

3

His Mission

“Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through.”¹ Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem, and he is getting close. The closer he gets, the more he talks about his mission, or purpose. We will read a “mission statement” in this lesson. A mission statement gives the purpose of a company or a project. You could write a mission statement about your own purpose and priorities. What your purpose is in life? What *do you think* is the purpose of all humans?

Part One: Private Words

Luke 18: 31-34

As soon as the disciples understood that Jesus was the Christ,² Jesus began to tell them that he was going to Jerusalem to die. That was his mission; it was necessary for him to die in Jerusalem. His disciples did not understand it, but they continued to follow him.

LOOK OVER the Text

1. In this text, Jesus tells exactly what will happen to him in Jerusalem. This is called a prophecy because it tells about future events. When a prophecy comes true, it is considered “fulfilled.” Notice all the details as you read.
2. Before you read, underline all the verbs in Luke 18:32, 33.
Which verb is in the passive tense? _____
3. Read Luke 18:31-34.

¹ Luke 19:1

² “Christ” is the Greek term and “Messiah” is the Hebrew. The Messiah was the Promised One from God who was coming to save His people. See Luke 9:18-23.

18: 31 Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled.

18: 32 He will be handed over to the Gentiles.³ They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him.⁴ 18:33 On the third day he will rise again.”

18:34 The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about.

NIV

LABEL the Text

4. What does Jesus call himself? Circle the words. This was another name for the Messiah.⁵
5. Find out who is going to do all these terrible things to Jesus. Underline the words in the text.
6. The verb “will be handed over” is in the passive tense. This means that someone is going to hand Jesus over. Who *do you think* will do this? (The text does not tell you.)

LEARN from the Text

7. Why *do you think* Jesus is telling his disciples what is going to happen?

³ Gentiles are people who are not Jews. Here Jesus is talking about the Romans.

⁴ In other words, they will make fun of him, speak against him, spray water on him, hit with a whip, and kill him.

⁵ See note in the LINK section.

8. Why *do you think* the disciples cannot understand Jesus' words? (Use the text and your own ideas to answer this.)

LINK to the Old Testament

Jesus tells his disciples that everything written by the prophets will be fulfilled. The prophets spoke of the Messiah, or "Coming One." He was going to set up the kingdom of God on earth. "He will reign on David's throne⁶ and over his kingdom...from that time on and forever." Isaiah 9:7 NIV

The Jewish people also thought that Daniel 7:13-14 referred to the Messiah. Daniel saw in a vision, "one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days⁷ and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power."⁸ Jesus called himself "the Son of Man" more often than any other name.

However, if this is a correct picture of the Messiah, how can Jesus say that he is going to die? There are texts in the Old Testament that say this about the Messiah, but the Jews did not understand. As you read the rest of Luke, it will become clearer how the different pictures fit together.

Isaiah 53: 6-9 (Written 700 years before Christ.)

"All of us were like sheep that were lost, each of us going his own way. But the Lord made the punishment fall on him, the punishment all of us deserved. ...Like a lamb about to be slaughtered⁹...he never said a word. He was arrested and sentenced and led off to die... He was put to death for the sins of our people...even though he had never committed a crime or ever told a lie." GNB

⁶ A throne is the king's chair. It is a symbol of his rule, or reign.

⁷ "The Ancient of Days" is God. Ancient means from long ago, the distant past.

⁸ Sovereign power is power and authority above all other powers.

⁹ To slaughter is to kill.

Part Two: The Blind Man and Zacchaeus

Luke 18: 35- 19:10

LOOK OVER the Text

1. Together: There are two events in this text. Draw a line between the two accounts. Work with a partner.
Alone: Take one event each. Read the first 3 verses (only). Mark the text¹⁰ that tells the setting (who, what, where...). What do you learn?
Together: Describe the setting and the people to your partner. Read the story aloud to him or her. Listen to your partner.
2. Read Luke 18: 35- 19:10.

18:35 As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging.¹¹ 18:36 When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening.

18:37 They told him, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.”

18:38 He called out, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy¹² on me!”

18:39 Those who led the way rebuked¹³ him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

18:40 Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, 18:41 “What do you want me to do for you?”

18:41b “Lord, I want to see,” he replied.

18:42 Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.”

¹⁰ Mark the text any way you wish.

¹¹ He was asking for food or money.

¹² Mercy is kindness.

¹³ To rebuke is to tell someone they should not be doing something.

18:43 Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.

19:1 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 19:2 A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy.¹⁴ 19:3 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. 19:4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

19:5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” 19:6 So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

19:7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a ‘sinner.’”

19:8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

19:9 Jesus said to him, “Today salvation¹⁵ has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.¹⁶ 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

NIV

¹⁴ “Wealthy” means rich.

¹⁵ To save is to rescue someone. Jesus saves us from our sins and brings us to God. “Salvation” is the noun. Jesus brings salvation.

¹⁶ Abraham was the father of the Jews. Zacchaeus was Jewish, so he was a son of Abraham. However, the way Jesus said it here, Zacchaeus has just become a true son because he has turned back to God.

LABEL the Text

3. Fill in the chart to compare the two stories.

Blind Man	Zacchaeus
What did they call Jesus?	
What did they want <i>at first</i> ?	
What did they do to get what they wanted?	
What did Jesus do for them?	
How did they respond to Jesus?	

4. Which verse tells you **WHY** Jesus helped these men? Write it here.

LEARN from the Text

5. The verse above is Jesus' "mission statement." It tells his purpose or goal. How does he fulfill this goal? Find your answer in both parts of the lesson.

6. How were these two men “lost”? Describe how they were “found” after they met Jesus.

7. Jesus said that the blind man’s faith had healed him. Faith is trusting in someone or something we do not see.¹⁷ How do the blind man and Zacchaeus show their trust in Jesus?

LIVE What you Learn

Discuss one of these questions:

1. How can you build trust with people who do not know you or trust you?
2. What type of people do you consider lost? Whom *do you think* Jesus considers lost?

Consider this:

The blind man responded to Jesus by following him. Zacchaeus responded by welcoming him gladly and correcting something that he knew was wrong. If Jesus forgave you for all the wrong things you have done, how would you respond to him? If he told you to follow him into a dangerous situation, how would you respond? Our response is based on our trust in Jesus.

¹⁷ Hebrews 11:1 says, “And now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”



The Final Word

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;
the old has gone, the new has come!”

II Corinthians 5:17