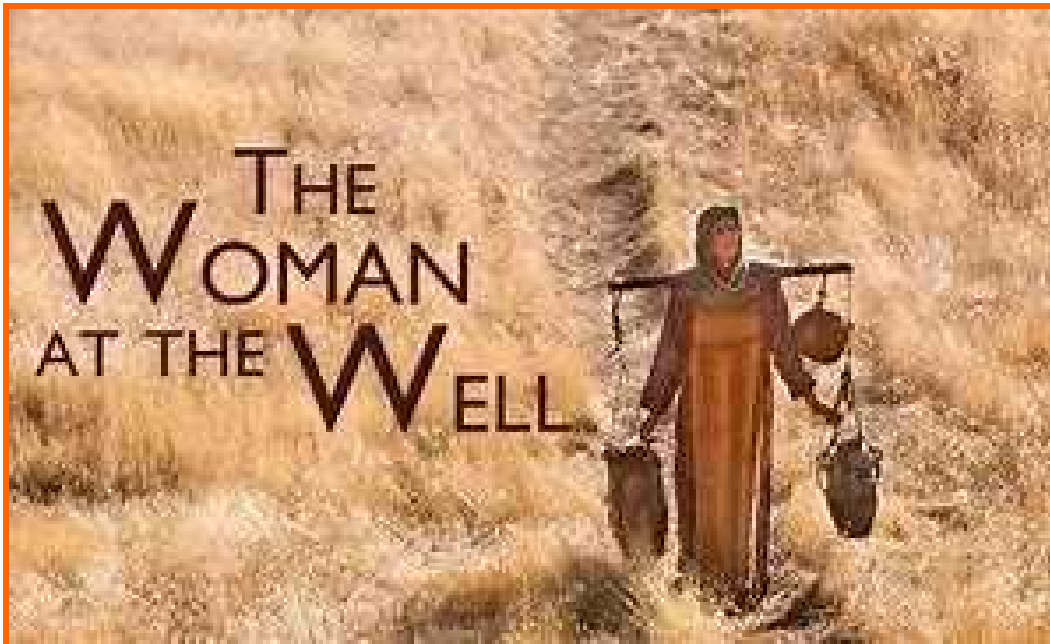


# A Dollop of the Fourth Gospel: What do the Johannine scholars say about the Woman at the Well – and John?



By

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## COMMENTS

The task of this research is to compile and comment on a select number of Johannine scholars about the Woman at the Well in Jn 4 with special emphasis on verses 23-26 and 29. Their responses will carry their insight and thoughts on also the Book of John, noting this background information will be instrumental in understanding these key verses as it pertains to the woman and Jesus. This walk through of a number of scholars to see the different ideas is what gives this paper the power of appreciation of this transformative story.

## OUTLINE

- I. Background or preliminary comments on how to read these verses, how to see the different ways to interpret the findings, and have a better way to see the methods used like text, exposition, and commentary. These scholars or sources are The Interpreters Bible (VII), Victor Furnish, Maurice Goguel, Günther Bornkamm, and Rudolf Bultmann.
- II. Authors (in no particular order): Robert Kysar, Jaime Clark-Soles, Raymond Brown, Francis Moloney, C.K. Barrett, Sandra Schneiders, R. Alan Culpepper, Gail O'Day, Paul Anderson, Karloine Lewis, Craig Koester, Rudolf Schnackenburg, D. Moody Smith, Paul Duke, Edwyn Hoskyns, C.H. Dodd, Mary Coloe.
- III. Reading "The Chosen."

## PATH

Pertinent, pithy, proleptic, progressive, parenthetically, presented, partly, parsimoniously, pathetically, pugnaciously, parochial, paraphrased, piecemeal, prophylactic, propitious, propagate, pommel, portray, portage, poise, plunge, plunder, place, picket, peruse...

Each one of these words is addressed by a paradigmatic author in Outline II above. I mean, how many different ways are there to purge, purify, pardon, or palliate these three verses?

**"The hour has come and now is."**

**"I, that speak unto thee, am He."**

**"Come and see..He cannot be the Messiah, can he?"**

I love to tell the story: For those who know it best Seem hun - ger-  
 ing and thirsting To hear it like the rest. And when, in scenes of glo - ry,  
 I sing the new, new song. 'Twill be the old, old story, That I have loved so long.  
*I love to tell the sto - ry! 'Twill be my theme in glo - ry.  
 To tell the old, old sto - ry Of Je - sus and His love.<sup>1</sup>*



Vs 23 – “This time is coming and is already here...If the coming of the ὥρα (hour) is stressed, as in 5.25, as well as its presence, this is done in order to show that **the present hour is the eschatological hour**. For its ‘coming’, even if it is present, is never a thing of the past” (Bultmann, p. 190). And from the Interpreter’s Bible (p. 527): **“The eschatological hour has brought the dawn of the day of the Lord.”**

Vs 26 – The Samaritan women “speaks of a Messiah in terms of a revealer, one who will announce all things. To such a messianic description Jesus can say ‘I am’...in being the incarnation in history of the God who revealed himself to Moses as **I AM**” (Exod 3:14) (Coloe, p. 102).

Vs 29 – “Not only does she believe, she witnesses to her faith. Forgetting her water pots, she runs back to share her newfound faith with her village. With joyful exaggeration she invites her neighbors to ‘Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done!’ **and then entices them with the question she knows very well is going to pique their curiosity**, ‘He cannot be the Messiah, can he?’ (Kysar, p. 181).

