

Luke 18:35-19:27

Chapter 18

Verses 35-43: Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight."

Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

--(35) This account is also recorded in **Mt. 20:29-34; Mk. 10:46-52.**

--A seeming discrepancy is that the other two gospels have Jesus departing, or going out of the city, as this miracle happens. Luke says Jesus **was coming near**, which in the Greek means Jesus was *in the vicinity of or close by*. In that case, there is no problem.

--Also, there were two cities named Jericho in those days. One primarily Jewish and one primarily Roman. Jesus was leaving the Old Testament Jewish Jericho, which was still considered cursed, and traveling about one mile away to enter the Roman one, which was lush and bustling. Either case solves the issue.

--**a certain blind man** gives us the sense that he was known. Mark names him **blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus**. He was a familiar fixture in that place.

--(36) At that time, large crowds would be passing through on their way to Jerusalem for the Passover. This road would have been particularly busy as Jews traveled through Perea to avoid Samaria.

--Even for that busy time, Bartimaeus' keen hearing picks up something unusual. A particularly large crowd is passing by, and he knows something irregular is happening.

--(37-39) He is told **Jesus of Nazareth was passing by**.

--His response is to begin crying out for mercy from **Jesus, Son of David!** Son of David was a clear Messianic title.

Matthew 21:15-16: But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant and said to Him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise?'"

--We don't know where Bartimaeus came by this childlike faith, but no doubt, he had heard of the teachings and works of this Jesus of Nazareth. Some measure of faith was present in his heart when ***Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.***

--The crowd tries to silence him, but it only makes him louder! What did they know about the misery and weight of blindness?

--**(40-41)** Jesus Christ stops.

*Bellett (Notes on the Gospel of Luke, pg. 69-70): *"His dignity is beautiful as He stops on His way at the bidding of a poor blind beggar. Joshua once bade the sun and moon to stand still in the heavens, but here the Lord of the sun, and the moon, and the heavens, stands still at the bidding of a blind beggar!"**

--Why? Jesus cannot ignore a cry of sincere childlike faith. How this must have cheered His heart on His way to Jerusalem to be rejected!

--What was it like for the crowd to grow silent? For someone to grab his hand and say, *Jesus has called for you?* To be led forward and then released in the presence of the Son of David?

--Jesus wants Bartimaeus close. He wants to make a clear connection between the two of them. He wants Bartimaeus to ask *Him* face-to-face, not at a distance. ***What do you want Me to do for you?*** A blank check from the Son of David!

--**Lord.** . . a true expression of true faith. *Jesus wants us to know that all our miracles and answers are from Him. We haven't "lucked-out" or "stolen" some good.*

--**(42-43)** Imagine, the first thing he sees is the face of Jesus Christ! We, too, who have not seen Him here, will have a similar experience one day.

--Bartimaeus is made whole because his faith was in more than a power, but in the Person of Jesus Christ. To him, Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of David, the Lord.

--Wonderfully, we are told of Bartimaeus that he ***followed Him.*** So many were healed by Jesus Christ, and so few follow Him. Most went their way, happy with healing, and willing to live at a distance from the Healer.

--People begin to praise God. No doubt, this miracle added to the growing fervor of the crowd as Jesus approached Jerusalem. This would have them all talking!

Chapter 19

Verses 1-7: Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. But when they saw it, they all complained saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner."

--(1-2) Jesus arrives at the newer Jericho, and Luke wants us to **behold** someone—a man named Zacchaeus. He was a Jew whose name means *Pure*.

--He was also a **chief tax collector**. The only one mentioned in the Bible. Being chief would put him over an entire tax district. He was the tax collector of tax collectors! Which means he would also be “chiefly” despised and rejected by his own people.

--We also learn that he is **rich**, which typically could only happen through injustice.

Luke 3:12-13: Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Collect no more than what is appointed for you.”

--Yet in all this, the most important thing we know about Zacchaeus is that he is one of the last individuals collected by Christ on His way to Jerusalem and the cross.

--He is in conflict—with his own conscience because of the sin he scars it with day by day. No doubt, he is lonely in his conviction, because convicted of sin, where can a chief tax collector turn? His own people and the religious elites have no fellowship or encouragement to offer him. He cannot betray his tax-collecting community. Zacchaeus was a true outcast from society and religion. It is hard for us to imagine what a hopeless and gloomy life it was for the conscience-stricken and God-seeking publican!

--Zacchaeus needs more than forgiveness. He needs a Forgiver, a living Person to draw him into the fellowship of God and His followers. He truly needs a Savior.

