

THE PARABLE OF THE ONE LOST SHEEP

INTRODUCTION

Jesus Christ our Lord and Master communicated his doctrines majorly in the form of parables, and stories that his audience then can easily relate to. But the interpretations of those parables were not easy to come by, though on the surface they might seem straightforward or self explanatory. Christ's apostles were the privileged few that he expounded his parables to after dispersing the multitude in most cases, but yet they at that time still lacked spiritual understanding of the explanations that he gave to them. **Mtt 15:15-17; Mk 8:21; Jn 2:18-22**

Mtt 13: 34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: **Vr.35** That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world. **Vr.36** Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

To understand the teachings of Christ that were coded in parables, you would need to receive by his Spirit the requisite keys needed to decode them. These keys are also embedded in his doctrines and are revealed only to those that the Lord has chosen to reveal them to. With the keys, the received Spirit of truth dwelling within you gives the true understanding thereof. It is not given to all to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the few. By the Spirit of Christ received through baptism and the words of Christ dwelling richly in you, the Lord can cause the eyes of your understanding to be enlightened unto having spiritual understanding of his doctrines. **Eph 1:17-19; Jn 14:26; Jn 20:21-23; I Jn 2:27**

Mtt 13:1-17 (Vr.9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. **Vr.10** And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? **Vr.11** He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. **Vr.16** But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. **Vr.17** For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

Mtt 16:15-20 (Vr.18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. **Vr.19** And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

In this literature, we shall be unveiling the understanding of one of the numerous parables of Christ. Of which many hold unto some interpretation of it that might have caused the truth thereof to elude them. And the parable is - the parable of the one lost sheep. As usual we shall run to our Master Jesus Christ to hear him in his doctrine in order to receive understanding.

THE PARABLE

Mtt 18:11-14 (Vr.11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. **Vr.12** How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? **Vr.13** And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. **Vr.14** Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

Lk 15: 1 Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. **Vr.2** And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. **Vr.3** And he spake this parable unto them, saying, **Vr.4** What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? **Vr.5** And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. **Vr.6** And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. **Vr.7** I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

The two categories of people that together make up the one hundred (100) sheep are identifiable from the passage above, but many are oblivious of this. You would notice also in the parable that the 99 sheep was left still in the wilderness and he went home with only the 1. Why?

This parable of Christ is far reaching in meaning and is relatable to a whole lot of other parables and teachings of his as we shall see, because in those other parables he still emphasizes the central truth that is gotten from this one parable. So we have the ninety nine (99) sheep + one (1) lost sheep = one hundred (100) sheep.

THE OWNER OF THE SHEEP AND THE SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP

God the Father is the owner of all the one hundred sheep found in the wilderness of sin of this evil world. The one hundred sheep were put to pasture in the wilderness. The Father sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ into the field of the world to save those amongst the sheep that are lost, who acknowledge that they had gone astray truly, and not those that claim not to be lost. Jesus Christ is the good shepherd of only the sheep which the Father giveth to him. Out of the 100 sheep he was given the one (1) lost sheep to rescue, have and keep as it were, that they shall not perish. **Jn 10:14-16,26-29; Jn 17:11-12**

Jn 10:1-18 (Vr.2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd [*the Son of God*] of the sheep. **Vr.3** To him the porter [*God the Father*] openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. **Vr.11** I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. **Vr.15** As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. **Vr.16** And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. **Vr.29** My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all;

Jn 17:1-26 (Vr.2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. **Vr.6** I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. **Vr.9** I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. **Vr.10** And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. **Vr.14** I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Isa 53: 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Rom 3: 9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; **Vr.10** As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: **Vr.11** There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. **Vr.12** They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. **Vr.23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Gal 3: 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Mtt 18:11-14 (Vr.11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. **Vr.12** How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

I Pet 2:21-25 (Vr.25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

It is the will of the Father that men should repent, be reconciled unto Him by the salvation that He offers through His Son Jesus Christ. It is the one sheep that shall hearken unto him, but not the ninety nine at the end as it were. The purpose, mission and goal of the Son of man in the world have been unambiguously spelt out for us, yet many do not hear him in his doctrine. Rather, they walk according to their own presumption and wisdom, which is of the world. **Mtt 21:28-32; Jn 17:11-12; Lk 6:46; I Cor 1:21**

THE NINETY NINE (99) SHEEP IDENTIFIED

The Pharisees, scribes and their likes, the Sadducees, Herodians, high priests, chief priests, priests, elders, etc., are the ones that constitute the ninety nine sheep amongst the nation of Israel. Those that claim to be just and righteous, who have no need for repentance, and the salvation that Christ came to give to repentant sinners in the world as it were. **Lk 10:25,29; Mtt 5:20; Rom 2:23; Mtt 23:1-3**

Lk 15: 2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

Lk 16: 15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

Lk 18:9-14 (Vr.9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: **Vr.10** Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. **Vr.11** The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am [*just and*] not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. **Vr.12** I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

Mk 2:15-17 (Vr.16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? **Vr.17** When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous [*according to the deeds of the law*], but sinners to repentance [*according to mercy, grace and truth*].

