

Welcome To Sunday Night Bible Fellowship



“We proclaim Him, warning every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man mature in Christ.” Col 1:28

“Zaccheus: Chosen, Pursued, Saved, and Transformed”

Luke 19:1-10

Nov. 12, 2023

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- 2 And there was a man called by the name of Zaccheus; he was a chief tax collector and he was rich.
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- **Jericho:**

- Lowest inhabited point on earth.
- On major trade routes.
- A center of trade, commerce, business, industry, and agriculture.
- Summer = warm. Winter = moderate to warm.
- 18 miles from Jerusalem.
- Beautiful gardens. Roses everywhere.
- Herod built theater, amphitheater.
- Palaces were built here.
- Known for balsam (an aromatic and usually oily and resinous substance), and dates.
- Marc Antony once gave the city of Jericho to Cleopatra as a gift.
- **Bottom line:** Lots and lots of money flowed through Jericho.
- There were three great tax centers in the first century in Israel.
 1. Capernaum on the northern port of Galilee.
 2. Caesarea on the seacoast.
 3. Jericho.
- Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem to observe the Passover as were thousands of others.
- So, many would be passing through Jericho on their way to Jerusalem.



approximate distance

23 miles - 37 kilometers

Jerusalem

Lowest Point
+ 2,133 feet
+ 650 meters

Total
Difference
2,986 feet
498 meters

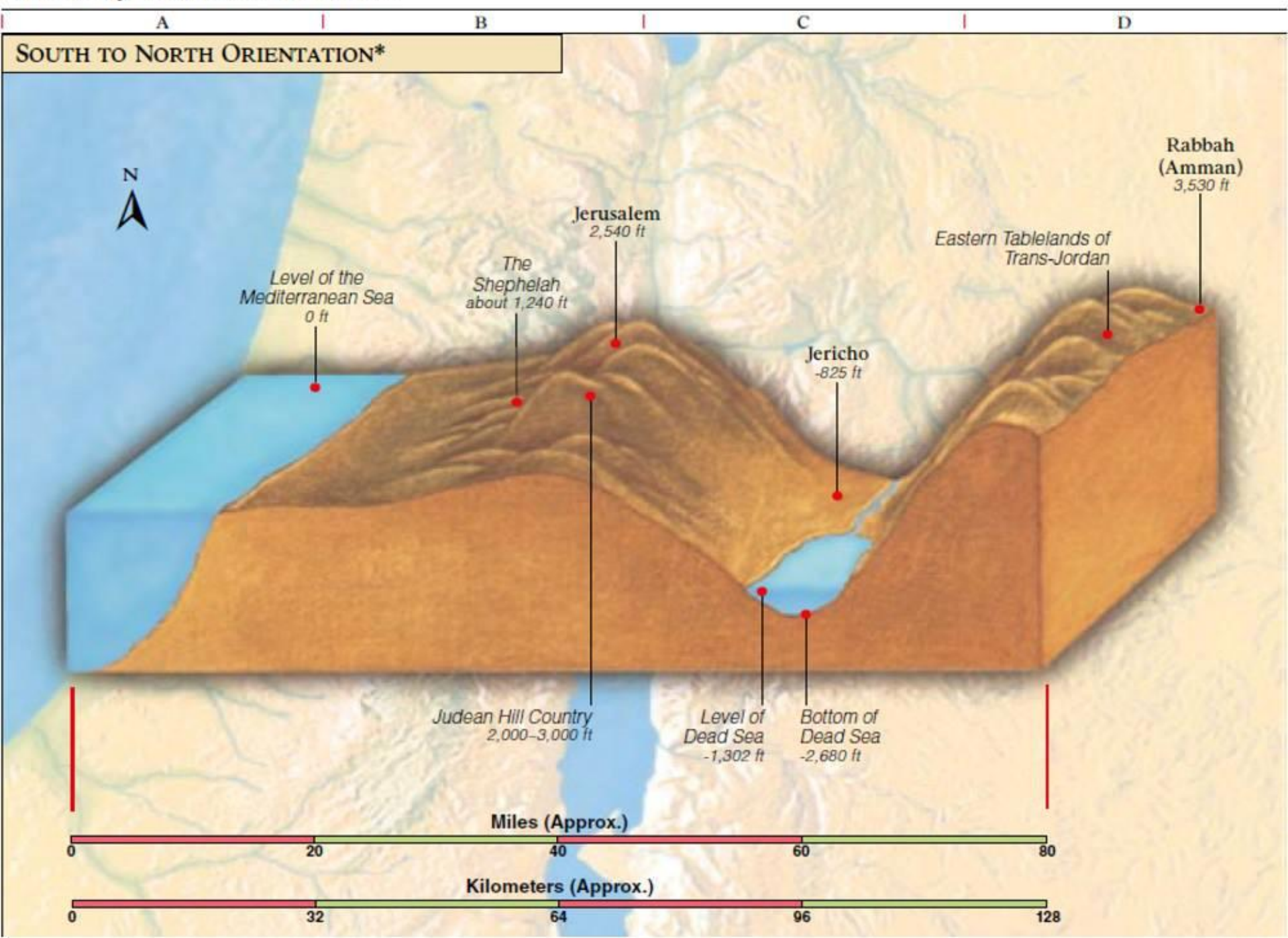
Mean Sea Level

- 853 feet
- 260 meters

Jericho



14. Holy Land Elevations





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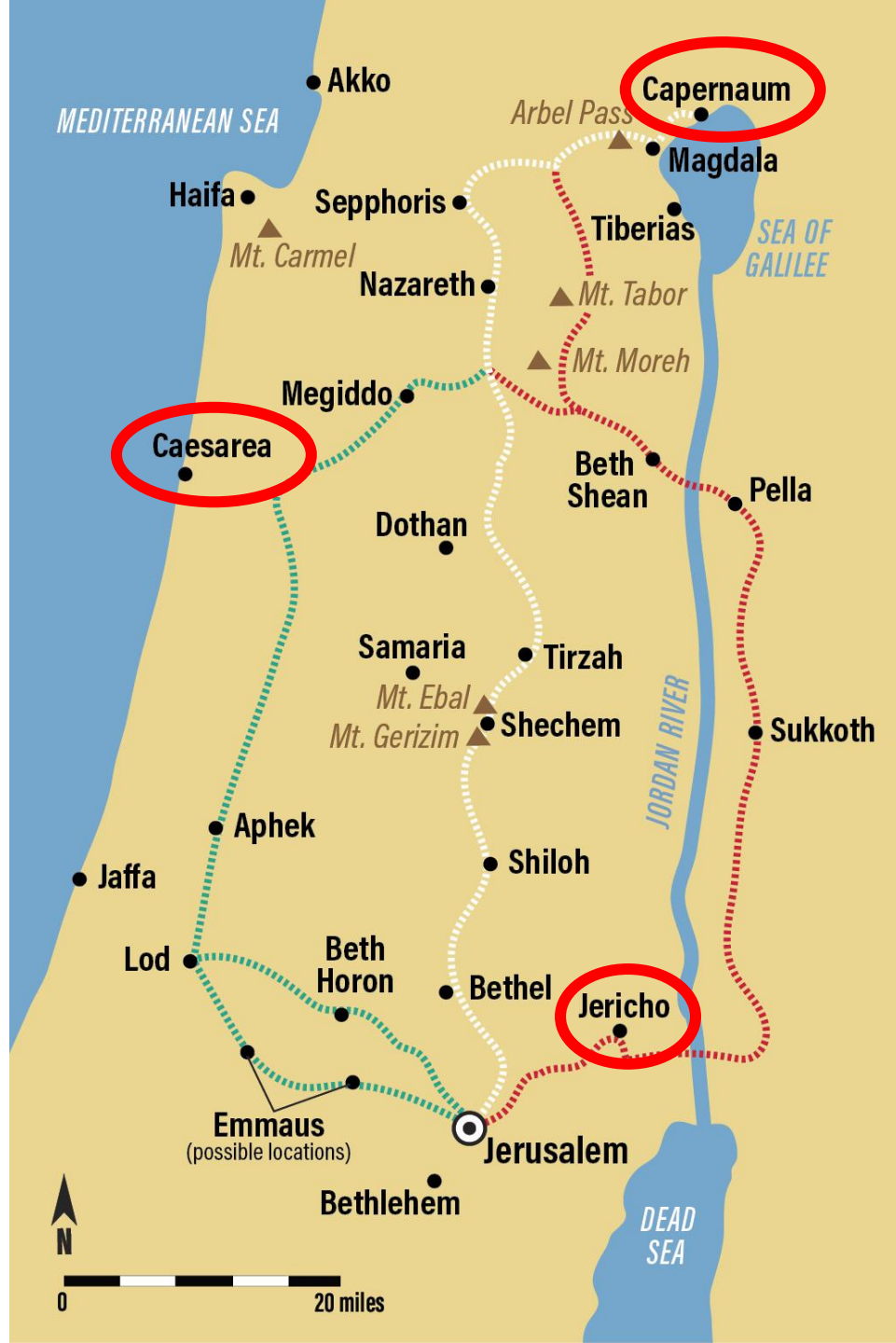
- **Zaccheus: (2 characteristics)**