Note: Now, take the time to read with care the next page on John 4:5-30 which is about the Woman at the Well. We are going from wading like a child to later swimming with the elephants. Ask: “Who wrote this?” - “Who is this story for?” - “For what reason was this Gospel written?” Then see if you agree: “The Fourth Gospel was written in order that ‘you’ might believe **“that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God and that through believing you may have life in his name”** (Jn 4:31) (Koester, “What is John?” p. 18).

**Ok - Let’s go swimming!**

<sup>1</sup> The Cokesbury Worship Hymnal (1938). *I Love To Tell The Story*. Page 65.

## John 4:5-30

**5**So He came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. **6**Since Jacob's well was there, Jesus, weary from His journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. **7**When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." **8**(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

**9**"You are a Jew," said the woman. "How can You ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

**10**Jesus answered, "If you knew the gift of God and who is asking you for a drink, you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

**11**"Sir," the woman replied, "You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where then will You get this living water? **12**Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock?"

**13**Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. **14**But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a fount of water springing up to eternal life."

**15**The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water so that I will not get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." **16**Jesus told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

**17**"I have no husband," the woman replied. Jesus said to her, "You are correct to say that you have no husband. **18**In fact, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. You have spoken truthfully."

**19**"Sir," the woman said, "I see that You are a prophet. **20**Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews say that the place where one must worship is in Jerusalem."

**21**"Believe Me, woman," Jesus replied, "a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. **22**You worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. **23**But a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father is seeking such as these to worship Him. **24**God is Spirit, and His worshipers must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

**25**The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When He comes, He will explain everything to us."

**26**Jesus answered, "I who speak to you am He."

**27**Just then His disciples returned and were surprised that He was speaking with a woman. But no one asked Him, "What do You want from her?" or "Why are You talking with her?" **28**Then the woman left her water jar, went back into the town, and said to the people,

**29**"Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"

**30**So they left the town and made their way toward Jesus.

**Victor Paul Furnish** (1973). "Some Practical Guidelines for New Testament Exegesis." Perkins Journal.

"*Exegesis*" represents the work of technical biblical scholars and deals with philological, grammatical, literary and historical details.

"*Exposition*" puts the biblical texts into a homiletical, "preachable" context.

"*Hermeneutics*" is to translate from "foreign tongues," "to expound, explain," "to put into words, articulate," or even "to describe," "to write about."

"*Textual Analysis*" is the aim to reconstruct, as exactly as possible, the precise words of the original writer.

"*Literary Analysis*" is closely concerned with the *written* characteristics of the document itself asking:

- a. What is the meaning of the individual terms the author used?
- b. Does he borrow words from other languages?
- c. Does he coin new words?
- d. Are there Greek words that have been influenced by translated Hebrew words?

"*Historical analysis*" is looking at the related problems of authorship, the place, and the dates.

"*Theological analysis*" means paying attention, first of all, to the explicit theological concepts and ideas which the original writers were sponsoring and seeking to expand.

The tasks of exegesis has presupposed the exegete's ability to work with the primary texts to be interpreted...For it is absolutely true that *every translation is an interpretation.*"

It is and always will be impossible to point to any single translation as "the best one" for the interpreter who must use translations.

Special regard should be paid to cognate (related or connected) passages in the same or in related writings. That is, if one is exegeting a passage from the Gospel of John, what other passages in that Gospel are relevant, and are there passages in the Johannine letters which are cognate?

**Maurice Goguel** (1960). Volume I: *Prolegomena to the Life of Jesus*.

The attempt, therefore, to discover a history of the life of Jesus in the Johannine Gospel is due to a misunderstanding of the nature of this Gospel.

The historical value of John's narrative does not lie in its framework nor in its general construction, but in the traditional material which it has used. In my opinion, we can, to a very large extent, recognize and reconstruct the sources or some of the sources of the Gospel, in spite of alterations, adaptations, and additions which the evangelist introduced in order to make them useful for his purpose, which was that of the edification of his readers and the strengthening of their faith, not that of instruction in the actual facts of the life of Jesus, nor to satisfy an historical curiosity which did not exist when he wrote (p. 157).

**Günther Bornkamm** (1960). *Jesus of Nazareth*.

"The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed: nor will they say, 'Lo here it is!' or, 'there!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you" (Lk. xvii.20 f.). In this way, in both word and action, Jesus fastens upon today, this present moment in which are contained the decisions of the ultimate future,

The Jesus of the synoptic Gospels – and we may here say with certainty the historical Jesus – speaks in a characteristically different way from the Jesus of John's Gospel, who is seen entirely with the eyes of post-Easter faith. The great "I am" sayings of the fourth gospel (light, way, truth, resurrection, life) have no parallels in the synoptic Gospels (p. 68).



[Rudolf Bultmann](#) (1971). *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*.

[GH] Just a few words on Bultmann. His commentary is text, exegesis, hermeneutics, and a rewrite of the Gospel. He has rearranged the text to fit what he thinks is a more agreeable writing to agree with his interpretation of the Greek. It is his master piece. It was the first book I paid more than fifty bucks for; course, it took a few years to appreciate just how deep it was and the Greek is still 'an on going lesson.'

First, and I am assuming you might like to read the Fourth Gospel past what we have been covering in this paper.

Try reading chapter Six and then Five.

