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# “Thy Faith Hath Saved Me”

Lesson  
**19**  
Summary

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*Luke 18:1-8; 35-43; Jesus gives the parables of the unjust judge, and of the Pharisee and publican—He invites little children to come unto Him and teaches how to gain eternal life—He tells of his coming death and resurrection, and gives sight to a blind man.*

*Luke 19:1-10; Jesus came to save souls.*

*John 11: Jesus testifies He is the resurrection and the life—Mary and Martha testify of Him—He raises Lazarus from the dead—Caiaphas speaks prophetically of the death of Christ.*

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## Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:

**Jericho – Three Biblical Events about Wealth:** In Joshua’s time, Achan stole wealth when “the walls came tumbling down.” Jesus experienced a temptation of wealth and then in a tax collector’s conversion, wealth is returned. Just north of the Dead Sea, nestled at the bottom of the Judean Hills is Jericho, a quiet town of fruit and vegetable growers. It is a trade-route city that has encountered at least twenty-eight different conquests. One of those conquests was by Joshua, who commanded that all living persons and animals were to be killed except for Rahab (the harlot who had saved the Israelite spies). All gold, silver, other metal, and worthwhile items were to be brought to the Lord’s treasury. Achan succumbed to the temptation of wealth. Because he took a Babylonish garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold and hid them in his tent, the Israelites experienced a terrible defeat at their next battle. After Joshua had interviewed them man by man, he found Achan, who confessed the theft. He and his entire family were stoned to death and then with all of their possessions they were burned with fire. (Joshua 7:20-25)

**Jesus Endures Temptation:** The Mount of Temptation just above Jericho marks the traditional spot where Jesus’ temptation with wealth may have occurred. The Creator simply said, “Get thee behind me . . .” (Luke 4:8) A monastery has been built into the side of the mount. Tradition indicates that for many years, the monastery was “wordless.” Possibly this was done in symbolic gesture of the silent walks the Israelites made around the site.

**Tax Collector in a Tree:** When Jesus was teaching at Jericho, the tax collector, Zacchaeus, climbed a tree to better see Him. Jesus invited Himself to Zacchaeus’s house to dine with him. People murmured that Jesus was socializing with the expropriator of their taxes. Tax collectors had to reach a quota set by the Romans. Therefore, it is likely that taxes were over collected when the economy was good so that the quota could be met when the economy was bad. People may have murmured that Zacchaeus might have abused that system for his own benefit. However, a better look into his personality shows a different story, or at least indicates a complete change. Zacchaeus became so impressed with Jesus’ teachings that he offered half of his wealth to the poor and fourfold repayment to the people he had wronged. The important lesson underlying these accounts is that there is no ownership; it is all stewardship. Everything belongs to the Lord. Whatever wealth man assembles is a test of his stewardship. The test of stewardship is manifested by faith.

**Taxation, Highest in Israel:** “The urge to evade payment of taxes has always been strong . . . tax evasion was seen as a form of robbery subject to severe punishment, for it was “robbery of the public” -- it increased the burden on the remaining members of the community by obliging them to pay more than their due share for the satisfaction of the community's needs.” “In the modern State of Israel, there is a taxation system similar . . . in most countries of the western world. However, because of the defense burden, Israelis pay the highest tax rate in the world.” (*Encyclopædia Judaica Jr.*) Taxation in Israel covers many social responsibilities benefiting society. A standard burial is one of those services. Some interesting facts correspond with Lazarus’ burial two thousand years ago. The procedure in Jesus’ day was to bury within a day of death and leave the burial room open for three days as the family and friends begin a seven-day mourning period (except on the Sabbath day).

