

The Lost Sheep is Found

Lesson + 13: (COL 185-192; Lk. 15:1-7; John 10:1-18, 25-29; Ps. 23; Ezek. 34; I Pet. 5:1-8)

Luke 15 contains a triplet of parables which we will call “God’s Lost and Found.” These parables have three things in common: 1) Something was lost; 2) What was lost was found; 3) There was rapturous joy when it was found.

Even though the parables are similar, they are also different. They illustrate three types of lost people. The **sheep** represents people who are aware that they are lost, want to return to the fold but do not know how. The **coin** represents people who must be sought because they are lost but do not know it. The lost **son** represents people who have gone astray and must be drawn back to the household by the love of God

The Setting and Purpose of these Parables

1. Why did Jesus tell these particular parables and to whom? “Then drew _____ unto him all the publicans and sinners for to _____ him. And the Pharisees and scribes _____, saying, this man receiveth sinners, and _____ with them.” (Lk. 15:1, 2)
2. What perplexed the Pharisees and scribes about Jesus? “The scribes and Pharisees felt only _____ in that pure presence [of Jesus]; how was it, then, that publicans and sinners were _____ to Jesus?” (COL 186)
3. Why were the publicans and sinners attracted to Jesus? “The Pharisees had only _____ and condemnation for them; but Christ greeted them as _____ of God, estranged indeed from the Father’s _____, but not forgotten by the Father’s _____.” (COL 186)
4. Did Jesus take his audience and the geographical setting into account when he told the parable of the Lost Sheep? “He appealed to the witness of their own _____. . . . In the company about Jesus there were _____, and also men who had _____ invested in flocks and herds, and all could appreciate His illustration.” (COL 186-87)

The Old Testament Background

1. Who was perceived as the model shepherd in the Old Testament? _____ (I Sam. 16:11-13; 17:34-37) When David was anointed king, he became the shepherd of _____.
2. In Ezekiel 34 we find a description of the unfaithful shepherds of Israel after the death of David. Who spoke to these apostate shepherds? “And the word of the _____ [YWHH] came unto me saying: ‘Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel.’” (34:1)

3. What were these shepherds doing to the sheep? “Ye eat the _____, and ye clothe you with the _____, ye _____ them that are fed: but ye _____ not the flock.” (Eze.34:3)
4. What else were the shepherds failing to do? “The _____ have ye not strengthened, neither have ye _____ that which was sick, neither have ye _____ up that which was broken, neither have ye brought _____ that which was driven away, neither have ye _____ that which was _____; but with force and with cruelty ye have _____ over them.” (Eze.34:5)
5. In what condition were the sheep as a result of the unfaithfulness of the shepherds? “My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was _____.” (Eze.34:5)
6. To whom did these sheep really belong? “As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because _____ flock became a prey, and _____ flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was _____ shepherd, neither did _____ shepherds search for _____ flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not _____ flock.” (Eze.34:8)
7. What did the LORD promise to do for His scattered sheep? “I, even I, will both _____ my sheep, and _____ them out.” (Eze.34:11)
8. What else did the LORD promise to do for His sheep? “I will _____ my flock, and I will cause them to _____ down, saith the Lord God.” (Eze.34:15)
9. What task did the LORD promise to perform with His sheep? “I will _____ between cattle and cattle, between _____ and the he _____.” (Eze.34:17)

Note: Please notice that there were not only **false shepherds** in Israel, but there were also **false sheep**. This is why the LORD needed to separate the sheep from the goats. (See Mt. 25:31ff)

10. Whom did the LORD promise to send to shepherd Israel? “And I will set up _____ shepherd over them, and he shall _____ them, even my servant _____, he shall feed them and he shall be their _____. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant _____ a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it.” (Eze.34:23-24)

Note: This cannot be speaking about literal David because he had been dead for over 300 years. The New Testament identifies Christ as the fulfiller of this prophecy.

11. Who is the flock over which David was to rule? “Thus shall they know that I the LORD their God am with them, and that they, even the house of _____, are my _____, saith the Lord God. And _____ my flock, the flock of my pasture, are _____, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.” (Eze.34:30-31)

Jesus, the Good Shepherd

1. What evidence do we have that David knew that he was not the **real** shepherd? “The _____ [YHWH] is my shepherd; I shall not _____.” (Psalm 23:1)
2. What condition was the flock of Israel in when Jesus came? “But when he saw the _____, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were _____ abroad, as _____ having no _____.” (Mt. 9:36; see also Mk. 6:34)

Note: Obviously, the leaders of Israel had become the false shepherds of Ezekiel 34. This necessitated the coming of Jesus to gather Israel, lead them and feed them.

