

PARABLES, “THROUGH PEASANTS EYES!”

Study 10, The Parable of The Two Debtors, Part VI. Luke 7:36-50

1. There are 7 scenes;
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Outpouring of woman’s love. (in action)
 - c. Dialogue. Simon judges wrongly.
 - d. A parable.
 - e. A Dialogue. Simon judges rightly.
 - f. The outpouring of the woman’s love (in retrospect).
 - g. Conclusion. The woman/Jesus/Pharisees).
1. With this, we understand the text to present to the reader a picture of two great sinners; one sins w/o the L the other with the L. The first responds and accepts forgiveness and responds with much love. The second, Simon, has no real awareness of the nature of evil in his life. He sees himself with few spiritual debts and thus in little need of grace. Consequently, receiving little grace, shows little love. This can be seen with the 99 sheep, of course, Jesus really knows that the 99 other need to repent in the p of The Lost Sheep. Or is he laughing at the Pharisaical assumption? (Bailey). The sons in the p of the Prodigal Son and the two men in prayer at the temple, in Luke 15 and 18, offer similar contrasts. The rebuke to Simon is stunning. The prophet (Jesus) not only reads the women’s heart, but Simon’s as well. Simon becomes the accused. The drama is with Jesus under scrutiny, the tables turn and Simon is exposed. What is affirmed by Jesus Himself?
2. The drama’s affirmations of Jesus are profound. Simon thought that Jesus may be a prophet or ‘the prophet,’ foretold in Deut. 8:15, some see this in Luke 7:39. In the drama Jesus demonstrates the inner nature of the woman and Simon. This goes beyond just a simple affirmation of Jesus as He surfaces as a unique agent of God through whom God announces forgiveness and to whom a grateful response of love is demonstrated. The woman loves for her redemption, Simon fails to do the same. Such functioning affirmations about the person of Jesus are calculated to evoke from the reader/listener a response of recognition, affirmation, obedience,

accusations of blasphemy against the imposter who acts as God's unique agent. The drama does not leave us in doubt regarding the assembled guests at this banquet.

CONCLUSION: The PHARISEE, JESUS and THE WOMAN: (Scene 7).

3. The beginning of this study shows the three and a concluding glance looks back at some of these same characters. The other diners are not impressed. They only speak 'among themselves.' Other versions translate more literally, 'in themselves.' Like Simon, they are a bit nervous about verbalizing their criticism (They saw the withering attack Simon took). Jesus has not forgiven this woman, even though this is not beyond Him, see Luke 5:17-26. He has only acted in God's stead in announcing forgiveness and receiving gratitude. The Pharisees are puzzled or offended. In the Syriac and Arabic, we prefer to read, "Who is this who also forgives sins?" As in with other outrages, Jesus ALSO forgives sins. (Plummer). Finally comes the concluding remark to the woman, "Your faith has saved you, go in peace!" Her faith (Not her works of love) saved her.
4. The Biblical author uses the inversion principal that the major theme is in the middle and then repeats this at the end. (Bailey). The feature occurs here. The themes of God's freely offered love and accepted forgiveness is the major point in this p. She is mercifully sent away in front of her despisers in the peace with reconciliation with her father, whose agent will receive hostility and persecution in the proclamation of reconciliation. This scene like the one with the P of the Prodigal Son is unfinished. We don't know Simon's response, much like that of the older son. Will they reevaluate their debt and repent and offer gratitude of love that they have been glaringly missing? Or will their hostility and opposition harden? Then and now readers/listeners must complete their own response to the p. The drama ends and a look back is necessary.
5. In each p, we will look at the response that the original listener is pressed to make, and determine the cluster of the theological motives that comprise the impact of the p. These are motifs that can be beneficial for believers of any age. "A number of different motives are present in this p." (Marshall) Simon is pressed to understand and confess, "I am a great sinner and this I have not realized. I have not repented nor have heard the offer

of God's grace. I have been forgiven little and thus love little. If Jesus really want to avoid sinners, He would avoid me, not the woman!"

The theological clusters of motifs that comprise the impact of this p are;

- a. Forgiveness and Salvation are freely offered, an unearned gift from God received by faith.
- b. When received, this will trigger costly acts of love, these are expressions of gratitude, not done to 'receive more.'
- c. Jesus is God's agent through whom forgiveness is announced and to whom a grateful response is given out of an awareness that through Him the believer is forgiven much. The question in scene 7 is not answered, each reader will bring their own response.
- d. Forgiveness to sinners involves the person of that forgiveness and is a costly demonstration of unexpected love. In this theme, one can hear the meaning of this passion.
- e. There are two kinds of sins and sinners, namely Simon and the woman. Simons sins inside the L and the woman outside of the L. Sinners like the woman most often know they are sinners, sinners like Simon often don't. Repentance is hard for the 'righteous.'
- f. In a man's world and a man's banquet, the woman is set forth as a heroine of faith, repentance and devotion. She is the champion in these regards over a man. The inherit worth of the woman and the fact that Jesus ministry is for women and men is powerfully affirmed in this drama.
- g. In the confrontation with Jesus, the options are faith or offense, there is no middle ground. For Simon, Jesus is a young guest who offends his host, fails to show gratitude for the meal and presumes to act in God's place. Or He is in fact God's unique agent who mediates forgiveness and appropriately expects humble and costly devotion to His person.
- h. Jesus accepts Simon's invitation w/o hesitation. He is the known friend of sinners and includes a concern for the 'righteous' and even the outcast.

May this great dramatic scene provide the same catharsis for us that it has for countless millions throughout the history of its telling.