

This week, Lent brings us to a well in Samaria and a dry wilderness in Rephidim. In John 4:5–42 and Exodus 17:1–7, we meet people who are thirsty; physically and spiritually. And we see a God who responds, not with frustration, but with grace and faithful presence.

In the Gospel According to John, Jesus sits beside a well at noon and asks a Samaritan woman for a drink. It's a simple request, yet it breaks social, cultural, and religious barriers. The woman comes carrying her water jar, but she is also carrying shame, isolation, and unanswered longing. Jesus gently uncovers her deeper thirst, the thirst for acceptance, truth, and living hope.

He tells her about “living water,” water that becomes a spring within, welling up to eternal life. She begins the conversation confused, maybe even defensive. But she stays. She listens. And slowly, her heart opens. By the end, she leaves her jar behind and runs back to her town, not hiding anymore, but sharing good news.

In Exodus, the Israelites are also thirsty. The wilderness feels harsh and unforgiving. Fear rises quickly, and they question Moses and God. “Is the Lord among us or not?” they ask. God answers not with anger, but with grace. Water flows from the rock. In their doubt and complaining, God still makes a way.

A well in Samaria. A rock in the wilderness. In both places, God sees the thirst of His people.

Lent invites us to notice our own thirst. Beneath our busy schedules and surface prayers, what are we really longing for? Approval? Security? Relief from guilt? Hope in the middle of uncertainty? Like the woman at the well, we may try to draw from wells that don't truly satisfy. Like the Israelites, we may wonder if God is really with us when life feels dry.

But Jesus still sits beside wells at midday. He still meets us in wilderness seasons. He still offers living water.

This living water doesn't mean life becomes easy. The wilderness doesn't disappear overnight. But it does mean we're not alone. It means that Christ Himself becomes the source within us; steady, faithful, renewing.

This Lent, perhaps the invitation is not to hide our thirst or pretend we have it all together. Perhaps it is to bring our emptiness honestly before God. To name our questions. To admit our dryness. And to trust that the One who brings water from rock and life from wells is still at work.

Reflective Questions:

1. Where do you feel spiritually thirsty right now?
2. Are there “wells” you keep returning to that leave you unsatisfied?

3. What might it look like to receive the living water Jesus offers, instead of trying to quench your thirst on your own?

Prayer

Gracious God,

You meet us in our thirst. In the dry and weary places of our lives, You do not turn away. You offer living water; grace that restores, love that satisfies, hope that endures. Forgive us for the times we doubt Your presence or try to fill our hearts with lesser things.

Draw us back to You this Lent. Help us lay down what we are carrying and receive what only You can give. Let Your Spirit become a spring within us, overflowing into love for others.

Amen.

Grace and peace

Rev Aaron Moad