

# PM Hebrews 9:1-10 & John 4:19-42 Jesus in Samaria 2

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[ 0 : 00 ] Our first reading is in Hebrews, Hebrews chapter 9, and we'll read verses 1 to 10. This is a book that speaks about the Old Testament and its New Testament significance.

And here we've got the holy place brought to special attention, and some of the ideas that come from that that are a parable, we might say, of New Testament things.

Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness. For a tent was prepared, the first section in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the presence.

It is called the holy place. Behind the second curtain was a second section called the most holy place, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden urn holding the manna and Aaron's staff that budded and the tablets of the covenant.

Above it were the cherubim of glory, overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. These preparations having thus been made, the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties.

[ 1 : 37 ] But into the second only the high priest goes, By this the holy place is not yet opened, as long as the first section is still standing, which is symbolic for the present age.

According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshipper, but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

May God bless to us this reading. I'm going to read in John's Gospel, chapter 4, and we'll read from verse 19.

John chapter 4 and verse 19. Now this is the concluding part of the well-known story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman. And we know how he came to the well and asked for water and the conversation results and Jesus shows himself in various ways to her and this is the continuation of that story.

If you think it's strange that we're starting at this point, we looked at that story this morning and this evening's sermon is the conclusion of that. So, bearing in mind what we know of the Samaritan woman, we take up the story at verse 19 here.

[ 3 : 21 ] The woman said to him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.

Jesus said to her woman, Believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know. For salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

For the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth.

The woman said to him, I know that Messiah is coming. He was called Christ. When he comes, he will tell us all things.

[ 4 : 30 ] Jesus said to her, I who speak to you am he. Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, What do you seek?

Or, Why are you talking with her? So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, Come see a man who told me all that I ever did.

Could this be the Christ? They went out of the town and were coming to him. Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, saying, Rabbi, eat.

But he said to them, I have food to eat that you do not know about. So the disciples said to one another, Has anyone brought him something to eat? Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of him who sent me to accomplish his work.

Do you not see there are yet four months? Then comes the harvest. Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes and see that the fields are white for harvest.

[ 5 : 42 ] Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, one sows and another reaps.

I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour. Others have laboured and you have entered into their labour. Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony.

He told me all that I ever did. So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word.

They said to the woman, It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and we know that this is indeed the saviour of the world.

Just to there, may God bless to us this reading also. We are going to look at this passage that we read and we will go over it really bit by bit but I think verse 19 itself summarises much of what we are going to find in this passage.

[ 7 : 03 ] John chapter 4 and verse 19 The woman said to him, Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Now we have been looking at this passage because we think that the focus of it is the revelation that Jesus makes of himself.

Who is he? What is his character? What is his work? What has he promised to do for people? It seems to me that that is set out here in a variety of ways.

Even the way that he approaches this Samaritan woman gives an impression of somebody whose compassion knows no bounds. Generally, Jewish men wouldn't speak to women.

He speaks to this woman. Jews wouldn't speak to Samaritans. He deals with her kindly. And that's an indication of who he is.

He's a kind and gracious person who looks upon all without respect to their nation to which they belong or the religion that they profess or the gender or whatever.

[ 8 : 23 ] His compassion knows no bounds. And then there's this idea that he's going to give water to the woman. And she says, are you greater than our father Jacob who made this wealth?

And there you see this kindling of this idea that this is no ordinary person. He's making big claims here. He's got a power here.

And that points to the fact that we know the power of Jesus knows no limits. and then he speaks of the water of life and although she doesn't understand it he still displays himself in this capacity just as life is necessary just as water is necessary for life at a physical level so Jesus is necessary for life at a spiritual level.

Water gives vitality. the water of life who is Jesus gives us spiritual vitality and that results in a well of water being in us that springs up and produces eternal life.

Life that knows no ending. And then he turns to the moral issue and this is where we stopped. The moral issue is that she's been living an immoral lifestyle.

