



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



# The Holy Gospel According to St. John

## Chapter 4

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# Introduction

- The Jews took pride in their land for it was ‘the promised land’ that God had granted to Abraham, the father of believers, as an inheritance for him and his children
- At the time of the Lord Jesus Christ this land had become divided into three parts: Judea in the South where the city of God, Jerusalem, stands and where there is the Temple that is considered the holiest place in the world; Galilee or the Galilee of the Gentiles in the North and many in this area had accepted the Jewish faith; and Samaria in the central part of the land



# Introduction

- There was a deep and reciprocal hatred between the Samaritans and the Jews
- In this chapter, we find the Lord visiting these three parts of the land

## Chapter Outline:

- A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 1-26
- The Whiteness Harvest 27-38
- The Savior of the World 39-42
- Welcome at Galilee 43-45
- A Nobleman's Son Healed 46-54

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- Jesus realized that the Pharisees were aware of His increasing popularity, He was in fact making more disciples than John
- So, He left Judea, where the events in the last part of chapter 3 had occurred and went back to Galilee
- The Pharisees were intensely jealous of anyone besides themselves who obtained a following, Matthew 27:18
- Jesus knew that confrontation with them was inevitable, but the time had not yet come for Him to die

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- Jesus did not leave Judea because of any lack of favorable response to His message
- He was making many disciples, even more so than John was
- He apparently thought there were even more important reasons for Him to return to Galilee
- *but His disciples* , This is the only passage in the Gospels where it is recorded that Jesus' disciples are baptizing
- What kind of baptism is it that Jesus' disciples are giving?

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- It must be a baptism of repentance, similar to the baptism offered by John the Baptist since the baptism of Christ cannot be offered until after the crucifixion and resurrection
- St. John Chrysostom writes that “...both baptisms, that of St. John the Baptist and that of our Lord's disciples ..., had a single purpose—to bring the baptized to Christ ... and prepare the way for future faith.”

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- St. Ambrose wrote that baptism of repentance was necessary to prepare the way for the grace that would be Christ's gift:  
“Neither repentance avails without grace nor grace without repentance; for repentance must first condemn sin that grace may blot it out.” St. Ambrose of Milan
- Why Jesus did not baptize? Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:5-9
- He was preparing the disciples for the time when He would give them the Great Commission to baptize all nations in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, beginning in Jerusalem and Judea, and then in Samaria, and to the Gentile nations of the earth

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- But if Jesus had also been baptizing before His crucifixion it would have caused confusion between the baptism of repentance and the baptism of re-birth into the New Covenant in Christ that was to be offered after the Resurrection
- When the rage of the Pharisees and their desire to kill Him was aroused, the Lord left Judea and went towards the Galilee of the Gentiles because the time of His death had not yet come
- Besides, probably His disciples were not ready to bear hard trials yet



# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- *needed to go through Samaria*, Following the shortest and most usual road, and the one we find Him taking from Galilee to Jerusalem, Luke 9:52
- Josephus spoke of this as the customary way of the Galileans going up during the feasts at Jerusalem
- The Pharisees, indeed, took the longer road through Perea, to avoid contact with the country and people of Samaria
- But it is within the purpose of His life and work *He needed to go*, i.e., was necessary that He should go to teach in Samaria, as in Judea

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- “This knowledge which the Pharisees had of our Savior's making so many disciples, and baptizing such members, could not prevail upon them to follow Him for their salvation; otherwise Christ would not have departed out of Judea. Jesus knew full well that this, their knowledge, would not work their conversion, but only stir up their envy, and excite them to persecute Him; and therefore he retired. He could indeed have remained amongst them in security, had he chosen to exercise His power; but He would not: that so He might leave an example to His faithful servants, teaching them to flee from the rage of their cruel persecutors.” St. Augustine

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The Samaritans were of Jewish origin whether from the perspective of blood ties or of religion
- The history of conflict and hostility between Judeans and Samaritans stretched back to pre-Samaritan times in the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC when the 10 northern tribes of Israel united in a civil war against David's descendant King Rehoboam
- The 10 tribes successfully broke away to form the Northern Kingdom of Israel

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The 10 tribes elected Jeroboam, a descendant of Joseph's son Ephraim, as their king
- To prevent the influence of the Southern Kingdom of Judah through the priesthood and the Temple in Jerusalem, Jeroboam expelled all the priests and Levites
- Jeroboam rejected worship of the Covenant at the Temple in Jerusalem, set up a new Temple on Mt. Gerizim in violation of the Sinai Covenant, and reintroduced golden calf worship

