

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN: THE TWO SUPREME QUESTIONS OF LIFE LUKE 10:25–37

Introduction

There are two supreme questions of life, questions that could revolutionize the world if men would ask them and then heed their answers.

- I. A lawyer (an expert in the law) tempted Jesus (v. 25).
- II. Question 1: how do we inherit eternal life (vv. 25-28)?
- III. Question 2: who is my neighbour (vv. 29-37)?

I. *Luke 10:25 The Lawyer's Question*

A lawyer, an expert in the law, tempted Jesus (see *Lawyer*; Mt. 22:35). The lawyer was not seeking the truth. He was not really trying to discover the way to God. His purpose was to trip Jesus, to lead Jesus to discredit Himself by giving some unusual answer that would arouse the people against Him.

MATHEW 22:35 LAWYER, AN EXPERT IN THE LAW (NOMIKOS)

A profession of laymen who studied, taught, interpreted, and dealt with the practical questions of Jewish law. They were a special group within the profession commonly called Scribes (Mk. 12:28). They functioned both in the court and synagogues (Lk. 7:30; 10:25; 11:45, 46, 52; 14:3; Tit. 3:13). They apparently dealt more with the study and interpretation of the law. □

II. *Luke 10:25–28 Steps to Eternal Life*

The first supreme question of life is: How do we inherit eternal life? Note that the lawyer's question stressed works. He asked, "What must I do?" To him, salvation was by works. God was going to accept him because he was or could become *good enough*. He had no concept of the part that God's love and grace played in salvation (see Eph. 2:8-8; Tit. 3:5-7 for a description of what he failed to see).

Note how clearly Jesus led the conversation to spell out the steps to eternal life.

1. First, the law has the answer to eternal life. If a man wishes eternal life, he must look into the law of God. Note Jesus' instructions to the lawyer, "How do you read it?" The lawyer had a little leather box called a phylactery. Several passages of Scripture were in the box, two of which were Dut. 6:3 and Dut. 6:11. These were the two verses which he quoted.

Thought 1. God has given us the answer to eternal life in clear terms - so clear we are left without excuse.

- (1) He has given us the answer in written words. It is in black and white, certain and unmistakable.
 - (2) He has given us the answer in the life of Christ Himself. God has caused the words to be lived out in a human life, giving us the example of the Ideal Life (see *Jesus Christ, The Word*, Jn. 1:1-5).
2. Second, love God supremely.
 - a. “Love the Lord your God.” Love God as *your* very own God. This is a personal relationship, not a distant relationship. God is not impersonal, not far out in space someplace, distant and removed. God is personal, ever so close, and we are to be personally involved with God as though face to face. The command is to “*love the Lord your God.*” Loving God is alive and active, not dead and inactive. We are, therefore, to maintain a personal relationship with God that is alive and active.
 - b. Love God with all that you are, with all of your being, all of your nature. Jesus breaks our being into three parts: the heart, the soul, and the mind (See *Heart, Soul and Mind*, Mt. 22:37.)

2 Th 3:5 *May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.*

Jude 1:21 *Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.*

Deu 6:5 *Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*

Deu 10:12 *And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*

Deu 11:1 *Love the LORD your God and keep his requirements, his decrees, his laws and his commands always.*

Josh 22:5 *But be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to obey his commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him with all your heart and all your soul.”*

Psa 31:23 *Love the LORD, all his saints! The LORD preserves the faithful, but the proud he pays back in full.*

Love is man's chief duty. Man is responsible to maintain a loving relationship with God. Very practically, loving God involves the very same factors that loving a person involves (Eph. 5:22-33).

- 1) A loving relationship involves *commitment and loyalty*. True love does not allow lustful behaviour with others. True love does not covet; it does not care for a carnal definition of love that allows fleshly acts and sensual relationships with others.

True love is commitment and loyalty to one another. This is very significant. The first commandment deals with *commitment and loyalty*. God strikes out at the very core of man's carnal and fleshly behaviour, at his tendency to define love in terms that allow him to satisfy his lust. God irrevocably says, "You shall have no other gods" (Exo. 20:3). God demands our total commitment and loyalty.

