

God"; Micah 1:2-7, "I will make Samaria a heap in the open country....all her idols I will lay waste..". Similar sentiments are in Amos, Isaiah and Ezekiel. These prophets span the 8<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.

Jewish belief is that Jerusalem is the legitimate centre of worship and that Samaritans did not remain true Israelites due to intermarriage with the invading Assyrians and Babylonians and the incorporation of certain of their pagan attitudes. In summary, the differences began with Eli and David, were fomented by the subsequent split into the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, then reinforced by further religious divisions after the Assyrian invasion and the Babylonian exile. Events after the return from the Babylonian exile did little to bring Jews and Samaritans closer together. In the final centuries B.C., the region of Samaria was more open to foreign cultures e.g Hellenisation by the Greeks. The Judeans in and around Jerusalem were much more resistant to pagan cultural influences. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. the Samaritans built a temple at Mount Gerizim. It was destroyed 200 years later by the Jewish high priest and leader, John Hyrcanus. The destruction took place during a successful military campaign waged against the Samaritans which culminated in the Samaritans being put into slavery. After this historical sketch I shall next look in a little more detail at religious differences and similarities of Jews and Samaritans which last until the present day.

**Stephen S**

**Entrance antiphon: All that you have done to us, O Lord, you have done with true judgement, for we have sinned against you and not obeyed your commandments. But give glory to your name and deal with us according to the bounty of your mercy.**

**First Reading: Amos 6:1,4-7**

**Psalms 145: Response: My soul, give praise to the Lord.**

**Second Reading: 1 Timothy 6:11-16**

**Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice, says the Lord. I know them and they follow me. Alleluia!**

**Gospel: Luke 16 19-31**

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

**Communion Antiphon: Remember your word to your servant, O Lord, by which you have given me hope. This is my comfort when I am brought low.**



## Twenty Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Cycle C, 2022 Weekly Reflection: Samaritans and Galileans (2): Samaritans in the final millennium BC.** Last week I

discussed how the few accounts of Samaritans in the Gospels highlight the rift between them and the Jews. Trying to simplify briefly a very complex situation, what is the history behind this rift? King David ruled over the 12 tribes in Israel, from Galilee in the north to the Dead Sea in the south. His son, Solomon, died in 930 B.C. Then the kingdom split into Israel and Judah. Judah and its kings retained the capital at Jerusalem. Samaria became the capital of the central region, bordered by Judea to the south and Galilee to the north. In time the central region itself became known as Samaria. By 722 B.C. the Assyrians had conquered Samaria and deported thousands of its inhabitants to other countries. In 587 B.C., the Babylonians vanquished Jerusalem and forced vast numbers of Judeans into exile in Babylon. They were liberated by the Persians in 538 B.C. whereupon many returned to Jerusalem. There is substantial controversy about the historical and religious origins of the Samaritans. The Samaritans challenge the sacred kingship of David, maintaining that Eli, responsible for anointing the line of David, was a false priest. Samaritans therefore contest the lineage of David and the sanctity of Jerusalem as the sanctuary of the God of Israel. For Samaritans the sacred sanctuary is at Gerizim. Mount Gerizim, in the area we call the West Bank, is referenced (Deuteronomy 11:29) as the place where God was to pronounce His blessing on the Jewish people. A fundamental Samaritan belief is that Jewish insistence on Jerusalem as the legitimate Temple of worship, instead of the northern shrine of Gerizim, was seriously erroneous. The Samaritans consider themselves to be the descendants of Israelites who stayed after the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions. They believe that they remained free from Babylonian religious influence which, they say, affects Scripture subsequent to the Torah (the first 5 Old Testament books). It is unsurprising that Samaritans do not accept many Old Testament books. They contain numerous adverse references to them. For example Hosea 13:16 "Samaria shall bear her guilt, because she has rebelled against her