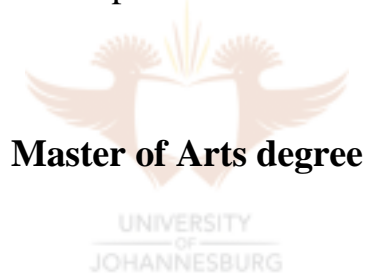


# **THE METAPHOR OF THE FAMILY IN JOHN 4:1-42**

by

**Sepadi W.D. Moruthane**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the



in the Department of Biblical and Religious Studies,

Rand Afrikaans University,

**JOHANNESBURG**

May 2004

**Supervisor : Dr.SJ Nortjé-Meyer**  
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Table of contents	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
Summary	v
<b>CHAPTER 1: Research Premise</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Problem statement	1
1.2 Objectives of the Research	4
1.2.1 General Objectives	4
1.2.2 Specific Objectives	4
1.3 Motivation	5
1.4 Methodology	5
1.5 Paradigm and Point of Departure	6
1.6 Further Development of the Study	6
<b>CHAPTER 2: Jewish and Roman family</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 What is family	8
2.2 Family functions in the Jewish household	10
2.2.1 Jewish family and the community solidarity	12
2.2.2 Cleanness and uncleanness in the Jewish family	16
2.3 Roman Family	17
2.4 Similarities and differences between Jewish and Roman Families	19
2.5 Samaritan Family	20
2.5.1 The origin of the Samaritans	20
2.5.2 Samaritan beliefs and traditions	22
2.5.3 Marriage and Divorce in the Samaritan Community	22
2.5.4 Education in the Samaritan Community	24
2.5.5 Cleanness and uncleanness in the Samaritan Community	24
2.5.6 The place of a woman in the Samaritan family	24



<b>CHAPTER 3: Meaning and functioning of Metaphors</b>	<b>26</b>
3.1 Introduction	26
3.2 Definition of Metaphor	26
3.3 Metaphors in the Fourth Gospel	27
3.3.1 Types of Metaphors	30
3.3.2 Theories of metaphors in the Gospel of John	31
3.3.3 The elements of the family imagery	32
3.4 Conclusion	35
<b>CHAPTER 4: Exegesis of John 4: 1-42</b>	<b>36</b>
4.1 John 4: 1-3	36
4.2 John 4: 4-42	40
4.3 The metaphor of water	48
4.3.1 The significance of water in John's Gospel	48
4.3.2 The significance of water in John 4	49
(a) Physical water	49
(b) Symbolic water	50
4.4 The metaphors of <i>light</i> and <i>life</i>	52
4.5 Relationships in John	52
4.5.1 The Samaritan woman's relationship with men	52
4.5.2 The Samaritan woman's relationship with the disciples	53
4.5.3 The Samaritan woman's relation with men in the village	54
4.5.4 Family relationship of Jesus	54
<b>CHAPTER 5: Families in South Africa: Concluding Remarks</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>WORKS CONSULTED</b>	<b>64</b>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Although I bear full responsibility for the errors and inadequacies of this work, I owe a tremendous debt to those who led me to it and help me complete it volumes of gratitude stand behind these brief words of thanks.

My debt is great to Dr SJ Nortjie'-Meyer, for guiding me throughout different stages of this research. It was a pleasure to work under the supervision of Dr.Nortjie'-Meyer. Her candid criticism, superb scholarship, and friendliness served to challenge, guide, and sustain me.

**I thank special friends and colleagues, especially those who tolerated my antics while completing this research.**

**I thank my family, especially my Mother and sisters, who encourage and inspire me constantly.**

But above all I thank God, the Almighty, for the call to ministry in general and to the place I now minister in particular. If it brings God any glory, this effort is not in vain.

## SUMMARY

The motivation of my research is the massive problem of physical and sexual abuse of women and children we experience in South Africa. This is unacceptable for a society like ours where the rights of every citizen are entrenched in the constitution. Therefore, I have focused on the metaphor of the family in the Fourth Gospel, and how they are employed at micro-, meso- or macro-level. J.G. van der Watt's book, *Family of the King. Dynamics of Metaphor in the Gospel of John* (2000) forms the basis of my study. He has pointed out that the metaphor of the family is the constitutive and most essential imagery in the Gospel. The story of the Samaritan woman in John 4 fits somehow into the family history of the father and the son. The questions I am concerned with are: 'How does Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman in John 4 fit into the network of imagery of the family in John's Gospel? What other imageries related to the imagery of the family, are also functioning in the story of the Samaritan woman and what significance does this encounter have in relation with the rest of the Gospel?

In chapter 1 the research premise is worked out. Elements featuring in this chapter are: the problem statement, general and specific objectives, aim of the study, motivation and methodology. Literary criticism, social-scientific criticism, rhetorical criticism and theological criticism together are used into an integrated and approach to interpret this pericope. When they are used interactively, a rich and responsible approach is available for dealing with belief, action and life in the world today.

In Chapter 2 the social-historical background of the Jewish and Roman family is discussed. Aspects like the meaning of family, family functions in the Jewish household and family and community solidarity were taking into consideration. The important role of cleanness and uncleanness in the Jewish family and the way they considered Samaritans as 'menstruants from the cradle' are underlined. Because John 4 is about the encounter between Jesus and a Samaritan woman, the origin of the Samaritans; their beliefs and traditions; and divorce in their community are important. The Samaritan education system; cleanness and uncleanness in their community and the place of a

woman in the Samaritan family were also included in the discussion. At the end of this particular section the similarities and differences of the Jewish and Roman families were compared to be able to reconstruct and to obtain as much information as possible of the context of the Samaritan family.

Chapter 3 contains the discussion of the meaning and function of metaphors in general and specific in the Gospel of John. In this study I have looked at the definition of a metaphor, types of metaphors and imagery in the Fourth Gospel. John emphasizes in his gospel the divinity of Jesus and his relationship with God. The author is using human relational images to portray this relationship as well as Jesus, the divine's relationship to the world and to other people. In the words of Van den Heever: 'The metaphors in John are all embedded in contexts made up by other metaphorical expressions: descent/ascent, living in you/you in me, partaking of Me as food, walking in the light, etcetera. It means that the connoted micro-level metaphors must be understood macro-metaphorically.' (1992:94). This forms the basis of the discussion of the metaphor of the family in John 4.

Chapter 4 is the focal point of the research and contains a detailed exegesis of John 4:1-42 in order to explain the functioning of the metaphor of the family on micro-level. The other metaphors that are linked with the metaphor of the family are also discussed, e.g. the metaphor of water and the significance of water in the Fourth Gospel as well as the metaphors of light and life. Because a family is about relationships, the family metaphors in John's Gospel are about various relationships. It is in the first place about Jesus' relationship with his Father, with the disciples and with the believers. In John 4 two other family relationships are portrayed: the Samaritan family and the Jewish family and they are in conflict with each other. Therefore, Jesus invites the Samaritan woman into a new family, namely the family of the Father. In this family she will have a special place and function. Other aspects of the Samaritan woman's relationships are also explored, e.g. her relationship with men, with the disciples and with men in the village. Jesus as a human being was also part of a family. The Gospel writers hesitated to say too much about it, but eventually we do know something about his family relationships.

In the last chapter of my research families in South Africa are discussed. How the Fourth Gospel and particularly the story of the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman can help to build families in South Africa that respects women; a society that gives women their rightful places in that society.

