

LESSON 18
“He Was Lost and Is Found”
Luke 15; 17

OVERVIEW:

Prodigal Son. Healed leper gives thanks. Unprofitable servant. Laborers in the vineyard.

SCRIPTURES:

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
ST LUKE
CHAPTER 15

Jesus gives the parables of the lost sheep, of the piece of silver, and of the prodigal son.

1 THEN drew near unto him ~~all~~ (many of) the ^apublicans and sinners (They are called sinners according to the Pharisaic definition. They accused Jesus of being a sinner. This may not be a very accurate description of their true status.) ~~for~~ to hear him.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. (The three parables are in response to the criticism of the Pharisees and scribes about Jesus associating with publicans and sinners. The first two address the thesis of their criticism. The third one addresses not only the thesis of their criticism, but the psychology motivating the criticism. The main point is to emphasize God's happiness and acceptance of repentant persons. Where the Pharisees look down upon publicans and sinners, God searches after them and rejoices when they repent.)

3 ¶ And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

4 What man of you, (Jesus is painting a picture of the ideal shepherd.) having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine ^ain the wilderness, and go (into the wilderness) after that which is ^blost, until he find it? (The good shepherd would not leave the 99 unless they were secure.)

5 And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying (and saith) unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise ^ajoy shall be in heaven over one ^bsinner that ^crepenteth, (The rejoicing over the lost one being greater than the rejoicing over those that were never lost is simply a function of the relief and happiness of one being spared the suffering of spiritual death. The righteous were never in jeopardy of such, and needed no additional shepherding, so there is no emotional release as is the case with the accomplishment of a sinner repenting.) more than over ninety and nine just persons, which (who) need no repentance. (Matthew 18:11-14 is the same story, but at an earlier time: 11 For the ^aSon of man is come to ^bsave that which was ^clost. (And to call sinners to repentance; but these little ones have no need of repentance, and I will save them.) 12 How think ye? if a man have an hundred ^asheep, 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? 13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that ~~sheep~~ (over that which was lost), than of (over) the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these ^alittle ones should ^bperish. It is reasonable to assume that Jesus taught his parables and stories many times, repeating them for different audiences. Even the Sermon on the Mount may have been taught at different times to different people. The story of the shepherd leaving the ninety-nine sheep and finding the lost animal as told in the Gospel of Luke was also given on another occasion. (See Matt. 18:12-14.) In both cases, God's concern for the lost soul is the main point. But in light of the Pharisees' and scribes' self-

righteousness, the story's moral also becomes a caricature of smugness when the Savior says, "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." (Luke 15:7.) **Actually, Jesus recognized that no person is exempt from repentance.** Nor did his disciples make any exceptions. John the Beloved, for example, insisted that "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 Jn. 1:8.) **Thus, the phrase "just persons, which need no repentance" is ironic, for no such persons exist.** Willard Richards's rough notes of the Prophet Joseph Smith's 1843 sermon show that the Prophet compared the one hundred sheep with one hundred Pharisees and Sadducees. The Prophet then said, "If you Pharisees and Sadducees are in the sheepfold, I have no mission for you. [I am] sent to look up sheep that are lost. [I will] back him up and make joy in heaven." **Note how, according to the Prophet's explanation, the characters in the parable—shepherd, lost sheep, and sheep in the fold—reflect the situation Christ was facing: the divine searcher, the repentant minority, and the group of people who were so self-righteous that they would not repent.** Richard Anderson, Ensign, "Parables of Mercy," Ensign, Feb. 1987, 20. Elder McConkie said: The emphasis is on keeping the sheep from getting lost, on showing how precious the sheep are, and on how reluctant the Shepherd is to lose even one. And as he, the Chief Shepherd, does, so also should we do who are his servant-shepherds. MM, 3:245. Also, to liken the scriptures to ourselves, we are lost sheep and the Savior goes into the wilderness to find us and bring us back.)

8 ¶ Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one ^apiece, (drachma (a silver coin equal to the Roman denarius – a workman's daily wage.)) doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find *it*? (These three analogies justify his working with sinners.)