1. **Chief tax collector.**

- ✓ A level above the average tax-collector like Matthew.
- ✓ May have been like a regional or district manager or commissioner. Over-saw the franchisees.
- ✓ Was in a position to make lots of money.
- ✓ He was a professional extortioner.
- ✓ Put pressure on people. Intimidated them.
- ✓ He was the most hated man in the city.

2. **He was rich.**

- This tells us his position (CTC) resulted in great wealth.
- This story is further proof of what Jesus taught in Luke 18 with the rich young ruler – wealthy people can be saved.



Zaccheus was a wee little man
and a wee little man was he.
He climbed up into a sycamore tree
for the Lord he would to see.
And as the Savior passed that way,
he looked up in the tree and he said,
'Zaccheus, you come down,
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- So as Jesus is coming through Jericho. The Holy Spirit begins to work in the heart of Zaccheus.

Acts 16:14

14 A woman named **Lydia**, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, **a worshiper of God, was listening**; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.

Acts 9:3-5,15,20

3 As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him;

4 and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, **Saul**, why are you persecuting Me?"

5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,

15 But the Lord said to him (Ananias), "Go, for **he is a chosen instrument of Mine**, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel;

20 and immediately **he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues**, saying, "He is the Son of God."

John 3:1-2

1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named **Nicodemus**, a ruler of the Jews;

2 this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

Rom 3:10

10 THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

Eph 2:1-5

- 1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,
2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.
3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.
4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,
5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ
- There are no degrees of being “dead”. You either are dead or you are not. Being sick is not a degree of being dead.

John 15:16

16 "You did not choose Me but I chose you,

2 Thess 2:13

13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation.

John 1:13

13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

1 Cor 2:14

- 14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.
- a dead man, a blind man, a deaf man, a dumb man, a mindless man cannot seek God.

3 Zaccheus was trying to see who Jesus was, and was unable because of the crowd, for he was small in stature.

4 So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass through that way.

- **Note:** Zach goes from interest to see Jesus, to trying to see Jesus, to climbing a tree to see Jesus. He is in pursuit of Jesus because Jesus was in pursuit of him.
- Nothing is going to stop him.
- **Think about it:** Here is a wealthy businessman climbing a tree. He had no thought of inconvenience or embarrassment or public humiliation.
- When the Holy Spirit is at work in your heart, nothing else matters. You will go to whatever lengths you have to find Him.



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It may start small:

Maybe it was a friend, a roommate in college, a co-worker, a neighbor that made a remark that got you thinking.

Maybe a brother or sister or parent or other relative became a believer and you talked to them about it.

Maybe you were invited to a church, or an evangelistic crusade.