Try reading this order: 13, 17, 15, 16, and 14.

You will appreciate this time (Thursday evening) as he spends a few hours with his disciples in "The Revealer's Farewell" (13.1 – 17.26) in the Last Supper..."Jesus knew his hour had come" (13.1) and in 14.31 "Arise, let us go hence."

Second, on the redactions, Bultmann has 'called them out' so the rest of us know when either the Evangelist or someone else has modified the original word. Some of the changes are easy to see and in your Bible you will see parentheses showing these changes. Bultmann was able to see the differences in Greek and has noted in his book with footnotes where something was added, edited, or changed. Some of this is easy to see where the change says things like "On this day..." and that means an ecclesiastical (church) change has been added. Some of the editors will not let go of the Synoptic direction and is a steer against the realized eschatology of the Fourth Gospel.

Third, if you want to quickly see some of this please look at my Web site [www.gheart.net](http://www.gheart.net) in "Monk Work" folder, as I have shown these additions in "Gospel of John: ReOrdered."

**Craig R. Koester** *The Word of Life: A Theology of John's Gospel*. (2008).

One of the Gospel's most complex characters is the Samaritan woman. She meets Jesus beside a well, then flounders in her attempt to understand the living water. When she finally asks for this water, she seems to expect it to work like magic plumbing, eliminating the need to come to the well each day (4:15). She moves toward greater clarity when Jesus tells her about her personal life and she discerns that he must be a prophet (4:19). She comes close to genuine insight when she introduces the topic of the Messiah. Then after Jesus identifies himself, she tells her townspeople, "Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did" (4:29a). She sounds like a true believer. Yet her final words are a question that technically expects a negative answer: "He can't be the Messiah, can he?" (4:29). She invites people to "come and see," but she does so despite lingering uncertainty. What she has received from Jesus enables her to bear witness, but it has not fully eliminated her questions (p. 173).

The Jesus of John's Gospel sends his followers into the world. There they meet human beings who, like themselves, have no innate ability to generate relationships with God. What the followers of Jesus bring is what they themselves have received: the message of the cruciform love of God that calls any and all to faith and life. This is the purpose for which John's Gospel was written (20:31) (p. 214).

**Robert Kysar** (2007). *John the Maverick Gospel*.

This evangelist is sly and clever in the presentation of women (p.178).

Mary Magdalene 20

Women at the foot of the cross 19

Mary 12

Martha 11

Samaritan Women 4

Mother of Jesus 2

When we ask where in the Johannine story of Jesus the author presents the female characters of the drama, it occurs to us that they pop up at all the crucial places...How important those chapters are!...At the apex of his passion, a group of women are present at the foot of the cross, including his mother, Mary Magdalene, and others (19:25). Their presence is highlighted by the conspicuous absence of all but one of the male followers (the beloved disciple, *if this person was a male*)...Women are then involved in the beginning, the middle, and the conclusion of the Johannine story (p. 178).

[GH] Let me discuss for a moment the Johannine expression "The hour has come" or **Ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα** in Greek. There are different versions or translations of this in similar verses:

4:21 the hour is coming

4:23 the hour is coming and now here

5:25 the hour is coming, and now here

12:23 the hour has come

**Ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα**

13:1 his hour had come

16:23 the hour is coming

16:32 the hour is coming, indeed it has come. ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ ἐλήλυθεν

17:1 the hour has come

**Ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα**

**Sandra M. Schneiders** *Written That You May Believe*. (1999).

The aim is to allow the world of Christian discipleship as it is projected by this text to emerge and invite the transformative participation of the reader (p. 126).

*Historical Presuppositions* – First, the episode in Samaria is, in all likelihood, not a historical event in the life of the earthly Jesus...The story in John 4, then, probably represents a reading back into the public ministry of Jesus the Johannine community's post resurrection experience of the Samaritan mission and the influence of the Samaritan converts within the community of the Fourth Gospel [The footnote says this comes from Raymond Brown.] (p. 134).

Jesus confirms her conclusion with his lapidary and unambiguous self-identification as Messiah and as the God of Mosaic revelation, "I am" (v. 26)...Nowhere else in the Fourth Gospel is there a dialogue of such theological depth and intensity" (pp. 140-141).

Despite this critical picture of the woman, generations of believers have been deeply religiously moved by this story and drawn to this woman, a fact that testifies to its literary power and spiritual density and justifies our taking a second look at the data...I entertained an alternate possibility about this woman, namely, that she was not a whore whom Jesus converted but a potential spouse whom he invited to intimacy...The analysis of the episode from this alternative perspective revealed the woman as a symbolic figure representing the Samaritan element in the Johannine community, which understood itself as the new Israel bride of the true Bridegroom, Jesus (p. 144).

I do not think we will ever know with certainty the identity of the evangelist, because the evangelist does not want us to know it and is a good enough writer to keep us from finding it out. But of all the characters in the Gospel, the most likely candidate for the evangelist's *textual alter ego* is the Samaritan woman in chapter 4. Lacking the space to develop each point, I will list a number of factors that make me think this character might be the evangelist's literary self-portrait, whatever the historical evangelist's actual identity or gender might be...

