

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

Crowning Works of the Ministry

Attainment through Regeneration

And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

And he sought to see Jesus, who he was; and could not for the press, because he was of little stature.

And he ran before, and climbed into a sycamore tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.

And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said to him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.

And he made haste, and came down; and received him joyfully.

And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods, I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.—*Luke 19:1-10.*

If we try to interpret this story literally, we find it to have very little meaning. We even wonder that an episode of such slight significance was included in Luke's narrative. But when we bring to light its spiritual meaning, we find quite another story and one of the most important of all the lessons given to us in the entire Gospel of Luke. From the esoteric standpoint this is not simply the story of a man who climbed a tree in order to see Christ Jesus pass by, and whose guest Christ chose to be for a time. Some no doubt may read into this story a reward of faith in and enthusiasm for the Great Master, and that because Zacchaeus possessed these attributes the Master chose him from out the great throng surrounding him and said that He would be his guest. But there is a much deeper meaning to be found here. Zacchaeus is taken from the Hebrew name *Zakkay*, meaning "the pure." The tree

with its rising sap, its leaves, its blossoms and fruitage at the top, has ever been a symbol in all esoteric schools of the ascending spinal spirit fire. Buddha received his enlightenment under the banyan tree; Gurnemanz taught the Grail Knights under a tree; Elijah received his illumination under the Juniper tree; and Christ Jesus suffered His great agony for all humanity under the olive tree. All of these stories symbolize the only way by which illumination and liberation, the chief goals of all aspirants, are attained.

By purity, sacrifice, and service the aspirant ascends like Zacchaeus to a high place, from which he sees the Master and hears the joyful words of promise: "Today I must abide in thy house."

This story of Zacchaeus is universal in its appeal. Christ Jesus trod the way of the Cross for each one of us. His blessed words have been ringing down through the ages: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Yet man has not understood what He meant.

We must become wholly pure and wholly loving before we can hear Him say, "This day is salvation come to this house" (the purified body), for it is only as we demonstrate purity and love that we may become "a son of Abraham." The story of Abraham is not only the story of the founding of the Jewish race, but is the story of the spiritual regeneration of all mankind as well.

Zacchaeus, like Matthew, followed the despised profession of a publican. He lived in the city of Jericho, estimated revenues and collected taxes for the Roman government . . . The Master did not bid him renounce all and "follow me" as he had done to Matthew, for not all are called to the teaching ministry but may have another service to perform.

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