

when Jesus, having recounted the parable asks the lawyer which of the three proved himself the neighbour, the lawyer cannot bring himself to say the word “Samaritan” but uses the circumlocution, “The one who showed mercy on him”. All three passages demonstrated to the Jewish people present that the outcast Samaritans could bear true witness by observing the main commandments of loving God and loving one’s neighbour. Indeed, the grateful leper and the Good Samaritan do this better than some Jewish people, and even their religious representatives. For some of his critics, Jesus’ dealings with the Samaritans put Him beyond the pale. The clearest example of this is in John 8:48 where they say to Jesus: “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon.” This was a triple insult as for them it meant denying his Jewishness, accusing Him of heresy and of being mad.

I will try subsequently to cast some light on the historical and religious differences that had arisen between Jews and Samaritans whereby the Samaritans had become such ‘bogeymen’ that it is by reference to them that Jesus imparts important messages in the above passages.

Stephen S

Entrance antiphon: I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord. Should they cry to me in any distress, I will hear them, and I will be their Lord forever.

First Reading: Amos 8 4-7

Psalm 50: Response: Praise the Lord, who raises the poor.

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-8

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Open our heart, O Lord, to accept the words of your Son. Alleluia!

Gospel: Luke 16 1-13

Memorial Acclamation: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

Communion Antiphon: You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept; may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.



Marinus van Reymerswaele
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Twenty Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Cycle C, 2022 Weekly Reflection: Samaritans and Galileans (1): Samaritans in the Gospels

Samaritans appear rarely in the Gospels. When they do their impact is considerable. The aim of this series of articles is to outline the principal Gospel appearances of Samaritan people and then give some background on the Samaritan people, their history and their beliefs. In the last article I will summarise the position of Galileans in the Judaism of the 1st century A.D. The most famous is in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37). Here Jesus answers the lawyer’s question “Who is my neighbour?” by designating the Samaritan who cared for the man who had been beaten and robbed, rather than the priest and Levite who passed by. Subsequently in Luke 17:11-20, Jesus cures ten lepers. Only a Samaritan returns to thank Him, to which Jesus responds: “...Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner”, adding, “Rise and go your way, your faith has made you well”. In John 4:7-30 Jesus is passing through Samaria. He is at a well and there has a long conversation with a Samaritan woman. He asks her for a drink. The Gospel says, “The Samaritan woman said to Him: ‘How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?’ For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.” Later Jesus says to her: “You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews”. Ultimately the woman says that she knows that the Messiah is coming, he who is called the Christ and when he comes he will show us all things, to which Jesus says: “I who speak to you am He”.

It is clear from these passages that Jews and Samaritans did not get on well, to say the least. Jesus refers to the grateful leper as a ‘foreigner’ and St John makes it clear that Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. The parable chooses a good Samaritan to highlight the contrast between the status of the Jewish priest and Levite, holy men, who do not show compassion, and the Samaritan, an outcast among Jews, who does. It has been suggested that