9 And when she hath found *it*, she calleth (called) *her* friends and ~~her~~ neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the ^aangels of God over one ^bsinner that (who) repenteth. (The next story, that of the lost coin, is simple. In Greek, the piece of silver is a *drachma*—a coin equivalent to a day's wage. In this parable, a woman sweeps corners and cracks in an attempt to find the coin, possibly because of its sentimental value as a coin that was sewn onto her wedding costume, or possibly because she is a poor manager and has lost the coin, or perhaps even the opposite, because she is a careful manager and carefully guards her resources. Whatever the circumstances, like the shepherd, when she finds the coin the woman calls her friends together to rejoice with her. The moral of the story is similar to that of the parable of the sheep: there is joy in heaven "over one sinner that repenteth." (Luke 15:7, 10.) In discussing this parable, **Joseph Smith pointed out the irony: "One publican you despise [is] one piece of silver, the piece which was lost. Joy [is] found of the angels over one sinner that repenteth. [The rest are] so righteous ... you cannot save them."** Again we see the roles of the searcher, the sinner, and the self-righteous person." Richard Anderson, Ensign, "Parables of Mercy," Ensign, Feb. 1987, 20)

("The lost sheep strayed from the fold by choice, seeking green pastures and still waters out in the deserts of the world. But the lost coin was lost through the inattention of the officers of the kingdom. The Lord's servants neglected their responsibility to care for the needs of the saints, and one of the saintly coins slipped to the floor and rolled into the dust in a dark corner, where, except for diligent search, it would remain lost until swept out with the refuse." MM, 3:247. "The woman who by lack of care lost the precious piece may be taken to represent the theocracy of the time, and the Church as an institution in any dispensational period; then the pieces of silver, every one a genuine coin of the realm, bearing the image of the great King, are the souls committed to the care of the Church; and the lost piece symbolizes the souls that are neglected and, for a time at least, lost sight of, by the authorized ministers of the gospel of Christ." Jesus the Christ, p. 456)

11 ¶ And he said, A certain man had two sons:

12 And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of ^agoods (property) that (which) falleth to me. And he divided unto them *his* living. (The younger son would have taken one third of the inheritance that could be taken, while the oldest son obtains a double portion as heir. The eldest son was expected to care for other family members, hence the double portion.)

13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far (Gentile) country, and there ^awasted his ^bsubstance (property) with ^criotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. (Most degrading occupation for a Jew.)

16 And he ^awould (desired, set the heart upon) fain have filled his belly with the ^bhusks (pods of the carob tree) that (which) the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. (These husks were not fit for human consumption.)

17 And when he ^acame to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I will ^aarise and go to my father, (He thought of the goodness of his father.) and will say unto him, Father, I have ^bsinned against heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. (Don't we all feel like this sometimes?)

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, (His father had been watching for him, hoping he would return.) his father saw him, (His father was anxiously looking for him to return. The fatted calf was in the stall, waiting.) and had ^acompassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. (Our Heavenly Father)

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more ^aworthy to be called thy ^bson.

22 But the father said (un)to his servants, Bring forth the best robe (authority of a son), and put it on him; and put a ring (symbol of power) on his ~~hand~~ (finger), and shoes on *his* feet: (Slaves did not wear shoes.)

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

29 And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30 But as soon as this thy son (not my brother) was come, which (who) hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. (The elder son has failed to learn to love others as his father does. The son does not have a correct understanding of the principles of repentance and forgiveness.)

31 And he said unto him, ^aSon, thou art ever with me, and ^ball that I have is thine.

32 It was ^ameet (necessary) that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

(What do these three parables have in common? These three parables show the joy for one who repents.)

