

An open book with a red tassel bookmark is shown in a soft, slightly blurred light. The text is centered over the pages.

**Forgiveness and  
Three Parables of  
“Lost” Things**

**Luke 15:1–32**

**Luke 15:1, “Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him.**

**Luke 15:2, “And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, ‘This Man receives sinners and eats with them.’ ”**

**1. This is the Age of Israel, under the dispensation of the Messiah.**

**Lev. 19:18, “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.”**

**2. The Pharisees did not forgive those who were unacceptable by their standards of the Law.**



**Joy is the focus of the parables:**

**χαίρων (*chairōn*, rejoicing; 15:5),**

**συγχαρήτε (*syncharēte*, rejoice with; 15:6),**

**χαρά (*chara*, joy; 15:7).**

- 3. As such, all Jews, Pharisees and sinners were members of the covenant community of God's chosen people. The *unforgiving* Pharisaical attitude toward the sinner is the issue.**

**The Pharisees taught that “there is joy before God when those who provoke him and perish from the world.”**

- 4. Jesus responds to them with three parables each focusing on joy over the recovery of something lost. This is the key word for understanding the parable.**



**5. In each parable something is lost. The question to answer is: Does “lost” mean “unsaved” or does “lost” mean separated from fellowship with God and the covenant community, which is Israel.**

**Luke 14:35, “... He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”**

**Luke 15:2, “And the Pharisees and scribes  
complained, saying, ‘This Man receives sinners  
and eats with them.’ ”**

**“extremely influential among the townsfolk; and all prayers and sacred rites of divine worship are performed according to their exposition. This is the great tribute that the inhabitants of the cities, by practicing the highest ideal both in their way of living and in their discourse, have paid to the excellence of the Pharisees”**

**~Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.15**

**Matt. 5:20, “For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”**

## ***Mishnah Hagigah 2:7***

- A The clothing of ordinary folk is in the status of *midras* uncleanness for abstainers [who eat unconsecrated food in a state of cultic cleanness].**
  
- B The clothing of abstainers is in the status of *midras* uncleanness for those who eat heave offering [priests].**
  
- C The clothing of those who eat heave offering is in the status of *midras* uncleanness for those who eat Holy Things [officiating priests].**

**“Let not a man associate with the wicked, even to bring him near to the law”**

**~Mekilta de Rabbi Ishmael, *tractate Amalek*  
3.55–57 on Exod. 18:1**


**Luke 15:3, “So He told them this parable, saying,**

**Luke 15:4, “ ‘What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?**

**Luke 15:5, “ ‘When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.’ ”**







**Whoa...  
Where'd the pastor go?  
He was leading us just  
a minute ago.**

**Oh, good grief!  
He snuck over to  
Starbucks again!**

**Ezekiel 34:11, “For thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out.**

**Ezekiel 34:12, “ ‘As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day.’ ”**



**Ezekiel 34:13, “I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land.**

**Ezekiel 34:14, “I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the mountain heights of Israel. There they will lie down on good grazing ground and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.”**



**Ezekiel 34:15, “ ‘I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest,’ declares the Lord God.**

**Ezekiel 34:16, “ ‘I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.’ ”**




**Luke 15:6, “And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’**

**Luke 15:7, “I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.’ ”**

**Ezekiel 18:23, “ ‘Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked,’ declares the Lord God, ‘rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?’ ”**

The Parable of the  
**LOST**  
COIN

A decorative flourish consisting of three symmetrical, swirling scroll-like elements.

LUKE 15:8-10

**Luke 15:8, “Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?”**





**Luke 15:9, “When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!’**

**Luke 15:10, “In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”**



The  
Prodigal Son  
Luke 15:11-32

**Luke 15:11, “And He said, ‘A man had two sons.**

**Luke 15:12, “ ‘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’.”**

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**Luke 15:12, “ ‘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’.”**