Jn 9: 13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. **Vr.34** They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us [*who were not born of fornication – Jn 8:41*]? And they cast him out.

Jn 7: 45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? **Vr.48** Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? **Vr.49** But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

Mtt 21:28-32 (Vr.32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

Lk 7:24-30 (Vr.28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he. **Vr.30** But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

The Pharisees and scribes claim that they are not lost, blind nor are they sinners, but that they are just and righteous by reason of their deeds according to their own knowledge and application of the Law of Moses. Therefore the gospel message to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins was not meant for them. They constitute the ninety nine sheep that need no repentance in this parable as it were.

THE ONE (1) LOST SHEEP IDENTIFIED

The publicans, sinners, harlots, and their likes make up the one lost sheep. They are those that seek for mercy from God in order to be saved from the captivity of sin and death. They admit their need for a savior and surrender to Christ as such.

Lk 15: 1-7 (Vr.1 Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. **Vr.2** And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. **Vr.3** And he spake this parable unto them, saying, **Vr.6** And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. **Vr.7** I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

Lk 18:9-14 (Vr.10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. **Vr.13** And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. **Vr.14** I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Lk 19:1-10 (Vr.2 And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich. **Vr.7** And when they [99] saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner [*the 1*]. **Vr.9** And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. **Vr.10** For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Lk 5:1-11 (Vr.8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. **Vr.10** And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

Mtt 21:28-32 (Vr.31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. **Vr.32** For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him:

Lk 7:24-30 (Vr.29 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

The gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord is for the salvation of sinners and not for the self righteous. It is for sinners that are called and chosen as saints, so that the benefits of the death and resurrection of Christ shall avail unto them.

THE SHEPHERD'S HOME AND HIS NEIGHBOURS

Where is the home that the shepherd having found the one lost sheep took him to? And who are his friends and neighbours that gathered there at home, to rejoice with him when he came back? The home of the shepherd is found in his Father's house, which is the kingdom of God and the friends are the angels of God with the hosts of heaven as neighbours. **Rev 5:11-14; Rev 12:10-12; Jn 10:1-3; Mtt 6:19-20; Mtt 18:10-11; Rev 19:10**

Lk 15:5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. **Vr.6** And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. **Vr.7** I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance. **Vr.10** Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

Jn 14:1-6 (Vr.2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. **Vr.3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

Jn 17: 24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me:

Mtt 25:31-32 (Vr.31) When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

Lk 2:13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, **Vr.14** Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Mtt 21:28-32 (Vr.31) Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

We shall all meet to celebrate with the friends and neighbours of the good shepherd on that day at the marriage supper of the Lamb. May you not be found wanting there at the banqueting table of the King. **Mtt 22:1-16; Rev 19:4-14**

CONCLUSION

The understanding derivable from the parable of the one lost sheep is a classic meaning of what the Lord Jesus came to do on earth, and can be seen and applied throughout many teachings of Christ; if you are able to truly understand this its meaning spiritually. But we have, in this literature limited ourselves to sticking majorly to the context of the parable itself, how it was presented.

A whole lot more insight cum wisdom can be gotten by perceiving its meaning in other parables of Christ. In another literature, by his grace, we shall relate it aptly to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. God left the eleven (11) tribes of Israel dispersed all over in the wilderness of the nations of the world in order to rescue and restore the one (1) tribe of Judah by the Lion of Judah, the root of David as it were. All Israel is to be identified and found in the one tribe, Judah and known as Jews thenceforth. This is of the remnant of Israel that shall be saved. **Rom 9:27,29**

Mk 4: 13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

Also for example, the Wheat, being the children of the kingdom that shall be saved at the end, constitutes the ONE sheep, while the Tares, being the children of the wicked one make up the NINETY NINE sheep as it were. It is the will of God that none of the former shall perish, and that is why the crops have to be fully ripe for the harvesting to begin and not before. **Mtt 13:24-30**

Mtt 13:36-43 (Vr.38) The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

Mtt 18:10-14 (Vr.13) And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. **Vr.14** Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

Christ knew that it is not all men that shall be saved but few, because definitely many shall perish for not believing in him at the end. Also, he knew that it is the Father that draweth lost souls unto him in their hearts, and not men by themselves as many teach and practice today by the altar call ritual of men. **Jn 6:37,44-45,64-65; Lk 13:23-30**

It is those of which it is the will of the LORD God that they shall be saved that shall be saved, because the will of the Lord shall be done on earth even as it is in heaven. No man or devil can thwart the will of God or stop it from coming to pass.

Jesus Christ was sent by the Father into the world to save the lost, those that are blind, sick and dead in sin cum trespasses; these form the fold of the one lost sheep. They shall hear his voice and follow him till the end. He giveth them eternal life at his second coming and they shall never perish. May you be one of them in Jesus name. Amen.

FEEDBACK

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God bless and keep you heaven bound while ye still walk on this earth. MARANATHA.