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- Later in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC, God brought judgment on Israel's apostasy and the kingdom was destroyed by the Assyrians who exiled the 10 tribes of Israel and brought in 5 different groups of people from the East
- These people brought their gods, their baalim [plural of baal], with them but they also adopted the worship of Yahweh
- Intermarrying with the few remaining Israelites, these people became the Samaritans

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- Later after the Babylonian Exile in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC when the Southern Kingdom of Judah was allowed to return to the land and rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, the Samaritans offered to help rebuild the Temple
- When their offer was rejected the Samaritans, in spite, sought in every way to keep the Jews from rebuilding the Temple
- Centuries of enmity left deep-seeded hatred between Jews and Samaritans
- The Samaritans only accepted the first 5 books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy) into their canon

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- They did not accept the Old Testament books of the histories or the prophets, or the books of wisdom
- They celebrated the big Jewish feasts: the Passover, the Pentecost, the Tabernacles, and the Day of Atonement
- Concerning the schism in the Old Covenant Church and the Davidic Kingdom, read 1 Kings chapter 12
- On the fall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the origins of the Samaritans, read 2 Kings chapter 17
- And Ezra 4:1-24 on the hostility of the Samaritans to the rebuilding of the Temple after the return from exile

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- *A city ... called Sychar*, This city was anciently called Shechem
- It seems to have been situated at the foot of Mount Gerizim, in the province of Samaria, on which the temple of the Samaritans was built
- After the ruin of Samaria by Salmanezer, Sychar, or Shechem, became the capital of the Samaritans; and it continued so, according to Josephus, in the time of Alexander the Great
- It was about ten miles from Shiloh, forty from Jerusalem, and fifty-two from Jericho



# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- It probably got the name of Sychar, which signifies drunken, from the drunkenness of its inhabitants
- With this crime the Prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 28:1,3,7-8) solemnly charges the Ephraimites, within whose limits the city stood
- This place is remarkable in the Scriptures:
  1. As being that where Abram first stopped on his coming from Haran to Canaan

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



2. Where God first appeared to Abram, and promised to give the land to his seed
  3. The place where Abram first built an altar to the Lord, and called upon his name, Genesis 12:7
- The present name of this city is Neapolis, or Naplouse
  - Jacob had bought this field from the children of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of silver, Genesis 33:19; and in it he built an altar, which he dedicated to El Elohe Ishrael, Genesis 33:20

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- This place, Jacob left as a private or overplus inheritance to Joseph and his children, Genesis 48:21-22, and Joshua 24:32
- The reoccurring themes associated with Shechem are Covenant, failed covenant/ failed marriage, murder/ terrible wrongs committed, betrayal and lost opportunity to witness to the Gentile people of the One True God
- Jesus, King of Israel, descendant of King David, will undo all these centuries of wrongs and abuses as He calls Samaria, Israel, back into the Covenant
- He has come to save that which was lost

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- *being wearied*, John wants to remind us that Jesus was fully divine and fully human
- Like us He suffered from hunger and thirst and felt fatigue, but despite His tiredness Jesus, the good Shepherd, does not waste the opportunity to reach out to the lost sheep
- *Sat thus*, St. Chrysostom inquires what the particle thus, means here?
- And answers, that it simply signifies, He sat not upon a throne, seat, or cushion; but upon the ground

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- “Why is the sixth hour so meaningful? It is because in the Bible every period is viewed as an hour. So the first period covers from Adam to Noah, the second from Noah to Abraham, the third from Abraham to David, the fourth from David to the exile in Babylon, the fifth from the exile in Babylon to the baptism of John, and from that time the sixth period begins” St. Augustine

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The woman came at noon after the men and women had drawn water and had returned to their homes reveals the way her people regarded her
- She could not bring herself to face any of them
- So she came alone and in the heat of the day to draw water
- Our Lord is the God of those who are forsaken
- He transforms them into children of His kingdom and preachers of the truth

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The Lord began His conversation with her by a humble request: to have a drink of water
- The One who had become poor for our sake has now become a beggar, for our sake too
- He asks for a glass of water not out of His personal need but in order to reveal her own need for Him
- Then she would drink and be satisfied from the springs of His rich blessings and grace
- “What does ‘Give Me a drink’ imply? It implies: ‘I am yearning for you to believe.’ St. Augustine

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- “The One who asked for a drink was thirsty and sought to offer faith and salvation to the woman herself.” St. Augustine
- Our Messiah who is concerned with speaking with the crowds is also concerned with meeting one individual, a poor woman who is of a strange origin and a Samaritan who bears enmity towards the Jews
- *For His disciples had gone away*, This gives the reason for the request
- Had the disciples been present they would have made the request: an indication of the relations already existing between the disciples and the Lord



# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The Samaritan woman recognizes that the Lord is a Jew either from His clothes which are different from the Samaritans' or from His language
- What preoccupies her is not to answer His request or reject it, but the tone of His voice
- He did not sound like a Jew with hostile feelings
- The Samaritans too were known to be hostile to the Jews (Ezra 4:1)
- She was astonished that Jesus would speak to her

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- She was even more astonished that He would ask for water from her hand
- To associate with a Samaritan, much less to accept food or drink from such a person, would cause a Jew to become ritually unclean
- Samaritans were considered to be worse than Gentiles
- It is also outside the boundaries of Jewish customs for a man to converse with women in public who are not part of their immediate family, John 4:27 much less a woman who is a recognized sinner, John 4:18

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- *the gift of God*, Such a gift of kindness was Jesus Christ to the world, John 3:16; and through Him comes the gift of the Spirit, which those who believe in His name were to receive
- Through this great gift comes the Holy Spirit, and all other gifts which are necessary to the salvation of a lost world
- “Living water’ is a common expression to indicate the sources of water that flow continuously. This is the opposite of ‘dead water’ ... Living water refers to the Holy Spirit that waters the soul and transforms its bareness into a fruitful paradise. At the same time the Spirit washes the soul from her corruption.” St. John Chrysostom

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- *you would have asked Him*, You stand by this deep well that for centuries has been God's gift of refreshment to man; you have the means of drawing the water, and are thus the apparent benefactor to Him who asks for your aid
- It is not really so
- There is a deep well of spiritual truth in communion with God, as necessary for man's true life as water is for the natural life
- I stand here with the means to draw, with the power to enter the depths hidden from man, and reveal to your spirit the Being of God

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- It is really you that are the traveler in the journey of life, weary with the burning heat of its trials, and travel-stained by the sins through which you have passed, thirsting in the hopes and fears of that spirit that cannot rest apart from God, helpless at the very side of the well, for the Eternal is ever near you, and you do not know Him
- If you knew this gift of God, and knew Who it is that is now here to reveal it to you, you would have asked, and He would have given you that Spirit, which would have been in you as a fountain of living water

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The depth of the well is approximately 35 yards
- To draw water one would need a bucket and a long rope
- Neither the Lord nor His disciples had any of these
- It seemed to the woman that the Lord's words were illogical
- That is because He spoke of spiritual matters, whereas she was thinking in materialistic terms
- *Sir*, Her tone changes to one of respect
- Something in His voice and manner, it may be, has touched her

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- She does not understand His words, but she feels the presence of One who teaches with authority
- “Clearly, she must have had a reason for addressing Him in this manner and for greatly honoring Him. The proof is that she did not laugh, but was surprisingly confused. Do not be astonished that she could not understand immediately what she should have grasped concerning the Lord, for even Nicodemus did not understand the words of the Lord.” St. John Chrysostom

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The Samaritan woman took pride in the well that had been dug by a human hand; yet she was not aware that she stood before the divine and living Source
- *our father Jacob*, The ancient Samaritans were undoubtedly the descendants of Jacob; for they were the ten tribes that revolted in the reign of Rehoboam as we have mentioned earlier
- But those in our Lord's time were not genuine Israelites, but a corrupted race, sprung from a mixture of different nations, sent to by Salmanezer, king of the Assyrians



# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- Jesus does not answer her question, but asserts the universal recurrence of thirst, after even the water of Jacob's well, to lead her to the thought that His "living water" is something widely different
- After any water, or any drink, a man naturally thirsts again; but Christ speaks of the spiritual water of grace in this life, and of glory in the next, which will perfectly satisfy the desires of man's immortal soul for ever

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- “He did not answer: ‘Yes, I am greater than Jacob’, but rather achieved His purpose through His conversation with her...He wished to clarify matters to her, and explain the degree of difference and lack of correspondence between the two.” St. John Chrysostom
- *the water that I shall give him*, It is not an external supply, which must be sought to meet the recurring physical want, but it is the inner never-failing source, the fountain of living water, which satisfies every want as it occurs

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- He who has it, therefore, can never thirst
- Coming from the source of all life, it issues in eternal life
- “This is a reference to the redeeming water of baptism which has been truly offered once and will not be repeated again”  
St. Cyprian
- “When the promise is fulfilled to a blessed person because he hungers and thirsts for righteousness (Matt 5:6); he drinks of the water that the Lord gives to him and he possesses a source of water within him that flows into everlasting life.” Origen

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The water that the Lord offers has distinct benefits:
  1. It is a divine gift *I shall give him*
  2. It grants eternal life that cancels all other needs for he *will never thirst*
  3. It is inner water for the soul that *will become in him a fountain*
  4. The depths are transformed into a source that overflows onto others

