

The Samaritans Believe

Key Verse: “*Many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that I ever did.*”
—John 4:39

Selected Scripture:
John 4:25-42

heritage who believed Mount Gerizim was the appropriate location to worship God.—Deut. 27:11,12; Ezra 4:4-24; John 4:1-7,19,20

During his earthly ministry, after returning from the Passover in Jerusalem, Jesus departed for Galilee. Traveling through Samaria, he tarried at Jacob’s well to rest from his journey. (John 2:23; 4:1-6) The subsequent account reads: “There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, if thou knewest the

WHEN THE CAPTIVITY OF the inhabitants of Judah who were exiled to Babylon for seventy years had ended, Cyrus, king of Persia, issued a decree releasing them from bondage in order to participate in the rebuilding of their Temple in Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:1-4) After a number of Jews returned to their homeland for this purpose, they encountered opposition from the Samaritans, a group of people of mixed

gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.”—vss. 7-10

Following a lengthy exchange, Jesus explained to the woman that he could provide the water of life, and those who partook would never thirst again. Additionally, our Lord disclosed to her certain details about her personal life which could only be possible if he were sent from God. Upon perceiving that he was a prophet, the woman asked where the proper worship of God should take place. Jesus answered that the time would soon come that the true worship of God would not be in a physical place, such as either Mount Gerizim or even Jerusalem.—vss. 11-21

The Lord further disclosed to the Samaritan woman this important truth: “The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” Thus was manifest the fact that the Heavenly Father would no longer reveal himself through the formality of Judaism, nor through the Samaritan’s religion. Rather, he would come through the power of God’s Holy Spirit to those with sincere hearts who diligently seek him. When the woman was moved to acknowledge her belief that when the Messiah came, he would teach all these things, the Master revealed himself, saying, “I that speak unto thee am he.”—vss. 23-26

Our Key Verse reveals that many of the Samaritans in that area believed on Jesus as a result of his encounter with the woman and his teachings to the people as he passed through. Although our Lord’s earthly ministry ended nearly two thousand years ago, he left as a commission for his true followers to proclaim the good news of God’s coming kingdom to all who may have a hearing ear. If we are faithful in exercising this privilege, we may entertain the hope of becoming a part of the spiritual seed of Abraham that will help to bless all mankind when earth’s weary night of sin is ended.—Ps. 30:5; Gal. 3:27-29■