- 2) A loving relationship involves *trust and respect* for the person loved. It is loving the person just for who he is. So it is when we love God. We love God because of Himself, because He is who He is. We love Him because...
 - He is the Creator and Sustainer of life
 - He is the Saviour and Redeemer of our souls
 - He is the Lord and Owner of our lives
- 3) A loving relationship involves the *giving and surrendering* of oneself. The drive is to give oneself, to surrender oneself to the other, not to take and conquer. We are to so love God, to give and surrender ourselves to Him.
- 4) A loving relationship involves *knowing and sharing*. The desire is to know and to share, learning, growing, working, and serving ever so closely together. We are to know and share with God, learning, growing, working, and serving ever so closely with Him.

Thought 1. The importance of a personal relationship with God cannot be overstated.

- (1) It is the greatest, the sum and substance of all commandments.
- (2) God demands that He be loved. It is His first commandment, and to love is both personal and active.
- (3) The commandment to love God is given by Christ, the Son of God Himself.

Thought 2. A personal relationship can be maintained only through communication: we must talk to God and allow God to talk to us through prayer, His Word, and the presence of His Spirit.

Thought 3. A person's heart, soul, and mind are focused upon something: self, possessions, the world, the flesh or sinful nature, power, fame, a person. God demands that we focus our whole being upon Him.

3. Third, love your neighbour as yourself. If a man wishes eternal life, he has to love his *neighbour*. The first commandment, "Love God," is abstract; it cannot be seen or understood standing by itself. There has to be a *demonstration, an act, something done* for love to be seen and understood. A profession of love without demonstration is empty. It is profession only. Love is not known without showing it. Several important things need to be said about love at this point.

- a. Love is an active experience, not inactive and dormant. This was the point Jesus was making. Love for God *acts*. Love acts by showing and demonstrating itself. It is inaccurate and foolish for a man to say, "I love God," and then be inactive and dormant, doing nothing for God. If he truly loves God, he will *do things* for God. Any person who loves does things for the one loved.
 - b. The *primary thing* God wants from us is to love our neighbour, not to do religious things. Doing religious things is good, but it is not the first thing God wants. God wants us to make loving our neighbour the first order of our lives. To do religious things is only dealing with things such as rituals, observances, ordinances, laws. Such things are lifeless, unfeeling and unresponsive. They are material objects; therefore, they are not helped by our doing them. Only we are helped. They make us feel good and religious, which is beneficial to our growth, but religious things are not what demonstrate our love for God. Loving our neighbour is what proves our love for God. A man may say he loves God, but if he hates and acts unkindly toward his neighbour, everyone knows his religion is profession only.
4. Fourth, obey and you shall live eternally.

1 John 3:14 *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.*

1 John 4:20-21 *If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.*

Mat 5:44 *"But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."*

Mark 12:31 *"The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."*

John 12:34-35 *The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?" Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going."*

John 15:12 *"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."*

Rom 12:9 *Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.*

Rom 13:8-10 *Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbour as yourself." Love does no harm to its neighbour. Therefore love is the fulfilment of the law.*

Gal 5:14 *The entire law is summed up in a single command: “Love your neighbour as yourself.”*

1 Th 3:12 *May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.*

Heb 13:1 *Keep on loving each other as brothers.*

James 2:8 *If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbour as yourself,” you are doing right.*

1 Pet 1:22 *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.*

1 John 4:7-11 *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.*

Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Lev 19:34 *The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.*

JOHN 01:01–05 THE WORD, JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD

The *Word* (logos) is Jesus Christ. John faced a serious problem in writing to the Gentiles, that is, the non-Jewish world. Most Gentiles had never heard of the Messiah or Saviour who was expected by the Jews. The idea was foreign to them. However, the Messiah was the very centre of Christianity. How was John going to present Christ so that a Gentile could understand?

The answer lay in the idea of the *Word*, for the *Word* was understood by both Gentile and Jew.