(Joseph Smith said the elder son represented the judgmental Pharisees in the Savior's audience and that the younger son represented the publicans. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland said: "This son is not so much angry that the other has come home as he is angry that his parents are so happy about it. Feeling unappreciated and perhaps more than a little self-pity, this dutiful son—and he is *wonderfully* dutiful—forgets for a moment that he has never had to know filth or despair, fear or self-loathing. He forgets for a moment that every calf on the ranch is already his and so are all the robes in the closet and every ring in the drawer. He forgets for a moment that his faithfulness has been and always will be rewarded. No, he who has virtually everything, and who has in his hardworking, wonderful way earned it, lacks the one thing that might make him the complete man of the Lord he nearly is. He has yet to come to the compassion and mercy, the charitable breadth of vision to see that *this is not a rival returning*. It is his brother. As his father pled with him to see, it is one who was dead and now is alive. It is one who was lost and now is found. Certainly this younger brother had been a prisoner—a prisoner of sin, stupidity, and a pigsty. But the older brother lives in some confinement, too. He has, as yet, been unable to break out of the prison of himself. He is haunted by the green-eyed monster of jealousy. He feels taken for granted by his father and disenfranchised by his brother, when neither is the case. He has fallen victim to a fictional affront. As such he is like Tantalus of Greek mythology—he is up to his chin in water, but he remains thirsty nevertheless. One who has heretofore presumably been very happy with his life and content with his good fortune suddenly feels very unhappy simply because another has had some good fortune as well. "The Other Prodigal," Ensign, May 2002, 62.)

Richard Anderson said: "The parable of the prodigal son is the most developed of the three parables. It is a drama in three acts: the departure of the erring son, the father's welcome at his return, and the reaction of the dutiful son. The erring son is traditionally called *prodigal*, a word that refers to careless extravagance. As Jesus said, he "wasted his substance with riotous living." (Luke 15:13.)

Jesus described the consequences with painful touches of realism. A famine arises, and the young man, who has lacked the discipline to plan for the future, suddenly becomes the victim of that future. He had thought he had liberated himself by settling in a different country, but he now finds himself forced to work in a job that is despised in his own country because Jewish law declares that pigs are unclean for eating.

The headstrong son had already thrown away his moral standards and suffered a loss of status. In the story, painful hunger follows. The "husks" he feeds to the pigs were probably the pods of the native carob tree, which contained dried pulp, "as much as fifty percent sugar," that was "edible by man and livestock." However, the unfortunate man cannot even share the fodder that he throws to the animals.

Once defiant, the rebellious brother soon "comes to himself." He determines to go to his father and admit his mistakes, saying, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

"And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." (Luke 15:17-19.)

Up to this point, the parable has dealt with the effects of sin and rebellion. But now the story focuses on the effects of repentance and forgiveness. We read that while the prodigal "was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." (Luke 15:20.) **The son admits his guilt, and the father receives him with honor and celebrates his homecoming. No matter how hard the past or the future road, the father insists personally and publicly that the returning child is still his son and that he is still loved, saying,**

“For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.” (Luke 15:24; see also Luke 15:32.) **So important was this point that the father repeats it to the elder brother as the final line in the parable, with the variation for** *“this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.”* (Italics added.)

In the last verse, the father also says that “it was meet” that the happy celebration take place. This English phrase means “it was fitting or appropriate.” However, the Greek phrase is actually more intense: as the LDS edition of the Bible notes, the happiness was “necessary.” This thought appears in many current translations. For instance, in the New International Version, the father tells the elder brother, “But we had to celebrate and be glad.”

This parable deals with more than the effects of sin and repentance. As some have suggested, the story could also be called the parable of the father’s love, or the parable of the faithful father. Certainly the parable symbolizes God’s constant concern for his children. Since he is above all a God of love, he naturally welcomes the truly penitent.

Since parents ordinarily have a more mature love for their children than their children have for each other, the feelings of the elder brother reflects life. Through the parable, the Savior also challenged the Pharisees to learn to have a broader, more mature concern for their errant but repentant brothers and sisters.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that in this parable, the elder son represented the judgmental Pharisees in the Savior’s audience and that the younger son represented the publicans. Though sketchy, Willard Richards’s notes of the Prophet Joseph Smith’s sermon clearly indicate that this was how the Prophet interpreted the parable. They read: “ ‘[A] certain man had two sons,’ etc. [One said I] am a poor publican, a sinner. . . . All that is meant is brought to bear upon the Pharisee, Sadducee, the publicans and sinners. Eldest son—Pharisees and Sadducees murmuring and complaining because Jesus sat with publicans and sinners.”

