

The Forgotten Jesus Podcast
S5E13
Wisdom From The Well - (John 4)

Description – Jesus has a divine encounter with a woman at the well, who’s life was changed forever, and who changed her community forever.

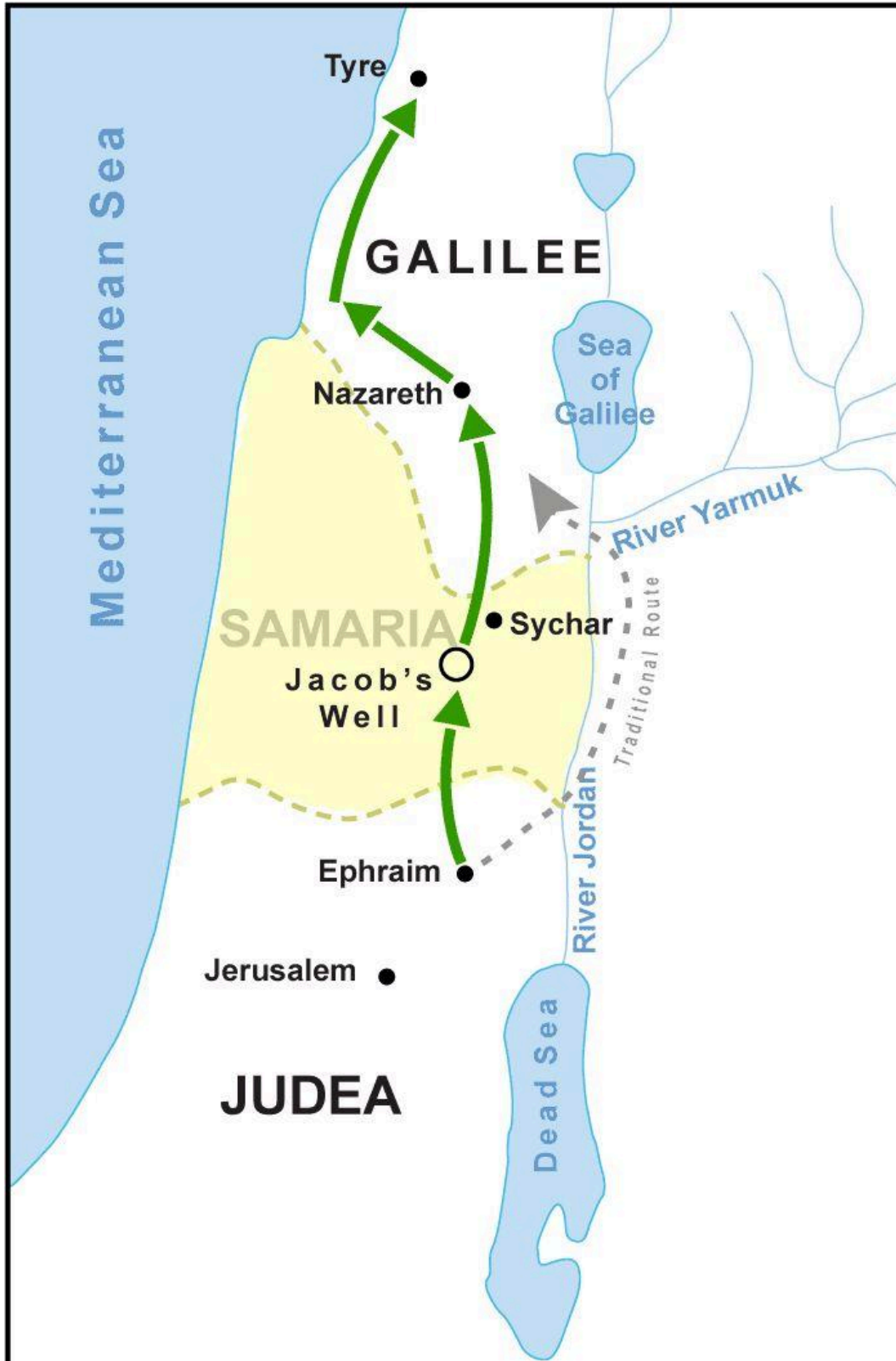
John loves the number seven, so much so that he outlines his book with 3 sets of seven.

John lays his book out around three sets of seven.

1. The seven miracles
 - a. The first one was turning water to wine

2. The seven “I Am...” statements
 - a. Descriptive statements where Jesus says things like, “I AM ... the door, or ...the bread of life.

