.”

2.3. This is exactly what the Samaritan woman had done:

2.3.1. Jesus had revealed Himself to her as the Fountain of Living Water, but initially, she was more interested in “the well”.

2.3.1.1. When the woman spoke of “the well”, she used the Greek word: “phrear” = a pit.

2.3.1.2. When Jesus mentions “the well”, He used the Greek word: “pege” = a fountain.

2.3.1.3. i.e. There are “wells”, and then there are “wells”. There is true spiritual nourishment from the Fountain of Life; and then there are the cheap substitutes of **people, places and things.**

2.4. I have two other full teachings delineating these substitutes i.e. the various other husbands for whom the Samaritan woman left her first husband, and the things for which the Ephesians left their first love; but I’ll just summarize them, so we can get on to the woman in the wilderness:

2.4.1. The other husbands for whom the Samaritan woman left her First Husband:

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2.4.1.1. Her 2<sup>nd</sup> husband: her culture. (John 4:9)

2.4.1.2. Her 3<sup>rd</sup> husband: her spiritual heritage. (John 4:12)

2.4.1.3. Her 4<sup>th</sup> husband: spiritual things and activities. (John 4:11)

2.4.1.4. Her 5<sup>th</sup> husband: her past spiritual experiences. (John 4:20a)

2.4.1.5. Her 6<sup>th</sup> man (“not really her husband”): church meetings. (John 4:20b)

2.4.1.6. The bottom line: John 4:22 “You worship what you do not know...” The Samaritan woman’s spiritual life was in a pitiable state - she had become so confused with all her substitute husbands, she was worshipping God, but did not know the God she was worshipping.

2.4.2. The things for which the Ephesians had left their “First Love”:

2.4.2.1. The work of the ministry. (Revelation 2:2a)

2.4.2.2. Purity of doctrine. (Revelation 2:2b)

2.4.2.3. Steadfastness and self-denial. (Revelation 2:2-3)

2.4.2.4. The bottom line: Revelation 2:4 “Nevertheless I have this against you...” The Lord did not hold these things against them, but rather, these things had become substitutes for a vital relationship with their First Love.

## 3. The Woman In The Wilderness:

3.1. Hosea 1:1-3 Gomer (Complete i.e. the full measure of harlotry) bore:

3.1.1. A son, Jezreel (The Lord sows i.e. fruitfulness).

3.1.2. A daughter, Lo-Ruhamah (Not having obtained mercy).

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3.1.3. A son, Lo-Ammi (Not My people).

3.1.4. The names of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> children speak of the Lord's dealings with His people:

Hosea 2:4.

3.1.5. The name of the first child speaks of the Lord's promise of restored blessing after His dealings produce the fruit He is wanting in their hearts and lives - i.e. the reality of a vital relationship with their First Husband.

3.2. Hosea 2:2-3 & 6-7 In the wilderness she was stripped of all her substitute husbands in order to be returned to her First Husband.

3.3. Hosea 2:5 & 8 She knew many spiritual things, but not the One Who is the "Sum of All Spiritual Things". Like the Samaritan woman, she worshipped God, but did not know the God she worshipped.

3.4. Hosea 2:9-12 In the wilderness, she would have to lose all her substitute husbands in order to again gain back her First Husband.

3.4.1. Philippians 3:3-8 Usually we must lose confidence (faith, trust, dependence upon) spiritual things, activities and experiences like church meetings, the work of the ministry, purity of doctrine and life, before we can truly gain confidence (faith, trust, dependence upon) and joy in Christ Jesus alone.

3.4.2. This causing a loss of confidence (faith, trust, dependence upon) a spirituality of **people, places and things** is a very real work of the Holy Spirit in the wilderness:

3.4.2.1. Isaiah 40:3 "Led by the Spirit into the Wilderness"(Luke 4:1):

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- 3.4.2.1.1. The wilderness is the spiritual place where there are no **people, places and things** to have confidence in and depend upon for our spirituality. It is the place where we must find the reality of a vital relationship with Jesus for our spirituality.
- 3.4.2.1.2. When God decides it is time for us to come into more spiritual reality in our relationship with Himself, He leads us into the wilderness - We can not remain there, but we must begin there.
- 3.4.2.1.3. The wilderness is God's means for "leading captivity captive" (Psalm 68:18) - leading us out of **the captivity of a spirituality of people, places and things** into captivity of a vital relationship with Himself.
- 3.4.2.1.3.1. Exodus 16 Moses & Israel being led out of the bondage of Egypt, through the Wilderness of Sin, into the Promised Land.
- 3.4.2.1.3.2. Ezekiel 20 The remnant being led out of the bondage of Babylon, through the "Wilderness of the Peoples/Nations" ("times of the Gentiles/Nations"), to the restoration of the temple.
- 3.4.2.1.3.3. I Samuel 22-23 David & "those who were discontented" escaped from Saul in Gilgal, came to the Cave of Adullam in the Judean wilderness, traveled through the Wilderness of Ziph, and other wildernesses, being formed as a people for a new expression of the Kingdom of God.
- 3.4.2.1.3.4. Matthew 3 1032 years after David, in the very same Judean wilderness, John the Baptist came "as a voice crying in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord". People traveled a few days journey on foot into this wilderness, leaving Jerusalem, the

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center for **spiritual people, places and things**. They were hungering and thirsting for the reality of a vital relationship with God.