The obedient son, surprised at concern for one whom he considered unworthy, has the narrow vision of the Pharisees who criticized Jesus. He is angry and points out his own righteousness to his father: “These many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment.” (Luke 15:29.)

Yet, in the process of “not transgressing” the father’s commandments, the elder son has failed to learn to love others as his father does. The son does not have a correct understanding of the principles of repentance and forgiveness. Yet his father replies: “Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.” (Luke 15:31.)

Thus, the parable ends with the father’s thought-provoking expressions of overwhelming love and loyalty to both sons. To debate about which son is more acceptable to God goes beyond the story. Salvation in both situations depends not on God’s love—which is freely given to all—but upon how one accepts God’s love.

For those whose lives may resemble that of the prodigal son, the message is reassuring: God welcomes us back as full sons and daughters. Indeed, as we read in Alma, God is a God of love, and in his mercy, he has provided repentance as a way for us to return to him: “There is a law given, and a punishment affixed, and a repentance granted; which repentance, mercy claimeth; . . . if not so, the works of justice would be destroyed, and God would cease to be God.

“But God ceaseth not to be God, and mercy claimeth the penitent.” (Alma 42:22-23.)

However, to return to our Father in Heaven, we must make the hard climb of consistent repentance and true reform. The powerful love of the Father and of the Savior can provide us with an immeasurable motivation. Indeed, Jesus may have added the killing of the best animal to the parable of the prodigal son as a hint that he would die for the sins of all repentant prodigals.

What does the ending of the parable signify for the dutiful son? Perhaps he is like those of us who fill our assignments and attend our meetings, but fail to learn charity—that unconditional love the Father has for all his children and which he commands us to obtain and exercise. (See Moro. 7:33-48.) For those of us whose lives are similar to that of the dutiful elder brother, the challenge is to learn to welcome God’s repentant sons and daughters—our brothers and sisters—with godly love.

Self-righteousness is a form of egotism that breeds intolerance and impatience. Lack of empathy is its major symptom. Since self-righteousness is an unhealthy inner pride, the cure for it is honest humility. Jesus, the most righteous of all, was the perfect example of humility. He said, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” (Matt. 11:29.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith followed that example. Despite his spiritual stature as a prophet, he never claimed personal superiority to other Saints. In fact, he said, “I don’t want you to think I am very righteous, for I am not very righteous. God judgeth men according to the light he gives them.” Like Jesus, the Prophet Joseph taught that true spiritual growth included the development of forbearance, tolerance, and compassion.

On this subject, the Prophet also said, “Don’t be limited in your views with regard to your neighbors’ virtues, but be limited towards your own virtues; and do not think yourselves more righteous than others. You must enlarge your souls toward others if you would do like Jesus. ... As you increase in innocence and virtue, as you increase in goodness, let your hearts expand—let them be enlarged towards others. You must be longsuffering and bear with the faults and errors of mankind. How precious are the souls of man!”

The Prophet was concerned about the lack of compassion the elder brother displays for his repentant brother. Perhaps Joseph saw how self-righteousness could easily lead to non-involvement. The ending line of his sermon on the three parables stresses the need to reach out and share the gospel with *all* mankind: “[The] servants of God of the last days—myself and those I have ordained—have the priesthood and a mission to the publicans and sinners.”

How did the Prophet regard the returning prodigals in his life? He felt betrayed when leaders left the Saints, and he bluntly said so. But some of these talented men “came to themselves” and were invited back to share in the work. Two of the most prominent were William W. Phelps and Oliver Cowdery, both of whom left the Church in 1838.

By 1840, William W. Phelps had written of the spiritual loneliness he felt without the fellowship of the Saints. The former Church editor and counselor in the Zion Stake presidency told the Prophet:

“I am as the prodigal son, though I never doubt or disbelieve the fulness of the gospel: I have been greatly abased and humbled. ... Says I, I will repent and live, and ask my old brethren to forgive me, and though they chasten one to death, yet I will die with them, for their God is my God. The least place with them is enough for me; yea, it is larger and better than all Babylon.”

