

The Red-Letter Words of Yeshua ~ Part 113

The Perea Ministry ~ Part 7

In our last post, we followed **Yeshua** as He left **Yerushalayim** to go to **Perea**. In this post, we continue to examine **His Perea Ministry** as **He Continues to Teach in Parables**.

Parable of The Prodigal Son

The **Parable of the Prodigal Son**, who leaves his loving father with his fortune, squanders it, and then returns home in repentance, is so widely referred to that those unfamiliar with the **Brit Hadashah** are often surprised to learn that the story originates here. Some say its only point is that the love of the father (i.e., **God**) is so all-embracing that He joyfully welcomes anyone who turns to Him from sin. Indeed, the parable shares this theme with the previous two we examined in our last post.

But in vv. 25–32, we see the **older son**, who considers himself righteous but rejects his **father's** generosity by resenting the reason it is offered. Some take them to be the **Jews** and the younger the **Gentiles**. Still, the context makes it more reasonable to think of the **older son** as anyone who supposes **God** owes him something and the younger as anyone who knows he has sinned and therefore throws himself on **God's** mercy, accepting **Yeshua** as his only hope for salvation and forgiveness.

¹¹ Again, Yeshua said, "A man had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that will be mine.' So, the father divided the property between them. ¹³ As soon as he could convert his share into cash, the younger son left home and went off to a distant country, where he squandered his money in reckless living. ¹⁴ But after he had spent it all, a severe famine arose throughout that country, and he began to feel the pinch. ¹⁵ "So he went and attached himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the carob pods the pigs were eating, but no one gave him any.

What is a nice **Jewish** boy doing, feeding pigs? Well, he's not so friendly anymore, and, for that matter, not so **Jewish** either. He left his **Jewish** father and home and went to **a distant country**, where the people were **Gentiles** and therefore had no compunction about raising pigs. He assimilated into that culture, first living recklessly and now necessarily performing that society's less pleasant tasks.

¹⁷ "At last, he came to his senses and said, 'Any number of my father's hired workers have food to spare, and here I am, starving to death! ¹⁸ I'm going to get up and go back to my father and say to him, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against you; ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired workers."'" ²⁰ So he got up and started back to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran and threw his arms around him and kissed him warmly. ²¹ His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son -'

The **son** began his prepared recitation confessing his sins, but the **father**, reading his heart, didn't even wait till he was finished (Isaiah 65:24) before receiving him as fully his son once more.

²² but his father said to his slaves, 'Quick, bring out a robe, the best one, and put it on him; and put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet; ²³ and bring the calf that has been fattened up, and kill it. Let's eat and have a celebration! ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead, but now he's alive again! He was lost, but now he has been found!' And they began celebrating.

²⁵ "Now his older son was in the field. As he came close to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked, 'What's going on?'" ²⁷ The servant told him, 'Your brother has come back, and your father has slaughtered the calf that was fattened up because he has gotten him back safe and sound.' ²⁸ But the older son became angry and refused to go inside. "So, his father came out and pleaded with him.

Pleaded. The **father** has not given up on his petulant and self-righteous **older son** but entreats him lovingly and courteously.

²⁹ 'Look,' the son answered, 'I have worked for you all these years, and I have never disobeyed your orders. But you have never even given me a young goat so that I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ Yet this son of yours comes, who squandered your property with prostitutes, and for him, you slaughter the fattened calf!' ³¹ 'Son, you are always with me,' said the father, 'and everything I have is yours. ³² We had to celebrate and rejoice because this brother of yours was dead but has come back to life—he was lost but has been found.'" ¹

The parable asks whether the **older son** will respond to his **father's** appeal. In present-day reality, whether self-righteous people will respond to **God's** salvation offer also remains open; ***"it is not his purpose that anyone should be destroyed, but that everyone should turn from his sins"*** (2 Kefa 3:9).

In our next post, **Yeshua Continues to Speak in Parables in Perea.**

¹ Luke 15:11–32.