

SHALL WE CALL DOWN FIRE FROM HEAVEN?



And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him;

but the people would not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, "Lord, do you want us to bid fire come down from heaven and consume them?"

But he turned and rebuked them... (Luke 9:51-55)

And these guys are disciples??

They want to call down fire from heaven on Samaritans.

Would they call down fire on fellow Jews?

*"Jews are human; Samaritans are scum!
Who do these Samaritans think they are?
This is our land, not theirs!"*

These men still didn't get it.

They felt they had every right to despise Samaritans.

*"Samaritans don't belong here.
They don't know their place!
They're dangerous!"*

Even though...

Jesus gave living water to a Samaritan Woman.

He gave high praise to a Samaritan leper, who alone knew how to say "Thanks".

He used a Samaritan to teach a Jewish legal expert what it means to be a neighbor.

Hopefully, James and John figured it out.

Hopefully their hard hearts toward Samaritans softened by the time Jesus arrived at the cross.

Or was this a problem they had to deal with for the rest of their lives?

One thing is for sure:

This is a problem we Christians still have difficulty with. Samaritans.

Not the Samaritans who live in Africa and Asia, but the Samaritans who live down the street and across town.

*"Who do they think they are!
What are they moaning about now?
Time to put them in their place!"*

"Lord, do you want us to bid fire come down from heaven and consume them?"

The Lord sighs and shakes his head.

"O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you?"



The refining fires of judgment are sweeping through the Body of Christ across the earth.

The flames are licking at our hard hearts.

Forcing us to see Samaritans the way God sees them.

Burning away the lie that we, not Samaritans, are specially favored by heaven.

Meanwhile Jesus is gathering Samaritans into his Body on earth.



He is anointing them with power and grace.

He is using them to teach us the meaning of mercy.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Message: Richard E. Bieber October 2021

Featured Art: Video stills from the LUMO Project... The Gospel of Luke chapter 9 and 10

Prayer: Lord deal with our hearts when they cry out "shall we call fire down from heaven". Soften them. Help us to see those who aren't like us... the way you see them. And yes, burn away the lies we tell ourselves that we are especially favored by heaven over any other people or group. And thank you that you do hold and love the Samaritans, all the "others" that our hearts sneer at, and look down on. May you continue to anoint them with grace, mercy and kindness and use them to teach us the meaning of mercy. May you continue to gather them into your loving arms, into your Body and may we embrace them instead of sneering at and condemning them. Amen.

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