The Prophet's answer is a remarkable blend of honesty and charity. He responded, "Truly our hearts were melted into tenderness and compassion when we ascertained your resolves. ... Believing your confession to be real and your repentance genuine, I shall be happy once again to give you the right hand of fellowship, and rejoice over the returning prodigal. ..."

" 'Come on, dear brother, since the war is past,

"For friends at first are friends again at last.' "

A number of years later, Oliver Cowdery also returned to the Church. Halfway through Oliver's exile, the Prophet sensed that Oliver was ready to return and to receive an important assignment—to go with Orson Hyde on a projected second European mission. In 1843, in a meeting with the Council of the Twelve, Joseph Smith directed that a letter be sent to his former counselor, alluding to the prodigal son's misfortune and eventual celebration:

"Write to Oliver Cowdery and ask him if he has not eaten husks long enough, if he is not almost ready to return, be clothed with robes of righteousness, and go up to Jerusalem. Orson Hyde hath need of him."

Such a letter apparently was not received. But after the martyrdom, the Council of the Twelve repeated Joseph's invitation in a letter to Oliver "exhorting him to be rebaptized." Within the year, hurt feelings were set aside as the Book of Mormon witness cast his lot once again with that of the persecuted believers.

The Savior sharply opposed sin, but frequently cautioned his disciples against rejecting the sinner. Joseph Smith also lived by this principle. In the letter inviting William Phelps to return, the Prophet showed how to treat the repentant: "Inasmuch as long-suffering, patience, and mercy have ever characterized the dealings of our Heavenly Father towards the humble and penitent, I feel disposed to copy the example and cherish the same principles, by so doing be a Savior of my fellow men." "Parables of Mercy," Ensign, Feb. 1987, 20)

(Elder Packer said: "The gospel teaches us that relief from torment and guilt can be earned through repentance. Save for those who defect to perdition after having known a fullness, there is no habit, no addiction, no rebellion, no transgression, no offense exempted from the promise of complete forgiveness....I repeat, save for the exception of the very few who defect to perdition, there is no habit, no addiction, no rebellion, no transgression, no apostasy, no crime exempted from the promise of complete forgiveness. That is the promise of the atonement of Christ. CR, Oct 1995, p. 22,23.)

Henry Drummond, a nineteenth century Scottish theologian, wrote the following masterful insight:

The peculiarity of ill temper is that it is the vice of the virtuous. It is often the one blot on an otherwise noble character. You know men who are all but perfect, and women who would be entirely perfect, but for an easily ruffled, quicktempered, or "touchy" disposition. This compatibility of ill temper with high moral character is one of the strangest and saddest problems of ethics. The truth is there are two great classes of sins—sins of the Body, and sins of the Disposition. The Prodigal Son may be taken as a type of the first, the Elder Brother of the second. Now society has no doubt whatever as to which of these is the worse. Its brand falls, without a challenge, upon the Prodigal. But are we right? We have no balance to weigh one another's sins, and coarser and finer are but human words; but faults in the higher nature may be less venial than those in the lower, and to the eye of Him who is Love, a sin against Love may

seem a hundred times more base. No form of vice, not worldliness, not greed of gold, not drunkenness itself, does more to un-Christianise society than evil temper. For embittering life, for breaking up communities, for destroying the most sacred relationships, for devastating homes, for withering up men and women, for taking the bloom off childhood; in short, for sheer gratuitous misery-producing power, this influence stands alone. Look at the Elder Brother, moral, hard-working, patient, dutiful—let him get all credit for his virtues—look at this man, this baby, sulking outside his own father’s door. “He was angry,” we read, “and would not go in.” Look at the effect upon the father, upon the servants, upon the happiness of the guests. Judge of the effect upon the Prodigal—and how many prodigals are kept out of the Kingdom of God by the unlovely characters of those who profess to be inside? Analyse, as a study in Temper, the thunder-cloud itself as it gathers upon the Elder Brother’s brow. What is it made of? Jealousy, anger, pride, uncharity, cruelty, self-righteousness, touchiness, doggedness, sullenness—these are the ingredients of this dark and loveless soul. In varying proportions, also, these are the ingredients of all ill temper. Judge if such sins of the disposition are not worse to live in, and for others to live with, than sins of the body. Did Christ indeed not answer the question Himself when He said, “I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of Heaven before you.” There is really no place in Heaven for a disposition like this. A man with such a mood could only make Heaven miserable for all the people in it. Except, therefore, such a man be born again, he cannot, he simply cannot, enter the Kingdom of Heaven. For it is perfectly certain—and you will not misunderstand me—that to enter Heaven a man must take it with him. (Greatest Thing in the World, p. 35-38)