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The woman has not yet emerged out of the region of her physical desires and her daily requirements
- She could not understand the miraculous water of which the Stranger spoke, but had some blurred notion that He might be able to deliver her from her hard work and exhausting life
- She did not as yet comprehend our Lord's meaning; but her curiosity was much excited, and this was the design of our Lord, that He might have her mind properly prepared to receive the great truths which He was about to announce

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- Christ begins to show her that He knows her life, to make her know Him and herself
- His purpose might have been to make her consider her own state
- And to show her that He knew her heart, and the secret actions of her life; and was therefore well qualified to teach her heavenly truths
- She has asked for this living water while she does not know that the well must first be dug

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- In the depth of her spirit there is a power of life; but like the source of a spring, it is hidden
- There are many hard rocks of unrepentance, remorselessness, relentless, and uncompassionate
- Many layers of every-day transgression
- Many bad habits that have become immovable

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- And many accumulations of carnal thoughts which had left nothing but its remains behind
- All this must be dug through before she can have the living water, and this well, too, must be deep
- The command, *Go, call your husband*, is the first stroke breaking up the surface of that fair appearance, and revealing the foulness of the life beneath it



# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- *I have no husband*, Her confession is not the result of hurtful reproaching or of facing her with her shameful self
- It is the result of His love
- By replying, “*I have no husband*”, she convicts herself on account of her wrongful association with a man who is not her husband in such a manner.” Origen
- In an amazingly gentle way, the Lord does not hurt her feelings on account of the fact that she had married five times previously and now lives with a man who is not her husband

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- He changes the conversation from being an argument about disagreements between the Jews and the Samaritans to a discussion about the new worship that would embrace the whole world
- St. Jerome comments that in order to meet the Savior of the world our Lord Jesus Christ, it is appropriate to abandon the five men- who stand for the Books written by Moses; as well as the sixth man- who stands for inventors or heretics

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- “The five husbands represent the five senses since she has surrendered her soul to her physical senses. These could not satisfy her as they do not lead her soul to eternal life. They just satisfy temporary and short lived feelings. The one with whom she is living now, and who is not her husband, represents the mind (that is not sanctified) and that does not lead her to the Word and the Truth. Rather, it leads her to sin, and offers her incorrect knowledge. She needs the Bridegroom of her soul who will lead her to wisdom, truth, and fulfillment.” St. Augustine

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- As the Lord reveals Himself gradually to her, the woman discovers that He knows all her hidden secrets
- According to her understanding, this means that He is a prophet and so she trusts in His ability to answer truthfully the question that puzzles so many, 'Will true worship take place in Jerusalem as the Jews claim, or will it be on Mount Gerizim according to the Samaritans and which had been blessed?'
- Some believe it is the same mountain upon which Abraham and later Jacob had built the altar, Genesis 12:6-7, 33:18-20

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- Now she had a curiosity to hear what Christ would say of these two temples, and of the different worship of the Jews and of the Samaritans
- “What an amazing situation, and what great philosophy this woman appears to possess! Note how she accepts the Lord’s reproach in a most pure manner when He uncovers her hidden act. She has no problem with that and she neither leaves nor runs away. Indeed, her amazement increases as she says to Him: *“I perceive that You are a prophet.”* St. John Chrysostom

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The hour has come when the Son of Man has descended in order to lift mankind away from the letter to the spirit
- What should preoccupy believers is not the place but their status as children of the heavenly Father
- Men are called to worship their heavenly Father, and to consider themselves as His children
- By saying, *what you do not know*, the Lord indicates the Prophetic Books which the Samaritans had rejected
- These Books prepare the way of knowledge and establish the person of the redeeming Messiah

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- By rejecting all the prophetic writings, they had but an imperfect knowledge of the Deity
- Besides, as they incorporated the worship of idols with His worship, they might be justly said to worship Him whom they did not properly know
- The words, *we know what we worship*, refer to the divine Books as a safe path to true knowledge and worship
- We Jews acknowledge all the attributes of His nature, and offer to Him only the sacrifices prescribed in the law

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The Lord Jesus Christ includes Himself among the crowd of worshippers since He has humbly become the Son of Man
- *for salvation comes of the Jews*, eternal salvation came from the Jews, Romans 9:5 and it was first offered to them
- The divine teachings were delivered to them, Romans 3:2; as well as the ministry to God, Romans 9:4
- The Messiah was born of them and they were the ones who began to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles
- The Samaritans believed in the same God with the Jews



# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- But, our Lord foretells her that sacrifices in both these temples should shortly cease
- The true sacrifice should be limited no longer to one spot or nation, but should be offered throughout all nations, according to that of Malachi 1:11
- The worship of the Samaritans was a defective worship
- They did not receive the prophetic writings
- That of the Jews was a carnal worship by the flesh and blood of beasts, not having in them grace, spirit, and life

