

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

THE WATER OF THE RIVER

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. John 4:14

The LORD had an appointment in Samaria with a woman who would come to a well to draw water. Therefore, *"he must needs go through Samaria."* (John 4:4) Now we are quite certain that HE who is the GOD of all ages has need of nothing. Yet it pleased HIM to place HIMSELF under necessity in order to fulfill HIS own purpose as HE came to earth and walked among men in flesh and blood. The "necessity" that was upon HIM in this case was that HE had determined to meet with this Samaritan woman long before she ever picked up her water pot or even entertained the notion that she needed to go to this particular well to draw water.

HE who had marked out the spot where Jacob would dig this well also determined the time and place that HE would meet with this unsuspecting woman. HE knew her long before she arrived at this rendezvous, for as the scripture says, *"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."* (2Ti 2:19)

So the LORD prepared the spot (where HE would come face to face with her), many years before she was born. The LORD prepared the woman and gave her a desire to come to this well, as she, no doubt, had done many times before this time without any incident. She had no idea what awaited her in this particular hour and it was impossible that anything could arise that would keep her from being at this exact spot at this exact time. *"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."* (Isa 42:16)

Since the LORD would never forsake HIS own HE must needs go through Samaria because HE would minister life to one of HIS own who was yet dead in trespasses and sins. That she was a wicked woman there is no doubt according to the LORD's testimony and her own admission of guilt. Such is the nature and practice of all of those whom the LORD is pleased to save. *"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."* (Luke 5:32)

Every step this woman had taken since she first drew breath, was designed and ordered by HIM who would not only insure her presence at that spot on that day, but also cause her to recognize the truth whenever HE spoke it. HE is not only the PLOWMAN who breaks up the fallow ground but HE is that ONE who plants the seed and waters it until it blooms as a flower to adorn HIS garden. *"Who is sufficient for these things?"* (2Cor 2:16).

Even HIS request for water was a demonstration of HIS purpose to call this woman to HIMSELF as HE drew her with cords of love that could not be broken. HE spoke to her of LIVING WATER and soon she was the one who was thirsty as she said, *"Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."* (John 4:15) Yet she would not be allowed to drink of it until first HE had brought her to repentance.

What a chilling command issued forth from the lips of HIM who will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax until HE brings forth judgement unto truth. (see Isa. 42:3). *"Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither."* (John 4:16) She replied, *"I have no husband"*, all the while hoping not to have to face the real truth. But HE who loved her from before the foundation of the world would in no wise leave her to her own devices nor let her hide in her sin. *"Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly."* (John 4:17-18)

Yes indeed HE must complete the work HE came to this well to perform. *"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."* (Deut 32:4) She is confronted with her sin and shame and tries to hide her guilt by turning to religion saying *"Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."* (John 4:20) But no, that mountain is no hiding place, nor will HE, who has begun a good work, abandon it until HE has finished it.

HE strips away all of her refuges by acquainting her with the GOD of TRUTH who can only be worshipped by the hidden man of the heart. *"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"*. (John 4:23-24)

When the fullness of time had come HE revealed HIMSELF to her, saying, *"I that speak unto thee am he."* (John 4:26) Essentially what HE said was, "I AM". Her reaction was to abandon her waterpot and confess HIM before men. Some drastic change had occurred that cannot rightly be explained by the purveyors of "free will". This is that which the LORD spoke to Nicodemus about saying *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* (John 3:3) Suddenly she "saw" the kingdom of GOD and HIM who is the KING of it.

She had now begun to drink long draughts from that WELL which she knew absolutely nothing about just a few moments earlier. A river of WATER which issued forth from the throne of GOD now swirled around her and overwhelmed her yet she lived, and every thing she longed for was now supplied. Yet the men of this city only saw the same woman they had known for years, she seemed somewhat crazed to them as she babbled about the LORD. Little did they know at the time, that though she looked just like she always did she was now a new creature and would never be the same again.

CHRIST is the LIVING WATER which fills the river of LIFE. The river is but a collection of WATER which is flowing by virtue of springing forth from the WELL and not by the power of the river, The river can add nothing to the WATER but the river exists because the water is in it and because it continues to flow forth from the SOURCE.

The WATER is that which supplies life to all who are planted by the shores of the river. *"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."* (Psa 1:3) HE is the VINE and we are the branches. We are HIS workmanship. HE is that WELL of WATER springing up into everlasting life.

The river is sometimes deeper or shallower according to the amount of WATER that flows in it (see Rom.12:3) but whether deep or shallow it is still the WATER that gives life and not the shape of the river which adds anything to the WATER.

"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together: That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it." (Isa 41:17-20)