

John 4:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

Analysis

The woman's question whether Jesus is 'greater than our father Jacob' is ironic—she doesn't realize she's speaking to Jacob's Lord. Her appeal to ancestral authority and historical precedent reflects human tendency to value tradition over present divine revelation. Christ indeed surpasses all patriarchs as the eternal Son.

Historical Context

Samaritans claimed descent from the northern tribes and venerated the patriarchs, particularly Jacob/Israel. This well represented their connection to Israel's heritage, which they shared with Jews despite theological differences.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do we sometimes elevate historical figures or traditions above Christ Himself?
2. What does it mean that Christ is 'greater than' all who came before Him?

Interlinear Text

μὴ	σὺ	μείζων	εἰ	τοῦ	πατρὸς	ἡμῶν	Ἰακώβ	ος
G3361	thou	greater	Art	G3588	father	than our	Jacob	which
G4771	G3187	G1488			G3962	G2257	G2384	G3739
ἔδωκεν	ἡμῖν	τὸ	φρέαρ	καὶ	αὐτοῦ	ἐξ	αὐτοῦ	ἔπιεν
gave	us	G3588	the well	and	himself	thereof	himself	drank
G1325	G2254		G5421	G2532	G846	G1537	G846	G4095
καὶ	οἱ	υἱοὶ	αὐτοῦ	καὶ	τὰ	θρέμματα	αὐτοῦ	
and	G3588	children	himself	and	G3588	cattle	himself	
G2532		G5207	G846	G2532		G2353	G846	

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