3. Who is the good shepherd who was promised in Ezekiel 34? Jesus said: “_____ am the Good Shepherd.” (John 10:11; see also, Heb. 13:20; I Peter 2:25)
4. What are some of the characteristics of Jesus, the Good Shepherd?
 - ✓ The sheep recognize his _____ and _____ him (Jn 10:3-4)
 - ✓ He _____ His sheep and they follow Him because they know his _____ (Jn. 10:4)
 - ✓ He owns the sheep and defends them from the jaws of the _____ (Jn. 10:12)
 - ✓ He lays down his _____ for his sheep (Jn. 10:11, 15)
 - ✓ He is the _____ that leads to green _____. (Jn. 10:9)
 - ✓ He knows his sheep individually by _____ (Jn. 10:3, 14)
 - ✓ No one is able to _____ them out His hand (Jn. 10:28)

5. In John 10 Jesus was speaking to literal Jews. What did Jesus say to them? “But ye _____ not, because ye are _____ of my sheep, as I said unto you.” (Jn. 10:26)

Note: It is remarkable that Jesus should tell the Jews that they were not his sheep. What He is saying is revolutionary. He is stating that the leaders of Israel were not His shepherds and that the people of Israel were not His sheep. It becomes clear that true Israel is defined by its relationship to Christ and not by its ethnicity!!

6. What does it mean to be one of Jesus’ sheep? “My sheep _____ my voice, and I know them, and they _____ me.” (Jn. 10:27) **To be true Israel means to obey Jesus!!**
7. Who gave Jesus charge over the sheep? “My _____, which gave them to me, is greater than all; and no man is able to _____ them out of my _____ hand.” (Jn. 10:28) Both David and Jesus cared for their fathers’ sheep.
8. **Thought Question:** Who are “the other sheep” that Jesus referred to in John 10:16? _____

9. **Thought Question:** Who do you think Jesus was referring to when he spoke about the strangers, the thieves, the robbers and the hireling shepherds? (Jn. 10:4, 8, 10, 12-13; the clue is in verse 6) _____

Application # 1: Christ's Love for the Individual Sinner

5. According to Isaiah 53:6, by what act would the Messiah save His straying sheep? "All we like _____ have gone _____; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on _____ the iniquity of _____ all."
6. How does the prophecy of Zechariah 13:7 express the same idea? "Awake, o sword, against my _____, and against the man that is my _____, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the _____, and the sheep shall be _____."
7. How and when was this prophecy of Zechariah 13:7 fulfilled? (Study Mk. 14:27) _____

8. Who is represented by the lost sheep? David said: "_____ have gone astray like a _____ sheep; _____ thy servant." (Psalm 119:176)
9. For how many would Christ have given His life? "So if there had been but _____ lost soul, Christ would have _____ for that one." (COL 187)
10. When Adam and Eve sinned, did they seek God or did God seek them? (Genesis 3:8-9)

Regarding this, Ellen White states: "God has made the _____ advance." (COL 189)
11. In what sense is the sinner's sense of orientation similar to that of a lost sheep? "The sheep that has strayed from the fold is the most _____ of all creatures. It must be _____ for by the shepherd, for it cannot find its way back. So with the _____ that has _____ away from God; he is as helpless as the lost sheep, and unless divine _____ had come to his rescue he could never find his way back to _____." (COL 187)
12. How does Ellen White describe the shepherd's search expedition? "With what relief he hears in the distance its first faint _____. Following the sound, he climbs the steepest _____, he goes to the very edge of the _____, at the risk of his own _____. Thus he searches, while the cry, growing fainter, tells him that his sheep is ready to _____." (COL 188)
13. How does the shepherd treat the sheep once he has rescued it? "Then he does not _____ it because it caused him so much _____. He does not drive it with a _____. He does not even try to _____ it home. In his joy he takes the _____ creature upon his _____, if it is bruised and wounded, he

