

"ZAP 'EM, LORD!"
Luke 9:51-56

"WE"/"THEY" Complex

Whatever happens to "them" is alright. As long as it doesn't happen to "us!"

They probably had it coming to them!

Rejection in Samaria

The disciples' willingness to judge the "outsiders" who reject Him.

Luke Presents Evidence from Jesus' Birth and Presentation Which Demonstrates That He's Messiah (1:1-4:13).

Jesus' Ministry Is Described with Special Attention Given to the Distinct Responses to it (4:14-9:50).

ISRAEL'S FORMAL REJECTION OF THEIR MESSIAH AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ARE PRESENTED AS JESUS TRAVELS TOWARD JERUSALEM (9:51-19:27).

REJECTION OF THE SON OF MAN 9:51-19:27

Jesus has demonstrated that He's Messiah.

He has come to fulfill the covenants as God promised.

Now Luke begins to describe in great detail **Israel's rejection**.

JESUS' DETERMINATION TO GO TO JERUSALEM TO DIE 9:51

He "resolutely set his face" to go to Jerusalem.

He's determined to go there.

9:53; 10:38; 13:22, 33, 34; 17:11; 18:31; 19:11, 28, 29

It is apparent, even to the Samaritans, where He is headed.

Last time He was in Jerusalem they tried to kill Him, but His time had not yet come.

This time He has begun His journey to die—*The time has now come!*

When Jesus arrives in Jerusalem (the center of operations of the religious leaders of the people), and presents Himself there, it will serve as a declaration of war.

He's going to be rejected and killed.

These 2 themes blend throughout description of His journey to Jerusalem:

1. Israel's rejection

2. His determination to go to Jerusalem to present Himself, though it means death.

DEMONSTRATION OF REJECTION 9:51-11:54

JESUS' REJECTION IN SAMARIA 9:51-56 52-56

Jesus' rejection begins in Samaria

Everyone expects *them* to reject Jesus.

What they don't realize is that this will set the pattern for what's going to keep on happening all the way to Jerusalem, and to the cross!

The Samaritans don't reject Him because of Who He is

They reject Him because of where He's headed.

Their Messiah wouldn't be headed for Jerusalem. John 4:20-26

He would be headed for Gerazim

Jesus didn't come on their terms either!

If you come to Jesus, you come on His terms, *not* yours!

Disciples continue to demonstrate their misunderstanding of Jesus' plan.

On the *positive side*, it should be noted that

(they had sufficient faith in Him)

They believe that He could enable them to call down fire from heaven as Elijah had done some centuries earlier.

They're also zealous for their Master and His cause.

However, they want to impose submission – on others!

Especially on these "half-breed" Samaritans

They somehow miss the fact that He was rejected previously and never retaliated. Why should they think it appropriate now?

Only explanation for different approach: these are **Samaritans!**

This is "*them!*"

They're a half-breed – formed by intermarriage of the pagans Assyria sent in to populate the northern territory, and exiled Israelites from the north who were brought back to teach them the ways of Yahweh.

2 Ki. 17:24-41

They're never really accepted.

They oppose Nehemiah and he refuses to let them take part in rebuilding.

They set up their own worship centers

– rewrote portions of the Pentateuch to their liking.

– rejected the rest of the O.T.

There's no love lost between them.

(Josephus, *Wars* II.232-246; *Antiquities* XX.118-126)

They have no fellowship with each other (cf. Jn. 4)

So close to their meeting with Elijah on the mountain, they probably remember how he called fire from heaven against those who oppose the work of God in this region (2 Ki. 1:9-12). They're all for it!

They fail to notice that God's judgment through Elijah was directed against the religious leadership of "His people" – who're motivating them to follow pagan deities of the nations around them – *NOT those who want to worship Yahweh their own way and avoid Jerusalem.*

In fact, it was this breed of historic "Samaritans" that God uses to judge the same royal dynasty that Elijah opposed.

These Samaritans would have been Elijah's allies!

They don't realize that Christ hadn't come to destroy "them", nor to force submission on those who reject Him [yet!] at this time.

They're especially prone to judge Samaritans who reject Him!

It's always easier to seek God's judgment for "pagans" around us, who don't do things our way and who don't want our Jesus, then to show them the love of God!

How often have religious causes been the basis for hateful, vindictive, and even murderous, acts. Sometimes even in the name of Christ!

That's how we expect intolerant religions of this world to treat those who oppose them.

But we are followers of the God who "so loved the world that He gave His only Son."

We are followers of the God who planned it so that "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us!"

We are followers of the God who "is not willing that any should perish."

They are very willing!

They had zeal for our Lord, but it was misdirected zeal!

Our Lord makes clear here that such acts are not the appropriate response to those who reject Him.

Jesus rebukes their vengeful spirit, and goes to another village.

KJV and some others, include what may have been the content of His rebuke.

It at least reflects what tradition believed that rebuke to include:

*"You do not know what Spirit (or what kind of Spirit) you are following here.
The Son of Man didn't come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."*

This is certainly consistent with Christ's attitude concerning the lost, and particularly with His rebuke in response to their desire for vengeance on *"them"*

Christ wasn't there to destroy.

He was there to seek and to save that which was lost– and the Samaritans certainly were lost. They would all agree to that!

He was not willing that ANY should perish;
but that all should turn to Him and live.

Are there some people we think God ought to let have it?

Who is the "them" in our life that WE would just as soon see God eliminate?

Christians today have a number of special targets–

Palestinians? Homosexuals? Murderers? Adulterers? etc.

How would Jesus respond to that attitude?

"There's a wideness in God's mercy, Like the wideness of the sea:

There's a kindness in His justice, That is more than liberty.

For the love of God is broader Than the measure of man's mind.

And the heart of the Eternal Is most wonderfully kind."

It's broad enough to include even *"them!"*

- It included the Samaritans who rejected Him
- It includes the *"them"* in our life too!
- *Do we care enough about "them" to take a risk and share Christ with them?*
- *Will we risk rejection that they might hear about the coming of our Lord?*