

While on His way to Jerusalem To Fulfill the Feast of Passover



Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

³¹ And taking the twelve, he said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written of the Son of man by the prophets will be accomplished. ³² For he will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon; ³³ they will scourge him and kill him, and on the third day he will rise.” ³⁴ But they understood none of these things; this saying was hid from them, and they did not grasp what was said. (Luke 18:31-34)

Jesus and Zacchaeus

He entered Jericho and was passing through. ² And there was a man named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector, and rich. ³ And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. ⁴ So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way. ⁵ And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today.” ⁶ So he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully. ⁷ And when they saw it they all murmured, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” ⁸ And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it fourfold.” ⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:1-10)



A Sycamore tree dating to the first century believed by some to be the tree Zacchaeus climbed to see Jesus.

The Parable of the Ten Pounds

¹¹ As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. ¹² He said therefore, “A nobleman went into a far

country to receive kingly power and then return.¹³ Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten pounds, and said to them, 'Trade with these till I come.'¹⁴ But his citizens hated him and sent an embassy after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.'¹⁵ When he returned, having received the kingly power, he commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by trading.¹⁶ The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your pound has made ten pounds more.'¹⁷ And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! faithful in a very authority over ten came, saying, 'Lord, pounds.'¹⁹ And he to be over five came, saying, 'Lord, kept laid away in a of you, because you up what you did not you did not sow.' condemn you out of wicked servant! You man, taking up what reaping what I did



The Road between Jericho and Jerusalem

Because you have been little, you shall have cities.'¹⁸ And the second your pound has made five said to him, 'And you are cities.'²⁰ Then another here is your pound, which I napkin;²¹ for I was afraid are a severe man; you take lay down, and reap what²² He said to him, 'I will your own mouth, you knew that I was a severe I did not lay down and not sow?'²³ Why then did

you not put my at my coming I with interest?'²⁴ And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the pound from him, and give it to him who has the ten pounds.'²⁵ (And they said to him, 'Lord, he has ten pounds!')²⁶ 'I tell you, that to every one who has will more be given; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away.'²⁷ But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them before me.' (Luke 19:11-27)

Our Time in Jericho

We did not spend much time in Jericho. The tour bus stopped so that we could get a glimpse of the Mount of Temptation, the Greek Orthodox Monastery of Temptation, and for the less faint of heart, a camel ride. We also went into a local store that sold much needed refreshment and the ubiquitous freshly squeezed pomegranate juice.



Reflections

Kevin's Reflection: "And he sought to see who Jesus was...."

"Today salvation has come to this house...", Jesus said of Zacchaeus. An amazing thing that must have been for Zacchaeus to hear from the mouth of Jesus, but that was not the only blessings that came to Jewish tax gatherer. Tradition has it that after the ascension of Jesus, Zacchaeus joined St. Peter on his missions of evangelization and that Peter ordained Zacchaeus as the first bishop of Caesarea. Quite an amazing story for a man whom the scriptures describe as "short of stature," but whose life turned out to have been writ large by the Holy Spirit. How did this change of stature begin? Did Zacchaeus know that Jesus could do something for him like so many of the people we've read about who asked for a healing or reached out to touch Jesus? No. He apparently didn't know that much about Jesus or what to think about the things he had probably heard about him. He was curious, *and he sought to see who Jesus was....* I dare say that he was curious enough to put himself out on a limb (sorry, couldn't help myself).

...but could not, on account of the crowd, because he was small of stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way.

So here's this tax collector, probably not well liked by the Jewish community in Jericho, and he's in the teeming mob following after Jesus. I can imagine him bopping up and down trying to look over the crowds, but he still can't get a glimpse of the elusive miracle worker because he's just too short. So he decides to leave the crowd (the very people he has always wanted to be accepted by) and *he ran on ahead*. Do you ever feel that way? You're with a group of people, may be family, friends, coworkers, fellow congregants from your church, and you want to be with them, accepted and respected by them, but something just isn't working. In your heart you know that there is something more than what everyone else seems to be content with, you may not know what it is or who it is, but a longing to deep for words drives you to seek. And it is this seeking that impels you to break free from the contented crowd and "to run on ahead." Now that we are freed from the contentment that can satiate curiosity we our confronted with the next obstacle, are we willing to expose the reality of ourselves, that we are not content with things as they are, to what we know and have experienced, even with ourselves, our relationships, and especially our relationship with God? Are we willing to *climb up into a sycamore tree to see him* whom our hearts desires no matter the cost?

"Look at Zacchaeus up there in that tree, who does he think he is?"

"He's a tax collector, he should be in the back of the crowd."

"Does Zacchaeus thinks he deserves Jesus' attention more than us?"

I hope we are willing to go out on a limb because sometimes that's what it takes to get Jesus to notice us:

And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchae'us, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today."

Isn't that what we want—for Jesus to stay in our house today and everyday? Zacchaeus did not know what to expect when he saw Jesus, as far as he knew Jesus might have called to him and said,

"Zacchaeus, make haste and come down here you sinner, you tax collector you, friend of the Romans and betrayer of the People of God whom you obviously think you are better than since you ran ahead and climbed up that tree so that I would notice you!"

But our Lord didn't, but I suspect that's what most of the crowd was thinking.

And when they saw it they all murmured, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."

Zacchaeus wasn't concerned about what the crowd was saying (okay, may be just a bit since he defended himself with the Lord), but was overjoyed.

⁶ *So he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully.*

So what started out with *and he sought to see who Jesus was* ended up exceeding all his expectations, and while he had to leave the crowd, run ahead, and go out on a limb, he climbed down, received the Lord into his house, and would eventually meet up with another crowd, the Church in Caesarea, and become their shepherd. Sometimes it all starts with seeking that lead us to go out on a limb, and perhaps even an encounter with Jesus.

Jan's Reflection:

While the crowd is running after Jesus, Zacchaeus runs ahead to climb a tree so He can see Jesus clearly. Interesting to note here that Jesus looks up and sees Zacchaeus and calls him by name to come down. You don't hear Jesus addressing anyone else in the crowd. Jesus pays attention to the one who is seeking Him with his whole heart. Zacchaeus positioned himself to be noticed and is all together joyful at the prospect of having Jesus stay in his home.

It is not enough that we run with the crowd. Each of us must have a revelation and a hunger for a relationship with Christ. He knows us and calls us by name. And in our seeking Him he comes and abides in us.

We are all sinners who are called up short (no pun intended) by our sinfulness.

The crowd misses it completely when they grumbled against Jesus for going to the house of a sinner. For this reason Jesus came; to seek and save the lost. Help us Lord to seek you that we might be found and not counted among the lost.



Apolytikion of Apostle Zachaias

Having justly hated unjust riches, thou didst lay up treasures of salvation; for, receiving the Saviour within thy house, thou, O Zacchaeus, wast truly made marvelous with all the fruits of repentance thou broughtest forth: deeds of mercy, the correction of wrongs, and godly life, because of which we honour thee and call thee blest.

Kontakion of Apostle Zachaias

When He that bowed the Heavens came to save sinners, Zacchaeus, great in zeal, but little of stature, beheld the Tree of Life from in the sycamore; lifted above the earth, he saw Jesus, Who called him: coming down in lowliness, he repenting, received Him; and so salvation came into his house, and he was shown forth a true son of Abraham.