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- The Gospel of Christ showed the meaning of all these carnal ordinances, and the legal sacrifices, which had all their consummation in His offering of Himself
- Thus a spiritual dispensation took the place of the carnal one which prefigured it
- The preaching of the Gospel discovered the true nature of God, of salvation, of the human soul, of earthly and of heavenly things; and, because of this, it is put in opposition to the defective Samaritan worship

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- Indeed, God the Father seeks those who worship Him with their hearts
- Instead of being preoccupied with the place of worship it is essential to be concerned with the condition of inner thought, with God's altar within the soul, and the manner of offering worship to God who is a spirit
- God can be pleased only with that which resembles Himself
- Therefore He can delight in those only who are made partakers of His own Divine nature

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- As all creatures were made by Him, so all owe Him obedience and reverence; but, to be acceptable to this infinite Spirit, the worship must be of a spiritual nature - must spring from the heart, through the influence of the Holy Spirit
- And it must be in Truth, not only in sincerity, but performed according to that Divine revelation which He has given men of Himself
- A man worships God in spirit, when, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, he brings all his affections, appetites, and desires to the throne of God

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- And he worships Him in truth, when every purpose and passion of his heart, and when every act of his religious worship, is guided and regulated by the word of God
- “The Lord’s words to the Samaritan woman: “God is Spirit ...” has no other meaning except that He does not have a body. Consequently, worship dedicated to the Incorporeal should be free from a body too. We should offer worship with that which is incorporeal within us. In other words, worship should proceed from our spirit and with the purity of our mind. This is why the Lord says: “...those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth” St. John Chrysostom

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- Though the Samaritans did not receive the prophetic writings, yet the tradition of the advent of the Messiah, which was common among the Jews, and founded on promises contained even in the books of Moses, was generally received among the Samaritans also
- When she no longer opposes the Lord's words; but rather senses the power within her, she poses the question that has preoccupied all the Jews and Samaritans, When will the Messiah come?
- All were awaiting that event, in spite of the enmity that existed between them, yet they shared in this expectation

# A Samaritan Woman Meets Her Messiah 4:1-26



- *I who speak to you am He*, Our Lord never spoke in such direct terms concerning Himself to anyone; not even to His own disciples, till a little before His death
- “Indeed, the Lord did not give the Jews a clear answer while they constantly said to Him: *“How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly”* John 10:24; whereas He clearly informs the Samaritan woman: *“I ... am He.”* St. John Chrysostom

# The Whitened Harvest 4:27-38



- It did not occur to the disciples that their Teacher, whose great kingdom they awaited, would speak to a poor Samaritan woman
- She did not belong to the lost flock of Israel, and in their minds she could not possibly have a role in His kingdom
- So they were wondering why was He talking to her!
- Besides, it was not usual for men to speak with women in the streets, even if they were their wives
- There were numerous laws laid by the Jewish leaders concerning this matter





# The Whitenened Harvest 4:27-38

- When the Samaritan woman received the divine truth she abandoned her waterpot and forgot the reason that had brought her to the well
- So she returned without getting water
- However she returned to offer the water of truth to the people of the city
- She left her waterpot because she did not want it to obstruct her from running to the city and giving testimony to the truth



# The Whitened Harvest 4:27-38

- She informed everyone in the streets that she had found the treasure she has been looking for, and that she has found the Source of her inner joy
- The Jews believed that one essential characteristic of the Messiah would be, that He should be able to tell the secrets of all hearts
- She does not inform them that He discussed with her serious religious matters concerning worship and the manner it should be conducted



# The Whitened Harvest 4:27-38

- Instead, she informs them of how He has touched her heart truly because He knows her secrets, how He attracted her to Him by His powerful words, and consequently how this led her to recognize His person and that He is the Messiah
- The words of the woman reveal her inner joy: she has met the Messiah, the Savior of the world and so she came to enjoy the One who satisfies her depths
- The six men did not give her any joy

# The Whitened Harvest 4:27-38



- However, her meeting with her Savior created in her the spirit of joy and inspired her to work in order to bring others to salvation
- She is not embarrassed to say that He had told her everything that she had done...for material matters did not matter any longer
- She is determined to disregard worldly glory or shame
- *they went out of the city*, Such effect had the simple testimony of the woman on their minds



# The Whitened Harvest 4:27-38

- “She did not want to draw them based on her own determination and conviction. Rather, she wanted them to draw their own conclusion after hearing Him. This is what made her words more acceptable to them...she did not say ‘Come and believe’ but said “Come see...” and this expression sounded more gentle and appealing to them.” St. John Chrysostom
- A Samaritan woman, who in spite of her painful past, becomes the first one to preach the good news to Samaria



