

Weekly Rhythm

Engaging with the weekly Lectionary Readings
Comment and Questions

[Readings for the week:](#)

[Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4](#)

The prophet is appalled at destruction, violence, and perversion of justice, wondering whether God is listening or even cares. Habakkuk prophesied in the period preceding the exile to Babylon and continued to the time of the first wave attack of the Babylonians (597 B.C.) The book of Habakkuk is a deep and honest cry from the heart. It also gives some hints as where we should turn in troubled times.

[Psalm 119:137-144.](#)

The juxtaposition of the submission in this Psalm and the outrage in Habakkuk is striking. Do not use the Psalm as a "solution" to the prophet's cry, but rather as part of a spectrum of responses reflecting trust in God in the face of the reality of violence and injustice around us that does not seem to abate.

[2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12.](#)

Paul greets the Thessalonians, expressing thanks for their growing faith and their love for one another even in the face of persecution. He assures them of his prayer that they be worthy of God's call and continue to grow in faith so that Christ may be glorified in and through them. (Saintly Sinners?)

[Luke 19:1-10](#)

Jesus says to Zacchaeus, "Today salvation has come to this house."

Comments and Questions on Luke 19: 1 -10

[Paul J. Nuechterlein](#) explores the connection between last week's reading (the Pharisee and the tax-collector in the temple) and this Sunday's. "If a tax collector such as the one in the parable ([of last week](#)), for example, goes home delivered from his sin ("justified") and empowered by the Spirit to live a life of repentance, is Zacchaeus an illustration of what that life looks like, by his promising to pay back his ill-gotten profits to the poor?... Here are some further comparisons between the two stories:

Instead of a Pharisee who lives by human justice based on divisive categories such as righteous-unrighteous, we have Jesus following God's justice of mercy and reconnecting Zacchaeus to the family of Abraham and Sarah (and Hagar?).

Instead of the Pharisee looking down his nose in judgment on the tax collector, we have Jesus literally looking UP in mercy at Zacchaeus in the tree.

Instead of a tax collector going to God's house, the temple, praying for salvation, we have God-in-Jesus going to the tax collector's house, proclaiming salvation." (*Jesus finds the lost sheep?*)

Paul Nuechterlein explores the theme of 'Blessed to be a blessing.' "Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Genesis 12:1-3)

Questions to help you reflect further:

How would you see the parable from last week being expanded by this week's parable?

How does the Zacchaeus story reflect the title "Blessed to be a blessing"?

Paul Nuechterlein suggests that we seek to be blessed (as in receiving) but that we are only really blessed when we realise that we are "Blessed to be a blessing". How is this true?

How do we live out this truth ("Blessed to be a blessing")?