Maybe you were cruising the radio dial and came upon a speaker talking about salvation in Christ.

Maybe you attended a church camp.

Maybe you overheard a conversation 2 people were having about Jesus.

Maybe someone gave you a book or a tract.

Maybe it was a serious illness you had or a funeral that got you thinking.

Maybe you went broke, or lost your business.

Maybe you lost your husband or wife or a child and it got you thinking about spiritual things.

Maybe you were just sitting there on a park bench, or on a beach, or in a campus student union or dormitory, and someone approached you and shared the gospel.

Maybe your man-made religion grew empty and you began a search to find the truth.

Maybe you heard a song about Jesus.

Etc., Etc., Etc. There are a million ways that God directs a person's circumstances by His providence, that brings one to Christ.

What is your story?

It all seemed so random, but in back of it all was the hand of God!

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5 When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house."

- This is what we call the effectual or specific call of God.
- There are 2 calls that go out to people:

1. General call. Goes out to everyone.

Matt 22:14

14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."

2. Specific call. Goes out to God's chosen or elect.

Rom 8:30

30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

- Here in verse 5, is the specific call of God to Zach.
- Jesus doesn't specifically call everyone that day, but He does call Zach.

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6 And he hurried and came down and received Him gladly.

- Wow! When the Holy Spirit has prepared a heart, it can't wait to respond.
- He did it fast and he did it gladly. No twisting an arm. It was irresistible.

John 1:12

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

- He did not care who saw him, in fact for someone so despised by society, for anyone to come to your house, was an honor.
- This was an invitation for him to leave his life of sin and corruption and receive salvation through Christ.

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7 When they saw it, they all began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."

- The crowd was upset.
- Same old Pharisaical problem: You can't be with evil, sinful people.

"to be the guest of" – καταλυο – to hang out with.

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- Between vss. 7 and 8, they go to Zach's home, Jesus shares the gospel, Zach puts his trust in Christ as Savior and somewhere at the end of the conversation Zach stops to make a declaration. He is taking a stand.
- His life and heart and thinking has suddenly changed.
- He has been convicted by the Holy Spirit.
- Here, in verse 8, is his repentant heart.
- Zach addresses Jesus as Lord.

Rom 10:9

9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

- So Zach's changed life results in taking action:
 1. ½ of possessions to the poor.
 2. 4 times given back, for what was extorted.

8 Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much."

"if" – 1st class condition – if, and it is true.

Num 5:7

7 then he shall confess his sins which he has committed, and he shall make restitution in full for his wrong and add to it one-fifth of it, and give it to him whom he has wronged.

- So this is way over and above what the Law required.
- This is what regeneration does.

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- Jesus pronounces instant justification. Total contrast to the Pharisees who are “putting in the hours”, the blood, sweat and tears to be justified.
- Jesus is not talking here about some kind of racial salvation.
- Zach is a “son of Abraham” because he believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness.

Rom 2:28-29

28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.

29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit,

- There is no salvation based on ethnic inheritance or works-righteousness.
- It is based on faith in Christ alone, by grace alone, and evidenced by a changed life.

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- This is what the whole story of Zaccheus is about.
- Jesus **seeks** those who are lost and He **saves** those who are lost.
- All who are pursued by Him will find Him.
- All who are pursued by Him will be saved.
- All who are pursued by Him will be changed.

“If the devil loads your mind w/accusations like, “you are a great sinner”, just agree with him & say, “Jesus came to save sinners, & thus he came to save me.” If he says you are lost altogether say, “Jesus came to seek & save that which was lost.”

- Ray Pritchard

Application

1. The pursuit of God after a sinner, is a wonder to behold.
2. All stories are different and none are insignificant. The “raised in a Christian home resulting in salvation” testimony is just as miraculous as the down-and-outer drug addict’s, or the up-and-outer famous and wealthy’s testimony of coming to Christ.
3. God is to be praised and glorified for His entire work of salvation in a person’s life, from very small promptings by the Holy Spirit to His dynamic power of transforming a life.

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