

PARABLE OF THE LOST COIN

Luke 15:8-10

"I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents." [v. 10]

Building on the parable of the Lost Sheep, Jesus illustrates God's great desire for return of his lost possessions. This parable concerns ten drachmas, a set belonging together, perhaps part of the bride's dowry from her father. A drachma is worth a day's wages. Although only one is missing, the rest are incomplete without the missing coin.



Jesus does not explain how the coin came to be lost, the only concern being its location. Night has come and the woman of the house is weary from all her labors. But, Jesus says, she cannot rest until the missing coin is found and returned to its place with the others. The woman begins to sweep every corner of her home, lighting a lamp so its flickering light might reveal anything hidden in the dark. She continues search until that which was lost is found!

Who is the woman in this parable? In the Parable of the Lost Sheep, we understand Christ to be the Good Shepherd (*"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."* [Luke 19:10]) Clearly the heart desire, focus and activity of the woman reflects that of the Lord. However, many writers believe she represents Christ's true church, *"prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."* [Rev. 21:2c] If so, kingdom disciples should embrace the church's purpose in carrying out the great commission, *"to seek and to save the lost."*

Having found what she had lost, the woman has cause for celebration. She *"calls together her friends and neighbors"* to display the coin and express her joy. Jesus then explains the joy of the Lord before angels in Heaven when a sinner repents. New believers easily go astray, but Jesus says their angels always stand before Almighty God. *"It is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."* [Mat. 18:10,14]



Godefridus Schalcken - Parable of the Lost Coin

Old Testament prophets understood God's great pleasure whenever a sinner repents and returns. *"He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."* [Zeph. 3:17]. And Isaiah exults, *"as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you."*

As for the scribes and Pharisees who distained the sinners who came to hear Jesus, what might they do to bring joy to the Lord's heart? God forbid that we be like them!

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