1. The Jews saw a word as something more than a mere sound. A word was something active and existing. It was power — it possessed the power to express something, to do something. This is seen in the many Old Testament references where *The Word of God* was seen as the creative power of God, the power that made the world and gave light and life to every man (Gen. 1:3, 6, 11; Psa. 33:6; 107:20; 147:15; Isa. 55:11).
2. The Gentiles or Greeks saw the *Word* more philosophically.
 - a. When they looked at the world of nature, they saw that things were not chaotic, but orderly. Everything had its place and moved or grew in an orderly fashion, including the stars above and the vegetation below. Therefore, the Greeks said that behind the world was a mind, a reason, a power that made and kept things in their

proper place. This creative and sustaining mind, this supreme reason, this unlimited power was said to be the *Word*.

- b. The *Word* was also seen as the power that enabled men to think and reason. It was the power that brought light and understanding to man's mind, enabling him to express his confused thoughts in an orderly fashion.
 - c. More importantly, the *Word* was the power by which men came into contact with God and expressed their feelings to God.
3. John utilized this common idea of the Jews and Gentiles to proclaim that Jesus Christ was the *Word*. John saw that a word is the expression of an idea, a thought, an image in the mind of a person. He saw that a word describes what is in the mind of a person. Thus, he proclaimed that in the life of Jesus Christ, God was speaking to the world, speaking and demonstrating just what He wanted to say to man. John said three things.
- a. God has given us much more than mere words in the Holy Scriptures. God has given us Jesus Christ, The Word. As The Word, Jesus Christ was the picture, the expression, the pattern, the very image of what God wished to say to man. The very image within God's mind of the Ideal Man was demonstrated in the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was the perfect expression of all that God wishes man to be. Jesus Christ was God's utterance, God's speech, God's Word to man. Jesus Christ was the Word of God who came down to earth in human flesh to bring man into a face-to-face relationship with God (vv. 1-2). Jesus was the *Word of God who came to earth to live out the written Word of God*.
 - b. Jesus Christ is the Mind, the Reason, the Power that both made and keeps things in their proper order. He is the creative and sustaining Mind, the Supreme Reason, the unlimited Power (v. 3).
 - c. Jesus Christ is the Light, the Illumination, the Power that penetrates the darkness of the world. He, the Life and Light of the world, is what makes sense of the world and enables men to understand the world (vv. 4-5). □

MATHEW 22:37 HEART

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." Mathew 22:37-38

The heart is the *seat* of man's affection and will (devotion). The heart attaches and focuses our will and devotion. The heart causes us to give either good things or bad things. The heart causes us to devote ourselves to either good or bad. Therefore,

Christ says we are to love God “with all our heart.” We are to focus our heart, our affection, and our will (devotion) upon God. We are to love God supremely.

Mat 6:21 “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Mat 12:34-35 “You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.” (see Mat. 15:18-19) □

MATHEW 22:37 SOUL (PSUCHE)

The soul is the seat of man’s breath and life or consciousness. The soul is the life of a man, the consciousness, the breath, the essence, the being of a man. The soul is the *animal life* of a man. The soul is the breath and consciousness that distinguishes man and other animals from vegetation.

The world of vegetation lives and man and animals live, but there is a difference in their living. Man and animals are *breathing* and *conscious* beings. The essence of their being is breath and consciousness. They are living souls. This is clearly pointed out in the Hebrew language of Gen. 1:20: “Let the waters teem with ‘*living souls*’ [nephesh].” The “living souls” that God created were different from the vegetation He had just created. The “living souls” were creatures (fish) that breathed and possessed consciousness.

Christ said we are to love God “with all our soul,” that is, with all our life, our breath, our consciousness. We are to love God with all the breath and consciousness, all the life and awareness, we have. □

MATHEW 22:37 MIND

The mind is the seat of reasoning and understanding. God has given intellectual powers to man. Man thinks, reasons, and understands. Christ says that our minds and thoughts are to be centred upon God. We are to love God “with all our mind.”