CHAPTER 17

Jesus speaks of offenses, forgiveness, and faith—Even the faithful are unprofitable servants—Ten lepers are healed—Jesus discourses on the Second Coming.

- 1 THEN said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that ^aoffences will come: but woe ~~unto~~ *him*, through whom they come! (Child abuse is an abomination.)
- 2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should ^aoffend one of these little ones.
- 3 ¶ Take heed to yourselves: If ~~thy~~ (your) brother ^atrespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, ^bforgive him.
- 4 And if he trespass against ~~thee~~ (you) seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn ~~again~~ to ~~thee~~ (you again), saying, I ^arepent; ~~thou~~ (you) shalt forgive him.
- 5 And the apostles said unto ~~the Lord~~ (him, Lord), Increase our faith. (Jesus’ reply isn’t so much about the quantity of our faith, but the quality. If our faith is as small as a mustard seed, but if it is genuine then one can do miraculous things that are seemingly impossible.)
- 6 And the Lord said, If ~~ye~~ (you) had ^afaith as a grain of mustard seed, ~~ye~~ (you) might say unto this ~~sycamine~~ (sycamore) tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.
- 7 But ~~which~~ (who) of you, having a servant plowing or ^afeeding (tending a flock) cattle, will say unto him ^bby and by, (immediately) when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?
- 8 And will (he) not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird ~~thyself~~ (yourself), and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward (by and by you shall) ~~thou shalt~~ eat and drink?
- 9 Doth he thank that servant because he ~~did~~ (doeth) the things ~~that~~ (which) were commanded him? I ^atrou not. (say unto you, Nay.)
- 10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are ^aunprofitable servants: we have done that which was (no more than) our ^bduty to do. (Mosiah 2:21: I say

unto you that if ye should ^aserve him who has created you from the beginning, and is ^bpreserving you from day to day, by lending you ^cbreath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own ^dwill, and even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your ^ewhole souls yet ye would be ^funprofitable servants.) (In this life we are all unprofitable servants, or to use a more modern term, we are all bad investments. (See, for example, Luke 17:10; Mosiah 2:21.) From the Savior's perspective, even the most righteous among us cost more to save and maintain than we can produce in return. So if we're looking for the Lord to say, "OK, you've done enough. Your obligation is fulfilled. You've made it, now relax," we're going to be disappointed. We need to accept the fact that we will never in this life, even through our most valiant efforts, reach the break-even point. We are all unprofitable servants being carried along on the Savior's back by his good will—by his grace. However, the Lord does say to us, "Given your present circumstances and your present level of maturity, you're doing a decent job. Of course it's not perfect, but your efforts are acceptable for the time being. I am pleased with what you've done." We may not be profitable servants yet in the ultimate sense, but we can still be good and faithful ones in this limited sense. So if we are doing what can reasonably be expected of a loyal disciple in our present circumstances, then we can have faith that our offering is accepted through the grace of God. Of course we're unprofitable—all of us. Yet within the shelter of the covenant, our honest attempts are acceptable for the time being. BELIEVING CHRIST, Steven Robinson, p.94. So we, servants of our Heavenly Father and our Savior, should not perform our expected duties and anticipate applause and commendation to be heaped upon us; we are still unprofitable servants. We can never put the Father and the Son in our debt. Verse by Verse, the Four Gospels, p. 401.)