[ 9 : 47 ] How immoral perhaps we don't exactly know but she is living a moral lifestyle. And why does he introduce that idea? And I've suggested it's because of this reason that she can only think of natural water and she hasn't understood the spiritual content.

And he's really saying you'll not do that until you get this in your mind. You're in a mess morally speaking. And so he's been teaching the necessity of looking at our guilt, the need for forgiveness and bearing that in mind.

And then we'll recognise how important it is that we have Jesus as the water of life. So we've seen various aspects of who Jesus is and we're going to continue this evening looking at more.

And the basic idea is that Jesus is a prophet. prophet. And that's where we take up. Now, why does the Samaritan woman say I perceive that you are a prophet?

Well, Jesus has said go call your husband and she says I don't have one and he says you're right you've had five husbands and the one that you have is not your husband.

[ 11 : 04 ] Probably emphasis on your meaning he really belongs to somebody else but you're living with a man. and his intention is to promote a sense of sinfulness.

But it's not what happens. She looks at that from a different point of view. She doesn't say oh right enough I'm a sinner. She says oh what insight you've got into my life.

How come you knew these things? They're not commonly known to strangers. How come you knew these things? You must have a power beyond the natural power. you must be a prophet.

And that's the way that she reads that incident. They're working at cross purposes in a sense. But nonetheless there is something positive that she takes out of it.

She doesn't say oh yes I'm a sinner. She says oh you must be a prophet. And that's the first thing that we're noticing here. That Jesus reveals himself here as a prophet who has knowledge of a person's heart.

[ 12 : 06 ] prophet. That's what prophets were. They had insight. They could see things with clarity. They could understand what was going on. They could see a dimension in things that was hidden from others because they had this insight of things that came from God.

Now we of course know that the insight that Jesus had did not simply come from the fact that he was a prophet. He had divine insight and that probably is why he knew what he did about her.

This knowledge that is God's was committed to his human nature and in his human mind he realized this position that she occupied as being an immoral woman.

And to us it's a sign, a testimony to the fact that he's God in human flesh. But she takes it as a testimony to the fact that he is a prophet because he's got this special insight into her situation.

And that's not a bad thing to have. Okay, there's better things to have than that, but that's not a bad thing to have. So let's not play down this idea that Jesus is a prophet, which is what we're going to be developing.

[ 13 : 20 ] And let's not play down the fact that as a prophet Jesus knows us and Jesus has insight into our situation so that he doesn't just see the situation that we go through but he understands it.

He doesn't only know what's happening but the tendency of what happens. He sees it with a special overview that enables him to grasp it in a dimension that we can't ourselves see.

Now all this is enhanced by the fact that he is the Son of God, that he is God in human form. But nonetheless there is this prophetic ministry that Jesus has and still has today and that we shouldn't neglect.

It may be rather unnerving at times in general, in fact unfortunately it is unnerving although it can be very positive as well that he knows what we are just as Jesus knew what this woman was.

So there is the first way in which she sees him, a prophet who has insight into her circumstances, into her inner life. But then we are just trying to fit all this story together so we go on quickly to the next point.

[ 14 : 38 ] And what we find here now is that Jesus has insight and authority. Now he not just into her life but in a wider way as well.

Now you might wonder why the conversation takes the line that it does. Jesus has talked about her immorality and what does she do? She talks about the right way to worship.

Now you might think all that she's doing here is changing the subject. It's rather uncomfortable to have your immorality exposed in this way. So let's change the subject and talk about theology instead.

When you're pressed upon your morals in the sexual realm, let's talk about what makes up pure worship and that will divert the attention from something that's really personal and somewhat uncomfortable.

And I must say I've often said this myself. Here she is and what she's doing is that she's trying to divert attention away from what Jesus has been teaching her about her life.

[ 15 : 40 ] But really it's not a change of theme at all. The situation is that the Samaritan woman says, I perceive that you're a prophet.