--Jesus makes it a point to connect with individual people and meets them on their individual level and in their individual circumstances. He could have just preached to large crowds and had something spiritual happen in their hearts apart from personal interaction with Him, but that is not what He did. *These scenes are the mystery of godliness and the gospel and the very purpose of the world in miniature!*

--(3-4) Here, we learn a few more things about Zacchaeus. First, he is short. Second, he overcomes his problems with a childlike sincerity seen in his willingness to climb a tree.

Joseph Parker: “Are you willing, if need be, to go out of the so-called regular way to see the Savior, or are you sacrificing your destiny to the tyrannous claims of conventionality?”

--What is the value of our “sincerity” or “desire” or “love” for God if it does not help us overcome difficulties to approach Him?

--We are often too stiff and formal and self-conscious to seek Jesus. We would never climb a tree! Our faith isn’t childlike enough.

Alexander Whyte: “We have too much starch in our souls. . . Your soul may be saved from sin, but scarcely from starch.”

--(5-6) It really doesn’t take much for the Lord to see and respond! Don’t you see—the seeker was more *sought* by the Finder than he was *seeking* himself.

--It is wonderful to see Jesus come to **the place**, look right at Zacchaeus, and call him by name! This is a personal call, leaving no doubt that Jesus knows what He is doing and who He is calling.

--Not only that, but Jesus commands Zacchaeus to fellowship with Him! He is both a King and a Pilgrim. *What could a king do more to bless us than to let down his “kingly” heir and come to kick off his shoes in our house?!

--And Jesus tells him to **make haste**. When the Lord calls us, any delay would show unbelief, distrust, and apathy. Why would we ever linger when Divine love and goodness are calling us?
Lot’s wife

--**I must stay (abide) at your house.** . . In all of Jericho, there is nothing more important for Him to do than to fellowship with Zacchaeus in his own home.

--Jesus is always coming to **the place** where we are; **He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. But He needed to go through Samaria** for a woman; **From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden** for the salvation of a daughter of God and a daughter demon-possessed.

--He came to your place and mine. Miracles of all miracles, the Son of Man and the Son of God, Emmanuel, God with us! He is still here, seeking not the righteous but lost sinners!

--You can feel the eager thrill in Zacchaeus as Luke writes: **So he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully.**

--Isn’t it glorious to know that some people will receive Jesus joyfully?!

John 1:11-13: He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

--(7) Zacchaeus’ call certainly wasn’t of the will of man. This was a bad cultural look, and the crowd was not happy. They had probably been rejoicing as they followed Christ with Not-blind Bartimaeus, but they began to grumble when Jesus invited Himself over the chief tax collector's house!

--We take great joy in this scene, but **they all complained!**

--It is wonderful to see Jesus’ willingness to be made of no reputation by His social connections—almost no one Jesus dealt with raised His social standing.

--No one who wanted to stand well in public opinion ever entered into Zacchaeus’ house! Yet Jesus did, and still does! *He wouldn’t want to sup with me Vs. **and received Him joyfully!***

--Yet, in all this wonderful beauty of Savior meeting sinner, we have this: **But when they saw it, they all complained saying, “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.”**

Adolph Saphir: “Jesus is never so much hated as when He reveals Himself as a Savior.”

--If He heals bodies, they will praise Him. If He makes food, they will love Him. If He teaches, they will hear Him. If He casts out demons, they will fear Him. But when He seeks sinners and forgives sin, they complain, grumble, slander, and murder.

Verses 8-10: Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold.”

And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

--(8) There is an interval of unknown time and interaction between verses 7+8. But at the end of this interaction, Zacchaeus is a new man! He is now saved, found, and selfless.

--The law required a restoration of 1/5th (**Lev. 6:1-5; Num. 5:6-7**) or sometimes double (**Ex. 22:4-9**), but Zacchaeus promises more! Half his goods and four times whatever he may have gotten by lying about someone.

--This is not self-defense or an apology before the crowd that was murmuring against him. His heart was converted, so his pockets were as well! Restoration is a part of genuine repentance.

Some people remain burdened with guilt until some form of restoration accompanies their repentance—especially in financial matters.

--(9-10) To confirm Zacchaeus’ salvation (to him, them, and us) Jesus makes it clear that he was a true son of Abraham by faith. (**See also: Jn. 8:39; Rom. 2:28-29, 9:7; Gal. 3:9+29; Gen. 15:6; Isa. 41:8**)

Galatians 3:7: Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

--This man Zacchaeus—apart from how all the world saw him—was most directly a lost son of Abraham. He had a rich and stable life but he was lost—lost to God and God’s purposes for his life. That is what it truly means to be lost—lost to God.

Tozer (Man: The Dwelling Place of God): “The man who does not know where he is, is lost; the man who does not know why he was born is worse lost; the man who cannot find an object worthy of his true devotion is lost utterly; and by this description the human race is lost and it is a part of our lostness that we do not know how lost we are.”

