



WEEK TWO: GOD IS WRITING YOUR STORY – Study Guide

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If you know Jesus, it's because He entered your story. He always initiates—our job is to respond. Remembering what your life was like before you met Jesus can be an encouragement to you, and a help for others. Think about the way Jesus entered your story as you read about His interaction with the woman at the well.

Where Am I Today?

- 1) What was your story like when Jesus first entered? Were you caught off guard, overwhelmed, or excited? Or, did you feel intruded upon at first?

Into the Bible

- 2) The woman at the well thought she was having a normal day. She was getting water in the middle of the day to avoid everyone else—but then Jesus entered her story. Read **John 4:7-15** to watch the beginning of their encounter. How does He begin the conversation? How does her opinion of Him seem to morph in this passage?

THE STORY

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Continue Learning on Your Own

- 8) Nobody liked Samaritans. Jews didn't like them because they were part Gentile (non Jew), and Gentiles didn't like them because they were part Jewish. Samaritans were from the region of Samaria. This region included the city of Samaria, which was the capital of Israel during the period of the divided kingdoms from roughly 931 BC until 722 BC (when Israel was two different countries: Israel and Judah). Israel, which was the northern nation, was conquered and its people were exiled by Assyria in 722 BC. Assyria kicked the Israelites out of Samaria and brought in people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim. However, some Israelites stayed behind and intermarried with the other people groups. That's how the Samaritans came to be.

Samaritans were obviously of mixed ethnic heritage, but they also mixed religious practices. They had their own version of the Old Testament, their own temple on Mount Gerizim, and their own version of Israelite history. They also mixed their religious practices with those of the foreigners who were brought in. This explains why the woman at the well had a different view of Old Testament faith and practice than Jesus did. How was the Jews' hatred for Samaritans similar to racial (and other) tensions in modern America? How is it different?