# The Whitenened Harvest 4:27-38

- While the Samaritan women hurried to preach with all her strength, the disciples were busy offering food to the Lord, for He was hungry and tired
- Our blessed Lord seizes every opportunity to raise the minds of His apostles to heavenly things, through the medium of earthly matters
- They understand His words in the ordinary sense
- He proceeds to explain their real meaning in the following verse



# The Whitened Harvest 4:27-38

- The will of the Father is always the driving force behind Jesus' mission
- Such ought to be the disposition of every one
- In these words, our blessed Lord teaches a lesson of zeal and earnestness to His apostles, and to all their successors in the Christian ministry
- Let the salvation of souls lie nearer your heart than life itself
- Let eating and drinking, labor and rest, reading, thinking, study, prayer, and all things, be directed to the accomplishment of this great work



# The Whitened Harvest 4:27-38

- Both the Synoptic Gospels and St. Paul in his epistles teach that Jesus was sent by the Father to do His will but St. John stresses this teaching to the point of insistence
  1. Jesus was sent by the Father, 3:17, 5:24,36-38, 7:16, 8:26-28, 12:49-50, 14:24, 17:8,14
  2. His origin is in the Father, 3:31, 6:46, 7:29, 8:42
  3. He comes down from the Father, 3:13, 6:38,42
  4. He speaks the words of the Father, 3:34, 7:16, 8:26-28, 12:49-50, 14:24, 17:8,14
  5. He does the will of the Father, 9:4, 10:32,37, 14:10





# The Whitenened Harvest 4:27-38

- Ministers of Jesus: imitate your Lord!
- Souls are perishing for lack of knowledge, God has given you the key of the kingdom, the knowledge of his word - O open unto them the gate of life!
- Looking on the fields of springing corn, they would say that in four months there would be harvest
- He sees signs of life springing up from seed sown in receptive hearts; and eyes lifted up and directed to the wide fields of the world's nations would see that the fullness of time was come, and that the fields were even now white to harvest



# The Whitened Harvest 4:27-38

- The Samaritans coming to Him are as the first-fruits, the earnest of the plentiful bundles which shall follow
- *lift up your eyes* , This expression occurs in many places in the Holy Bible for the divine Word urges us to raise our thoughts and vision upwards
- The disciples can now reap a harvest immediately, and they reap it from seeds they did not sow
- Jesus sowed the seeds, and they had the opportunity to reap
- Many times, this is how the work of God happens - one sows, and another reaps, 1 Corinthians 3:6-8



# The Whitened Harvest 4:27-38

- The seed of life which He had sown but a few hours ago had already brought forth much fruit
- Therefore He says, *lift up your eyes*, and look on the fields, over which it is likely the Samaritans were then coming in troops, guided by the woman who had already received the light of the Gospel of peace
- The fields - are white already to harvest - Multitudes of Samaritans are coming to believe in Me, and to be saved unto eternal life



# The Whitenened Harvest 4:27-38

- Jesus encouraged His disciples in their work with Him in at least three ways
  - 1 Their work in the harvest would be rewarded *he who reaps receives wages*
  2. The good of their work would last forever *gathers fruit for eternal life*
  3. Every worker in the harvest would *rejoice together*



# The Whitenened Harvest 4:27-38

- The reapers are the disciples and the sewers are those who have labored before them, the prophets of the Old Testament and Jesus Himself
- St. John tells us in 3:12 that Jesus teaches that "faith" consists in recognizing Him as the messenger of the Father, 7:28-29; 17:21,25, 19:9
- Jesus will tell the Apostles that He will send them as messengers of the Father into the harvest of the world, John 13:30, 17:18, 20:21; Acts 1:26, 22:21; Romans 1:1



# The Whitenened Harvest 4:27-38

- Now the LORD Christ sends His disciples to the harvest in the fields where the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament labored for such a long time
- We can say that one belongs to the Law and the other to the Gospel, but they rejoice together as they have one aim
- “The prophets are those who sowed and did not reap. Those who reap are the apostles. However, those who only sowed were not deprived of the joy of the reward for their labor. They rejoiced and were happy even though they did not reap.” St. John Chrysostom



# The Whitenened Harvest 4:27-38

- Why did Christ say these words of verse 38 to His disciples?
- So that when He sends them to preach, they may not be troubled as though they were sent to do a very difficult work, for the work of the prophets was more full of hardship
- The disciples came to do easier tasks than others, for just as the fruit is gathered in the harvest easily, likewise is the effort of the disciples now



