

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



Lost and Found: Pursued, Sought, and Welcomed Home

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Luke 15:11-24; Ps. 23; Jer. 23:1-5; Ezek. 34:11-12; 2 Pet. 3:9; Rom. 11:26

In Luke 15, Yeshua tells what is essentially one unified message told in three scenes: a lost sheep, a lost coin, and lost sons. Each story reveals something deeply personal about the heart of God. The setting matters. Tax collectors and sinners are drawing near, while Pharisees and Torah scholars are grumbling. That tension becomes the backdrop for everything Yeshua says. These parables are not random—they are a direct response to the complaint of the “righteous”—of the “faithful” – the religious. The complaint: *“This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”* What follows is a revelation: not just that God welcomes the lost, but that He actively pursues, values, and celebrates them. These are not stories about sheep, coins and sons — they are a story about the Father’s Heartbeat.

1. PURSUED WHEN WE WANDER (Luke 15:4-7)

Yeshua begins with the image of a shepherd who leaves ninety-nine sheep to go after one that is lost. *“Which man among you... will not leave the ninety-nine... and go after the lost one until he finds it?”* (Luke 15:4). This would have been a familiar picture to His audience. Throughout the Scriptures, God is revealed as a Shepherd—One who leads, protects, and restores. As Psalm 23 reminds us, *“He restores my soul”*—*He causes us to return.* The lost sheep is not abandoned; it is pursued.

This pursuit is intentional – relentless. The shepherd does not wait for the sheep to find its way back—he goes after it. This echoes the promises of Jer. 23 and Ezek. 34, where ADONAI declares that He Himself will search for His scattered flock. One sheep matters. You are not overlooked in the crowd. Heaven does not measure success by percentages—99% is not enough. The Shepherd’s heart is set on the one who has wandered.

2. SOUGHT BECAUSE WE ARE VALUABLE (Luke 15:8-10)

In the second scene, the imagery shifts from a shepherd to a woman searching for a lost coin. *“Does not [she] light a lamp, sweep the house, and search thoroughly until she finds it?”* (Luke 15:8). This coin represented a full day’s wage—something of real value. And her response reflects that. She doesn’t shrug it off or settle for what remains. She searches diligently, intentionally, and thoroughly.

This story presses the truth deeper: you are not only pursued—you are valued. The woman’s determination mirrors the heart of God. He does not treat people as disposable or insignificant. The lost coin may be small and silent, unable to respond or move toward being found, yet it is still worth the effort. And when it is found, there is rejoicing. Heaven celebrates repentance because every soul carries immeasurable worth in the eyes of the Father.

3. WELCOMED WHEN WE RETURN (Luke 15:11-24)

The final and most personal scene tells of a father and his two sons. The younger son's rebellion is staggering—he demands his inheritance, leaves home, and squanders everything. When he finally comes to his senses, broken and humbled, he prepares to return—not as a son, but as a servant. He knows he has forfeited his place. There is no excuse, no entitlement—only repentance.

But the father's response overturns every expectation. *"While he was still far away, his father saw him and felt compassion. He ran..."* (Luke 15:20). The father doesn't wait for the full speech. He doesn't demand repayment. He runs—humbling himself publicly—and restores his son completely. Robe, ring, sandals, feast. This is not reluctant forgiveness; it is lavish grace. The son expected survival—but received restoration. This is the heart of God toward all who return.

CONCLUSION

These three scenes together paint a breathtaking picture of God's character. He is not distant or disinterested. He is a Shepherd who pursues, a Seeker who values, and a Father who restores. The joy that fills heaven over one repentant sinner reveals how deeply personal this is. God is not hesitant to forgive—we are often hesitant to return.

The message is clear and open: come home. No matter how far you've wandered, no matter what you've squandered, the Father is watching, waiting, and ready to run toward you. His grace is not earned—it is given. His welcome is not cautious—it is overflowing. The question is not whether He will receive you. The question is: will you return?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What stands out to you most about the heart of God in these three parables?
2. Why do you think Yeshua emphasized rejoicing in each story when the lost was found?
3. In what ways have you personally experienced God pursuing or seeking you?
4. Are there areas in your life where you need to "come home" and return to the Father?
5. How can you reflect the Father's heart toward those who are far from God in your daily life?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Father, thank You for revealing Your heart so clearly. Thank You that You are not distant, but that You pursue us when we wander, seek us because we matter, and welcome us when we return. Help us to truly believe that we are valued and loved by You. Lord, for every heart that feels far from home, give courage to return. For every burden of shame or fear, replace it with the assurance of Your grace. And teach us to reflect Your heart—to pursue, to value, and to welcome others as You have welcomed us.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.