Judith Fritchman; *Living Water, The Woman At The Well*

The Living Water Promised to Me

In her book, *Hidden Women of the Gospels*, Kathy Coffey points out that of the 1,426 people given names in the Scriptures, 111 of them are female and many have no name. In contrast to say, *Andrew*, James or John, we meet the Samaritan Woman in this Sunday's gospel. Can you imagine being referred to as the *Toronto Woman* or the *New York Lady*? Surely, Jesus would have called the Samaritan Woman by her name. What might have been her name? So, before you listen to this unnamed *Samaritan Woman* tell her story, might you give her a name? Your name?

The day is so hot and the water-pot so heavy … I come in the hot sun when no one is around because the other women laugh at me, quietly, in whispers. They talk about me and how I live. Don't they know the pain I have felt over these years? I just want them to look at me and smile, acknowledge my presence. I am treated as an outcast by women of my own nation, my own bloodline.

But here I am alone … Wait, I am not alone … there is a man sitting at the well. Just what I need… Another man to deal with in the hot sun … I just want to get my water-pot filled and leave. 'Give Me a drink,' He says to me. Who does he think he is, asking me a woman, a Samaritan woman no less, for a drink?

Yet He looks at me - like no other man has ever looked at me. His eyes pierce me, as if He is looking into my soul, the depths of my being. He sees everything - the sins, the pain, the sorrow, the injustice. Somehow, something within me is changed. He speaks of 'Living Water'. Is it this Living Water that changes me? I can feel this water cleansing, refreshing me. I am the one now who wants to drink - to drink more of this Living Water, to quench the thirst of my dryness, the dryness of my sin, the dryness of injustice, the dryness of my sorrow. I am not ashamed, as I was with the others, that He knows my life, because He has not judged, has not condemned me.

Now I must go and tell the others, 'Come and see the man … could He be the Christ?' They do not need to believe me, but to come and see for themselves.

I have left my water-pot behind!!! I no longer need it because now I have the Living Water promised to me by the prophet from Galilee.

Does this woman's story resonate with you? Are you, and I, not often like the Samaritan Woman at the well? She speaks to us in our 'parched' times, so with her let us raise our hearts and voices.

Quench our thirst for meekness, when we are parched by a need for power.
Quench our thirst for humility, when we are parched with pride.
Quench our thirst for compassion, when we are parched with disregard.
Quench our thirst for forgiveness of others, when we are parched with revenge.
Quench our thirst for joy in You, when we are parched with sadness.
Quench our thirst for boldness, when we are parched with apathy.
Quench our thirst for salvation, when we are parched by our sinfulness.

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