

The Well.

I am the well. I go deep, reaching beyond the mud and the dust, down to a single spring of precious, cooling, life giving water, beyond all the eye can see.

I am the well. Dug by hands from a time long before the memory of anyone still living, yet never forgotten. Held on to. Cherished.

I am the well. In the heat of the sun and the cool of the evening, I do not go anywhere.

Sometimes they have neglected me, but always they have brought me back to life.

They know they need me.

Deep in my belly is the cool, precious water of life.

But most of all they have used me,
and as they have used me, I have listened to them.....

To the stories of everyday life.....

To the games of the children.....

To the tears of those who have lost.....

To the secret plans of lovers....

To the hopeful words all who look to the future....

To the boots of invading armies.....

To the prayers of people longing for freedom.

I have listened.

And I listened today.....

The woman - I know her well, as I do all the women.

She comes each day - as do all the women, but she is always alone.

Somehow she is not part of the group,

and she comes in the highest heat of the day.

But the man, I did not know him - but he seemed to know me,

For he talked of the precious water of life - welling up from the belly of creation,

and I knew he spoke of me!

so I pricked up my ears and I listened all the more.

But then I realised,

his words were not of me,

But of another source, another water....

Water which would so quench thirst

That a person would never thirst again!

And I wondered,

and I worried.

If this were true - what of me?

What would I become?

An un-needed, unloved, forgotten puddle!

And I shouted out from my deep belly,

But they did not hear.

They were too busy,

Swapping stories of what each knew about each other.

So I gently wept, as I feared for my very existence.

Then deep, deep down I felt a tickle.

The spring stirred in my belly.

A bucket bumped down,

crashing against my rough sides,

searching for cooling water.

Their conversation had stopped

- I hadn't even noticed,

And she had gone,

leaving her bucket for him to use

to get the water he needed.

I gladly obliged,

and his mid-day thirst was quenched.

I smiled.

What did he know about thirst?

What did he know about water?

I have been around longer than he!

I know what is and what is not!

I know that people will always get thirsty,

always need water,

- always need me!

Later that day, it got busy.

Many gathered around me

to meet with the man who claimed he did not need me.

I smiled deep in my belly

as they took bucket full after bucket full

of my cool, precious, life giving water.

"I have been here longer than you"

I whispered, but quietly so that no-one should hear,

for as I listened I did wonder what he did know

and what he could hear.

And when evening came,

he leaned over and looked deep towards my belly,

and I knew his face.

Anne Sardeson 27.3.11

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