

Jesus - Millenium Man (2)

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- [0 : 0 0] Amen. Well, some parts of the Bible need quite a bit of background information if we're going to gain the most out of the passage.
- And this is one of them. There are lots of details of background to do with people, groups, places, and geography and history.
- So, especially in the first little bit, there'll be quite a bit of background material to help us understand what's going on with Jesus and the woman at the well. But basically, what's happening in this chapter, or at least we're only looking up to verse 42, is a continuation of what we saw last week and indeed from the whole of the first three chapters of the Gospel.
- Jesus is fulfilling Old Testament expectation and ideas and themes and hopes and so on. And we'll see a number of those be drawn out tonight.
- Well, the first thing by way of background is that verse 1 mentions a group of people called Pharisees. And we tend to think of a person who's a Pharisee as being a bit of a baddie.
- [1 : 3 8] But actually, the Pharisees were the goodies. They were strict, sure. They were legalistic on the whole. And that's the thing that Jesus picked them up on several times.
- Especially they were legalistic to do with an oral tradition of law that they thought had never been written down in the Old Testament, but had been passed down orally by word of mouth from Moses.
- And they were very keen about that law. Jesus wasn't. They were very devout. And basically, good people.
- To some extent, yes, they were hypocrites. And to a large extent, they got the Old Testament wrong. It seems that the Pharisees probably originated in the second century BC.
- At a time when the Jews were persecuted for a while. And there was a growing strictness within a large group of them. It seems that Jesus, who has, if you remember last week, went to Jerusalem.
- [2 : 3 7] And then in chapter 3 went from Jerusalem into the area around Jerusalem, the Judean countryside. It seems that Jesus is attracting more and more opposition and sense of rejection.
- Which, after all, we ought to expect. Because chapter 1 told us that he came to his own people, but his own people did not receive him. So that seems to be there. And that's why, it seems, that Jesus now makes a beeline to go north.
- Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John. Although, in brackets, John tells us in verse 2 that it wasn't actually Jesus who baptized, but Jesus' disciples.