

Grace Bible Church
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Tree of Life
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As long as you have a desire to repent, rebound and recover, then you have hope. The prodigal Son.

I have chosen a very popular story in the word of GOD to illustrate how GOD the Father treats us in grace and what our attitude should be toward others who have failed as we do. This story is about a young man who decided that it was time for him to go and make a life for himself without GOD.

LUK 15:11, And He said, "A certain man had two sons;"

They have always been his sons and always will be.

LUK 15:12, and the younger of them [the prodigal son] said to his Father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' And he [the Father] divided his wealth between them.

The older brother and the younger brother both received a share of the estate.

LUK 15:13, "And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, [the distant country is in the cosmic system] and there [in the world of the cosmic system] he squandered his estate with loose living."

Notice "*loose living*" that's all it says! It doesn't tell us exactly what is meant by loose living. All it says is that the

Prodigal son squandered his estate with loose living. Squandering his estate with loose living is what causes the Prodigal son to waste his life away. Squandering is rejecting the calling of GOD and refusing to stand in the gap; **EZE 22:30, “And I searched for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.”**

We do not know what is meant by loose living because all we do know is what his arrogant, legalistic, self-righteous, brother said that he spent it all on "*harlots or prostitutes*" in verse 30.

The point is that the Bible doesn't tell us or specify what the prodigal son did. The Bible says it was just loose living. However, the point is that he spent it all. He spent everything that his father gave him. Everything he would need to get started.

This means that the father represents Jehovah Jireh which means the LORD provides for HIS children. We have two sons who were brothers, one who spent everything he had on loose living, while the other is not using his inheritance for anything including blessing his father. He was also flat broke, not money wise but doctrinally.

As the wealthiest King in the ancient world said in **ECC 5:10, he who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance {with its} income.**

ECC 7:12, For wisdom is protection {just as} money is protection. But the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the lives of its possessors.

So, it didn't take long for the young son to pack up and leave his father

And reveal to us in **MAT 12:38-40**, **Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them,**

"An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and {yet} no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

And notice that it was the son who moved away from the Father not the Father moving away from the son. This is what happens when we live outside of GOD's plan for our lives, we draw away from GOD, He does not draw away from us.

That's why **JAM 4:8** says, **Draw near to GOD and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners [rebound]; and purify your hearts [perceive doctrine], you double-minded.**

So, in **LUK 15:14**, **"Now when he had spent everything [he's not investing, he's just spending], a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be in need."**

This was a part of divine discipline which GOD brings on every one of His children who go astray for a length of time.

Why?

Because He loves us and wants us back!

And whenever a believer goes astray, eventually he will come to a point as the last part of this verse says when he will begin to be in need. Having forsaken his Father who represents GOD, he can now find nothing but poverty, misery, and want.

So that in MAT 12:40-42, for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment, and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

{The} Queen of {the} South shall rise up with this generation at the judgment and shall condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

The human soul is empty if GOD does not fill it. And the famine represents the fact that there's a famine in every heart which is no longer nourished by the word of GOD. There is always a famine in the heart when a person moves away from GOD.

So, when the famine hit, he began to be in need and he couldn't even find a job. Life was now officially meaningless, filled with boredom; with no meaning; no purpose; no direction and no personal sense of destiny.

Up until this point, he never knew hunger because he was always provided for by his loving father, the one he turned

his back upon. And like any loving and caring father, he desires the best for his children, and he leaves the best for them now, especially the best that He has for the believers as well as the natural blessings that He has for all.

LUK 15:15, "And he went and *attached himself* to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine."

Notice that he had to attach himself to someone because he was living in fear of what his father might do if he found out that his son had lost all his inheritance and was flat broke and looking for the food that the pigs were eating.

How low can you go? You can go as low as you desire but that's just another walking zombie on planet earth. Now, as usual, as long as the LORD is involved with you and you have a desire to repent and to rebound and recover, then you have hope.