The Samaritan woman in Chapter 4 is certainly the most theologically sophisticated interlocutor of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel and is deliberately contrasted with the theologically obtuse "teacher in Israel," Nicodemus in chapter 3...She receives the first "*ego eimi*" (I am) revelation of Jesus' identity in the Fourth Gospel (4:26), understands that he is the messianic prophet like Moses "who will tell us all things" (4:25)...and despite the fact that she obviously correctly identifies Jesus and must, therefore, believe in him since she goes off to bring her fellow townspeople to "come and see," she does not simply tell them who Jesus is but poses the question, "Can this be the Messiah?" (4:29) (pp. 251-252).

It seems not unlikely that whoever wrote the Fourth Gospel had some experience of women Christians as theologians and as apostles, was aware of the tension this aroused in the community, and wanted to present Jesus as legitimating female participation in male-appropriated roles. Again, one cannot help wondering about the identity of the evangelist (p. 142).



Barrett<sup>2</sup> says and I agree, “the hour” has to do with the glory that Jesus talks about in 17:1. Some of the hour is coming is about other items but most have to do with the glory in the Last Supper. “At 16:32 is the similar ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ ἐλήλυθεν (is coming an hour and has come); at 12:23; 13:1; 17:1 a simple past tense is used alone. These last three refer to the suffering and glorification of Jesus in its immediate approach; 16:32 similarly refers to the hour in which the disciples are about to desert Jesus and be scattered to their homes.

Barrett says 4:23 and 5:25 are “which the simple continuous present is used along with νῦν ἐστίν (now is), which seem to stand by themselves...

[HANG in here with me - we are swimming in some rather deep water...]

“Each refers to events which seem on the surface to belong to a later time – a pure and spiritual worship of the Father, and the resurrection. Indeed John does not mean to deny that they do truly belong to a later time, but he emphasizes by means of his oxymoron that in the ministry, and above all in he person, of Jesus they were proleptically [anticipated, taken beforehand] present. True worship takes place in and through him just as he is himself the resurrection” (11:25) (Barrett, p. 237).

This is the part in this paper where I would have stood on my head and spit wooden nickels to get someone to hear what is coming up – it won’t take long, but let me swim around some of this story maybe from my commentary, or exegesis, or maybe a prayerful look...

[GH] One day while reading this story, like a monk, I started asking questions – and then I began to answer them. I felt the heat of the “6<sup>th</sup> hour – it was noon” and looking down on the words I asked “Who is writing this? How can they know all the details of the discussion?” Of course, I figured out ‘the word’ about the woman and Jesus staying in town with the Samaritans – and the disciples taken it all in – the details became the wonderful story it is – so we can appreciate it. The words have lasted...In my opinion the words have done more for the cause than having a video recording of it...(who would in these days believe some video?)

While reading, I determined the way it was written could not have been done by a male. We boys just don’t think like this story was presented.

First, the hour. Yes, “**The hour has come**” – in German, Hebrew, Latin or Greek. To me this means the same thing as “**The hour is coming, and now here**” knowing full well ‘others’ have a different spin to it. This means Jesus has arrived. He is now tenting with us. *This is the Messiah*. Jesus announces what John the Baptist said “Among you stands one you do not know...this is the Son of God” (Jn 1:26; 34).

And He tells the lady at the well first.

When Jesus looked into her eyes he answered her comment of the Messiah coming to ‘proclaim all things’ – and Jesus spoke (my most favorite words) “**Lady, you’re looking at Him.**”

[Note the ‘recorded’ words in Part III from The Chosen and how he answered her comment “**And you know these things because you are the Christ...**” – it was moving...he just nodded to her – point for Jesus!]

Second, you will see and read of the authors and scholars who explain – with the same references – their different ideas about these verses. Some do not place as much emphasis on the “the hour” as I do or

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<sup>2</sup> C. K. Barrett (1955). *The Gospel According to St. John* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).

spend much time talking about the author being a female. The joy of spending time in these commentaries only adds to the authenticity of what the author of the Fourth Gospel is saying. My sense is to promote the women of this book. We have started with the Woman at the Well (I have called her "Samantha" in the past (do you have a name for her?) and have on record some comments about the real woman star of John as in Mary Magdalene.

Third, I salute the lady who dropped her water jugs and picked up her banner as she charged down the hill waving "The hour has come!" so all could see. This is a great story on the way to seeing Mary Magdalene wave her banner and hearing as she left the tomb saying "I have seen the Lord!" (Ἐώρακα τὸν κύριον).

Fourth, the sentiment for this section of the paper comes from a class on the Book of John I attended at Perkins back in 2014. Below are a words from my 'presentation' for the students and Dr. Jaime Clark-Soles.

**\*A salute to you all for letting me participate in the abundant life of this community.**

**\* Today, the 11th of December, by bride would have had another Birthday!**

**\* This project is dedicated to the girls in this class: Jen, Rachael, Beth, Jess, and Gay**

**- Jesus likes girls! - and especially two more:**

**Jaime, who was about three years ole when I had my first class on light, love, and life (on this campus in the late 60's). Thank you! ... This ONE HOUR OF JOHN was "written so that we might believe:" "John has everything in it, turn it, grow old and grey over it,...and stir not from it."**

**And dedicated to the second lady: the author of the 4th Gospel - she, would be proud of us all!**

**"Come and See..."**

**Ἐγώ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι. (I AM[HE], THE ONE SPEAKING TO YOU).**

**D. Moody Smith** (1996). "What Have I Learned about the Gospel of John?" (Segovia, ed).

"What have I learned about the Fourth Gospel in now nearly forty years of marinating in this Gospel?...I purchased C. K. Barrett's commentary...and a year or so later Rudolf Bultmann's *Theology of the New Testament*. What have I learned? Nothing that no one else knows...(p. pp. 217-218).

