

Joyous Faith

Key Verse: *“The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”*

—Luke 19:10

Selected Scripture:
Luke 19:1-10

Zacchaeus, . . . chief among the publicans [tax collectors], and he was rich.”—Luke 19:2

Zacchaeus was a Jew, and a tax collector for the Roman government. In those days, tax collectors were also assessors, deciding how much each person would be charged and have to pay. Most tax collectors took advantage of their position and power, and either overcharged or received bribes, thus increasing their personal wealth. As a result, they were despised and viewed as a disreputable group of people. Zacchaeus was “chief among the publicans,” which probably meant he employed several collectors under him to assist in this work.

Zacchaeus “sought to see Jesus,” and to know who he was, but was unable to do so because of the large crowd present, and “because he was little of stature.” He ran ahead and “climbed up into a sycamore tree” to see Jesus as he passed by. “When Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.” This was an honor Zacchaeus had not at all anticipated. “He made haste, and came down,” receiving

Jesus joyfully. (vss. 3-6) Zacchaeus was no doubt surprised when Jesus called him by name. Perhaps Jesus had heard the crowd jeering and laughing at this short, rich publican, in his unusual perch up in a tree.

When the crowd saw what had happened, “they all murmured,” accusing Jesus of going to be a guest “with a man that is a sinner.” Zacchaeus then said to Jesus, “Half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.” (vss. 7,8) Jesus knew Zacchaeus was much nearer to the right attitude of heart than those self-righteous ones who denounced him.

Jesus then said, “This day is salvation come to this house; forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.” Zacchaeus’ heart had begun to turn away from sin and selfishness, and was now directed toward God and righteousness. Similarly, salvation has come during this Gospel Age to all those of the spiritual seed of Abraham—those who have repented of their sins and come into harmony with the Lord, and seek to walk according to his ways. “As these great promises are ours, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that contaminates either flesh or spirit; let us be fully consecrated by reverence for God.”—II Cor. 7:1, *James Moffatt Translation*

Our Key Verse points out an important truth. As a result of Adam’s disobedience, human perfection and eternal life was “lost” for Adam and all his progeny. Jesus came “to seek and to save” what was lost by giving his life “a ransom for all.” In “due time,” every member of Adam’s race, after being raised from the dead, will be brought to a “knowledge of the truth” and given a full opportunity of returning to God. (I Tim. 2:3-6) The phrase “Son of man” in our Key Verse is a title which directs our attention to the great exhibition of humility on the part of God’s only begotten Son, who came to earth to be man’s Redeemer. What joyous faith should be ours! ■