--I think this is why this “children’s story” is so memorable. Its simplicity is as beautiful as its depth, and it brings us one of Christ’s most remarkable sayings: **for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.**

--Also, it shows us a camel making its way through the eye of a needle by the power of God!

Luke 18:24-27

--One final thought in closing: I cannot help but think of Matthew sitting in this crowd. You know how people of common skill and experience like to trade life stories and tricks of the trade. I can see Matthew sitting at Zacchaeus’ table—tears in his eyes—remembering his own call from the receipt of custom some three years earlier.

--With what joy did Matthew write down words such as:

***Matthew 21:31-32: Jesus said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots shall enter the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him.”**

--He is no doubt overjoyed for Zacchaeus! He would look him in the face and say, "Give it away, Zacchaeus. You will not regret it!"

Verses 11-19: Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'

"And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.'

--(11) At this point, Jesus is about 17 miles from Jerusalem. The crowds traveling there for Passover (which was a celebration of divine deliverance) are humming with anticipation. They are expecting **the kingdom of God to appear immediately.**

--Jesus gives them this parable to correct their false notions.

--(12) Right from the start, Jesus makes it clear He was leaving for a far country to return again someday (**Mt. 25:5+19; 24:14; 2 Thess. 2:2-3; 2 Peter 3:4-9**).

--Culturally, this was a picture they were familiar with. Multiple rulers of that time traveled to Rome to establish their claim to be king, including Herod the Great, Archelaus (who had built a palace in Jericho), and Antipas.

--(13) Each servant is given the same amount. (This is clearly different from the parable of the Talents, where the servants are given different amounts.)

--A Greek Mina was worth 100 drachmas, which was the typical day's wage. So it comes to something like three months' wages.

--I believe it is a picture of what is common to all of us as His servants—not what is specifically ours as individuals—the stewardship of life!

--**Do business till I come.** . . . If He comes in our lifetime, He should find us busily about our Father's business! *Each servant now has a choice.*

--(14) There is a difference between the **servants** and **citizens**. The citizens hate him and even send a delegation to reject the nobleman. *This actually happened with Archelaus and Caesar.*

--First, notice that citizens who hate the nobleman are still his citizens! So all humanity is God's, whether they like it or not. *It is a tragic miracle that God is such a stranger in His own world!*

--Second, notice that the servants must serve their master in a hostile country. We serve an unpopular King!

--(15-19) The nobleman returns as king. First, he **called** ten servants, but now he **commanded**.
All attempts at stopping the Kingdom of God will fail! Jesus will return as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and every knee will now and every tongue confess.

--He wants to measure their faithfulness and share His kingdom with them.

--Notice the language of the faithful servants: **Master, your mina**. . . There is a recognition of given stewardship. Our life is His life. What are we doing with it?

--**Well done, good servant**. . . Something was done. Someone was served.

--**because you were faithful in a very little**. . . The service was in relation to small things. Our service doesn't have to seem "huge". Now we are sowing seeds, then we will reap an eternal harvest!

--**have authority over ten cities**. There is a proportional reward of greater responsibility. The servant has proven worthy of the kingdom of the King.

--We, too, are promised a share in the ruling and reigning of the King of Kings when He reigns over this world system with an iron rod (1 Cor. 6:2-3; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:26-27).

Verses 20-27: "Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?'

"And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.' (But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.') For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me."

--(20-23) The wrong here is obvious. The servant took the master's mina and did absolutely nothing with it. He lived his own life, totally ignoring his king and kingdom.

--He gives a weak excuse about his total lack of fidelity by claiming to fear the sternness of the master. The master summarily dismisses his excuse.

--The question here for us is whether this man is supposed to represent someone saved or unsaved. There are good arguments for both.

--Saved: He received a mina; he was with the servants, not the citizens; his judgment seems separate from those of 27.

--Unsaved: **Then came another**. . . the Greek for **another** being *heteros*, which typically means *another of a different kind*; doesn't know the king; he is called **wicked**.

--Which is it? I don't know, but that is very true to human life, isn't it? Either way, you don't want to be him!

--**(24-26)** His portion of the kingdom, the seed given to him to test his faithfulness to the king, is taken and given to those who were faithful.

--This is so shocking, those in the story (Or maybe it was those in the crowd listening to Jesus' parable) protest!

--Jesus lays down the rule that those who forfeit their reward through unfaithfulness will have it taken and given to those who were already rewarded because they were faithful.

--I believe Jesus is explaining the process of His literal distribution of eternal rewards in His eternal kingdom. What I forfeit by my unfaithfulness will be given to another as a reward for their faithfulness.

--**(27)** The judgment of servants comes first (**1 Peter 4:17**), but the judgment of all Christ haters and enemies will be swift and final (**17:26-37+ Rev. 19:11-21**).