

## Sunday School Lesson

### **Luke 19: Jesus Triumphal Entry** (January 8, 2023)

#### ***Introduction:***

In our class we have been discussing to whom Jesus came to minister, and what kind of kingdom He ruled. Some of the best examples of each are in this part of Luke's narrative. At the end of Chapter 18, Jesus cured a blind beggar. At that time the people thought his blindness was due to what? \_\_\_\_\_  
Now, we will see another kind of healing.

#### **Zacchaeus**

Read this familiar story in **Luke 19:1-10**.

This is THE famous Jericho – great city of commerce, hub of trade routes, where Joshua brought down the walls with trumpets, where Herod had a palace, and was once given as a present by Mark Antony to Cleopatra. Remember that Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem (about an 18 mile walk), so he was only passing through. What do we know about Zacchaeus? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Not only was he a tax collector, he was a chief tax collector – so he had others working for him and doing the actual collecting. He is the only one mentioned in the Bible with this title.

Why did the Romans hire local citizens to be tax collectors? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Zacchaeus climbed that tree? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Regarding reimbursement, read **Exodus 22:1**.

There is no confession of sin, so how come Jesus said salvation had come to his house? The common assumption (to which I subscribe) is that Zacchaeus had an immediate and great change of heart. He suddenly denounced his former greedy ways and promised to make amends. I believe that Jesus saw Zacchaeus as a truly changed (converted) man.

Dr. Evans provides a different interpretation of this encounter by pointing out that the Greek words used for “pay back now” are not in a future tense; rather in the present tense.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the interpretation would be that Zacchaeus, stung by the mutterings and accusations of the crowd, was responding to their charges. Something on the order of, “Look here, Jesus, other tax collectors may be abusive, but I have always given generously to the poor, and, anytime I made a mistake and overcharge (not ‘cheated’), I have repaid four times over!” Jesus calls him “a true son of Abraham” because of his honest dealings. And because he is a true son, as evidenced by his welcome to Jesus, Zacchaeus’ house received salvation.

So, what healing did Zacchaeus need? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Kingship and Stewardship In One Story**

Knowing that His earthly ministry is near its end, this is Jesus’ last teaching before His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, so it must be important. And, He knew that people frequently don’t listen acutely when they already expect to hear something.

As a preface, read **Acts 1:6**.

The people kept looking for a particular kind of king and kingdom from Jesus, and they just were not listening to what He was telling them. From Luke 19:11-27:

<sup>11</sup> *While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.* <sup>12</sup> *He said: “A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return.* <sup>13</sup> *So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. ‘Put this money to work,’ he said, ‘until I come back.’*

<sup>14</sup> *“But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We don’t want this man to be our king.’*

<sup>15</sup> *“He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it.*

<sup>16</sup> *“The first one came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned ten more.’*

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<sup>1</sup> Evans, p. 280.

<sup>17</sup> “‘Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’

<sup>18</sup> “The second came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned five more.’

<sup>19</sup> “His master answered, ‘You take charge of five cities.’

<sup>20</sup> “Then another servant came and said, ‘Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. <sup>21</sup> I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.’

<sup>22</sup> “His master replied, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? <sup>23</sup> Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?’

<sup>24</sup> “Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’

<sup>25</sup> “‘Sir,’ they said, ‘he already has ten!’

<sup>26</sup> “He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>27</sup> But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.’”

This same story is also in Matthew 25:14 ff, with some variations. Matthew only identified three servants and he omitted the part about taking over another kingdom and slaughtering the objectors. So what’s going on here? In fact, this was a very timely story. You see, King Herod had just died and one of his sons traveled to Rome to appeal to Caesar to be allowed to take over. At the same time, the people had sent delegates with letters to Caesar declaring that this man is unsuitable to be their king.

Some translations use “mina,” which means “pound” (English money). Back then one drachma/one silver coin was a day’s wages, and one pound would have been 100 drachmas, or 100 days’ wages. So, ten servants were each give 100 days’ of pay.

