



Luke Chapter 15

- Parable of the Shepherd and the Lost Sheep
- Parable of the Woman and the Lost Coin
- Parable of the Father and the Lost Son
- All three are mirrors of each other
- Context is everything

LOST

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

¹ Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.”

³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it?

The Parable of the Lost Coin

⁸ “... what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds *it*? ⁹ And when she has found *it*, she calls *her* friends and neighbours together, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!’ ¹⁰ Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Audience

- Pharisees
- Strictly adherent to the law and condemned those who didn't
- Ceremonial cleanliness was their main deal
 - Don't touch dead things, injured things, sick people
 - Don't mix with the wrong crowd
 - Women must observe their place

Pharisees

- Jesus always attacks them – no difference here
- Pharisees have little to do with women – they have no place in society
- By making a woman the key figure, He makes them equal to men!
- A speaker in Middle Eastern culture cannot compare a male audience to a woman without giving offense.

Luke's Accounts of Women and Non-Jews

- Mentioning women is Counter-Cultural
- If the Bible mentions a woman it is because she has a significant role to play
- An angel speaks to Zechariah and Mary in Luke 1.
- Simeon and Anna receive Jesus in the temple in 2:25-38.
- Widow of Zarephath and Naaman are given as two examples of healing miracles in 4:24-27. Naaman was Syrian... unclean to Jews
- City built on a hill (men's work) and lighting a lamp (women's work) in 5:14-15.

Luke's Accounts of Women and Non-Jews

- Examples of mending a garment (women's work) and making wine (men's work) in 5:36-39.
- On the day of the Son of Man, there will be two men in bed and two women grinding in 17:34-35.
- One man and one woman offer aid to Jesus on the way to the cross in 23:26-27.

Luke's Accounts of Women and Non-Jews

- Jesus clearly elevating the status of women for Christian culture
- Theological meaning when tied into whole chapter
- The compassionate father running to kiss his son is something a woman would be expected to do and Jesus ascribes this to God.
- Male and female traits are reflections of God yet avoiding ascribing sexuality to God, as the pagan fertility cults did.

Coins

- Drachma's – each coin about one days wage
- For her to have them means her husband trusted her
- Coins could also have been a wedding gift
- Would possibly have been sown into her clothing
- Because she had no value in society this was all she had in case her marriage failed

Coins

- To lose one would be costly – value and trust
- Middle Easterners do not take direct blame for such an act.
- They might say “the coin is lost” but they would not say “I lost the coin.”
- Jesus emphasizes that this woman takes responsibility for having done so. (previous parable)

Houses

Galilean villages in mind. The homes were made with basalt slabs. The rooms were about seven feet high with six-inch slits near the top for windows. So its dark!

The floors were stones pieced together, with numerous cracks

In the parable, the woman must light a lamp in the dark room and painstakingly search for the coin.

Her trustworthiness is on the line. She was entrusted with the money and is responsible for it. She knows the coin is in the house. If she looks hard enough she knows the coin can indeed be found.

Celebration

⁹When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.'

- The woman finds the coin and invites the neighbours to a celebration.
- No one would know that she had lost the coin if she did not through the celebration.
- Jesus uses this story to highlight that women are also important
- what they do is important in the kingdom of God
- We celebrate in finding the lost, whether found by men or women

Parallels

- Parable of the Compassionate Father (Prodigal Son)
- The value of the coin did not change between being lost or found.
- The main character exhibits costly grace to retrieve the lost.
- There is celebration by the central character over what was done
- What does the parable say about repentance?
- What does the lost coin do to save itself? Nothing!
- The coin was restored because one who valued it searched with great difficulty to find it.

Story Telling Style

INTRODUCTION *"Or what woman having ten silver coins,*

1. LOST *if she loses one of them,*

2. FOUND *does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it?*

3. REJOICE *9 When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, 'Rejoice with me,*

4. FOUND *for I have found the coin*

5. LOST *that I had lost.'*

CONCLUSION *10 Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."*

Lessons Learned - God

- *Costly Grace.* A good woman pays a high price to find the lost coin.
- *Atonement.* Costly grace *finds* the coin. Without this effort the coin will be lost forever. It will not find itself nor can it cooperate in the process. The search is successful. The theme of the atonement is unmistakably present.
- *Sin.* Humankind is here linked to a lifeless coin, lost and nearly hidden on the floor of a dark room.

Lessons Learned - Others

- *Joy.* Again the friends and companions (*haberoth*) rejoice with the woman. They would not sit in judgment over her saving efforts. Heaven itself rejoices! How could the *haberim* [religious “club” the Pharisees belonged to] fail to do so?
- *Repentance.* The lost coin is completely inanimate and yet is symbol of repentance. The sheep’s bleating provides *some* help to the shepherd who seeks his lost one. But here woman does all the finding work. Thus again repentance is being found.
- The undiminished *worth* of the coin is a unique emphasis in this parable as noted.

Lessons Learned - Christology

- *Christology.* The first story presents “Jesus the good shepherd.” Here the text reveals “Jesus the good woman.” The church historically has chosen to recognize and proclaim the first while ignoring the second.
- *Holiness/love* as a spring of saving action. If anything, the holiness theme is here dominant. The woman acts primarily “for her own sake.”

Lessons Learned - Women

- *The worth of women.* The reader of Luke's gospel has just read where Jesus likens himself to a mother hen (13:34). Here he is a good woman.
- Prior to Jesus, Ben Sirach wrote, "the birth of a daughter is a loss" (Sir. 22:3b).
- (mid-2nd c. CE) taught every (Jewish) man is obligated to recite three blessings daily. These express gratitude for one's station in life through the negative statements: thank God that I am not a gentile, a woman, or a slave
- In the first parable Jesus boldly says, "You should be like this 'unclean' shepherd." In this parable he affirms, "I am like this woman! I search for the lost. What about you?"
- In the process Jesus elevates the worth of all women by his choice of imagery.

Lessons Learned - Lost

- *The hope of success in finding the lost.*
- The outcome of the shepherd's search, in spite of his determination, is uncertain. (may not have found it)
- The woman's diligence is assured. (it was contained)

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