

The Parables of Jesus #29

The Parables of the Lost in Israel - Part 2

Parable 3: A Lost Son (Luke 15:11-32)

Luke 15:1-3 (context)

Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near to Him to listen to Him. *Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." So He told them this parable, saying...*

The Sin and Slavery of Israel

Luke 15:11-13

And He said, *"A man had two sons. "The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he divided his wealth between them. "And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. (Deuteronomy 21:15-17)*

Luke 15:14-16

"Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished. "So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. "And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him. (Deuteronomy 28:1,11-13, Leviticus 11:7-8)

The Repentance of the younger Brother

Luke 15:17-19

"But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! 'I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."

"Hired men" = Gr. "misthios" (hired servant, wage earner)

"Bond-servant" = Gr. "doulos" (servant/slavebondman - Romans 1:1)

The Mercy and Love of the Father

Luke 15:20

"So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.

Luke 15:21-24

"And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' "But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat

and celebrate; *for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.*' And they began to celebrate.

What are your thoughts on these verses?

Some thoughts:

Israel (the younger son) had despised and devalued her inheritance, and as a result she had become enslaved and destitute. In Christ through the gospel, Israel (specifically the remnant) had come to her senses and was returning to 'the Father's house' in hopes of mercy and forgiveness. The Father in Christ had lowered himself and come out to meet the son to give him mercy, grace, and an inheritance. The restoration of Israel to God was her hope of the resurrection; he was dead, but had come to life again.

The Grumbling of the Old Brother (the Pharisees)

Luke 15:25-28

"Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. "And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be. "And he said to him, *'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.'* "But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. (recall the context of the parable - 15:1-3)

Luke 15:29-30

"But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For *so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.'*

Luke 15:31-32

"And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. *But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.'*"

What are your thoughts on these verses?

Some thoughts:

The gospel of Christ that "whoever will" was an offence to the faithful Pharisees. In their minds, it was works and obedience to the law plus faith which gave them favor with the Father, not repentance alone, and especially not from "sinners". The message of the Father to his eldest son was this; your obedience is good, and should you remain faithful, "all that I have is yours", yet do not grumble that I show mercy to the sinner, just as I have shown mercy with you. Israel had been lost, but in Christ she had been found.