



# A New Beginning

**“ And when he came to himself, he said ‘I will arise and go to my father’...” (Luke 15:17-18).**

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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 predicaments. 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, recorded in Luke 15:11-24, clearly illustrates the stages that led to his doom and those that led to his restoration (rise). These stages and principles that are still applicable in life in contemporary times.

## I. THE FALL

The fall of the prodigal son is marked by three distinct stages - delusion, depravity and disillusionment as explained 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 maturity, happiness and enjoyment in-life can be achieved 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 following irrational beliefs that are not consistent with realities and the principles of successful living, amassing wealth irrespective of the means, endless search for 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

**“And he arose, and came to his father...” (Luke 15:20).**


that can hold no water" (Jer 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" (Rom 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 (Numbers 32:23; Galatians 6:7). He was so devastated in his depravity that he was glad to feed with the swine that he was hired to keep. Before we talk too much about the prodigal son and forget ourselves, let us be reminded that many people living today are not in a better condition than him. True, they may not be feeding from the same dish with swine but their bestiality and bondage to dark spiritual forces proves that they are in a serious 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 Gen 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 from the Lord are gone; if you are now in a kind of spiritual doldrum condition rather than hearing from God and sailing plainly by the leading of the Holy Spirit; if the events of your life are more the outcome of gamble and chance than of expected outcome of plans through 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 part two (below), we shall examine the stages that led to the rise of the prodigal, which will help you to change your circumstances for the better and remain in control all your life. This started with his personal decision in Luke 15:18 "I will arise and go to my father". Time is short, and it is really time to arise and go to our father, who has been patiently waiting for our return.

## **II. THE RISE**

It thrills my heart to know that his downfall 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, but be assured that 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 will work for you and lift you from the dungeon to the throne.

### **(d) 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 (the father's) 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. Some-

times, they prefer to philosophise their delusions by believing that God must have been responsible for their problems and sufferings rather than facing facts and realities of life that emanate from the consequences of their decisions and actions. Following this pathway often lead to bitterness and complaints 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?

To be able to take meaningful sober decisions that will catapult one into success, one must be free from peer pressure and public opinion. Many today, though made to soar like eagles, are trudging like turtle doves. Their potentials to soar high has been dampened by the invisible chains of peer pressure and companionship.

### **(e) Deliverance on Departure**

For the prodigal son, deliverance from his predicament only came after he departed from the far country and returned to the father. Decision must be followed by corresponding action if a change in the situation is to take place. Mere wishes do not make eagles to fly. Failure to act on quality decisions only prolong your problems. Don't just sit down there waiting for the right time to act. Act now. The prodigal son 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 would not immediately act on the quality decisions they have been having in their minds for ages. Merely thinking will not solve your problems. Rise up and go to your father. He is waiting to receive you and help you.

From now till eternity, let every day of your life be characterised by taking prompt action that are based on quality decisions.