Even though Luke’s version describes ten servants, the point of the parable is that there are three types of people:

**First** – the fruitful good & faithful steward. This person has been entrusted with some of the master’s resources and has used them effectively on behalf of the master. The master is very appreciative and rewards this servant.

**Second** – the unfruitful slacker. This person has also been entrusted with some of the master’s resources, but did nothing for the master with them. Matthew’s version says this slacker was given a smaller portion to start with than the faithful servant, while Luke says they all got the same. The point is that regardless of his reasons or excuses, he has nothing to show for the investment in him.

**Third** – those rejecting the ruler. Matthew did not include this point. In this world there are agnostics, atheists, skeptics, and other nay-sayers. They think they are in charge of their own lives and are comfortable with that. But, Luke points out, in the end, God is king and Lord of lords, and the judge of their final destiny. They will not escape. Just because these others don’t believe it, does not mean it isn’t true.

### **Triumphant Entry to Jerusalem: Palm Sunday**

To this point Jesus has tried to keep a fairly low profile. Frequently, after a healing, He would say something like, “Go, and tell no one.”

*But the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who found out where Jesus was should report it so that they might arrest him.*

- *John 11:57*

But, now, nearing His end, it is time for a parade. And Jesus put it on Himself – He usually walked, but this time He sent disciples ahead to procure a donkey (in keeping with the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9). The parade is probably more for the people than for Jesus. They needed an upbeat and unifying experience, and one more chance to respond to Jesus’ calling. Jesus comes from Bethany, on the east side of Jerusalem, and down the Mount of Olives, across the Kidron Valley, and through the Golden Gate. (The Eastern Gate was sealed shut in AD 1540–41 by order of Suleiman the Magnificent, a sultan of the Ottoman Empire. It’s believed that the reason for the closing of the Eastern Gate was to prevent the Jewish Messiah from gaining entrance to Jerusalem.)

He was also advertising His presence to His adversaries: “Here I am; do what you will.” But, they could not find any way to do away with Him, and He was

surrounded by too many people. So, He was able to continue His ministry in the middle of Jerusalem, at least for a few more days.

### **Jesus' Lament**

Somewhere enroute, Luke does not specify where, Jesus breaks down and weeps. This was probably on the down-hill slope of Olivet when He had a full view of Jerusalem. Read **Luke 19:41-44**.

The city of peace does not know what it takes to have peace. The people have rejected God's Messiah. Here, again, Jesus is prophetic about the forthcoming destruction of the city. "Banks" were mounds that protected the siege armies and provided a platform for them to launch assaults on the city. Jesus is saying that not only will the city be captured, it will be totally destroyed.

### **Cleansing the Temple**

The inner area of the Temple was restricted to Jews only. The outer area was not restricted and called the Court of the Gentiles. It was in this area that people made arrangements for their sacrifices. Sacrifices in the Temple were supposed to be the best-of-the-best animals and birds. Just about any animal someone brought with them was not good enough, so the person had to exchange their animal plus a payment to buy "a good one." And the payment had to be in Temple coin (Tyrian coinage). And, since that coinage was not common outside the Temple, you had to exchange your common money into Tyrian before you could buy the sacrificial animal or bird. The exchange rates and the prices of the animals provided opportunity for huge fraudulent profits! Read **Luke 19:45-48**.

Despite upsetting the Temple businesses and antagonizing the leaders, they could not find a way to get back at Jesus because the populace was so enthralled with Him.

### ***Summary:***

I found several good messages from this chapter:

1. Which kind of person are you? God has invested you with some of His resources; when He asks for an accounting, have you used those resources wisely on His behalf?
2. Are you really listening for God's messages for you, or do you think you already know and maybe have missed what He muttered under His breath?
3. From Kevin Rudolph's book, "Do you feel that you have lost touch with God? Is there something you have done, or not done, that makes you feel sure He doesn't want to hear from you? Take a page from Zacchaeus' book, and climb any tree. You will find that God has been reaching out to you all along with His saving grace."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Rudolph, Day 305.