

**"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan****LUKE 15**

*Please note that today's commentary is longer than usual due to the critical nature of the content in today's culture.*

**Luke 15**

Luke chapter fifteen is an emotional chapter for most who read it. The chapter contains three emotional stories in answer to the complaining questions of the hypocritical religious Pharisees.

***Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near 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..."*** (Luke 15:1-3)

Jesus told three heart-wrenching stories of something or someone precious that was lost and then found and the joy in finding that which was lost. Obviously, the Lord Jesus was drawing attention to the sneering question of the religious leaders who had not realized that the mission of Jesus the Messiah was to redeem sinners. To do that, He must seek, find, and receive them.

Jesus got His point across in parables. The word parable is not an English word but rather the *transliteration* of the Greek word "parabolē." It is a compound word made from two words. The first word is "Para," which means "to be beside or alongside." The second word is "Ballō" in the form of "Bole." When you put the two words together, they mean or are *translated as* "a story alongside another story." Some have said that a parable is a heavenly story with an earthly meaning. It's better to say, "*A parable is a story everyone would understand in the audience that obviously is being told to express a spiritual reality.*"

The three stories are about lost sheep, lost silver, and finally, a lost son. When Jesus told the parable of the lost sheep, no doubt there were shepherds among His audience who had experienced that very thing and could understand the sense of desperation of losing a little lamb, tender and vulnerable, or losing a sheep that had been in the flock and greatly loved somehow going astray or even worse, being led astray. Still, others were among those who listened and had no idea how desperate the shepherd was and how helpless he would have felt in losing a sheep.

The next story related to more than just a few of those listening to Jesus, maybe as much as half or more of the audience. The story is related to women. Jesus told of a woman who had lost a coin, perhaps from her wedding dowry, given by her father after saving up for her wedding since the day she was born. He had sacrificed and had done without things that were needful and precious to him so he could give a lifetime gift to his love, his daughter. More than likely, there would have been silver, maybe even an entire headdress made of silver and gold for her to wear the day she was given to her husband and the final commitment made. It would have been very noticeable if a coin was missing. This was precious to her and to those near. After looking diligently and sweeping a stone and dirt floor, she found it! She was so happy that she had a party and called in friends and family to rejoice with her as she told of how this precious coin was lost and then found. Every woman in the audience related to this story and was touched in their heart.

