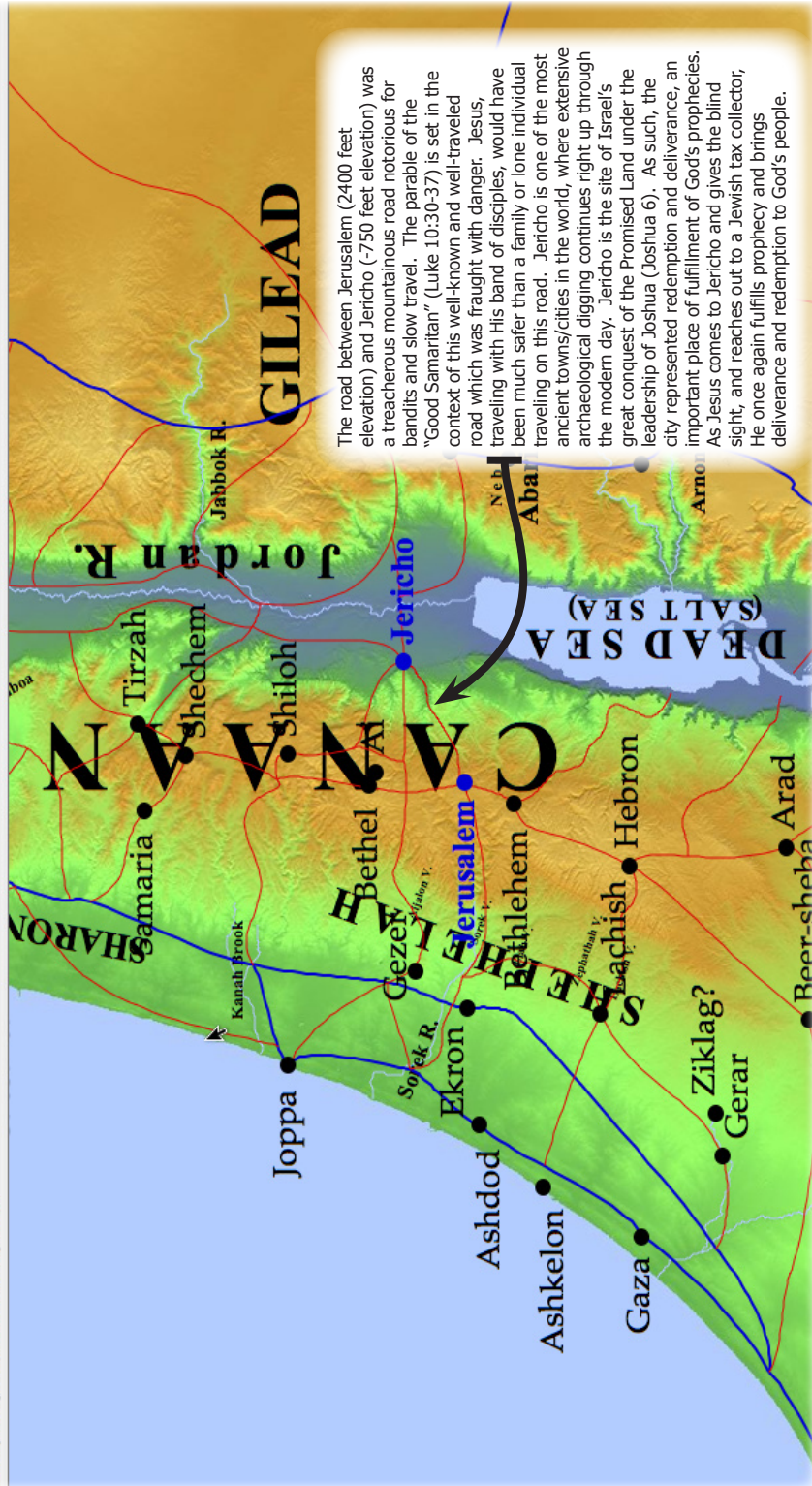


Jerusalem to Jericho

■ Major Highways ■ Minor Highways



Blind & Short

Long Beach Alliance Church • August 31st, 2003 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**FOR THE SON OF MAN HAS
COME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE
THAT WHICH WAS LOST.
~LUKE 19:10 (NASB)**

1) Blind Faith

- A) It's no mistake that the real-life story of the blind man (Luke 18:35-43) follows Jesus' parables on prayer (18:1-14) and Christ's heart for the weak & dependent (18:15-17).
- B) The story of the blind man is somewhat paralleled in Matthew 20:29-34 & Mark 10:46-52, although some of the important details* are different.
- C) It was common for the blind and infirm to be placed (by their own families) near city gates to beg each day, or to sit near healing sites/shrines (cf. John 5:2ff).