A hope that you can apply to your life beginning with honesty before the father. And so, the prodigal, embarrassed, shameful, guilty, condemned, humiliated, younger son went back home to get a job feeding pigs on a farm.

In this state, he **attached himself** which is the Greek verb *kollao* meaning to glue or to closely unite himself to a citizen of that foreign country which represents the Devil's children instead of GOD's.

And this reveals the misery of becoming a slave to the Devil and his cosmic system. The further a believer goes from GOD, the nearer he comes to being a slave to the Devil. And there is no master so cruel as the Devil.

There's no burden so heavy as that of sin nature control. No slavery, so nasty, as slavery to the old sin nature and the carnal, shameful, passions of the flesh. Now, in times of distress we are often led to self-examination and are used by GOD to bring about changes or repentance in people's lives.

This is not violating an individual's free will, this is simply you, as an ambassador for Christ, being ready and prepared to be used by the LORD in a special way.

Before the prodigal son goes back home, he still has some issues that he needs to deal with before his GOD and his father. His problem, once again, is that this young man still held on to the belief that he could maintain his self-sufficiency.

This parable describes the depths to which a prodigal son or a prodigal daughter can sink so low that if they do not deal with their problem of arrogance, then they will keep on sinking away from the LORD. His emptiness was shown by the job that he had to take, tending pigs.

There could be no worse job for a Jew than feeding pigs who were considered to be unclean animals and expressly forbidden in the Mosaic law, LEV 11:7; DEU 14:8.

LUK 15:16, "And he was longing to fill his stomach with the pods or the slop that the pigs were eating, and no one was giving {anything} to him."

He's starving while he's working because pay day only comes **after** the pigs are sold and marketed. And this is a picture of what happens when a believer goes back to the lifestyle that GOD has rescued him from which is a lifestyle that was

marked by filth and waste from whatever they eat, which is almost anything.

2PE 2:22 says, **It has happened to them according to the true proverb, “A dog returns to its own vomit,”**

This shows the humiliation the young man was now enduring. Gone were the fine robes and the rich food. Gone was the father’s excellent diet with fruit, vegetables, fish and some animals. Now, the lost son was occupied with the filthiest of jobs for survival.

And, his hunger was so great, his need was so wanting, his memories were so forgotten, and he was hurting so much inwardly, physically, and of course spiritually that he considered taken his life and filling his own belly with the slop (that’s about the closest he could get from skubula to the pigs).

The food that he was feeding the pigs with were called pods and they made **passable livestock food** especially for dirty animals like chicken, and pigs, and even rodents.

So that the detestable pigs were now eating better than the prodigal son. So, we read in **LUK 15:17, “But when he came to his senses,”**

I don't know if you realize it or not, but according to the food that a person eats, it effects their thinking because usually we do our best thinking when our soul is on an empty stomach.

And so, this man finally became honest with himself and looked at his life from a biblical perspective, which means to face up with the situation as it really exists, and then do something about it.

This should be something that the prodigal son would want to teach others about so that he had a chance to recognize his own sins and flaws and do something right for the rest of his life.

He needs to deal with his failures and mistakes and not be occupied with the failures and mistakes of others or lust after the food that others have filled their stomach with. To be restored and healed spiritually means to stop rationalizing or justifying yourself mentally and get back to thinking spiritually with a healthy mental attitude.

Stop blaming others or accusing others for the condition that you are under, change your diet, get some exercise, and follow up with a healthier diet. It simply means that you go back to the life that you were living, taken care of your body, soul, and human spirit.

We all need to be honest with ourselves and others and come to a point where we acknowledge and recognize that certain things are wrong and contrary to the word of GOD and that is why we put ourselves or find ourselves in the situations that we are in.

And remember, this is not a parable about what happens to a believer when he sins, this is a parable about what happens to a believer when he changes his lifestyle and refuses to rebound and recover.