# The Whitenened Harvest 4:27-38

- In this way Christ encouraged His disciples very much because this work, if it is thought to be difficult, since they will travel the world to preach repentance, it is indeed, Christ explains to them, an easy work
- The work that was very difficult was the work done by those who sowed the seeds to let a distant soul enter into the knowledge of God





# The Savior of the World 4:39-42

- This woman was the first apostle of Christ in Samaria!
- She went and told her fellow citizens that the Messiah has come; and gave for proof, that he had told her the most secret things she had ever done
- The people of Sychar did not see any miracle but the person and divine speech of the LORD Christ attracted them to Him
- They rejoiced in Christ's word that grants life
- In Origen's opinion, Jesus stayed with them but not in their city, for they had gone out of their city and had come to Him

# The Savior of the World 4:39-42



- Scripture does not say that He performed miracles among them
- For they were simple people in need of, and ready for listening to the Word
- They were attached to the LORD Christ for the truth
- They did not want miracles to ascertain Him as did many leaders of Judea
- The Jews saw Christ's miracles with their own eyes, yet they did not ask Him to stay with them, and they even drove Him away and used every means to chase Him away from their cities

# The Savior of the World 4:39-42



- We do not know what questions they must have asked or what truths He must have taught during this time
- But we know that the result was that many more believed
- On seeing and hearing our Lord, the faith of those who had already believed on the woman's testimony was abundantly confirmed
- Besides those, many others believed who had not heard the woman speak
- *the Savior of the world*, Not of the Jews only, but of the Samaritans, and of the whole Gentile world

# The Savior of the World 4:39-42



- It is interesting to compare between Jesus' witness to Nicodemus in chapter 3 and the Samaritan woman in chapter 4
- It is as a comparison between two people who are also representatives of the histories of their people: The covenant people of Judah and the apostate people of what was the Northern Kingdom of Israel
- Nicodemus is from the land of Judah (tribes of Judah & Benjamin)
- The Samaritan Woman is from the land of Israel (the land of the 10 tribes)



# The Savior of the World 4:39-42

- He is a citizen of Jerusalem the city of the true faith of the Covenant
- She is a citizen of Shechem, a city connected to the Covenant but also with violence and betrayal, and false worship
- He is a Pharisee, educated, elite Jewish male
- She is a mixed breed, idolatrous female
- He knows the Law and the Prophets
- She knows only the first 5 Books, the Torah

# The Savior of the World 4:39-42



- He is a representative of the Old Covenant people
- She is a representative of a people no longer in Covenant with God
- He cannot recognize the Messiah
- She, acknowledging her sins, receives the gift of faith and recognizes the Messiah

# Welcome at Galilee 4:43-45



- Jesus had originally planned to go to Galilee (verse 3), but had ended up staying two days in Samaria on His way (verse 40)
- After the two-day stay in Samaria, He went on to Galilee as planned
- There the Galileans received him, since they had gone to the feast in Jerusalem and had witnessed His miracles (2:23)
- The connection and reason given here by the word *for* in verse 44, is difficult to understand
- One would think this should not be a reason for His going into Galilee



# Welcome at Galilee 4:43-45

- Why did He add that proverb?
- St. Cyril and also St. Chrysostom distinguish different parts of Galilee; and say that when Jesus *went to Galilee*, the meaning is, that He would not at that time go *to Nazareth*, where He was brought up, nor *to Capharnaum*, where He had lived for a time, but went to Cana, and those other parts of Galilee
- And that the word *for* only gives the reason of this, that He would not go to Nazareth or Capharnaum, because no prophet is honored in his own country





# Welcome at Galilee 4:43-45

- For Jesus Himself had declared, *a prophet has no honor in his own country*, in Matthew 13:57; Mark 6:4; and Luke 4:24
- These are the only texts where Jesus is said to have declared this
- He always spoke of Nazareth only, and not of Galilee in general, a country where He lived for the most part, and wrought the greatest number of His miracles, and made the most converts

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- Cana was on the way from Nazareth to Capernaum and the Sea of Tiberias
- This miracle is recorded only by John
- Saint John Chrysostom says that that person was either a member of the royal family, or was highly honored because of his office
- He was, therefore, called a nobleman
- This officer appears to have had his ordinary abode at Capernaum

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- Hearing that Christ was at Cana, he came to beseech Him to heal his child
- The son was not just a little sick
- He was almost dead
- He thought Jesus had to come and personally have contact with his son to heal him
- Some commentators seem to criticize the nobleman for weakness of faith and it is true
- Nevertheless, he had faith enough to travel about 25 miles from Capernaum to Galilee to plead with Jesus to come and heal his son

