

*The
Prodigal
Son*

*by
Maria R. Schwartz*

The Prodigal Son

The Lord spoke to the multitudes in parables, but to us—his chosen people—he has made known the secrets of his kingdom through his Holy Spirit; the anointing which guides us to all truth. (Luke 8:10, 1 Co. 2:10, 12; 1 John 2:27.)

Luke 15:11 says, “There was a man who had two sons,” and through divine revelation we can identify this man as God, our Father.*

Vs. 12 says, “The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share to the estate.’ So he divided the property between them. Not long after that, the young son got together all he had, sets off to a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in the whole country, and he began to be in need. He hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.” We see that this younger son descended from the place his father had given him, and that the father did not argue with this but rather gave him what he asked for—so is God.

Many times we ask God for what is not good for us; just as the people of Israel asked for a king, God gave them a king, all in order to teach us, so that we may come to know Him who loved us and still loves us.

The son went far from the father’s provision with the blessings he had obtained from him. But there was a reality at work here: The son was sealed, and even though he was far from the father and away from the father’s provision, he was still a son, even though defeated.

When a person is sealed with the Holy Spirit and then leaves the Lord's way or leaves his place of habitation in Him, the Word says that "The wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23). So the son partook of this death. Vs. 17 says, "When he came to his senses, he said 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.'" The son was pondering within himself what he would say to his father, but it is worth noting that in vs. 17 is says, "When he came to his senses..." And I ask myself, what made him come to his senses? It was that which had sealed him as a son.

The Lord gives us the power to repent. Coming to his senses, he said, "I will set out and go back to my father," and at that moment he was able to acknowledge what he had not acknowledged before—that he was a sinner. He had to conclude that he didn't deserve anything of what his father had for him. He was not worthy, and so he humbled himself. The son knew where to go and who was his provision.

David the Psalmist had a similar experience in Psalm 42. David was the anointed one of God and the Holy Spirit was upon him. He too had been sealed for the inheritance. He always knew that the blood was his provision, and even though he only knew in type, it was counted to him as righteousness. David says, "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?" David knew that God was the direct provision to quench his thirst. My dear brothers and sisters, repentance and forgiveness are matters solely between ourselves and God. In vs. 9 of Psalm 42 David says, "Why have you forgotten me?"

Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?

My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, your God?" Then the Holy Spirit himself lifts him up, "Why so downcast O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God." David knew he had been created for the praise of His glory! The believer who has gone far from his God knows where to return, God's love awaits him. His love not only waits for him, but He also meets him half-way at the very moment when the son responds again to God, his creator. Blessed be His holy name! The younger son squandered all that belonged to his father's house because he was not aware of the great provision he had received. Many times when we are in the Lord's way we realize our condition in His light and then we come to repentance.

When we were in darkness, when we were dead, He came to give us life. In that life we can discern light from darkness. In the light of Christ we can see what we are when we're apart from Him. The whole world is under the evil one, but the believer has a sure dwelling place in the Father, and so we see once again in Luke 15:19 that the son says, "I am no longer worthy to be called your son." The truth is, he was never worthy. Sometimes we think we're worthy of the Father's goodness, but it becomes necessary to be broken down in order to know the provision in Christ's blood. In vs. 20, that which the Son thought about finally took place and it says, "So he got up..." We must get up. The Lord is ready to give us the strength, because his love is eternal, "... and he went to his father." Alleluia! "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him..." The father did not wait for the son, but rather when he was a long way off, and was able to get up, the father saw him, "and was filled with compassion

for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him." It was not the son who threw his arms around the father and kissed him, but rather it was the father—he who had been scorned by his son. He had to let him go—so that he could be disciplined as he went. The father did not ask for an accounting from his son, but rather received him in love and mercy.

This is one of God's virtues that the believer is well-acquainted with—his mercy is everlasting. Oh, what great love! The son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet."

It is necessary that the people of God see themselves as sinners, outside of all holiness. "I am not worthy." Only God is worthy of all honor, all glory and all power. It was necessary for the son to return to the father acknowledging his sins, and the father had his provision reserved for him.

The first provision that we see is the robe. "Bring the best robe." The Word tells us that our own righteousness is like filthy rags; but the garment that the Lord gives us is his own righteousness, God's righteousness in the blood of the Lamb. Without that holiness, without that provision, is impossible to see God or draw near to him. The provision of the garment has been given to us by the Father (Genesis 3:21).

He was also given a ring. The ring speaks of commitment, of vows and of authority, when we come to Him repenting. He receives us and gives us the authority of sons and we commit to Him in his life.

When we acknowledge God's virtues, He gives us shoes for our feet. My brethren, if we don't go through this process,

we cannot preach God's gospel. The Word speaks of having our feet shod with the good news of peace, the gospel of peace, because God has made peace with us and has not taken in to account our sins.

The youngest son represents that gentile son that came to Him, that did not trust in his own righteousness, which is through the law, but in God's righteousness. He is a type of a people that only acknowledge Him as worthy of all praise, glory and power, and that recognize that all their provision and virtues came from Him.

In vs. 23 we see another provision. "Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate." Communion and joy are found at his table. Alleluia! My brethren, this is the most important thing, that we have been called to the banquet of the Lamb, to the feast of the Lamb, and there is communion in his church, there is joy and praise in his people, because that's the essence of the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. The son entered into communion with the father with gratitude. He was now ready to walk in the good news, in the works that have been prepared beforehand in Christ Jesus, through forgiveness by the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

The garment for righteousness, the ring for authority, the shoes for his works. Blessed be the name of the Lord! We can always come near his table in order to have communion and to rejoice with Him. Alleluia! Oh, what a clear message about that younger son, that allows us to see the people who came after the law, in the grace and truth of Jesus Christ. Blessed be his holy name! These are the people who acknowledge their condition and whose only merit is the blood of the

Lamb. In Him we are complete, sealed and sure! There is no way that a son of God can escape Him. Alleluia! In order for the believer to live the abundant life, he must abide in God's provision, Christ Jesus, in the communion with the Father through his Son. He must abide in the virtues that have been freely given, in his garments, in the commitment, in the vows, and with his feet shod. Where the head is, there must the body be, it must move with the head. He has good news to proclaim and we must walk in Him, in newness of life, in order to enjoy all that he has for us.

Oh, people of God, bought by Him! Have faith, be encouraged, because his mercy is everlasting.

Jeremiah 17:13 says, "O Lord, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you will be put to shame. Those who turn away from you will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the Lord, the spring of living water. Heal me, O Lord, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise." Alleluia!

The creator who made all things is creating an new being in us, created in Christ Jesus to do good works." (Ephesians 2:10) May God richly bless you and may his Word continue to minister to you.

* In order to become sons of God we must be born again and acknowledge Him who the Father has sent. In John 1:12 it says, "Yet to all who received him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God." When we receive the Lord as our Savior, we are sealed. "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the work of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit." (Ephesians

1:13) Through faith in his Son, we receive a spiritual seal which demons recognize and the people of God acknowledge through the Holy Spirit, and this seal states that we are His sons. The seal of the Holy Spirit "... is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory." (Ephesians 1:14) He has overtaken us and we are his possession in Christ Jesus so that we may obtain that inheritance.