Okay, if you're a prophet then here's a question for you to answer. If you're a prophet you ought to have insight into this. You ought to be able to explain this.

And it's in that context that she brings up this question of where is the right place to worship. So she's not here trying to avoid teaching about her immorality.

She is trying to develop this idea of Jesus being the prophet. And she's trying to test him, I think, in a good way. She's trying to test him to see if he's got the answers to this difficult theological

problem.

Because surely if he's a prophet he will be able to bring clear and authoritative teaching that will bring light in that situation. So not a diversion but a following out of the line of thought that she's taken up.

[16:44] You're a prophet, okay, answer this one then. That's what's going on here, I think. So let's just see how that happens. I perceive that you're a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.

Now the Samaritans, as we said this morning, were not true Jews but they had Jewish blood in them and they had Jewish religion to some degree. They had only the five books of Moses in a perverted form but they had that as the basis of the religion.

Jerusalem and they had a temple of their own. That temple was in Mount Gerizim and that's what she means when she says here you see that in Jerusalem it's a place to worship but our fathers worshipped on this mountain.

This mountain being the mountain, Mount Gerizim, where the temple of the Samaritans was. So here's the question, which is the right place to worship?

If you're a prophet, you might have insight and understanding about that and be able to unfold relevant knowledge that will solve this problem for me.

[17:57] And I think we might say it's a genuine question that she's putting to him with a view to establishing how good his prophetic ministry really is. Now this contains an awful lot of important teaching and we're going to try and summarize it.

So what does Jesus teach here? He's teaching first of all that the future is different from the past. The future is to be different from the past.

Here he answers in verse 21, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

Now that, you see, is saying changes are coming. there's going to be a time of reformation as the letter to the Hebrews spoke about it.

There's going to be a time when everything is going to be changed for what it is now. The time is coming when people are not going to worship according to the old rules in accordance with the old pattern but there's going to be something different happening.

[19:07] Now, we know, of course, what he's talking about. I don't think the Samaritan woman probably did, but we know what he's talking about.

He's talking about what he was going to do, especially through his death and resurrection. He was going to make the Old Testament form of worship obsolete, antiquated, out of date and therefore unnecessary.

he was going to fulfill all the rites and ceremonies of the Old Testament and he was going to introduce therefore a new outlook and worship entirely.

And that was the change that he's speaking about here. And you see how this fits into the question that she'd been asking about. He said, she said, is it here in Mount Gerizim or is it there in Jerusalem we're meant to worship?

And he's saying the time is coming when neither there or here is going to be the place because the question of buildings and the question of temples is going to be a redundant one.

[20:16] There's something happening that is going to make these questions entirely redundant. Now let's see how he does this. You worship what you do not know.

We worship what we do what we know.

We know you worship what you don't know. You're worshipping in ignorance and he's not slow to say that. And he gives a reason for that. Salvation is from the Jews.

Now that does not mean to say that salvation is for the Jews but salvation is from the Jews. That's where it took its origin. That's where it first began in Abraham Isaac and Jacob and down through the line of Moses and David and the prophets.

If you want to know the origin of the message of salvation, of its revelation, look to the prophets of the Jews. That's where you'll find it.

[21:48] And so he's saying we've got the truth because that's the way God appointed it. Now that I see is a very strong statement that took prophetic courage to make.

You may have heard folks say nowadays, no offence but the gospel. And what they mean by that is don't say anything that will upset anybody unless it's that Jesus Christ died on the cross.

And so you cover up all sorts of difficulties in their way of looking at things and you don't dare criticize the religion for this, that or the other because it might give offence. but the only thing you're allowed to give offence about is the message of Christ crucified. And I must say there's something that sounds pretty nice about that in one level.

The only thing here is that it just doesn't correspond to the pattern that Jesus followed. How offensive this is. You're ignorant. Your religion is false because it doesn't come from the true basis. [ 22 : 53 ] a sweeping denunciation of Samaritan religion. But that's what prophets did. And because she's looking for a prophet she takes it. Now I'm not saying we must be gratuitously offensive to Muslims or to other people today.