- gathers it in his arms, pressing it close to his _____, that the warmth of his own heart may give it life.” (COL 188)
14. What erroneous view did the Jews of Christ’s day entertain? “In their view, repentance is a _____ by which men _____ the favor of heaven.” (COL 189)
 15. How does the parable of the lost sheep correct this erroneous concept? “But in the parable of the lost sheep, Christ teaches that salvation does not come through our _____ after God but through _____ seeking after us. . . . We do not repent in order that God may _____ us, but He reveals to us His love in _____ that we may repent” (COL 189)
 16. What other false view did the rabbis hold? “The rabbis had a saying that there was rejoicing in heaven when one who has _____ against God is _____.” (COL 190)
 17. How do many today share the same spirit as the rabbis? “When one who has wandered far in sin seeks to _____ to God, he will encounter _____ and distrust. There are those who will doubt whether his repentance is genuine, or will whisper, ‘He has no stability; I do not believe that he will hold out.’ These persons are doing not the work of God but the work of _____, who is the _____ of the brethren.” (COL 190)

Application # 2: Christ’s Love for the World

1. In the wider meaning of this parable, what is meant by the lost sheep? “The one _____ that has apostatized and has been _____ by sin.” (COL 190)
2. In the broader meaning, what is represented by the ninety nine sheep who were left safe in the fold? “This little _____ world—the one lost sheep—is more precious in His sight than are the ninety nine that went not _____ from the fold. . . . For this [lost world] He left the _____ worlds on high, the ninety nine that loved Him, and came to this earth.” (COL 190-191)
3. In the cosmic setting of the parable, what is meant by the shepherd leaving the fold? “Christ, the loved Commander in the heavenly courts, _____ from His high estate, laid aside the _____ that He had with the Father, in order to save the _____ lost world.” (COL 190-191)
4. Did Jesus risk His own existence to save the one lost world? “He [the Father] permitted Him [Jesus] to meet life’s peril in common with every human _____, to fight the battle as every _____ of humanity must fight it, at the risk of _____ and eternal _____.” (DA 49)
5. When the lost sheep was brought to the fold there was an explosion of joy in the household. When will this be fulfilled with God’s people? “I beheld, and, lo, a great _____, which no man could _____, of all nations, and kindreds, and people and tongues,

stood before the throne. . . . And cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb.’ (Rev. 7:9-10)

6. How do we know that this will be the final fulfillment of the parable of the lost sheep? “For the **Lamb** which is in the midst of the throne shall _____ them, and shall _____ them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” (Rev. 7:17; see also the explosion of praise in Rev. 19:6-7)

Note: The shepherd/sheep terminology is clear in this passage. Jesus will **feed** His sheep and **lead** them to the still waters (Psalm 23:1-2) Paradoxically, Jesus is both the Shepherd and the Sheep in Revelation 7:9-10. The same paradox is seen where Jesus is the Shepherd and the door in John 10.

Application # 3: We Should all Rescue Lost Sheep

1. According to the apostle Peter we should also be faithful under shepherds in the service of the Chief Shepherd (I Peter 5:4). How should we care for God’s flock? “_____ the flock of God which is among you, taking the _____ thereof, not by _____, but willingly; not for filthy _____ but of a ready mind. Neither being _____ over God’s heritage, but being _____ to the flock.” (I Peter 5:2-3)
2. What is the role of every member of the church? “Every soul whom Christ has _____ is called to work in His name for the saving of the _____. This work had been neglected in Israel. Is it not neglected today by those who profess to be Christ’s followers? (COL 191)
3. Are there lost sheep even within our own congregation? “In _____ assembly for worship, there are souls _____ for rest and peace. They may appear to be living _____ lives, but they are not insensible to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Many among them might be won for Christ.” (COL 191)
4. How do angels look upon these precious souls? “Angels _____ these wandering ones. Angels _____, while human eyes are _____ and hearts are closed to pity.” (COL 192)
5. Were the words of Christ in this parable lost upon deaf ears? “The Pharisees understood Christ’s parable as a rebuke to _____. . . . Now many rejected Christ’s reproof; yet to _____ His words brought _____. Upon these, after Christ’s ascension to heaven, the Holy Spirit came, and they _____ with His disciples in the very work outlined in the parable of the lost sheep.” (COL 192)