

Parables of Jesus **A Lost Sheep!** Albert Fairweather

A 'parable' is a story told to illustrate a spiritual truth. This one illustrates God's love for the foolishly lost! It can help those among us who come to realise that at times we have acted foolishly, and brought many problems upon ourselves, our families and friends. This is what Jesus said:

"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance" (Luke 15:4-7).

A sheep owner in those days led his sheep each day to the communal pastures, often in rough country in the mountains and valleys among bush and forest. Sheep can be foolish. They tend to 'follow the leader' or just 'hive off' on their own without thinking, at a tangent from the rest of the flock.

This shepherd had 100, but the missing one was of such importance to him, that he left the 99 to search for the lost sheep. Finding it brought his heart joy, and he called his friends and neighbours to rejoice with him over its recovery!

Jesus said, *"Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep?"* (Mat. 12:12). He puts great value on you, so much so that He came from heaven as *"the good Shepherd"* to *"give His life for the sheep"*! Read John Chapter 10 for much more about this lovely subject.

The Bible also tells us that *"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all"* (Isaiah 53:6). In other words, in varying degrees we have all done wrong things in God's sight, but Jesus took responsibility for all our 'iniquity' or wrong doing. He took our place on the cross and laid down His life under God's judgement, as a substitute for us, and took the penalty due to us. Because of this God can justly forgive all who believe in Him and take Him as their *"good Shepherd"*.

It brings great joy in heaven when we do this and 'repent'. To 'repent' means to be so sorry for our sins that we turn to God away from all wrong, and put our trust in Jesus Christ.

Remember, Jesus is teaching us here that we are of great value to Him. Why not cause rejoicing in heaven by doing this right now? I'm going to heaven, and I want to meet you there.