3. The seven witnesses.
 - a. John uses 7 people to testify about Jesus who’ve had encounters with Jesus.
 - b. Today we’ll look at the woman at the well, who after her encounter with Jesus goes back to her town and tells everyone about Him.



Jesus Passes Through Samaria

Who were the Samaritans?

They were the remnants of the northern kingdom of Israel, who were deported in exiles by Assyria and Babylon, but those conquered lands also had people moved into the land by the Assyrian government; who ended up intermarrying with the people there. Paganism became rampant in this area.

The Jews were not supposed to intermarry with other nations, yet the Jews who'd stayed in Samaria / the remnant of the northern kingdom had taken foreign wives and husbands.

These half-breeds are so looked down on by Jews in Judea and Galilee they didn't even want to travel through their lands.

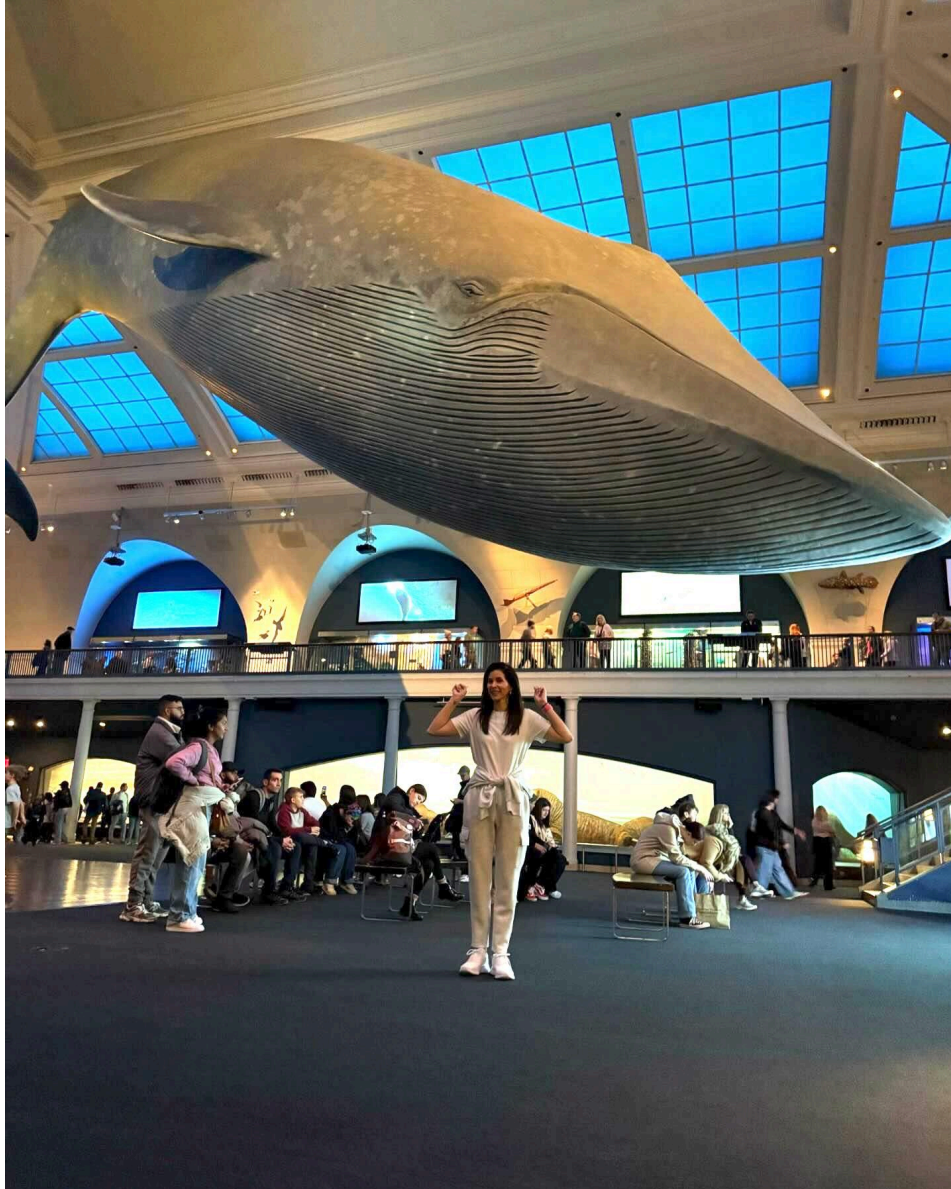
John 4:3-6

³ he left Judea and went again to Galilee. ⁴ He had to travel through Samaria; ⁵ so he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar near the property that Jacob had given his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, worn out from his journey, sat down at the well. It was about noon.