We must be careful about what we say. But to water it down to say the only offence is the cross just doesn't conform to my mind to biblical teaching.

So there you see is the way that Jesus is looking at things. He's not slow to speak the truth just like a true prophet.

Now he goes on to tell you what true worship consists of. And that's the second point that we're bringing in. The first point is there's going to be a big change from what we've got and worship buildings like Mount Gerizim Jerusalem they're going to be made redundant.

The second main point that he makes is worship must be spiritual. And you've got that in verse 23. The hour is coming and is now here when the two worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

[ 24 : 08 ] For the Father is seeking such people to worship him. Worship must be spiritual. Now that was in direct contrast to the sort of worship that they had.

The sort of worship that they practiced in Mount Gerizim and the sort of worship they practiced in Jerusalem was materially based worship. It wasn't in essence a spiritual worship. it may be a picture of spiritual worship but it was a physical picture of spiritual realities and at best it was that and it was physically based.

Look after all at the questions she's talking about. She's talking about buildings which is the right temple a place a building a special building that was used for worship.

She's talking about physical things about material objects here. And that was the nature of Old Testament worship. It was based upon physical things.

[ 25 : 22 ] Remember the Galilean fishermen when they came to Jerusalem and saw the beautiful temple they said see what beautiful stones. That was the nature of the building.

Beautiful outward adornment something pleasing to the eye. That was the nature of Old Testament worship. And they run right through the system.

It wasn't just that the building was beautiful and pleasing to the eye and impressive outwardly. Everything that went on was based upon senses, upon sensuous things.

Here were the physical animals that were killed on the altar. And here's the blood flowing and there's the smell of the blood. And all this is there in the temple.

Physical things. priests. And there are the priests and they're clothed in beautiful garments. And why are they clothed in beautiful garments? It's for honour and beauty.

[ 26 : 23 ] Honour, their glory consisted of this. The outward garments that were specially made and were specially designed for them alone.

Outward. And then that appealed to the sense of sight. And then there are things that appeal to the sense of smelling. There would be the blood sacrificed on the altar.

And there would be a particular aroma, maybe not a very pleasant one, from that. And then there was the incense that was offered. And to my mind that's not very pleasant either.

But it would be combined so that there was something unique about the aroma in the temple. and in the worship conducted. And that was something that appealed to the sense of smell.

And then there's the sense of hearing. The musical instruments and the musicians and the choirs and so on. It appealed to the sense of hearing. So the whole thing is something material.

[ 27 : 25 ] And Jesus comes along and he says the time is coming and now is. When true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. This old material worship will no longer be valid.

It will no longer be practiced. It will no longer be acceptable. Because God seeks worshippers to worship in spirit and in truth. That's the writer to the Hebrews, the Old Testament worship.

It was just a parable. That word parable is actually used. It's just a parable of New Testament worship. an outward picture of spiritual realities.

And now that the New Testament worship has come, the spiritual realities have come to the fore.

And the material worship of the Old Testament is now obsolete, redundant, no longer to be practiced because God doesn't seek people to worship him in that way any longer.

And of course we can think about that and see its meaning quite plainly. We are the temple of God. Us believers, we are the temple of God because the spirit of God dwells in us.

[ 28 : 34 ] So this building is not the church. We are the church. This building is not the house of God. We are the house of God. A spiritual reality, not a physical reality, a spiritual one.

And the sacrifices that are offered are no longer sacrifices of animals. We look to one sacrifice that was made forever on the cross. And there's no need for animals to be killed any longer.

It's redundant, obsolete, because Christ has died. And we don't look for men to dress up in fancy clothes as priests or anything like that. So that people look at them and say, oh how beautiful, outstanding, impressive that is.

