

THE SINNERS and THE SHEPHERDS of ISRAEL

Luke 15:1-3

- V:1 (A) The love of the SAVIOR has attracted a very needy group! 1 John 4:10
- (B) The searching love of GOD is the purpose of the coming of the MESSIAH. JESUS CHRIST. John 3:16 & Romans 5:6, 8.
- V:2 (A) JESUS is criticized by these shepherds of Israel.
- (B) You an almost hear them say: *Why do you spend time with them?* Psalms 8:4
- (C) GOD had long ago spoken of ceremonially clean and ritualistically proper shepherds. Isaiah 56:10-12, Jeremiah 23:2, Ezekiel 34:1-10
- (D) God had also foretold of the hatred of these worthless shepherds for the MESSIAH. Zechariah 11:17, 12:10, 13:1 and 13:6-7
- V:3 (A) *And HE spake this parable unto them...* Who is the *them?* obviously, the *Pharisees and Scribes* in V: 2
- (B) JESUS' attitude is guilty as charged! And glad of it because JESUS is doing their job!
- (C) Yet the MASTER is kind and wants to teach them they are a very needy group The sinners had already *drew near unto HIM (V:1)*. *It's the shepherds who are Still afar off among those present.*

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP

Luke 15:4-7

- V: 4 (A) Can't you just imagine the Pharisees' and Scribes' reaction? It doesn't make good sense.
- (B) *To leave the 99 in the wilderness* and go after the one lost sheep is just not natural. It's not human!
- (C) A shepherd who had 100 sheep in Israel was very prosperous - He certainly didn't get that by throwing good money after bad!

(D) This is bad business. It's time to cut our losses and write it off!

This Parable is what GOD is like as opposed to what man is like!

God is better and kinder than man!

(E) Israel was the flock of GOD. Psalms 79:15, 100:3, Jeremiah 50:6.17, Matt.15:24

(F) The LORD GOD is the SHEPHERD. Psalms 23:1. 80:1-3, John 10:11, 14. Hebrews 13:20

(G) The lost sheep - How could these shepherds of Israel (the Pharisees) not put it all together? Isaiah 53:6 *all we like sheep have gone astray ...*

(H) The searching love of GOD for sinners! Go after.....until HE find it! Not just look ... not just search.....but it must be found! Until in Greek, heh-occe, a word of continuance even until, as far and as long is necessary *-until*. Luke 19:10

V: 5 GOD carrying us home! *HE layeth it on HIS shoulders*. Isaiah 40:10-11, 46:3-4 & I Peter 2:25

V: 6 (A) Has JESUS carried you home yet? Well the, you must come to JESUS! Isaiah 53:6 *and the Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all.*

(B) Those strong arms were stretched out on a cross for you!

V: 7 (A) The joy in Heaven over sinners that repent and come to JESUS. Psalms 16:11, Psalms 89:15-18, 132:16 and Isaiah 12:1-3

(B) It is an awesome responsibility to be a shepherd in the Church of Christ today.
Acts 20:28-30

(C) So obey them (Hebrews 13:17) - for in subjection to your elders and shepherds there is protection. 1 Peter 5:1-5

THE PARABLE of THE LOST COIN

Luke 15:8-10

- V: 8 (A) *Ten pieces of silver* - The custom was for a woman who was betrothed to wear a frontlet of silver coins on her brow, signifying her betrothal prior to marriage. Israel was betrothed to GOD. Hosea 2:19:23
- (B) The loss is traumatic, for it is a sign of fellowship with her beloved and must be restored. Jeremiah 3:11-15
- (C) Dark in the house - Israel, the Lord is the light. Psalms 18:28 & 119:105
- (D) It is lost in the house - lost in Israel. Psalms 23:6, 122:1
- (E) The floor of the house is dirt and straw. Even though the woman had to get her ceremonially clean hands dirty (Exodus 30:20) her beloved's gift, the token of their marriage, must be found. Matthew 15:1-20.
- (F) *Seek diligently till she find it.* (Proverbs 22:29). *Till* is the same Greek word as is used in V: 4 and there translated *until*. The lost coin is so precious that the search is never ending until it is found!
- V: 9 If any woman would search for a token and a symbol like this, how much more should these Pharisees and Scribes, these Rabbis, these Shepherds of Israel be searching for the lost? Especially when they prayed everyday the same ritualistic prayer: *I thank thee, O GOD, that you did not make me a woman!*
- V:10 (A) What will GOD do to restore the lost to fellowship? Give HIS all! Hebrews 12:2
- (B) *Joy in the presence of the Angels* - Who in Heaven is in the presence of the Angels? GOD, JESUS and all HIS saints singing a new song. Revelation 5:9-10 and 19:6-9.

THE PARABLE of THE PRODIGAL SON

Luke 15:11-24

- V: 11 (A) What is GOD like? HE is like *a certain man who had two sons.*
- (B) The Father (God) dominates the parable.
- (C) He is the central character!
- (D) The sons are only supporting characters.

- (E) JESUS is about to teach you how much GOD loves you. The FATHER has excessive, unrestrained, extravagant and lavish love for you - you prodigal son, you!

V: 12 (A) The younger son wouldn't ask if he had any doubt.

- (B) What does this say about the FATHER?

- (C) So I can get away - the stupidity of independence.

- (D) This is not just a fling - this son is leaving for good!

- (E) Did he know, or care, that he broke the FATHER'S heart?

