

## **Bottled or Living Water**

**Intro.** Recently I read that for the first time, bottled water will outsell soda this year. Americans on average are estimated to drink twenty-seven gallons of bottled water each (a gallon more than soda). Last year, almost thirteen billion gallons of bottled water were sold (Beverage Marketing Corp. report). Not too many folks go to their own wells for water anymore.

**I.** In the Middle East, life depends on knowing where the water is. Wherever a well exists, so does life. The Samaritan woman claimed the well was a gift from Jacob, one of the great Jewish ancestors. But the Samaritans now owned it [M. McGlone, NCR, 3/10-23/17]. That must have been a sore point with the Jews. It is at this *same* well that an *even*

*greater gift* is given and received. In the course of her usual work, the woman found the Lord sitting at her well. We can believe it was an accidental meeting *or* believe it was purposeful. The Lord *always* has a purpose. He was there to give her the opportunity to change her life. She immediately recognized him as a Jew. Things got off to a rough start due to the clash of cultures. She was able to hold her own in the conversation as they went back and forth, he talking about salvation and she about well water. The Lord finally changed the subject to one that got her attention: the life she was living. She admitted it wasn't good and that opened the door for salvation. She realized who he was and forgot all about her water jar.

**Concl.** Going to the well and drawing water every day was hard work. Most of us have never done it, but some of you remember it and are glad for indoor plumbing. Replenishing our faith each day is *also* hard work. If we don't, it gets stale and uninspiring. It took the woman a long time to finally realize what and who the Living Water was. She misunderstood because she was too focused on the work of getting water and missed seeing the Lord for who he was. We often get so balled up in *our* daily routine that we don't see the Lord whether at school or work. The Lord had to get the woman's attention before she focused on him. She first thought he was a prophet and but as her faith grew, she came to believe he was the Messiah. She turned evangelizer, bringing the whole town to the Living Water.

Not all thirst is about water and water is not always something we drink. It can be something that gives life. Where do we find the "Living Water" today? Some days we have to work for it; other days we stumble on it. Find **that** well and we will find the Lord there waiting for us.