Because we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. And we don't look for incense to be offered that gives a nice smell to the atmosphere. Or some people think a nice smell to the atmosphere.

We look for the prayers of God's people that ascend, as incense did, that ascended into God's presence. And the thing that counts about worship is that we worship not with outward things, but from the heart.

[ 29 : 41 ] We have to make music in our hearts to God, and that's the spiritual reality of New Testament worship. So, when Jesus says this here, you can see how far reaching it is.

the sort of thing that a prophet was expected to do, and Jesus fulfills this role in an exemplary fashion. Telling the future, and introducing something radically new.

What authority! Who dare criticize the law of Moses? Who can say that the generations that have gone before have been doing it the wrong way? Okay, it was right for them.

Who's going to say that all that is to come to an end? It takes a bold man to say that, and teaches the Son of God to say that. What authority to sweep aside all that Moses wrote and say it's no valid any longer.

All that you've been doing these years, we're not going to be doing it in the future. What authority he's got here? And that's the prophetic voice that's speaking. Now, the third thing that he speaks about is not just times are changing, a new thing is coming into being, not just that the nature of worship is now going to be spiritual, rather than material.

[ 30 : 53 ] He's saying this is based upon the nature of God. The nature of God determines the nature of our worship. And he says this in verse 24.

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. Now, there you see, it's just what I'm saying. Why is our New Testament worship essentially spiritual?

Because of the nature of the God whom we're worshipping. Why is it not based upon material things, like it was in the Old Testament? God is not that sort of a God.

He doesn't have a physical body, he doesn't have ears to hear or eyes to see or not literally anyway, okay, he has these faculties but he doesn't literally have them.

He's not a physical being, he's not a material object, material being. He's spirit and that determines the nature of our worship. worship.

[ 31 : 56 ] So Jesus is saying what is going to happen, he's saying that something big is going to take place, transforming worship. He's saying what's going to be the basic principle is going to be in spirit and he's saying why it should be that way because that's the very nature of God himself.

Okay, that's Jesus answering that simple question. Now, there's so much more that could be said about this and obviously the applies to our worship and we cannot leave it without saying something about that although it's not the main point in the story in my opinion.

We will see something about this. Now, notice that last thing in particular. The worship of God is to be based upon the character of God. The nature of our worship is to be determined by the question who is God?

What's he like? Is this worship appropriate to such a God as that? Now, that's a very important question because in an awful lot of churches, as you probably well know, that's not the question that's being asked about worship.

The question is asked, we must get people to come into the church. What would they like? So, we'll do this and we'll do that or we do the other because outsiders will be much happier if we do it that way.

[ 33 : 21 ] Now, that just isn't on in the teaching of Jesus here. Whatever conclusion we come to about worship, that way of arguing does not hold any water because the basic question is not how does this affect the worshippers?

How does this please the outsider that comes into the church? The question is, is this in conformity with the nature of God? And the other point that I want to notice this is this.

And I say, whatever form of worship we adopt, whether we have a so-called traditional pattern or what we may call the more modern pattern, like either of these words, but you know what I mean. Whatever pattern of worship we might adopt, the question that really matters is, is it in spirit and in truth? And in a way, that matters as well as the form of worship.

So we might take one form of worship that we think to be biblical, but if we're not doing it from the heart, and if we're not doing it making music in our hearts to God, then it isn't worship.

[ 34 : 31 ] And if we're doing it because we think it's right as a mere form, and our hearts aren't involved in it, it isn't in spirit, and it isn't in truth. Or if we adopt other forms of worship that we haven't been accustomed to, the question is still the same.

it's not a matter of form merely. The big question is this, is this real worship something that comes from the heart and soul? so I'm not entering into details of how we should worship, I'm trying to avoid that in fact, I hope you notice, but I'm trying to go to the principles, we must please God in our worship, and whatever style of worship we adopt, the thing that matters is that we do it in spirit and in truth, from the heart, and it's a real thing to us in spiritual terms.

things. But these are the application for us today, and much more could be said, but I'm not going to say it. But the question is, what impact do you think this had on the woman?