Having first said that John cries out to be understood in its originative historical context, I must now maintain with equal seriousness that John cries out to be interpreted in the context of he New Testament...and Bultmann have maintained or implied that John is, theologically speaking, the culmination or keystone of the canon (p. 228).

Who is in control and what is the purpose of control? Professional exegetes as interpreters of biblical texts in the scholarly or academic community have as their proper purpose and goal to control the text, that is, to explain it, whether as a phenomenon of ancient or modern culture...

The goal is not to stand outside or above the text in order to explain it, but to stand within or under the text in order to be explained by it" (pp. 234-235).

Raymond E. Brown (1966). *The Gospel According to John* (i-xii).

There are three more references to “an hour” which say both that it is coming and that it “is now here” or “has already come.” The combination of the two temporal indications would suggest an inchoative or anticipated effect of Jesus’ hour upon the disciples.

(One) In iv 23 this coming and yet present hour is one of worshipping the Father in Spirit and truth; in v 25 it involves the gift of eternal life to those spiritually dead.

(Two) Although the gift of the Spirit and hence the gift of life was not made until after the resurrection (vii 39, xx 22), the work of Jesus during his ministry already offered to those who believed in him an anticipation of these heavenly gifts. The resurrected Jesus, after all, acted in continuity with what he had already begun during his ministry. And so during the ministry the effects of the hour may be said both to be coming and to be already here.

(Third) The third passage and the one spoken at the Last Supper is xvi 32 which concerns the scattering of the disciples, presumably at the death of Jesus. Since this Supper is part of the hour, John can properly say, “An hour...has already come.” However, since the particular effect of being scattered will take place after the Supper and at a time later in “the hour,” John can properly say, “An hour is coming” (p. 518).

[From Brown’s notes]

23. *is coming and is now here*. When we contrast this with vs. 21, we find in John the same eschatological tension that is apparent in the Synoptic references to the kingdom – it is future, and yet it is at hand. The idea seems to be that the one is present who, at the hour of glorification, will render possible adoration in Spirit by his gift of the Spirit.

*In Spirit and truth*. Both nouns are anarthrous<sup>3</sup>, and there is one preposition.

(From Brown’s APPENDIX)

Hōra = “hour”

Although the frequency of this word in John (26 times) is not extraordinary for a Gospel, the special connotation give to “the hour” in John is noteworthy.

[GH - He puts the expression in two examples with one meaning “has not yet come” and the other “has come” noting the first group show:

iv 21: “An hour is coming...”

iv 23: “An hour is coming and is now here...”

Both passages are in the “has not come yet” and, of course, I disagree with “and is now here” not meaning the same thing as “The hour has come.” ]

[GH] It must be pointed out that some say Raymond Brown is one of the best Johannine scholars that there is and I too agree. Like D. Moody Smith said in his article he bought Dodd, Barrett, and Bultmann. Two pages later he is referencing both Brown’s 2 volume set on the Gospel According to John. I am saying this and making a case for saying, in spite of all of them using one another as a reference when it fits their scheme or direction, there is a range in beliefs and camps, these authors live in. Essentially there are two – probably three – but there are the Johannine scholars and the Synoptic scholars. A third maybe those who try to keep one foot in each or go back and forth between the two.

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<sup>3</sup> Greek *anarthros* not differentiated, strengthless, inarticulate, without the article, from *an-* + *arthron* joint, article.

I make this distinction to point out they (us – maybe?) will all fly the New Testament “Jesus” flag but the shirt they wear or even the banner below the flag will be narrowed down to something like John, Synoptic, Paul, Peter, Mary, or Magdalene – as examples. And the kind of shirt we wear is just fine.

I make the distinction that R. E. Brown will use the ecclesiastic additions in 4G. He does this because, with no disrespect, he is a well known and respected Catholic priest. It would be a push for him to dismiss like Bultmann the redactions in John on say, for instance, “On that day” speaking for the “end of times” eschatologically. John’s book does not say that. John’s theme is “realized eschatology.” Just want to point that out for my readers. Not everyone is happy with the issues of this John camp and that is also just fine. As everyone will agree that John, like Paul Anderson says “The Gospel according to John has been described as a stream in which a child can wade and an elephant can swim.”



Rudolf Bultmann (1971). *The Gospel of John*. V. *The Self-revelation of Jesus: 4.20-26*.

V.23 then tells us how this eschatological time and its worship of God is to be understood. This time is coming and is already here,<sup>4</sup> and the true worship of God is worship ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ (in spirit and truth). The two statements are mutually explanatory. For the eschatological hour comes only with the Revealer and his word. 3.19 has already stated that his coming is the eschatological “now”, and this will be reiterated at 5.25, as well as here at 4.23. This gives us the clue to the ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ: the cultic worship of God is contrasted, not with a spiritual, inward form of worship, but with the eschatological worship. Correspondingly the terms πνεύμα and ἀληθεία (spirit and truth) are used in John to bring out the fact that the eschatological age has been brought about by the miracle of the revelation in Jesus. The πνεύμα is God’s miraculous dealing with men which takes place in the revelation (p.190). (Highlight/underline mine – GH)

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<sup>4</sup> If the coming of the ὥρα (hour) is stressed, as in 5.25, as well as its presence, this is done in order to show that the present hour is the eschatological hour. For its “coming”, even if it is present, is never a thing of the past.