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- *Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe*, Whereas the Samaritans, from whom He was now coming, readily believed without such miracles
- The LORD did not say to him that he had no faith, but that he was weak in his faith
- He was unable to believe that the LORD could heal the child without going in person from Cana to Capernaum
- This is the weak faith that is built on miracles

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- It is a faith that is often only mental and is therefore subject to weakness and doubt
- This is contrary to the faith through God's revelation to the spirit and the consequent exultation at the mysteries of the divine word
- The words are not addressed to the nobleman alone, but to all the Galilean Jews in general; for our Lord uses the plural number, which He never does when addressing an individual
- St. John Chrysostom asks why did the LORD Christ say this although it is clear that the man was a believer and as soon as he heard the LORD Christ's word, he believed [50]?

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- “The LORD’s motive was either to bear witness to the Samaritans who believed without seeing wonders, or to influence Capernaum ... Besides, consider the saying of another man, “LORD, I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24) and you will understand that though this nobleman believed, his belief was not complete or sound. This becomes evident when he inquires about the hour when his child got better [52] to know whether his son was healed normally or as a result of Christ’s order.”  
St. John Chrysostom

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- *Sir, come down before my child dies!* In spite of his faith that caused him to travel all that distance and leave his son on his deathbed to meet the LORD Christ, yet in weakness he did not realize that he is talking to the conqueror of death and giver of resurrection
- In bitterness he urged the LORD Christ to go to his house before his son dies
- The LORD showed reluctance, not because He did not share the feelings of this father, but rather to edify the spirit of this man and many other spirits

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- Had our Lord gone with him, as he wished, his unbelief could not have been fully removed; as he would have still thought that our Lord's power could not reach from Cana to Capernaum
- In order to destroy his unbelief at once, and bring him into the fullness of the faith of his supreme power, Christ cures him by a word



# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- Here it may be observed, our blessed Lord did what this man requested him to do, but not in the way in which he wished it to be done
- God will save all to the uttermost who call upon Him, but not in the way in which they may desire
- In order to emphasize the evidence for the miracle, John tells us that, as the man was returning home, he met his servants coming to meet him
- They told him the son was healed

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- *he inquired of them the hour when he got better,* With this question the nobleman revealed his weak faith
- *the father knew,* He had the fullest proof that his son's cure was supernatural, and that it was wrought by the Lord Jesus
- *he himself believed,* This is a yet higher faith
- He believed the report before he went to Cana
- He believed personally when he pleaded, "Lord, come down."

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- He believed the word that Jesus spoke when told to go his way, and every step of that road going away from the power to the sufferer was an act of faith; but still there is place for a fuller faith, and he and his household became believers
- St. John traces here, as before, in the case of the Samaritans, John 4:41-42, and of the disciples themselves, John 2:11, the successive development of faith
- The evangelist had previously mentioned the miracle of changing water into wine when he said that Jesus came to Cana of Galilee [46]

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- Here, he refers to it by saying, *This again is the second sign Jesus did* as though he wishes to link the two signs
- Saint John Chrysostom observes that the evangelist mentions this to reveal the eminence of the Samaritans who believed in the LORD Christ without seeing the first or second miracle, but received Him through His doctrine

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- The Fathers of the Church compare this miracle healing of the royal official's son with the healing of the centurion's servant in Matthew 8:5 and Luke 7:2
- However, St. John Chrysostom is not convinced these accounts are of the same individual

# A Nobleman's Son Healed

## 4:46-54



- 'Some indeed think that this is the man mentioned by Matthew, but he is shown to be a different person, not only from his dignity, but also from his faith. That other, even when Christ was willing to go to him, entreats Him to tarry; this one, when He had made no such offer, draws Him to his house. The one said, 'I am not worthy that You should come under my roof'; but the other even urges Him, saying 'Come down ere my son die.' In that instance He came down from the mountain, and entered into Caperanum; but here, as He came from Samaria, and went not into Caperanum but into Cana, this person met Him. The servant of the other was possessed by the palsy, this one's son by a fever." [Homilies on the Gospel of St. John, 35]



# Discussion

- What was the difference in the baptism of Jesus' disciples and that of John? Why is it noted that Jesus Himself was not baptizing?
- What does Jesus' willingness to leave Judea and go miles away from John's ministry say about our Savior?
- How is the Samaritan woman's response similar to Nicodemus' response to Jesus?
- What do you know about Samaria?

# Discussion



- What impact should this conversation between the Samaritan woman and Jesus have on us and our witness in the world?
- Trace the progression of the woman's opinion of Jesus. Who did she think He was at first, then who, etc.?
- Why do the miracle of the nobleman's son this way? How did this strengthen the impact of the miracle?
- What effect did this have on the man and his family?