She's not been coming to this subject with the question of saying, now how should we arrange our worship these days? she's coming to this matter with the question in her mind, is this really a prophet or not?

Really, surely, surely, she's left in no doubt at all about that. Jesus has such insight here, Jesus has such authority here, surely, surely, he must be classified as a prophet because of that.

[ 36 : 00 ] Knowing that a man of God, in touch with God, receiving God's word, could speak with such clarity, and with such authority, and with such boldness, and with such decisiveness, he must surely be a prophet.

And she's got her question answered, not so much about the right place to worship, she has got that answered, but she's got the underlying question answered, is he perhaps a prophet?

Of course he's a prophet, that's what she'd be saying as a result of this discussion. So, to her, Jesus is a prophet, not just because he sought into her heart and life, and brought things out, she didn't know anybody knew, but he's a prophet too, because he can expand this difficult question, he can make a pronouncement about the future, and he can speak in radical terms about what the will of God involves.

Surely, surely, that's her question answered, this man is indeed a prophet. And that leads her to a third stage in Jesus as a prophet, a prophet who sees into her heart, a prophet who foretells the future and describes things authoritatively and so on, a prophet who is the promised Messiah, and that's the final conclusion she comes to.

The woman said to him in verse 25, I know that Messiah is coming, he was called Christ, when he comes he will tell us all things.

[ 37 : 32 ] Jesus said to her, I who speak to you am he. And then she goes off and she goes out to her people and she says in verse 29, come see a man who told me all that I ever did.

Can this be the Christ? It's this prophetic work that leads her to the conclusion that he is the Christ. Now that doesn't sit well with us and our outlook.

To us, we know who Jesus is, we know who the Messiah is. To the Jewish people, they too had their concept of the Messiah and he was very much a king.

He was the son of David. He came from David's line, he was to sit on David's throne and he was to do so forever and ever. Of his kingdom, there would be no end.

So it was a kingly figure who would rule on David's throne in God's name that is the Jewish concept of the Messiah and to some degree the Christian one as well.

[ 38 : 37 ] And this woman doesn't see that. Now that's which he only talks about a prophet. He's got this insight into the future. He can tell us all things. He's a prophet, therefore he's the Messiah. Well, the explanation of that is simple. They've only got the five books of Moses. So they don't know about David. Or at least they don't accept what they know about David. and they don't accept the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel and the other prophets that spoke about the Messiah. She doesn't have this concept of a kingly Messiah of David's line because she's only got the five books of Moses. And it is understood, check this out, the Samaritans only believed in a prophet coming as a Messiah. They didn't see him in any other role. And she's saying, therefore, this is him. This is the one that we're thinking about. He's told me what was in my heart. He's expounded this problem and told about future things. He's a prophet. He must be.

[ 39 : 42 ] Therefore, isn't he then the Messiah? And that's what she means when she says, come and see this man. He told me everything I ever did. Isn't he the Messiah?

Because he's a prophet. prophet. And that's where we leave the woman, more or less. That's where we leave her understanding of things anyway. And now you may, you know, you've got to ask, well, what is her situation?

She hasn't understood what the water of life was. She just thought he was talking about some special water. She hasn't faced up to her sinfulness and all she knows is that Jesus is a prophet and therefore, the Messiah that the Samaritans were expecting.

Well, I think that's the situation. She is not what we would call a converted woman. She hasn't come to a knowledge of Jesus as the Saviour. She doesn't know him as the water of life. But don't downgrade this because she does know him as a prophet. And surely, surely, that's the first stage at which we all begin. We hear the prophetic word, telling us what Jesus is like.

[ 40 : 58 ] We hear Jesus' words that come to us in prophetic tones, announcing God's will and purpose and talking about things definitively as a prophet was meant to do.