V: 13 (A) This son loved only possessions - but what did it realize him? Deut. 8:13-14

- (B) More tragedy- *and there wasted his substance with riotous living.* Proverbs 23:5 and Jeremiah 17:1

V:14- (A) He *joined himself to a citizen of that country.* A dreaded unclean gentile!
But 15 joined - Greek kol-lah-0: *to glue together, to stick together or to be pinned to* - a gentile. Deuteronomy 15:6 & 26:19

- (B) But how did he *join* himself to this gentile? Our word servant comes from the following

Greek words: doo-los is a qualified sense of subjection or subserviency, a bond man, a top servant responsible for all other servants; pahee-ce, a man servant; pahee-dis-kay, a maid servant. But the prodigal son was none of these. He was mis-thee-os - a hired slave - laborer of:

- (C) Swine! *And he sent him into his fields to feed swine.* Leviticus 11:7, Deut. 14:8

- (D) He is hungry and eats the husks the swine refuse!

- (E) The insanity of sin! A pitiful end to the search for independence. Ecclesiastes 9:3

- (F) This was enough to make any Jew's teeth rattle! But for the Pharisees and Scribes, the ceremonially clean doctors of the law, this was the horror story of all horror stories!

- (G) They could not imagine a worse sinner or a worse condition for a Jew to be in! And they certainly could not remember Isaiah 1:18-19.

V: 17 (A) *And when he came to himself, he saw himself as he really was!* He took an Look at himself. Have you really taken an honest look at yourself lately? II Corinthians 10:5
surely

shames to silence the best of men!

(B) *Hunger* drove the son. Psalms 84:10, Matthew 5:6

V: 18 (A) He made the great decision and stopped right where he was - He halted because He was sorry! Psalms 38:17-18, 34:18, II Corinthians 7:10

(B) *I will rise and go to my father* - Repentance involves a turning from sin to GOD. Acts 11:21, 15:19, I Thessalonians 1:9

(C) *FATHER, I have sinned!* Your only hope is to own up to the FATHER, as King David did when he committed adultery and killed an innocent man (II Samuel 12:13). At that point God saw a change of heart He wants to see in all sinners.

God then inspired David to write Psalm 51, so that all sinners could understand what type of brokenness of heart and sorrow is involved in real repentance!

Study Psalm 51!

V: 19 (A) He suffered from self condemnation. 1 John 3:20

(B) He felt unworthy- he was humbled. 1 Corinthians 15:9

V: 20 (A) *But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him* - The father was watching for the son! He's been looking, hoping and watching. Hebrews 4:13-16

(B) *Compassion* - O the divine compassion of GOD for returning sinners. Deuteronomy 30:1-3, Psalms 78:38 and 86:15

(C) *And ran* - Have you seen God run? It was undignified for a father to run and a Pharisee certainly wouldn't to a returning sinner - even if were his son. But O The paternal love of GOD for his erring children.

(D) *And fell on his neck and kissed him* - God will not receive you at arms length. He wants to take you in his arms! Revelation 7:17 and 21:4

(E) Note: the son had not yet given the well-rehearsed confession for he does that in V: 21 - the grace of GOD! The unmerited love and favor of GOD!

V: 21 Forgiveness is offered before we ask. Romans 5:6 & 8

V: 22 (A) *Bring forth* - Quickly bring forth! What?

The best robe - In a household in Israel, the father had the best robe! The robe of a person is symbolic in Scripture of their righteousness. Isaiah 64:6 teaches that *All our*

righteousness is as filthy rags before GOD. But God is willing to provide us with HIS own robe (righteousness) - Isaiah 61:10, Zechariah 3:1-4, Romans 1:16-17, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Romans 6:3-6 and II Corinthians 5:21. If you don't follow GOD'S way to receive a change of robe (righteousness) (John 10:1 and Matthew 22:11-14) you are standing in your own righteousness and lost forever. Romans 10:1-3 - Accept the grace of GOD!

- V:23 (A) Spare nothing!
- 24 (B) The FATHER thought he was lost forever - but now he is found!
- (C) To understand the celebration in these verses, you must check the context found in verses 6, 7 & 9, 10.
- (D) Have you been kissed by GOD? If not, maybe you should start home!
Matthew 11:28-30

THE PARABLE OF THE ELDER SON

Luke 15:25-32

V:25 Now the plot thickens! Most of those who heard this parable - *the Pharisees and Scribes* (verses 1 and 2) could not identify with the sinning *prodigal son*.

V:26-27 Rage - white hot anger - Proverbs 16:32. Ecclesiastes 7:9 and Matthew 5:22

V: 28 (A) Had the world gone mad?

- (B) *Came his father out and entreated him* - The love of the FATHER entreats!
- (C) The elder brother couldn't be at a banquet like that - Arrogant!

V:29 (A) *Lo, these many years do I serve thee.* He was responsible - but he had a double portion.

Deuteronomy 21:17

- (B) He is not working out of love and faithfulness - it belonged to him!
- (C) He forgot it was a trust, to be enjoyed with thankfulness! No joy - just determination.

(D) *Neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment.* Surely the Pharisees could identify with this son now!

(E) No wonder he has the attitude he does He has no experience of grace!

(F) Childish - *never gave me a kid* - Where are the standards? He never missed a move.

V:30 (A) *Thy son* - self-righteous, self justifying relationship with the Father.

(B) Harlots - Where did that idea come from?

V:31 (A) Heartbreak! This son, though he had never left home...had never been Home all along!

(B) *Son* - Greek, tek-non, my child, a word of tender endearment. GOD is still calling the Pharisees and Scribes tenderly. Will they hear their MESSIAH?

V:32
Scribes We end with Love's offer of arms out to the elder brother ... Will the Pharisees and allow GOD to fall on their *neck and kiss* them?

What would have happened if the younger son had met the elder son instead of the Father on the way Home?

Would he have ever gotten there?

Have you ever met a younger son on his way home?