C. H. Dodd (1968). *The interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*.

The main dialogue then ends with an express avowal by Christ that He is the “Messiah” – with the implication that ‘Messiah’ means not only the messenger who will ‘announce’ certain religious truths (iv. 25), but the inaugurator of a new era in religion, of which it may be said, not only ἔρχεται ὥρα (comes an hour) (iv.21), but ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστίν (is coming an hour and now is) (iv. 23). This introduces what is to be the central theme of the dialogue which forms the conclusion of the whole scene (pp. 314-315)... The Messiah she takes to be the One who will announce the whole truth in matters of religion - for such is the implication, in the context, of the words ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν ἅπαντα (He will declare to us everything). Of Jesus she can attest that He has shown complete knowledge of her own past: a knowledge which is at least the mark of a prophet (iv. 19), and may be more. Upon such grounds many of the Samaritans accept the claims of Jesus...

The whole passage...constitutes a compact episode in the presentation of the ministry of Jesus Christ...in such a way that the entire episode may be said to contain the whole Gospel for those who have sufficient command of the material...

‘This is indeed the Saviour of the world’, fittingly gather up, not only the teaching of the second discourse, but that of the entire episode; for the precise content of the somewhat vague (and widely used) title σωτήρ (saviour) is to be understood from all that has been laid before the reader in these chapters (pp. 316-317).

Jaime Clark-Soles (2020). *Women in the Bible*. “The Samaritan Woman”

Nowhere is this woman referred to as a “whore” (pornē) and nowhere is she forgiven (*aphiēmi*). John insists she had “husbands,” not johns (p. 209).

Here I raise only a few points for consideration and entreat the reader to dive more deeply into study, preaching, and teaching concerning this woman and her witness..

The Samaritan woman appears only in the Gospel of John...Jesus seeks her out intentionally...He “had” to go because she was there...

It was high noon...

Here we have a woman who boldly, publicly appears in the brightest light of today to encounter the True Light, and as a result she is enlightened (p. 210).

Intrepidly, the Samaritan woman engages him and discovers in him a theological conversation partner...

The conversation escalates when the woman moves it from worship to the coming of the Messiah. Then, she receives a theophany when Jesus says to her, “I am” (*egō eimi*, John 4:26). Translations that say “I am he” here do the reader a disservice, as they eclipse the fact that Jesus is claiming *the* title of God that appears when God reveals God’s name to Moses as “I am” (Exod. 3:13-15, esp. v. 14).

**Our sister the Samaritan woman is the first to behold Jesus as God.**

As Schneiders writes: “In summary, the entire dialogue between Jesus and the woman is the ‘wooing’ of Samaria to full covenant fidelity in the new Israel by Jesus, the new Bridegroom. It has nothing to do with the women’s private moral life but with the covenant life of the community (141). (pp. 211-212).

[GH] See Moloney’s note below.

Francis J. Moloney (1998). *The Gospel of John*.

26. “I am” is the one speaking to you: Most critics and translations interpret Jesus’ response as an acceptance of the woman’s suggestion that he might be the Messiah...The narrative as a whole, especially when this section is read through to v. 30, demands that Jesus transcends the woman’s confession in a way she does not understand. Only Bultmann (Gospel 192) sees v. 26 as a use of *egō eimi* as a revelatory formula. He also follows the narrative down to v. 30 (p. 134).

Rudolf Schnackenburg (1990). *The Gospel According to St. John – Volume One (Chapters 1 -4)*.

4:26 Jesus said to her, “I am he, I who am speaking to you.”

Jesus presents himself to the Samaritan as the expected Messiah, using the formula of revelation Ἐγὼ εἰμι. “The Messiah” can be easily supplied from the context. But in the mind of the evangelist, it must already suggest the absolute terms in which Jesus reveals his divine being...Jesus knows that the field is ripe for the harvest (v. 35f.), and the Samaritans finally come to believe in him without reserve as the “saviour of the world” (v. 42).

Rudolf Bultmann (1971). *The Gospel of John. Jn 4.26*

The woman’s answer in v. 25 is correct, inasmuch as she has seen that Jesus is speaking of an eschatological event...For she expects the καὶ νῦν ἐστίν (and now is), and consequently has also failed to understand what is meant by ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ (in spirit and truth)...Accordingly she is not aware that it is the awaited Revealer who is speaking to her. Even so she is not portrayed as being completely unresponsive to the revelation; her expectation makes it possible for Jesus to reveal himself (v. 26). He does this in the simple words: Ἐγὼ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι (I AM (HE), THE ONE SPEAKING TO YOU). The person whom she has been asking after is Jesus; the Messiah for whom men wait is already present. Whoever hears these words spoken by the Revealer is faced with the ultimate decision: the Ἐγὼ εἰμι lays absolute claim to faith (p. 192).

Compare Jesus’ reply (Jn 6. 35) “Ἐγὼ εἰμι the bread of life,” expressed by means of the revelatory formula, : Ἐγὼ εἰμι, says that what they are looking for is present in his person (p. 225).

Paul N. Anderson (2011). *The Riddles of the Fourth Gospel*.