And I think in a very real way, that's where we all started. And it's a very good place to start. If you start saying, Jesus is a prophet, you're going to listen to him. you're going to ask, what's he teaching? What does he mean? Who is he? And you're going to be led on to recognize other things. So that I don't think that this woman was converted, if we can use these terms.

But I do think she was on the road to it because she says he's a prophet. She's going to listen to his word, she's going to accept his teaching and she's going to develop until she comes to a full knowledge of the truth.

That's the way I understand her situation at least. And you might think, oh well, that's a poor situation to end the story on. But that's the point, I think, that we have to bear in mind.

[ 41 : 59 ] That this isn't the end of the story. Because it doesn't end in her experience, because there's a wee bit else to be added. But there's the real climax to the story.

She goes off and she tells her people, can this be the Christ? And they went out of the town and were coming to him.

Now, if I may just touch on something I said this morning, this doesn't seem to me to be the witness of a woman that was isolated and ostracised, that nobody would speak to.

She doesn't go up to a man and say, here's a person I found to be a prophet, is he the Christ? And the man turns his back upon her, because he doesn't speak with that woman.

She's a social outcast. She's isolated from the community because of her immoral lifestyle. It doesn't strike me that the reception of this woman's testimony was the reception of the testimony of a woman who generally people would turn their backs on and would refuse to listen to.

[ 43 : 06 ] So I don't think that that picture that is often put over about this woman's social status is really valid. Anyway, the point is that she makes her testimony and there's a big result from it.

And that's where the story really ends. Many more believed because of Jesus' word. Or I should go back to verse 40. So when the Samaritanes came to him, they asked him to stay with him, and he stayed there two days.

And many more believed because of his word. And they said to the woman, it is no longer because of what you said that we believe. For we have heard for ourselves and we know that this indeed is the saviour of the world.

And that's where it ends. This is the final picture. Not of Jesus the Messiah because he's a prophet, but Jesus as the saviour of the world. Now we connect the Messiah and the saviour pretty closely. But the Jews didn't, you know, and the disciples didn't. Peter says one moment, you are the Christ, the son of the living God. And then Jesus says, I'm going to die on the cross and rise again.

[ 44 : 18 ] And Peter says to him, don't think about that. So one moment he says you're the Messiah, and the next moment in effect he's saying you're not going to die on the cross.

A denial of him being the saviour. So don't think that the Jews automatically connected the Messiah and the saviour. They didn't. But these people go from one to the other.

They go out looking for a Messiah, and they come saying he's the saviour. And that's a fantastic step forward. Insight that the disciples at this stage perhaps didn't have to the same degree.

And that's an amazing result of this woman's testimony. They go on from where she was to the big thing, the saviour. And not just the saviour, the saviour of the world.

And that context of course means simply, not the saviour of the Jewish people from whom salvation comes, but the saviour of all peoples, whatever be their nation, whatever be their ethnicity, as people say nowadays, whatever be their social background or their national status.

[ 45 : 27 ] All are included in this salvation. Jews and Gentiles alike, all nations of the world. There's no distinction on the basis of nationality. that's the conclusion that they've come to.

And for a Samaritan to say that about a Jew, fantastic, remarkable insight they've been given here. And surely, surely the Spirit of God is indeed working in them.

And that's the climax of the story. And that's to be the climax of our experience. Whatever we may see of Jesus, and there's an awful lot to be seen, this is what it should build up to and come to a climax in.

Not just that Jesus is the Messiah, not just that he's a prophet, but he's the saviour of the world. And if I come to him in my guilt and my sin, he'll save me, because he's a compassionate God whose compassion knows no bounds.

And he's a powerful God whose power knows no limits. And he offers the life-giving water of his grace that produces life that will never end. I can go to him with confidence and embrace him as the saviour of all nations, of all peoples, the saviour of the world.

[ 46 : 39 ] And that's the climax, the big point in our experience as well. May God bless his word to us.