11 ¶ And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee (and Samaria).

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that (who) were ^alepers, which (who) stood afar off:

13 And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And ~~when he saw them,~~ he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the ^apriests. And it came to pass, ~~that,~~ as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw ~~that~~ he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

16 And fell down on *his* face at ~~his~~ (Jesus') feet, giving him ^athanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten ^acleansed? but where *are* the ^bnine?

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole. (Elder Bateman said: Luke describes Jesus meeting ten lepers. Upon seeing the Savior, they cried, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Jesus responded: "Go shew yourselves unto the priests." As they went their way, they were cleansed. One returned, fell on his face at the Master's feet, and gave thanks. Jesus said, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" And then the Lord said to the one who returned, "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole" (see Luke 17:12-19). In becoming a whole person, the grateful leper was healed inside as well as on the outside. **That day nine lepers were healed skin deep, but only one had the faith to be made whole.** The tenth leper ... [was] changed eternally by [his] faith in the Savior and the healing power of his atonement. Ensign May 1995, p. 13 Elder McConkie said "Were there not ten cleansed?" Jesus asked, "but where are the nine?" Surely there is sorrow in his voice as he continues: "There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger." **And then, to the Samaritan he said: "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole"—which can only be interpreted to mean that this one Samaritan, singled out of the group, received added spiritual blessings that were withheld from the nine.** MM 3, p. 283)

20 ¶ And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the ^akingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: ("Jesus simply goes back to

basic principles, corrects their false understanding of the doctrine involved, and announces what the fact is, 'You do err. This is my first appearance among men, and I came to work out the atoning sacrifice by which redemption comes. This time the kingdom of God cometh not with observation; there will be no great display of power and destruction.' DNTC, 1:539)

21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the ^akingdom of God (on the earth is the Church) ^bis ^cwithin you (has already come unto you.) (Many translations read 'among' because the pronoun 'you' is plural here in Greek)

22 And he said unto ~~the~~ (his) disciples, The days will come, when ~~ye shall~~ (they will) desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ~~ye~~ (they) shall not see *it*.

23 And (if) they shall say to you, See here; or, ^asee there: go not after *them*, nor follow *them*.

24 For as the lightning (light of the morning), that ~~lighteneth~~ (shineth) out of the one *part* under heaven, ~~shineth~~ (and lighteneth) ~~unto~~ the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of Man be in his ^aday.

(When Jesus returns, everyone will know it.)

25 But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

26 And as it was in the days of ^aNoe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the ^aflood came, and destroyed them all.

28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

29 But the same day that Lot went out of ^aSodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all.

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. (The destructions incident to the Second Coming)

31 In that day, ~~he~~ ~~which~~ (the disciple who) shall be ~~upon~~ the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he ~~that~~ (who) is in the field, let him likewise not return back. (The destruction of Jerusalem included the death of 1.1 million Jews. The Saints that dwelt in Jerusalem fled to Pella in Perea and were spared. DNTC, 1:644-5)

32 Remember ^aLot's wife. (Don't look back to Sodom and the wealth and luxury you are leaving. Don't stay in the burning house, in the hope of salvaging your treasures, lest the flame destroy you.)

33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life (seek temporal things) shall lose it; and whosoever shall ^alose his life shall preserve it.

34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two ~~men~~ in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35 Two ~~women~~ shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36 Two ~~men~~ shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. (Only those who keep the law of the terrestrial kingdom will abide the day of the Lord's coming.)

37 ^aAnd they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord, (shall they be taken)? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body *is* (gathered, or in other words, whithersoever the saints are gathered), thither will the eagles be gathered together; (or thither will the remainder be gathered together. This he spake, signifying the gathering of his saints; and of angels descending and gathering the remainder unto them; the one from the bed, the other from the grinding, and the other from the field, whithersoever he listeth. For verily there shall be new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. And there shall be no unclean thing, for the earth becoming old, even as a garment having waxed in corruption, wherefore it vanisheth away, and the footstool remaineth sanctified, cleansed from all sin.)