“Come and see”

The priesthood of believers is more than a mere idea in the Fourth Gospel, as from the beginning of Jesus’ ministry until the very end disciples bring people to the Lord, serving as bridges between others and Jesus. After John the Baptist points his disciples to Jesus as the Lamb of God (1:36), two of his disciples become followers of Jesus, who simply invites them to “come and see” (1:39). They in turn bring others to Jesus, also saying, “come and see” (1:46). Andrew brings his brother Peter to Jesus, and Philip brings Nathanael to him. The Samaritan woman also says to her townspeople, “Come and see” a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” (4:29). She thus becomes an apostle to the Samaritans (p. 226).

Edwyn Clement Hoskyns (1947). *The Fourth Gospel*. (4:23)

*But the hour cometh – and now is.*

Confronted by Jesus, the woman is met by the end and fulfilment of prophecy, that is to say, by the operation of the Spirit of God, and also by the consequent corresponding possibility of the advent of the true and spiritual worship of the Father, which is, in fact, the worship awaited by the Father ...the woman understands, surely rightly, that this is a messianic claim; the Evangelist knows that, precisely because the subject is the operation of the Spirit of God...and it is Jesus Himself who ends the discourse with the positive affirmation – *I am*. This may be simply the 'ordinary Greek affirmative', *I am He*; but the words have a significant Old Testament background, ***Therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak; behold, it is I*** (Isa. 52.6).

R. Alan Culpepper (1983). *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel*. [Prolepses defined]

Similarly anticipations of coming events are called "prolepses," that is, "any narrative maneuver that consists of narrating or evoking in advance an event that will take place later" (p. 56).

Prolepses, references to event which have not yet occurred at the point in the narrative at which they are foretold, may also be classified according to whether the events will occur within narrative time...

Mixed prolepses are those which tell of events which will begin prior to the end of the narrative and continue past its ending. Many of the prolepses in John defy precise classification, however, because they are metaphorical ("night comes, when no one can work," 9:4), allusive ("my hour has not yet come," 2:4), subject to multiple meanings ("so must the Son of man be lifted up," 3:14), or tied to events which are only partially or symbolically accomplished within the narrative ("the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live," 5:25; cf. 11:43-44) (pp. 61-62).

Paul D. Duke (1985). *Irony in the Fourth Gospel*. (4:12)

"Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, and his sons, and his cattle? The entire scene of 4:4-42 is rich with irony...Verse 12, however, is a choice ironic moment which stands on its own. The woman addresses the magisterial stranger sitting beside Jacob's well and asks him if he is greater than Jacob...Your aren't greater than Jacob, are you? That would be irony enough, but the woman's every word heightens the hidden meaning of the question. That Jacob is "our father" will shortly be undercut by the reminder of another Father who calls his children to move beyond this venerated site and all others to the realm of spirit and truth. Jacob is defined as the one "who gave us the well"; but "the gift of God," Jesus has already said, is "living water," a gift the woman will shortly ask to be given her (p. 70).

Gail R. O'Day (2002). *The Word Disclosed: Preaching the Gospel of John*.

Jesus' response to the Samaritan woman's traditional affirmations about the future and the Messiah is simple and bold, "I am, the one talking to you" (v. 26; auth. Trans.). Translations of Jesus' words here downplay the boldness of Jesus' remarks by supplying a predicate ("he"), which is not present in the Greek for the *ego eimi* saying. For example, the NRSV of this verse reads, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you," and the NIV reads, "I who speak to you am he." When the predicate is supplied, the meaning of Jesus' words becomes, "I am the Messiah you expect." Such a translation, however, is more

in line with the Samaritan woman's flawed understanding of Jesus than with Jesus' own announcement, because to translate *ego eimi* as "I am he" is to reduce Jesus' words to an assent to the woman's Messianic expectations. This translation loses the boldness of Jesus' announcement, because when Jesus speaks the "I am" in v. 26, his words make explicit connections with the divine name of Exodus 3:14 ("God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'"). Jesus speaks the "I AM" without any predicate supplied in order to evoke the fullness of God's presence and to identify himself as the one in whom God can be found. The "I AM" places in Jesus' own mouth the theological truth with which the Fourth Evangelist begins the gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and Word was with God, and the Word was God, "Jesus will spell out the meaning of "I AM" in 10:30: "The Father and I are one" ... At v. 26, all indirection is cast aside. The fullness of Jesus' identity is revealed to the Samaritan woman (pp. 52-53).

Karoline M. Lewis (2014). *John*. (vs. 28-19)

The woman's transformation is no mere new vocation or passing conversation with Jesus. Her encounter with the Word made flesh brings her into the theological reality that undergirds the entire Gospel. She is not only an example of what it means to be a witness. She embodies fully the transition from darkness to light, from outsider to insider. She is reborn.

Verses 28-29 narrate the woman's return to her city. The first words in her invitation to the people are the same words Jesus utters in the calling of the disciples (1:39) and which Peter speaks to Nathanael (1:46). Jesus first says to the disciples, "what are you looking for?" after they have been following him...the disciples' question "where are you staying?" is central for this Gospel. They ask Jesus where he is abiding. To know where Jesus is abiding, which is right here and right now as the Word made flesh, as this unique revelation of God, is all that is needed for a relationship with Jesus. Jesus answers the disciples, "come and see." They do and abide with Jesus. The Woman at the well invites her townspeople to the very same possibility.

