

A Harmony of the Gospels

Jesus' departure from Judea and the beginning of John's imprisonment by Herod Matthew 4:12; Mark 1:14a; Luke 3:19-20; 4:14a; John 4:1-4

- Herod Antipas

- Son of Herod the Great
- Ruled 4 B.C. to A.D. 39 as tetrarch of Galilee and Perea
- Built Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee. Named after the Roman Emperor Tiberius and served as Herod's capital city.
- Married originally to the daughter of the Nabatean king Aretas IV. Marriage probably arranged by Augustus to establish peace between the Jews and Arabs.
- Planned to divorce his first wife who fled to her father at the news and married his brother Herod Philip's wife.
- Rebuked by John the Baptist over this and other sinful acts
- Imprisoned John shortly into the public ministry of Jesus

Jesus' departure from Judea and the beginning of John's imprisonment by Herod Matthew 4:12; Mark 1:14a; Luke 3:19-20; 4:14a; John 4:1-4

- The return of Jesus to Galilee was occasioned by the attempt by the Pharisees to cause division between the ministries of Jesus and John.
- The imprisonment of John took place shortly after Jesus returned to Galilee.

Discussion with a Samaritan woman John 4:5-26

- And He had to pass through Samaria.



Discussion with a Samaritan woman John 4:5-26

- Samaria

- Was in the area of the Northern Kingdom. The Northern Kingdom was taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.
 - Never a “return from captivity” as the Southern Kingdom
 - Assyrians deported many of the Israelites and imported other captured people to the area to destabilize any organized resistance. 2 Kings 17:22-41

Discussion with a Samaritan woman John 4:5-26

- Samaria

- Those from the area of Samaria were rebuffed by the returning exiles of the Southern Kingdom when they offered to help them rebuild the Temple. Ezra 4:1-3
- Some historical evidence that priests from Jerusalem went to Samaria and established a rival place of worship on Mt. Gerizim. The Samaritan Pentateuch added a command to the Ten Commandments to build an altar on Mt. Gerizim based on Deuteronomy 27.

Discussion with a Samaritan woman John 4:5-26

- Jewish Samaritan relationships were strained by Jesus time by:
 - Dispute over the place of the “central sanctuary”.
 - History of taking different sides in conflicts going back to the Ptolemies and the Seleucids.
 - The Samaritan practice of embracing Greek culture and not supporting the Jews in their resistance to Antiochus Epiphanes
 - The capture of Shechem and destruction of the sanctuary on Mount Gerizim by John Hyrcanus in 128 B.C.

Discussion with a Samaritan woman John 4:5-26

- The setting:

- ⁵ So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. *John 4:5-6 (ESV)*

- *See Genesis 33:19-20 and Joshua 24:32*

- *Noon*

Discussion with a Samaritan woman John 4:5-26

- The initial encounter
 - Noon would not be a time when anyone would normally be at the well.
 - Jesus masterfully ignored every barrier and made a simple request for a drink of water. The woman's surprised reply reflects:
 - Samaritan women were considered perpetually unclean by the Jews.
 - Samaritans and Jews would only interact if absolutely necessary.
 - A man would not normally initiate a conversation with a strange woman in public

Discussion with a Samaritan woman John 4:5-26

- The interaction

- Probably from the tone of her reply, Jesus immediately picked up on the fact that she had a more profound thirst than his physical thirst and offers to satisfy it.
- The woman immediately responds that she would like this everlasting water.
- Jesus' reply reveals that she was not yet fully aware of her deep need for this living water. She had to realize that her sin was causing this thirst.
- She tries to divert the attention away from her sin by bringing up one of the biggest points of contention between the Samaritans and the Jews, the place of worship.

Discussion with a Samaritan woman John 4:5-26

- The interaction
 - Jesus uses this occasion to speak of the true nature of God and worship.
 - A key point of the beliefs of the Samaritans was the coming of the “prophet like Moses” a recognized Messianic reference in the Pentateuch. Deuteronomy 18:15
 - Jesus plainly reveals to her that He is the expected Messiah.

Challenge of a spiritual harvest John 4:27-38

- The immediate transformation of this woman motivated a whole community to come out to meet Jesus.
- Contrast this to the disciples who had spent some time with Jesus already and did not bring a single person back to meet Jesus.
- As the woman initially, the disciples were focused on the physical needs at hand. We need to be discerning in these matters.
- Jesus led the disciples to see the real harvest as the people streamed out of the town to meet Him.

Challenge of a spiritual harvest John 4:27-38

- The Spiritual Harvest

- True fulfillment comes from being a part of the harvest of souls.
- The time of harvest is now.
- Those who engage in the harvest have the opportunity to benefit from the labor of others.

Evangelization of Sychar John 4:39-42

- Like the woman, we introduce people to Jesus
- Jesus does the saving.