

The Story of Jesus: His Encounter with Zacchaeus  
(Lesson 78)

Introduction:

1. The Lord's people are to continually grow in the knowledge of Him (2 Peter 3:18).
2. This growth is accomplished by "searching the Scriptures" (John 5:39).
3. In this lesson we are concentrating on the occasion when Jesus interacted with Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10).
4. Let us first examine . . .

Discussion:

- I. THE SETTING FOR WHAT HAPPENED ON THIS OCCASION
  - A. According to Luke 18:31-33, Jesus was traveling to Jerusalem.
  - B. Before reaching Jerusalem, Jesus passed through Jericho.
  - C. Luke tells about the Lord's dealings with 2 men as He approached and passed through Jericho.
    1. As Jesus approached Jericho He gave sight to a blind man (Luke 18:35-43).
    2. As Jesus passed through Jericho He met Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10).
  - D. Let us turn our attention to . . .
- II. THE LORD'S ENCOUNTER WITH ZACCHAEUS
  - A. Zacchaeus is introduced in vs.2.
    1. He "*was the chief among the publicans.*"
    2. "Publicans" [tax collectors] are mentioned many times in the Gospels.
      - a. They were Jews who collected taxes from the Jews for the Romans.
      - b. The Jews despised them because of their involvement with Rome.
      - c. Unfortunately, some publicans took advantage of their fellow Jews.
    3. Luke also informs us that Zacchaeus "*was rich.*"
  - B. (vs.3-4) Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus as He passed through Jericho.
    1. Perhaps he had heard about the Lord's dealings with publicans.
      - a. Jesus had chosen a publican [Matthew] to be an apostle.
      - b. Jesus ate with publicans.
      - c. Jesus said in Matthew 11:19 that He was known as "*a friend of publicans.*"
    2. Although Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, he could not because he was too short.
    3. To see Jesus he ran ahead of the crowd and climbed up into a tree.
  - C. (vs.5) As Jesus passed by He saw Zacchaeus in the tree, Jesus called Zacchaeus by name, and Jesus invited Himself to his home.
  - D. Notice the joy in vs.6 as Zacchaeus received Jesus -- out of all the people present, the Lord chose to be a guest at the home of a chief publican.
  - E. Unfortunately, the other people present murmured (vs.7).
    1. They saw Zacchaeus as "*a sinner.*"
    2. Publicans are often mentioned in connection with "sinners" (Matthew 9:11), "heathens" (Matthew 18:17), and "harlots" (Matthew 21:31).
    3. It is true that some publicans took advantage of people, but others had good qualities.
      - a. They went to John to be baptized (Luke 3:12-13).
      - b. They heard the Lord's teaching while others rejected it (Luke 7:29-30; 15:1-2).
    4. Zacchaeus was not one of the evil publicans.
  - F. (vs.8) Zacchaeus defended himself.
    1. He was generous -- he gave half of his goods to the poor.
    2. He restored fourfold anything he had taken wrongfully [the law only required a fifth part -- Numbers 5:7].
  - G. (vs.9) Jesus brought salvation to the home of Zacchaeus and identified him as "*a son of Abraham*" [we learn from Galatians 3:26-29 how we become Abraham's children today].
  - H. Jesus revealed His mission in vs.10.