

Prodigal Pigs

Scripture Text: Luke 15:11-32

“One of the World’s Best loved stories” – George W. DeHoff

1. Background:

Luke 15 – “the lost chapter”

Audience: v. 1-3 – tax collectors, sinners, Pharisees, scribes

Lost sheep – v. 4-7

Lost coin – v. 8-10

2. Parable:

11 Younger son presumably no older than 18 (unmarried) – had little experience with money

12 Younger son insults father – Num. 27:8-11; 36:7-9

Dividing inheritance – Deut. 21:17

Not unheard of but not unusual to divide inheritance before father’s death

Older gets 2/3, younger gets 1/3

Sin begins in the heart – James 1:15

Basically saying “I wish you were dead!”

13 One’s use of wealth corresponds to the object of one’s worship

“Not many days” – downward course is rapid

“Gathered” – apparently converted all land, cattle, etc. Into cash to waste

Father able to give before his death but still able to live on the property until his death

No intentions to return

No real way of knowing his real intentions or if the harlots (v. 30) was just his brother being angry

14 “There is always a famine when one is far from God.” – George W. DeHoff

Twofold evil: poverty & famine

Severe famines common (Joseph’s dreams) but he kept nothing in reserve

15 Later Jewish tradition would’ve made this son to “be cursed”

Unlikely not even want to approach the synagogue for help

Son hired himself out to feed pigs – should have been repugnant to him

Feeding swine – unclean – Lev. 11:7

Clean vs. Unclean {Leviticus 11}

1. Land [v. 3-8] – split hoof, chews cud = clean (cow); split hoof, doesn't chew cud = unclean (pigs)
2. Water [v. 9-12] – has fins & scales = clean; has fins but no scales = unclean
3. Air [v. 13-19] – see verses for specific list of unclean birds
4. Insects [v. 20-23] – four walking legs, jointed jumping legs = clean
5. Conclusion: instituted by God to:
 - Teach them to be obedient
 - Keep them separated from the Gentiles

16 Animals ate carob pods raw – humans ate them toasted (sometimes only in times of famine)

Seed castings of a tree used as food for cattle, pigs, sometimes the poor

Had a “sweetish taste” – coarse, locust-like bean with a certain sugar content.

Seeds are strangely uniform in size and weight, and they were used as the measure of a “Carat” by gem merchants. The weight of one seed equaling one carob.

Still sold in Manhattan.

All worldly friends deserted him

17 Realized his sin was against God Himself

Repentance begins in self-reflection – Psalm 119:59

Repent – Metaneo- used 9x in Luke [10:13, 11:32, 13:3, 13:5, 15:7, 15:10, 16:30, 17:3, 17:4]
37 in NT

18 Heaven surrogate name for God – cf. Daniel 4:26

20 Afar off – habitually looking for him

Running considered to be undignified for an older person – especially for a wealthy man

The Father shows: [opposite of expected]

1. Compassion
2. Love (arms around him, kissed his neck)
3. Celebration (feast)
4. Joyful restoration of status

21 Unable to complete his rehearsed speech

22 Best robe – long flowing robe, reaching the feet, worn by persons of rank

Robe and ring restores position as a son – Esther 3:10; 8:2; Gen. 41:42

Shoes – slaves were often barefoot

Unlike the father, the older brother:

1. Was surprised at his brother's return
2. Offended and jealous at father's celebration
3. Became angry at the father's forgiving love
4. Declared his own self-righteousness
5. Focused on his brother's sinfulness rather than his newfound repentance

23 Fattened calf – reserved for special occasions – Gen. 18:7; Amos 6:4

Fattened calf would have fed the entire village

24 Assumed to be dead, now alive – a picture of a member of membership in God's Kingdom

25 Younger son represents tax collectors & sinners

Older son represents Pharisees

V. 1-3 – both groups listening to Jesus

27 Safe & sound – spiritual & physical safety

28 Anger mirrors Pharisees and Sadducees

Angers his father

Young goat – of less value than fatted calf

29 "Lo" – offensive – not greeting with "Father, ..."

30 Refuses to acknowledge his brother

31 Son – shows affliction of the Father

3. Applications:

1. There is a great rejoicing when one soul repents
2. Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay – cf. Psalm 1
3. God is always willing and waiting to welcome us back home
4. When one repents, we don't need to focus on their past sin-filled life but on their restored new-life
5. As long as there is still breath in the nostrils, there is time to come back to God!

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