

## **A Spring of Water**

**By David Wright**

You are stranded in the desert with nothing to drink. A relentless sun burns your skin. A hot wind saps your strength and parches your throat. Finally, you discover a small natural reservoir of cold, clear water and quench your thirst. According to John's Gospel, the refreshment of drinking water is an excellent metaphor for the joy of being in Christ.

The student of John finds this metaphor in the Sychar well narrative. Tired and thirsty from his long walk over rugged terrain, Jesus sits and waits for his disciples to return with food bought in the Samaritan village. His brief rest is interrupted by a Samaritan woman who comes to draw water. Jesus is indeed exhausted by his walk, but she is the true weary traveler. Her fatigue is spiritual, the great weariness that weighs down the spirits of one who for many years has indulged in shameful conduct. The Samaritan woman has had five husbands, and now she is living with a man. Jesus offers her a drink of "living water" (John 4:10).

The woman is startled. How can this stranger give her a drink? He has no water jar, "and the well is deep" (John 4:11).

The Lord explains to her that "everyone who drinks of this water [in the well] will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:13-14). Water is not only refreshing but also essential to life. Jesus is inviting the woman (and all of us) to come to him. He alone has the power to satisfy our deepest longings and give us life with God.

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