* The most obvious differences regard the "coming and going" differences. In Luke, Jesus heals while "approaching Jericho." In Matthew & Mark, Jesus heals while "leaving Jericho." Some commentators view two different healings, one on the way in to Jericho, and then another on the way out of Jericho. Others see a condensing of the material, with each author emphasizing different elements of the story (two blind men vs. one blind man, timing, location, etc.). Others see the accounts as totally different stories, although, because of their position in the narrative, this would seem highly unlikely. John Calvin saw the account as a singular account, reporting Jesus coming into and out of the city, and then condensed into a singular encounter. Again, this is possible, albeit odd, and not the most likely solution. I prefer the view which takes the stories as condensed by the authors with different emphases for different reasons (common practice with writing from this historical period), although even this solution leaves one wondering as to what the specific reasons were for the condensing of material. Summarized from various sources, esp. Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary, Pages 1501-1506.

- D) A blind man (probably Bartimaeus, cf. Mark 10:46), who is sitting by the gates of Jericho hears a crowd passing, and learns that "Jesus of Nazareth" is nearing (Luke 18:35-37).
- E) Jesus' reputation is already known to the blind man, and sensing Jesus' true identity, cries out to the "Son of David," a profound Messianic title (cf. Isaiah 11:1; Matthew 1:1). What the crowd does not see, this blind man can see!
- F) The blind man's cry is met with a resounding rebuke from the crowd (Luke 18:39). Like the children who attempt to reach Jesus earlier (18:15-17), the blind man is turned away.
- G) But the blind man only yells out more loudly (18:39)[†]. His cries for mercy echo an application from Christ's previous parables to faithfully persist in seeking God's mercy (18:1-8).
- H) Jesus hears the cries of the blind man, and understands the blind man's faith immediately because of the Messianic title (18:40). Unlike the crowd, Jesus wants to hear from the blind man.
- I) Jesus asks the man what he wants, and the blind man is quick to request that Jesus heal him of his blindness (18:41), which Jesus provides the man^Ω, on the basis of his faithful request to Jesus (18:42).
- J) The blind man, who now can see, begins following Jesus and glorifying God (18:43). This provided a great testimony to all the people, which causes corporate praise.

† Peer pressure is a decided failure here! One commentator plausibly suggests that Luke's shift to ἔκραζεν (ekrazen, he was crying out) from ἐβόησεν (eboesen, he cried out) in Luke 18:38 indicates an intelligent cry for help instead of a more intensive, primal cry, especially since the former term is also used of animal cries. The failure to respect public pressure shows how desperate this man is to be healed and how convinced he is that Jesus can help him. Summarized from various sources, esp. Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary, Page 1509.

2) Rich Faith

- A) As Jesus moves through Jericho (19:1), he encounters the chief tax collector in town, a short man named Zaccheus, who has climbed a sycamore tree in order to get a glimpse of Jesus Christ (19:2-4).
- B) As though Jesus had an appointment with Zaccheus, he stops under the sycamore tree and addresses Zaccheus by name (whether by miracle (cf. John 1:47-48) or by reputation, the text does not reveal). Clearly, Jesus is in control of this situation with the important tax-collector.
- C) Jesus asks Zaccheus to come down in urgent terms, and Zaccheus responds with enthusiasm and urgency to Jesus' request (19:5-6), although others do not appreciate Jesus' decision to eat in the home of a "sinner" (19:7).
- D) The text indicates that Zaccheus hears the grumbling talk of the crowd, and stops short of entering his house to address Jesus (19:8).
- E) Zaccheus turns to Jesus and offers to give away half of his possessions (19:8), and extraordinary contrast to the previous negative story of the "rich young ruler" (18:18-30).
- F) Jesus commends Zaccheus' actions as faithful and repentant (19:9, despite no mention of repentance or faith), by noting that "salvation" has come to his home (cf. Ephesians 2:8-9). Once again, the mission of Jesus Christ, to "seek and save that which was lost" has been joyfully accomplished (19:10).

Ω "Your faith has made you well" is literally, "Your faith has saved you" (σέσωκέν, from σῶζω, to save). Clearly, in the immediate sense, it means that the beggar has regained his sight. Insofar as his marginal status in his community has been grounded in his physical malady, the "saving" of this man must also mark at least the potential of the reversal of his station in the community. Still further, in relation to soteriology (doctrine of salvation), for this man to be "saved" affirms that he has entered the kingdom of God. Once again we see actions which reveal faith, and Jesus responding to and commending the actions of faith as "saving" a person. Various sources, esp. Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT) Series, Page 665.