



**"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; " (Psamls 92:12-14)**

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**A HAPPY  
NEW YEAR**

Jehovah is a God of new beginnings who promised **"Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.** Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." (Isaiah 43:18,19). Through the process of divine exchange we can all rise from danger to breakthroughs.

Every bad situation in life can be changed for the better if only the divine principles of victorious living are followed. Generally, everyone desires success and prosperity but the everyday reality they encounter is far from their expectations. Some complain about their predicament. Others excuse and justify it. However a sober reflection may reveal that humanity is often consciously or unconsciously responsible for most of the "weeds that grow in their garden" (Galatians 6:7). The story of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-24, clearly illustrates this, as well as how thoughts, decision and action led to his doom and rise - stages that are still applicable in life today.

## **I. THE FALL**

The fall of the prodigal son is marked by three distinct stages - delusion, depravity and disillusionment, considered in closer details below.

### **(a) Dangers In Delusion**

In asking for the portion of goods that falleth to him, and going to spend them in a far country, the prodigal son was deluded to think that enjoyment in-life can be achieved only by (i) acquisition of material wealth, (ii) gaining independence from the father, and (iii) indulgence in pleasure and promiscuity. There are always dangers in delusion! A life built on deluded philosophies is bound to meet with disaster sooner or later. It is only a matter of time. Today too, many are following deluded philosophies of life such as amassing wealth irrespective of the means, endless search for

**"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psalms 1:1-3).**

power and position, a carefree and independent attitude towards God and His word, indulgence in sensual pleasure and revelry, to mention but the few. Like the Israelites at the time of Jeremiah these "have forsaken the fountain of living waters and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water" (Jeremiah 2:13). And for the religiously oriented, they manifest a "zeal of God but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:2,3).

### **(b) Devastation of Depravity**

On his deluded mission, the prodigal son soon came to the realisation that "riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away as an eagle toward heaven " (Proverbs 23:5). He learnt the hard way that "man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). His sins found him out and he reaped what he soweth (Number 32:23; Galatians 6:7). He was so devastated in his depravity that he was glad to feed with the swine.

Leaving the prodigal son aside, let us note that many today are not in a better condition than him. They may not be feeding with swine but their spiritual condition and bondage to dark spiritual forces leave them in a similar mess.

### **(c) Disillusionment of the Disappointed**

The prodigal left home with high hopes and aspirations - riding as it were on cloud nine, but no sooner than not realised that his plans had all been "castles in the air", and that a life of fantasy and vanity only leaves behind a trail of disappointment and disillusionment. With his money, friends and popularity all gone he was faced with such harsh realities he never bargained for. In Genesis 3:9 God asked Adam a question worth considering - "Where art thou?". Once in a while, we ought to honestly and soberly reflect on this - In your journey of life where art thou? Is your life a catalogue of frustrations and woes? And are you disillusioned by these? If you are not getting what you bargained for in life; if the freshness of relationship and answered prayers you once enjoyed with the Lord is gone; if you are now in a spiritual doldrum condition rather than hearing from the Lord always; if the events of your life are more the outcome of gamble and chance than of expected outcome of plans and answered prayers; then it will do you much good to pause for a while and carefully weigh your life in the light of God's word.

Where art thou? Disappointed and disillusioned? - I tell you many are in that state. But be of good cheer victory is near. In Luke 15:18, the prodigal son took control of his life and turned the situation around when he decided "I will arise and go to my father".

## **II. THE RISE**

His thoughts, decisions and actions led to the terrible predicament which the prodigal son found himself, but it thrills my heart to know that that was not the end of the story. You may be in a terrible situation now. You may not yet know any possible solution to your predicament. Your circumstances can change from sadness to joy, poverty to prosperity, perplexities to possibilities as you follow the steps that brought back the prodigal son into a life of abundance and joy. It does not matter where you are or for how long you have been there. These timeless principles can lift you from the dungeon to the throne.

### **(a) A Delightful Discovery**

After a long time of living on deluded principles and suffering for its consequences, the prodigal son **"came to himself"**. This led to the

delightful discovery - "How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!" (Luke 15:17). He remembered that his father was still alive and loving, and that his servants were in a better condition than him. How pleasant was it for him to think that his hunger, poverty and perplexity would soon fade into history if he returned to his father.

Many today in difficult times are often not wise enough to discover the real source of their problem and the loving nature of God who is always waiting and willing to receive them home. Sometimes, they are deluded to think that God must have been responsible for their problems and sufferings. This often leads to bitterness and complain against God, which in turn leads one further away from the love of God. Cessation from these negative emotions and facing reality is the sure way to the rediscovery of the love and grace of God. Do you know that you have a powerful and loving God, who is able and willing to help you? Do you know that he has not abandoned you to the present predicament? Do you know that he is willing to accept you despite your previous disappointments and negative attitudes towards Him?

The ability to take meaningful sober decisions will catapult anyone into success, provided they are free from peer pressure and public opinion. Many today, though made to soar like eagles, are trudging around like turtle doves. Their potentials to soar high has been damaged by the invisible chains of peer pressure and companionship.

### **(b) Deliverance on Departure**

For the prodigal son, deliverance from his predicament only came after he departed from the far country. Decision must be followed by corresponding action if a change in the situation is desired. Mere wishes do not make eagles to fly. Failure to act on quality decisions only prolong problems. Don't just sit there waiting for the right time. Act now. The prodigal said "I will arise and go to my father" - that was quality decision, but if he never acted upon it he would have died of poverty and hunger. Sometimes shame, shyness, and the fear of a humble beginning keep people longer in their problems because they do not immediately act on the quality decisions they are harbouring in their minds for ages. Merely thinking will not solve your problems. It is time to rise and go to your father. He is waiting to receive and help you.

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