3.4.2.1.3.5. Hosea 2 Gomer being led out of **a life filled with people, places and things**, into wilderness of Achor, where in the end she is betrothed to her First Husband in faithfulness.

3.4.2.2. Isaiah 40:4-5 “Divine Rectification”:

3.4.2.2.1. Think of it literally: Mountains collapsing and valleys erupting.

Traumatic, revolutionary change - but all happening in our hearts and lives.

3.4.2.2.2. Our strengths being made weak; and our weaknesses being made strong. II Corinthians 12:9 “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me....For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

3.4.2.2.3. Isaiah 40:6-7

- Flesh/people = grass
- People’s “loveliness”/spirituality = the flower
- We “wither” and our spirituality “fades”
- “Because the breath (Hebrew: “ruah”, wind or Spirit) of the Lord blows upon (us)”.

(Revivals which are true revivals always and only begin this way.)

- We “wither” (Hebrew: “yabesh”): become disappointed and confused i.e. disillusioned with our own spirituality and that of the Church as a whole.

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- Our “flower”/spirituality “fades” (Hebrew: “nabel”, Abigail’s husband’s name): becomes foolish, and comes to nought. i.e. We see the spirituality of people, places and things for what it’s worth - in the end, nothing. i.e. Humiliation which approaches true humility.

## 3.4.2.2.4. Isaiah 40:8

- After we are disillusioned with ourselves and come to a place of true humility with regards to our own spirituality, we realize:
- The fulfilling of the word of God is the work of God.
- The work of God is the work of God.
- But we are called to co-labor with God in His word and work.
- And, in spite of, in the midst of, and even because of, our gross imperfection, “the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together...”
- Realizing this, we also realize that, rather than our own spirituality, the reality of a vital relationship with God is the primary and first thing.

## 3.5. Hosea 2:14 “speak comfort” = (Literally) “speak to her heart”:

Revelation 2:4-5 & 7 i.e. The “comfort” of the restored blessing comes after she realizes she has fallen away from the reality of a vital relationship with her First Husband: Hosea 2:7b.

## 3.6. The restored blessing that comes with returning to the reality of a vital relationship with God: Hosea 2:15-16 & 19-20.

- fruitfulness (v.15)
- a setting free from religious bondages into a youthful, joyful freedom in one’s relationship with the Lord. (v.15)

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- a relationship with the Lord that arises out of reciprocal love rather than obligatory servitude. (v.16)
- a vital relationship with our First Love which also has the reality - not the human manufacture - of righteousness, justice, lovingkindness and compassion towards others because we experience the same in our relationship with God.
- Note that all this came out of a wilderness experience: (v.15) “the Valley of Achor as a door of hope”: “Achor” = trouble, tribulation, causing sorrow, **to make deep viz. Our relationship with the Lord.**

3.7. Both Jezreel and Sychar were in Samaria, so let’s go back to the Samaritan woman at the well in Sychar: John 4:19-24.

3.7.1. Jesus is making a distinction between a worship and spirituality acted out in a “mountain” of spiritual things, activities and experiences like church meetings, the work of the ministry, purity of doctrine and life, etc. and a worship and spirituality acted out “in spirit and **truth**”.

3.7.1.1. “truth” = (Greek) “aletheia”: (Vine) “the **reality** lying at the basis of an appearance”. i.e. **the reality of a vital relationship with God lying at the basis of our worship and spirituality.**

3.7.1.2. This reality of relationship is the ear mark of “worship in spirit”.

3.7.1.3. Hosea 2:19-20 A betrothal, a marriage of spirit and truth: Psalm 85:10-11 Only when we have **the reality of a vital relationship with God** does our understanding of His nature - and consequently the expression of our spirituality - go beyond “taking sides” in emphasizing certain things over other things which may seem opposite or contradictory to each other. e.g. the expression of both

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the righteousness of God along with the mercy of God toward those who, in our opinion, may not seem to be so righteous; or maintaining purity of doctrine without sacrificing peace with others who hold a different perspective, etc. **Only those who have the reality of a vital relationship with God can take hold of this marriage of spirit and truth,** because when we are primarily relating to spiritual things instead of relating to God, we find ourselves “taking sides” in emphasizing our pet doctrines and spiritual hobbyhorses.

4. Hosea 2:21-22 In this poetic picture we can understand the word “answer” to mean “relate to”. i.e. God in heaven relating to man on earth. Man on earth in relationship with God in heaven.
- “Jezreel” = “**God sows**” and “**man is made fruitful**”.
  - God sows us **into the wilderness** for the purpose of drawing us closer to Himself in a **vital relationship**. While in the wilderness, if we will sow the seed of our pseudo-spirituality into the ground to die, and let it be watered by the Fountain of Living Water, it can become a **truly fruitful spirituality** with “grain, new wine, and oil”. God will sow it again - transplant it - into the realm of “**spirit and truth**” - a **place of vital relationship with God**.