**Burial at Bethany - Home of Lazarus:** About five miles north of Bethlehem and less than two miles east of Jerusalem is an ancient village called Bethany. The word *Beth-ani* means house of the poor. More commonly, Bethany is called Al-Azaria. This is derived from the two-thousand-year-old name of an inhabitant of Bethany who was called Eliezer. In modern English his name became known as Lazarus. Traditional churches mark the events involving Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. These friends of Jesus anxiously awaited His swift return to their home. They had sent a message to Him

across the Jordan River that Lazarus was ill. (The message may have taken an overnight journey to reach Him, and Jesus would have needed at least another overnight journey to return if He left immediately.) However, “. . . he abode two days still in the same place where he was . . . then when Jesus came, he found that he [Lazarus] had lain in the grave four days already.” (*John 11:6-17*)

**The Tomb of Lazarus:** The entrance and steps to Lazarus’s tomb were made by Christians just hundreds of years ago. However, they do lead down through the crest of a hill to the remains of a first-century Jewish tomb. Typically, such tombs had two chambers. One was for the mourners who returned for seven days, praying and weeping. (This mourning is called *Shiva* in Hebrew.) The other is the burial room, wherein the body was placed within a day of passing away. After three days it was customary to close the burial room but to continue mourning for the rest of the seven-day period. Jesus asked, “Where have ye laid him? . . . take ye away the stone. . . . Lazarus, come forth.” (*John 11:34-43*)

**Lazarus’s Family Was Amazed!** They knew that the body had been washed, completely immersed, and anointed with fragrant spiced oils. They probably assisted in dressing the body, fastening his hands and feet, and reverently wrapping the *talith* over his head and around his body. As they laid him in the burial chamber, they knew that he was dead, and now, before their very eyes, he was alive again. His “shuffling” out of the burial chamber must have astonished the mourners so much that Jesus had to reassure them: “Loose him and let him go.” (*John 11:44*)

**A Call for Lazarus’ Death:** Lazarus was one of several people Jesus had raised from the dead. They would all eventually die again. Jesus himself would become the first to resurrect from the dead, never to die again. The raising of Lazarus aroused great interest among the people. The miracle was reported to the high priests who immediately felt threatened. In their minds, Jesus’ popularity imperiled their social and political standing. A council convened, and Caiaphas, the High Priest that year, suggested that Jesus should die. Caiaphas further justified his wicked proposal by exclaiming that Jesus’ popularity was spreading to other Jews in other lands. Again, that would imperil his influence throughout the Jewish world. Caiaphas’ anger justified his call for Lazarus’ death as well.

**Jewish Burial Concepts:** “Decent burial was regarded to be of great importance in ancient Israel, as in the rest of the ancient Near East. Abraham’s purchase of the cave at Machpelah as a family tomb (Genesis 23) and the subsequent measures taken by later patriarchs to ensure that they would be buried there occupy a prominent place in the patriarchal narratives. Biblical biographies ordinarily end with the statement that a man died, and an account of his burial reflects the value assigned to proper interment. To bury an unidentified corpse was considered to be so great a good deed that even the high priest was required to do it although it involved him in becoming ritually unclean.”

**Immediate Burial:** “There is no explicit biblical evidence as to how soon after death burial took place, but it is likely that it was within a day after death. This was dictated by the climate and by the fact that the Israelites did not embalm the dead (Jacob and Joseph were embalmed following Egyptian custom).” “In Talmudic times, burial took place in caves, hewn tombs, sarcophagi, and catacombs; and a secondary burial, i.e., a re-interment of the remains sometimes took place about one year after the original burial. Jewish custom insists on prompt burial as a matter of respect for the dead. The precedents set by the prompt burials of Sarah (Genesis 23) and of Rachel (Genesis 35:19) are reinforced by the Torah’s express command that even the body of a man who had been hanged shall not remain upon the tree all night, but “you must bury him the same day” (Deuteronomy 21:23) Certain delays are unavoidable. Funerals may not take place on the Sabbath or on the Day of Atonement.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Daniel Rona, born in Israel and living in Jerusalem has authored Old & New Testament, Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Supplement Study Materials to be used in conjunction with the weekly LDS Gospel Doctrine Lesson study. NOTE: Three versions of the supplemental study materials are available *at no charge* at [www.HolyLandsRevealed.com](http://www.HolyLandsRevealed.com). (Just click “LDS SUPPLEMENTS”)

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