Certainly there are other reiterations of witness that the woman could have expressed. That her words are an exact replication of Jesus' words and also Philip's should invite significant pause for interpretation. What does this mean for the woman at the well? How is it the words she speaks underscore who she has become? The fact that she uses identical words as Jesus also anticipates the final conversation with Jesus and Peter in chapter 21, where Jesus tells Peter that he will need to feed, tend, and shepherd Jesus' sheep once Jesus ascends to the Father. The woman at the well is not only a witness. She is Jesus, the "I AM" in the world, for her people. The same thing will be true for Peter. Jesus will ask him to be the "I AM" in the world when he cannot be. To be a disciple of, a witness for, Jesus is no second-rate position. It means embodying fully the ministry of Jesus for the sake of those yet to believe.

Remarkably, the woman's invitation to the members of her community comes without certainty. The question in Greek, "he cannot be the Messiah, can he?" (4:29) expects a negative answer. A more accurate translation might be, "Surely, this cannot be the Christ, can it?" There is undeniable promise in this moment of uncertainty. It suggests that to be a disciple or witness of Jesus does not demand full and complete knowledge or conviction. It intimates the primary mystery, the unbelievability of what God has done in becoming human. For the woman at the well to be certain of her encounter with and discovery of Jesus would take for granted what God has done, as if God becoming human was a most ordinary, understandable, and expected choice on God's part (pp. 64-65).



**The Chosen** "Did you hear me?"



Would you give me a drink?

Did you hear me?

That bad, huh?

What?

You, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan? And a woman?

I'm sorry. I should have said "Please."

You know, it is not safe for you to be alone out here.

Nor you. Why haven't you come with others? And why so late in the day? Don't women go to the wells in the cool of the morning?

Yeah well, none of them will be seen with me, so I have to come at noon in the heat, as you have so kindly reminded me.

Why won't they be seen with you?

- long story.

I'd still like a drink of water, if you can spare it.

Amazing what a parched throat will do. Aren't I unclean to you?  
Won't you be defiled by this vessel?

Maybe some of my people say that about your women, but I don't.

Yeah, what do you say?

I say if you knew who I am, you'd be asking me for a drink.

Really?

And I would give you living water.

Would, except that you have nothing to draw water with, and this is a deep well. Besides, what do you need from me if you have your own supply of “living water”?

- long story.

But Jewish water is better than Samaritan water, humm?

That’s not what I said.

Are you a better man than our ancestor, Jacob, who dug this well? Your water is better than his?

I know Jacob. And everyone who drinks this water will thirst again. But whoever drinks the water that I give him will never be thirsty again.

- Wouldn’t that be nice.



The water I give will become in a person a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

Really.

Yes, really.

Prove it.

First, go and call your husband and when you come back I will explain to you both.

I don’t have a husband.

You are right...You’ve had five husbands...And the man you’re living with now is not your husband.

Ha, ha, haa...I see. You’re a prophet. You’re here to preach at me.

No.

Usually the one good thing about coming here alone is I can escape being condemned.

I’m not here to condemn you.

I've made mistakes...too many. But it's men like you who have made it impossible for me to do anything about it.

How?

Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews insist Jerusalem is the only place for true worship.

They say that because the temple is there.

Yeah, exactly where we're not allowed.

I'm here to break those barriers. And the time is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

So where am I supposed to go when I need God? I never received anything from God but I couldn't thank him even if I did.

Anywhere. God is spirit and the time is coming and is now here that you won't matter where you worship, but only that you do it in spirit and truth. Heart and mind – that! That is the kind of worshiper He's looking for. It won't matter where you are from...or what you have done. Do you believe what I am telling you?

Until the Messiah comes, and explains everything and sorts this mess out, including me, I don't trust in anyone.

You're wrong...when you say that you've never received anything from God.

This Messiah you speak of. I am he...

The first one was named Ramin. You were a woman of purity who was excited to be married, but he wasn't a good man. He hurt you, and it made you question marriage and even the practice of your faith.

Stop it!

The second was Fazad. On your wedding night his skin smelled like oranges, and to this day every time you pass by the oranges in the market, you feel guilty for leaving him because he was the only truly godly man you have been with but you felt unworthy.

Why are you doing this!

I have not revealed myself to the public as the Messiah. You are the first. It would be good if you believed me.

You picked the wrong person.

I came to Samaria just to meet you. Do you think it is an accident that I am here in the middle of the day?

I am rejected by others.

I know. But not by the Messiah.

And you know these things because you are the Christ...I am going to tell everyone.

I was counting on it.

Spirit and truth?

Spirit and truth.

It won't be about mountains or temples?

Soon...just the heart.

You promise?

I promise.

This man told me everything I've done! Oh, he must be the Christ!

**Hey, wait! You forgot your...**



**Come and see** a man who told me everything I ever did!

**Uh, Rabbi we got food, what would you like?**

Ah...I have food to eat that you do not know about.

**Who got your food? ... Wait a minute. You told her?**

Mm-hmm...So that means we are going to stay here a couple of days. It has been a long time of sowing, but the fields are ripe for harvest.

**And so it's time?**

Let's go!

**Yes!**



## ESCHATOLOGY

Ἐλήλυθεν ἡ ὥρα

THE PRESENCE OF ETERNITY

**JETZT**

Page 21.

About twenty-1 'compiled' authors.

Each having something to say about the Woman at the Well;

for sure a pivotal story in the

Gospel and I hope you enjoyed the review.

I wish you luck in your swimming in **4G** – **go deep!**