

IF "ENTERING YOUR 18" IS WHAT IT TAKES, THEN ...!

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When's the last time you read the actual story of THE SAMARITAN WOMAN or heard a sermon with her as the "central character"? If your answer is: "E don really stay", my guess is you're not alone. Aftr'all, why bother with a "Shady Chick" like her when the Bible has no shortage of "bettah women" such as ESTHER, (a whole Queen who saved her people from annihilation), RUTH, (Mighty King David's Grand Ma well known for her loyalty), HANNAH, (Prophet Samuel's mother whose persistence & fervency in prayer are exemplary) and, of course, Holy MARIA herself, Mother of JESUS??!! De poor Woman! E bad for e side sotey e no even get "really" name oh! We know of RAHAB, de "Ashawo", JEZEBEL, de "wiket" Queen wey hambock Poor ELIJAH time no dey, HERODIAS, wey e make'am dem slice Poor John The Baptizer e head put'am on top pan, and even DELILAH, de Seductress wey cause "Super Makia" SAMSON e downfall; BUT this "Nyango", whom the Apostle John writes about in the 4th Chapter of his Gospel, is known simply by the place she was from; – SAMARIA. In ohdah werds, if e be be na me so, the Scriptures would simply have referred to me as "THE WOMAN OF BESONGABANG"! Trouble oh! Ma own bettah seff say BESONGABANG; at least P.S.S. (Presbyterian Secondary School), dey for dey. This SAMARIA was avoided, shunned and hated with a passion by the JEWS in that day and time, and no JEW worth his kosher salt would want to be caught dead near a SAMARITAN oh! They were considered the assimilated, impure, tainted breed that resulted from the abominable and abhorred intermarriage that occurred between the Assyrian heathens and the rebellious "LOST" 10 tribes that made up the Northern Kingdom of Israel after it split from the 2 "Pure" Tribes of Joseph & Benjamin that made up the "Faithful" Southern Kingdom of JUDAH. (No be today HUTU and TUTSI kind wahala dem start oh!!!!)

Do not mean to bore you to tears, but these maps I looked up online and these 2 little excerpts from 2 online ancient history articles on the subject should help shed more light on how bad the situation and animosity between the JEWS and SAMARITANS was, and explain WHY I scratched every flake of dandruff right off my head when I re-read the story of THE SAMARITAN WOMAN over again recently:

Article 1:

*"At the time of Jesus' earthly ministry, the land of Samaria was situated between the regions of Galilee in the north of Israel, and Judea in the south. **Jewish travelers would take the longer, six-day journey along the Jordan River valley between Galilee and Judea rather than taking a shorter, more direct route through Samaria. The Jews avoided all contact with the Samaritans because of the bitter history between them and the Samaritans.**"*

Article 2:

"There was a long history of racial tension between the Jews and the Samaritans. It was dangerous for a Jew to travel through Samaria. They were sometimes attacked,

beaten, robbed, and maybe killed.

Most Jews traveling from Judea to Galilee, went around. They crossed over the Jordan River, went North until they were well beyond Samaria's northern border and then crossed back into Galilee.”



Now, fast forward to JOHN 4:1-5! Here's what it says, verbatim:

*Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John— 2 although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. 3 So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. 4 Now he **had to go** through Samaria.*

Somehow, I had never quite noticed the “undah must-must” nature of this verse oh! **HAD TO GO**?? How manage? What does John The Apostle mean? The historical excerpt I just posted above makes it abundantly clear that there was an ALTERNATE (“DETOUR”) Route available, albeit a longer one, which the JEWS preferred to take; So why would JESUS, who was not just an ordinary Jew but a Devout RABBI – a Teacher & Upholder of the Law not take that alternate route?? Why did He **HAVE TO go THROUGH** and Not **AROUND** Samaria???

I found the beginning of my answer in The 21st Century King James Version of the Bible which presents the same verse, (John 4:4), this way:

4 and He needed to go through Samaria.

The light bulb sure came on in my head! So, no be sey Jesus be want take cut short oh! He **NEEDED** – as in WANTED, to go to Samaria, ON PURPOSE, to meet this SAMARITAN WOMAN!!! Alright then! So what was so special about this woman that would make a RESPECTABLE & REVERED JEWISH RABBI so bent on meeting her nah? Abi she was the “MOTHER TERESA” of the town? FOR WOOSAI!!! Instead, EVERYTHING about her could, would and should have made her the VERY LAST person someone of JESUS’ stature would

have wanted to be even remotely associated with, much less *seen* with - in BROAD DAYLIGHT! Here's why:

1. She was a WOMAN:

Men do not just talk to women "anyhow like that" in Mid-Eastern Cultures even today; then how much more back then? And no be sey Jesus go meet de woman for inside market or Synagogue wey people flop de whole place oh! The "Rendez-Vous" was by "JACOB'S WELL", only dem 2! Hah! (Even His own Disciples were astonished when they came back from the "go find chop" errand they'd gone on and saw de "situation"!

Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked to find him talking to a woman, but none of them had the nerve to ask, "What do you want with her?" or "Why are you talking to her?"

(John 4:27)

2. She was a SAMARITAN: Need I go over the sworn hatred between their two Tribes?

3. Her REPUTATION & LIFESTYLE: De woman too be be na hélélé oh! Verse 6 of John 4 puts the time when she came to "Carry Wata", as "The 6th Hour", which is NOON, as in 12 O'clock for afternoon oh! Na which kind woman dey go "Likomba" for go carry wata undah hot afternoon sun, instead of for sharp-sharp morning wey sun neva comm'ot or for ivining time wey sun don go down finish – which is when women NORMALLY went - and still go, to "fetch a pail of water"???? ANSWER:

A WOMAN WHO IS TOO EMBARRASSED & ASHAMED TO DARE MIX WITH THE OTHERS!!!

This Woman chose a time when she was sure there would be no one at the well, to sneak off, "kunya-kunya", to draw water!

Well, She gets there, and to her dismay, right there is this Single, Jewish, 'Tranger Man, who "hits on her" with the "donnest" "PICK UP LINE" of all time: **"EXCUSE ME WATA"!!!** (Don't play with THE SANGO OF SANGOS oh!!! WELL BEFORE all those "Monkey Coat", Ali Baba Pointing toe shoe, Polka Dot bow tie-wearing "Gallant Bobes" of the 60s, 70s and 80s came along with their CLAP & "EXCUSE ME DANCE" Routines at all those MASU, BASU & FASU dances in Ngoa-Ekele, HE WAS - STILL IS and WILL FOREVER BE Oh!!!)

We all know how the story unfolded, with the poor, clueless, and confused woman taking Jesus' spiritual message about "Water", literally. Something tells me that if OGA JESUS had continued speaking "metaphorically", de Nyango would not have picked up a thing, and we might just never have had a John Chapter 4 at all! So what "strategy" did JESUS use which finally got her full and undivided attention??

HE "ENTERED HER 18" LIKE ONLY HE CAN!!!

Out of nowhere; just like dat, GBAM-GBAM! He says to her:

“GO AND BRING YOUR HUSBAND.”
(Kaï Walahi!!!)

Ah sure de woman e head spin for inside, Nwiiiiiiiing, but at least, she managed to blurt out the “Half Truth”:

“I HAVE NO HUSBAND”

(De woman try yah! Jesus E seff-seff for shock, had the woman said: “Oga! Make I go bring which one of de 5 Massa dem??”)

It is when JESUS “confronts” her with ALL the sordid details of her Private Life – including her current “Cam We Stay” situation, that she declares:

“I PERCEIVE THAT YOU ARE A PROPHET”

(No Quack of a Ngambe Man or Crystal Ball-gazing “Miss Cleo” could measure up oh!!!)

Jesus goes on to explain a few more things to her, concluding with the ultimate Direct Revelation that He is *The* MESSIAH: (“I am that one,” V. 26), at which point, de woman leave calabash for back, run go call de whole town make dem cam see wandas!! And they must have noticed something very different about her because they DISREGARDED her bad reputation and responded so very positively and overwhelmingly to her incredible witness. Just check out this PHENOMENAL Conclusion to the story about this NAMELESS, SAMARITAN WOMAN OF BAD REPUTE:

39 A lot of Samaritans in that town put their faith in Jesus because the woman had said, “This man told me everything I have ever done.” 40 They came and asked him to stay in their town, and he stayed on for two days.

Wow! Not only did Jesus "stop by" this contemptuous, "mbahluck" town: He stayed there 2 Whole Days!!!

Lessons Learned? PLENTY, but mainly that:

- Jesus loves us enough to “go out of His way” to SEEK & PURSUE us, even when we have strayed far, far away from Him.

- He can use ANYBODY – even people whom we would self-righteously qualify as "unworthy", to spread His Message. (Talk about a God of 2nd – 3rd and even 4th Chances!)

- JESUS *does* need to “GO THERE”, “ENTER OUR 18”, call us out and confront us with our shortcomings oh! NOT to humiliate or embarrass us, but to help us “GET REAL”, confess and do the required 180 degree turn around in the right direction. More and more, we find Pastors and Spiritual Leaders who literally LOVE THEIR CONGREGATIONS TO DEATH, (as in,

straight to hell), by shying away from and avoiding any “unpleasant” and “uncomfortable” YET Biblically-based & backed topics, for fear that their Church attendance would drop or just fizzle out!

I, for one, am pretty sure that The Samaritan Woman was mighty glad that Jesus didn't just ask her for "empty" water, drink it, belch, and let her go back to her empty, purposeless, unfulfilled life!!

God Bless,
Egbe Mbiwan Monjimbo