**μέρος *meros* “designates the inheritance share or portion” (Luke 12:46; 15:12; Rev. 20:6; 21:8)**

**Luke 15:13, “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.**

**Luke 15:14, “Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished.”**

**Luke 15:13, “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.**

**Luke 15:14, “Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished.”**

**ἀσώτως *asōtōs*; wasteful, recklessly  
extravagant, profligate living**

**Luke 15:15, “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.**

**Luke 15:16, “And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him.”**



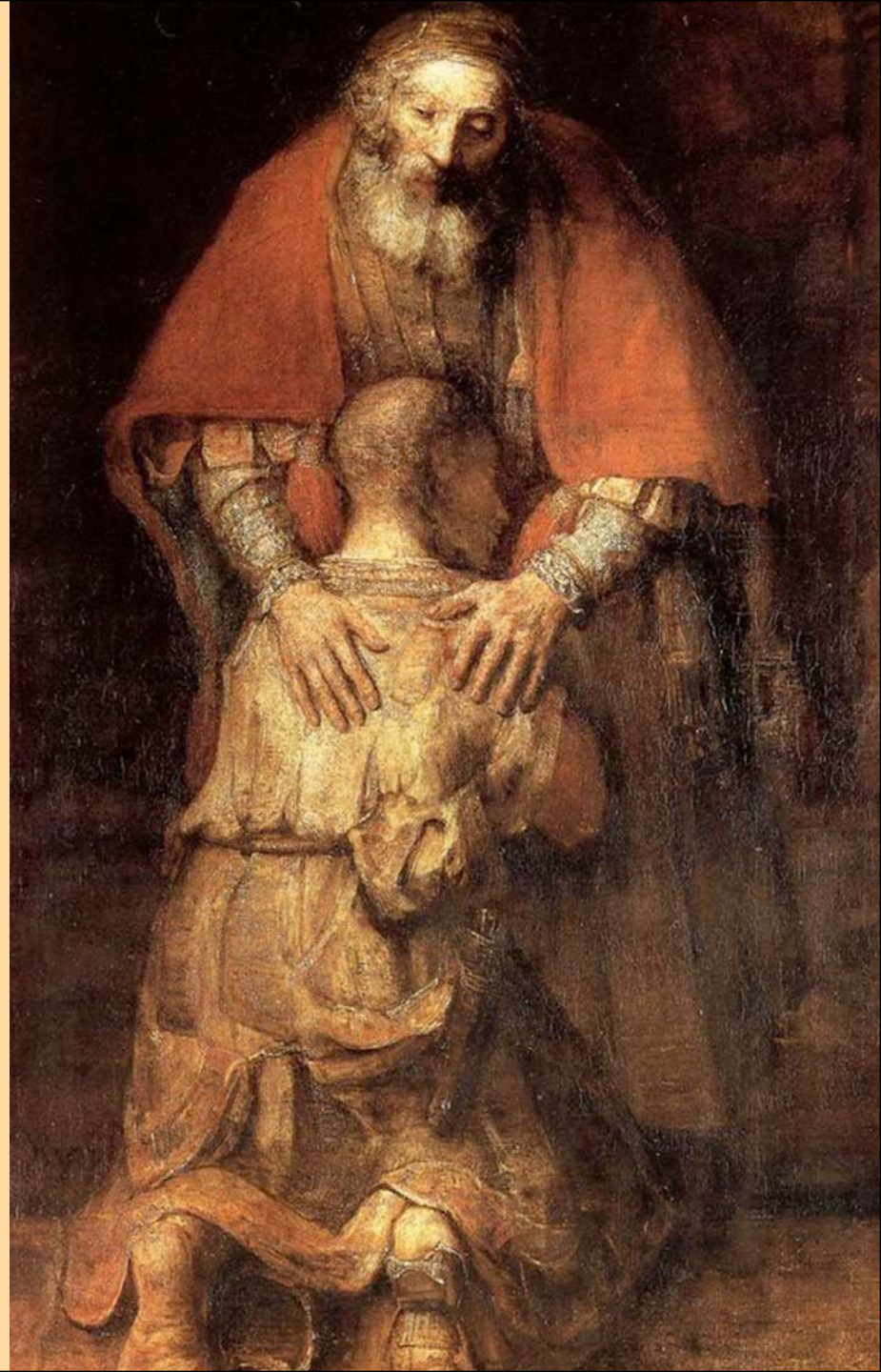
**Luke 15:17, “But when he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger!**

**Luke 15:18, “ ‘I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight;” ’ ”**



**Luke 15:19, “ ‘I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.’ ”**

**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, “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.’**

**Luke 15:22, “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;’ ”**

**Luke 15:23, “ ‘and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate;**

**Luke 15:24, “ ‘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.”**



**Luke 15:25, “Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing.**

**Luke 15:26, “And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be.”**

**Luke 15:27, “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.’**

**Luke 15:28, “But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him.”**

**Luke 15:29, “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;**

**Luke 15:30, “ ‘but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.’ ”**

**Luke 15:31, “And he said to him, ‘Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours.**

**Luke 15:32, “ ‘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.’ ”**