Rom 12:2 *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Eph 4:24 *And to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Phil 4:8 *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.*

Col 3:10 And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

2 Cor 10:5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. □

III. *Luke 10:29–37 The Real Brotherhood*

The second supreme question of life is: Who is my neighbour? Note the lawyer sought to “justify himself.” He sensed that Jesus was saying that he had not done the law; he had failed to love his neighbour. So he asked the logical question, “Who is my neighbour?” Jesus answered and drove the point home to the human heart by doing what He had so often done — He gave an illustration.

1. There was a traveller who was foolish and irresponsible. He was foolish because he travelled the road between Jerusalem and Jericho that was known for its danger. It was about twenty one miles in distance, in a wild country, a rugged, rocky pass much of the way. It was a favourite habitat for marauding thieves, so much so it was called *the Way of Blood*. Travellers never journeyed there alone. They always travelled with caravans. Therefore, this traveller was irresponsible, foolish, and reckless. Some would even argue that such foolishness was undeserving of help.

Thought 1. How many are foolish and reckless in life, exposing and destroying their bodies by walking where they should not and by doing what they should not?

Prov 22:3 A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.

Hosea 14:9 Who is wise? He will realize these things. Who is discerning? He will understand them. The ways of the LORD are right; the righteous walk in them, but the rebellious stumble in them.

2. There was the priest who placed his religious work and ceremony before the welfare of the man. Note this was a religionist, and he did not even make a move toward helping the man. He “passed by on the other side” which means he rushed away. The priest was probably hurrying to meet his evening religious duties. The trip was a day’s journey, and he would have to rush to make it. There was also a religious rule that made a person unclean for seven days after touching a dead body. This ceremonial ritual caused a priest to lose his turn of duty at the temple. The priest was not about to sacrifice his primary work and privilege for the man.

Thought 1. How many put work, even religious works, and *busyness* before helping others?

Thought 2. How many put their church and its ceremony and ritual before the needs of desperate men? How much less would be invested in buildings and facilities if men were seen as half dead travellers who needed our compassion and help?

Mat 25:41-43 “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’”

Luke 12:47 “That servant who knows his master’s will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows.”

James 4:17 Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it, sins.

Hosea 6:6 For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.

Micah 6:8 He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

3. There was the Levite who placed safety before compassion. The Levite was touched with enough feeling to walk over and look upon the man. But he shrank from helping. Perhaps He...

- feared being identified with the robbers.
- feared that the robbers might still be lurking behind the shadows of the surrounding cliffs.
- felt that meddling with the poor soul was just too much bother to undergo.

Luke 16:19-23 “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.”

James 2:14-16 What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?

1 John 3:17-18 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

Psa 109:16-17 *For he never thought of doing a kindness, but hounded to death the poor and the needy and the broken-hearted. He loved to pronounce a curse — may it come on him; he found no pleasure in blessing — may it be far from him.*

Prov 21:13 *If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.*

Prov 24:11-12 *Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter. If you say, “But we knew nothing about this,” does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay each person according to what he has done?*

Ezek 34:4 *You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally. (see vv. 5-10)*

4. The good Samaritan placed compassion before everything: prejudice, opinion, work, time, energy, and money. The *good Samaritan* teaches beyond question who our neighbour is. The good Samaritan gave his heart, his compassion, his all in order to help the desperate man.
 - a. The injured man was a Jew. The good Samaritan and the Jew were of different races — races who hated and despised each other. No prejudice has ever run any deeper than the prejudice between these two (see Lk. 10:33). Yet the good Samaritan had a sense of *common humanity*. He was a man who saw another man — not as a Jew and not as an enemy. This was most strange, for the Jews cursed the Samaritans, and there was the likelihood that the injured Jew would curse the Samaritan when he had recovered. However, despite all, the good Samaritan saw a fellow human being in desperate need, and he was moved with compassion for him.
 - b. The good Samaritan gave up his work, time, and energy to help the man. Note what he did. Each step is significant in showing how we are to love our neighbours.
 - => He went to him: went forth, reached out personally to help.
 - => He bandaged up his wounds: eased his pain.
 - => He poured oil and wine into his wounds: gave of his own goods.
 - => He set him on his own donkey: sacrificed his own comfort.
 - => He provided rooming for him: provided the basic necessities.
 - => He took care of him: nursed, looked after him personally.

