

*Elijah the prophet came near, and said, "LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel" ... 1 Kings 18:36b*

How does a people go from being "Israel" to being "Samaria?" The people of God had cut themselves off from the Temple in Jerusalem. Politics and rebellion had severed them from Judah and the priests. Along the way, idolatry permeated their culture. Finally, they had replaced the God who brought them out of Egypt for the plethora of gods offered in culture. God never ceased to be the God of Israel...but Israel ceased to be the people of God. Eventually, Samaria became a byword and Samaritans became outcasts...something only Christ was able to remedy.

Yet, Elijah asked God to prove He was God. The first focus of his prayer was not the need for water. Nor was it the request for fire or the necessity of a national revival. His top priority was for God to prove Himself to a generation that had long since forgotten Him.

In our own society, we are so far removed from past awakenings that the predominant mindset of culture is leaning toward agnosticism. This is to say that our people don't know, nor do they believe that anyone can truly know, whether there is one true God. Faith is important to them, but not as important as knowledge. As a result, many can say they believe in God, or gods, but yet don't believe He/they can actually be known.

Because the intellectualizing of faith has largely replaced the experiential faith of former generations, we find fewer and fewer in Western society expecting God to be actively involved in our livelihoods. We anticipate meeting God someday, but we fail to see the point in living for Him today.

Can we see ourselves...our nation...becoming a modern day Samaria? If so, we need to cry out for God to reveal Himself once again. We want Him to show His glory in such a way that is categorically undeniable. At the same time we recognize that we are to be living proof of His existence. Through power filled love we should represent Him to the world.

*And so we pray:*

*Father...You have created us in Your likeness. You have prepared us in Your image to demonstrate who You are. Many times, and in many ways, we have failed. We have not demonstrated your unconditional love as we should. Nor have we been consistent in living the empowered witness that Your Spirit gifted to us. We repent for all the times we have reduced Your glory to an argument instead of being conduits through which Your glory could be seen. We acknowledge our need for You to prove Yourself to our nation once again, and ask that You will use us to that very end. Let it be known that You are still the God of our people, and that there is no other god but You.*

*In Jesus' name we pray...AMEN*