

Thursday, May 23 | The celebration.

Luke 15:20-24 “And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ “But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ And they began to be merry.”

I would like to share an ancient Jewish tradition with you called the “Kezazah” ceremony. “By Jewish custom...[a son] would have been threatened to be disowned by the community. A ceremony called Kezazah (cutting off) would be performed if a Jewish boy lost his inheritance to a Gentile and he would not even be allowed to return or have anything to do with the community.”¹ Jesus knew these people understood this ceremonial tradition would have come into play when the prodigal son returned home. They also knew how humiliating it was for the father to run to him, place a ring on his finger, a robe on his back and sandals on his feet. Then to throw this elaborate celebration? Well, have we gone too far? Let’s dive into that.

Step back a bit and look at the figures in this parable. The father has now transformed into Jesus the son’s Savior. He has rescued him from the consequences of his sin. This celebration that was being given is more than what it seems. Looking ahead, the future holds a magnificent celebration: the marriage supper of the Lamb!

The celebration is about what the father has done. He has rescued his child. Jesus will be giving the same celebration to rejoice that he has saved us from eternal destruction. It’s that simple and yet so incredible! I know the implications of this was lost on the Pharisees and others. I pray it’s not lost on you. Rejoice with me!

To drive the point home, this is where Christ builds our hope and confidence in knowing we are a child of God! His love for us runs deep and wide, long and high, and nothing can separate us from that love. This is what we share with others as well and with the children this summer.

Q. What did you learn about God’s character?

Q. How can you apply this to your life?

MEMORY VERSE 1: Galatians 5:1, “For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.”

¹ <https://acts242study.com/the-request-for-the-inheritance-part-1-of-the-study-of-the-lost-son-parable-in-luke-15/>