

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan**LUKE 19****Luke 19**

Chapter nineteen of Luke continues the theme of money and stewardship. Jesus taught about how money and responsibilities are looked upon by the Father.

Jesus was passing through what is known as the oldest city in the world, the city of Jericho. Jericho is not only the oldest city in the world that is still in existence today, but is also the lowest in elevation, approximately 850 ft below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. The Lord often made His way through or around Jericho, as it was the favorite route from the Galilee to Jerusalem. Jerusalem's Temple Mount is 2,400 ft above sea level, and the Mount of Olives, the highest peak directly across from the Temple Mount, is 2,700 ft above sea level. Jericho and the Dead Sea can be seen from the top of the Mount of Olives.

The story of Zacchaeus (Hebrew, *Zakay*-from *Zakak*, be clean, or pure), the chief tax collector, is an amazing story of repentance, acceptance, and of God's forgiveness and transformative power. Zacchaeus, being a chief tax collector, would have gone through a process with the Roman government of "bidding" for the right to collect taxes. The bidding process would be given to the highest bidder among the tax collectors. The person who received the authority to collect taxes in an area would have to assume full responsibility for

collecting all the taxes that would be expected to be brought in from a region, city, or town. They would be expected and required to pay the amount expected in advance. The chief tax collector, who had paid for the authority to collect, would often then recruit collectors, and at times, they would charge up to four times the amount they had paid the Roman government; hence Zacchaeus was willing to do the right thing as prescribed and pay fourfold back to those who had wrongly overcharged. Jesus recognized and accepted His repentant attitude and action that He pronounced the following to the most notorious man in Jericho.

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." (Luke 19:9-10)

The chapter ends with Jesus leaving Jericho and making His way up, making Aliyah, to Jerusalem. Jesus would be staying on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, in the village of the poor, Bethany. He would have stayed at the home of Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus. Luke records the triumphal entry and the cleansing of the temple, which we will detail in the coming book of John.

Prayer and Action Steps

Lord, thank You that You can change the most wicked among us, whether it be the wicked who are rich like Zacchaeus. Thank You for changing my life. Amen