Note the time, energy and money involved in this. Showing love to one's neighbour is putting love into action; and putting love into action requires time, energy and money. Love is not just an idea or a feeling toward God. It is *practical acts and commitment* to help any who need help.

- c. The good Samaritan saw to it that continued compassion and care were given. Two silver coins (*two denarii*) amounted to somewhere between twenty-four to forty-eight days of room and board, a considerable sum. And note: the good Samaritan said that if it cost more, he would pay it when he returned. The good Samaritan saw a desperate need and did *all he could* to help.
5. The Lord's commission was forceful: go and do likewise. Note a striking point: Christ still did not answer the lawyer (an expert in the law). There was no need. The answer was strikingly clear. If the lawyer wished eternal life, he had to "go and do likewise." He now knew who his neighbour was: it was any man who needed mercy, whether a friend or just an acquaintance or even an enemy. The lawyer was forced to admit this. However, more than just confession was needed. Love was needed. The lawyer and all of us need to demonstrate love as we go about our daily affairs. We must help our neighbours — all those around us who hurt and are suffering.

Mat 25:35-40 “‘For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

Acts 20:35 *In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’*

Rom 12:20 *On the contrary: If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.*

Gal 6:2 *Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.*

Heb 13:3 *Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.*

Exo 23:4 *If you come across your enemy's ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to take it back to him.*

Lev 25:35 *‘If one of your countrymen becomes poor and is unable to support himself among you, help him as you would an alien or a temporary resident, so he can continue to live among you.’*

Deu 10:17-19 *For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing. And you are to love those who are aliens, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt.*

Prov 24:17 *Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice.*

Prov 25:21-22 *If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head, and the LORD will reward you.*

Isa 58:6-7 *“Is not this the kind of fasting [religion] I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? ■*

JOHN 04:05 SAMARIA, SAMARITANS

Samaria was the central part of Palestine. Palestine was a small country, stretching only 120 miles north to south. The country was divided into three sections:

=> Judea, the southern section

=> Galilee, the northern section

=> Samaria, the central section, lying right between the two

There was bitter hatred between the Jews and Samaritans. Two things in particular caused this hatred.

1. The Samaritans were mongrel or half Jews, a mixed breed *by birth*. Centuries before (about 720 B.C.), the King of Assyria had captured the ten tribes of Israel and deported a large number of the people, scattering them all throughout the Media empire (see 2 Kng. 17:6-41). He then took people from all over the Assyrian empire to transplant them into Samaria to repopulate the land. The result was only natural. Intermarriage took place and the people became a mixed breed, a breed including...

- the transplanted people
- the weak of the land who had been left behind
- the outcast and irreligious who had intermarried with the original Samaritans

The fact of a mixed breed, of course, infuriated the strict Jews who held to a pure race.

2. The Samaritans were mongrel or half Jews, a mixed breed *by religion*. The transplanted heathen, of course, brought their gods with them. Eventually the God of Israel won out, but the Samaritan religion never became pure Judaism. Three things happened to cause this.

- a. When Ezra led the Jews back from exile in Babylon, the first thing the Jews did was to start rebuilding their temple. The Samaritans offered to help them, but the Jews rejected their help, declaring that the Samaritans — through intermarriage and worship of false gods — had lost their purity and forfeited their right to worship the only true God. This severe denunciation embittered the Samaritans against the Jews in Jerusalem.
- b. The Samaritans built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim to stand in competition with the Jewish temple at Jerusalem.
- c. The Samaritans twisted both the Scripture and history to favour their own people and nation.
 - => They twisted Scripture in that they accepted only five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch. (Just imagine! They missed all the richness and depth of the Psalms and prophets.)
 - => They twisted history in that they claimed three great events took place on Mt. Gerizim that set it apart as a place of worship. They claimed it was the place where Abraham offered Isaac, where Melchizedek met Abraham, and where Moses built his first altar after leading Israel out from Egyptian bondage. □