What was odd about this time? It's midday, the hottest part of the day. Normally water was drawn early in the morning or late afternoon before dusk.

This woman coming by herself to the well at Noon was either because she wanted to avoid other people, or possibly that the community had shunned her and wouldn't allow her to draw with the other women because of her lifestyle.

Notice what the text says; Jesus "Had to go" through Samaria. He had an appointment with this woman. She had no idea she would meet a Jewish Rabbi that day when she got up to start her day, but Jesus knew he was going to meet her.



A “whale”... not a “well”.

Well encounters have a paradigm to follow in the Bible

1. A journey from far away
2. A woman or women at the well, drawing water, that the traveling man encounters
3. The woman draws water from the well
4. News of the encounter at the well spreads, the woman will hurry to share news of the encounter
5. Hospitality is shown to the traveler, he stays with them
6. Joining: The two are joined together.

Examples:

- Genesis 24 - Isaac & Rebekah

- Genesis 29 - Jacob & Rachel
- Exodus 2 - Moses & Zipporah

Jesus and the woman are at “Jacob’s Well.” Something else is being communicated here, There is going to be a joining or marriage between Jews and Samaritans.

John 4:7-9

⁷ A woman of Samaria came to draw water. “Give me a drink,” Jesus said to her, ⁸ because his disciples had gone into town to buy food. ⁹ “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” she asked him. For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.

Jesus says in v.10 that if she knew the gift of God she would ask him for water.

This is not just any water, Jesus is talking about the best kind of water, the artesian spring water. It’s better than any cistern to catch run off rainwater, or a well dug deep to try to get to water that may come and go.

John 4:16-17

¹⁶ “Go call your husband,” he told her, “and come back here.” ¹⁷ “I don’t have a husband,” she answered. “You have correctly said, ‘I don’t have a husband,’” Jesus said. ¹⁸ “For you’ve had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.”

Jesus is going to drop the mic here in this moment. He’s getting to the heart or root of her problem. She’s searching for something to fulfill her, that will never fulfill in the way she hopes it will.

Her sin was apparent to the community, but remember, back then, a man could divorce his wife for any reason he made up. This woman is a broken, rejected woman who is an outcast.

Jesus is not condemning the woman without purpose, he’s not putting her down for no reason. He’s exposing her sin to bring healing into her life. Water is a metaphor for sexual sin in her life.

The truth can be very hard to hear, but if its accepted, it can lead to life change. This woman is open and honest with Jesus, but she may not be fully ready to deal with her sin, as she changes the topic to worship.

This is one of the 8 times that Jesus in the gospel of John uses his omniscience to reveal something thought to be hidden.

How many men has the woman at the well been with? 6. Five husbands and currently with a man who she’s not even married to. 6 as we know is both the number of mankind, and the number of incompleteness.

Just like the water to wine miracle, where you had 6 large jars of water. That was a reflection of judaism, that it was never enough, it could never save.

This woman had 5 husbands, and was with a 6th man, but these relationships would never satisfy her.

2 Kings 17:24

²⁴ Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim and settled them in place of the Israelites in the cities of Samaria. The settlers took possession of Samaria and lived in its cities.

The king of Assyria, when bringing pagan people into the land of Israel, brings in 5 people groups who will intermarry with the Jews who were still there.

Could it be that this woman, who had 5 husbands, was a symbol of the people of Israel / Samaria, who had intermarried with these 5 people groups and had been led astray from worshiping the one true God.

Jesus was telling this woman to change not so that He could accept her; but to change because He had already accepted her.

And because of her encounter with Jesus; she runs back to town to tell them all about Jesus. She's not been to school, or had any theological training, but she has a powerful testimony of lifechange.

John 4:28-30

²⁸ Then the woman left her water jar, went into town, and told the people, ²⁹ **"Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?"** ³⁰ They left the town and made their way to him.

John 4:39-42

³⁹ Now many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of what the woman said when she testified, "He told me everything I ever did." ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹ Many more believed because of what he said. ⁴² And they told the woman, **"We no longer believe because of what you said, since we have heard for ourselves and know that this really is the Savior of the world."**

Think about the people John shows us here in his gospel that Jesus encounters: In John 3, you meet Nicodemus, a rabbi, a teacher of the Jews, an educated man, a Pharisee, one of the 70 rulers of the Sanhedrin. In John 4, you meet a woman, who's living in adultery, who's uneducated, who's a samaritan, a half breed. John is pointing out that the Gospel is for everyone, that Jesus is for all. And Jesus uses this woman's testimony to powerfully impact her community for eternity.