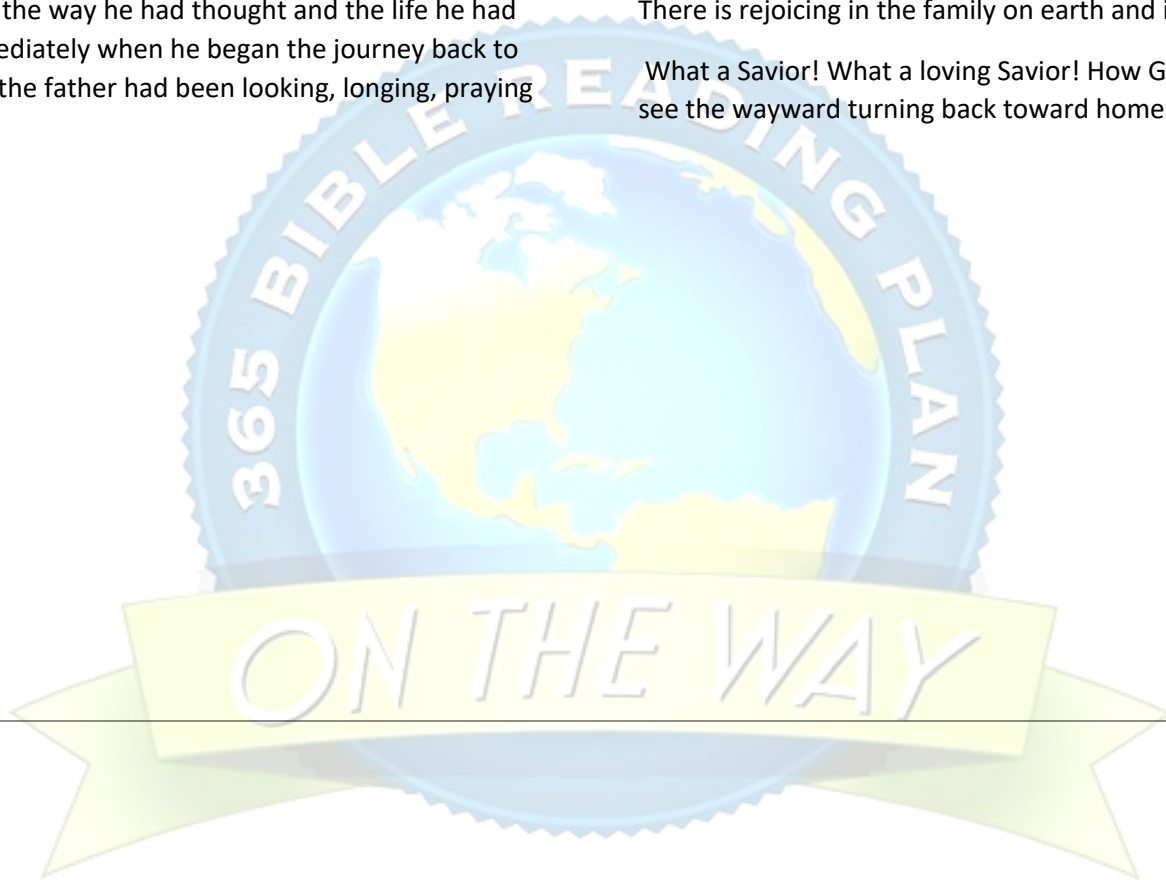
The third parable of Luke fifteen takes our breath away and stirs us to the depth of our being. The story that Jesus told would have struck a chord with every person there as He began to tell the story of a father who lost a son. Everyone in the audience, most likely if not a father, could relate to their own family as a brother, sister, or close relative. The story is of a wealthy father who had two sons. One was dutiful, and the younger derelict and rebellious. The younger son went to his father and asked his father if his part of the inheritance could be had immediately, before the death of his father. In effect, what the younger son was saying was, "*I wish you were dead!*" The loving father knowing the wayward and rebellious attitude, granted the boy's wish and gave him his part of the inheritance. The story continued with the younger son squandering the entire inheritance and being left alone broke, broken, and abandoned by his transactional friends, who had been by his side as long as he had money and could do something for them. In desperation, he took a job that was something he thought he would never stoop to do.

**"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan****LUKE 15 *continued***

*(Rebellion, selfish living, and sin will take you farther than you want to go, make you pay a higher price than you wanted to pay, and will destroy everything that you cherished in your life).* While in a place of desperation, the youngest son **came to himself**. He came to a point in his mind/heart where he realized that he had made a series of bad choices and had hurt those who loved him most, namely his father. He had a longing in his heart to return to see his father and repent, expressing his true sorrow for the way he had thought and the life he had lived. Immediately when he began the journey back to his father, the father had been looking, longing, praying

for him to come to himself and return to the place of love and acceptance. As Jesus told of the lost son coming home, I dare say there was not a dry eye or cheek in the crowds who were listening. Jesus drove home the truth that one who is lost can be found, and one who is wayward and left the home is never forgotten but sought after, and the offending, repentant son would be welcomed back into the family. Jesus said, such it is when a sinning person repents. There is rejoicing in the family on earth and in heaven.

What a Savior! What a loving Savior! How God loves to see the wayward turning back toward home!

***Prayer and Action Steps***

*If in any way you find yourself lost or wayward today. Think about it. Look around you. Repent and run to the Father in heaven, Seek His forgiveness. He will give you a fresh start. He will always receive a broken, contrite, and broken heart.*