

The Parable of the Prodigal son.

Found in Luke, chapter 15: verses 11 to 32,

"There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So, he divided his property between them.

"Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country, and, there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So, he went and 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.

"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants 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 servants. So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

"The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 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. 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.

Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So, he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

"The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So, his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

The feast and welcome back correctly symbolize the joy in heaven when a sinner repents and finds his or her way back to GOD. But the story has left many grappling about a commensurate reward, if any, for the other faithful and obedient son who never left home. After all, if one can go away to live a prodigal life and return to a great welcoming feast, what is the incentive against such willful action?

Granted, the prodigal son experienced challenges, pain and suffering during his period of profligacy. But these arose from the choices he made during this period. It could not have compensated for the heart break, pain and suffering of the loving father.

And the response to the other son that; *‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.’*, does not sound adequate enough for this seeming preferential treatment given to the younger son.

Viewed from this perspective, it is understandable that many ask this question, because the ending of the story seems to lack overall balance. Focusing on the forgiveness aspect of the story alone, does not offer the balance that the spirit seeks with its question.

For a satisfactory answer to this question, one must look at things from a spiritual perspective. But for this, we must have a deeper grasp of how sin (profligacy or exercise of willfulness) affects the spirit. This effect is independent of the physical or emotional pain that such actions may bring upon the person, as the parable describes in what happened to the younger son after he had squandered his inheritance.

So, what is the effect of sin on the Spirit. More important, what does a spirit experience, in accordance with the laws of creation, as it goes through the process of gaining forgiveness for a sin.

We know, from Jesus’ saying; *“What a man soweth, that he shall reap”*. We also know from the Grail Message of Abdrushin that the Law of Sowing and Reaping is inviolable, operating to bring to each person, in precise measure, the consequences of their actions (sowing). Through this law, we get to experience first-hand, and learn from our actions. Hopefully, in experiencing, we will learn to recognize actions that hurt others, and if we are of goodwill, choose to refrain from such actions in the future. Thus, the law of sowing and reaping has the effect of restoring balance to the act that created an imbalance, in the first place. But there is no guarantee that the perpetrator will necessarily see the error of their ways through the reciprocal action. It is up

to the individual to experience and recognize. Or fail to do so and continue to cause harm and remain trapped in the cycle of sowing and reaping.

However, the process of gaining forgiveness only commences with recognition of the error in one's action. As the younger son expressed with the recognition; - *I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son;*

This can begin at any point after the initial act. For a few, it begins soon after the act, indicated by a deep regret, usually accompanied by deep remorse and inward shame at having violated another creature or situation , i.e. *I am no longer worthy to be called your son ...* .

However, the regret does not override the activity of the Law of Sowing and Reaping. It can help the person readily see the effect of their actions, and appreciate their own experiencing of its consequences. It will also make it easier for them to see the justice and the regenerative opportunity that the painful experience holds for them.

But, recognizing the opportunity contained in the activity of the law, or the regret at the act, does not immediately eradicate memory of the erroneous act (i.e. sin), along with the regret and inward shame felt. Both are etched into the psyche of the originator or their victim. And this lives in the memory of the spirit for quite a while. Similar to how the after effects of drug addiction remains in the body, and hunts the memory and emotions for years, after one would have kicked the addiction, and regrets ever succumbing to it.

The same laws manifest, but perhaps differently, in different aspects of our being. Therefore, the same principle applies to the process of ridding errors (or sins) from the psyche or Spirit.

In fact, the more spiritually aware a person becomes, the more the memory of one's past errors become even more painful, though this is only experienced inwardly, with no one else, or onlookers being the wiser.

If a thousand earth years are like one spiritual year, one can imagine the length and depth of inner remorse that a repentant spirit will have to live through, even though it has experienced and learned from its karma.

It is through this slow and painful process that the spirit can finally learn to see the error of its ways. But much more important, to truly decide never again to transgress in that manner. This time, the decision will be in its broadest sense, and not in the narrow way in which an unenlightened may couch their regret. For example, a person who has gone through the rigors of Spiritual regret, will see a transgression like theft, in a much broader scope. Such a person will see this as more than simply theft of personal property or reputation. He will include such transgressions like depriving others of their freedom of action, by imposing undue control of them, etc.

But equally important, they would never wish the painful and long psychic expiatory experience on anyone.

Using this frame work, it becomes easy to see that the older brother, who never strayed from the right path, could not have seen the welcome reception for the returning brother as an unfair differential treatment. If anything, being more enlightened, as one can imply from the parable, he would have pity on his younger brother, for the painful remorse that he would have to experience, as he slowly earned the forgiveness that has been generously offered by their father.

Needless to say, the foregoing explanation, is at odds with the ending of the parable, which suggests that: *"The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. "*

However, the explanation about the process of forgiveness given above, is more consistent with the activities of the Laws of Creation, as explained in The Grail Message of Abdrushin.

Since Jesus always spoke from a spiritual perspective, his original parable could not possibly have ended, as recorded in the gospel of Luke. It would have been consistent in its entirety with the Laws of Creation.

Under Jesus' spiritual scenario, the story was about two brothers; one who strayed away from the light, and the other who stood close to the Light and was faithful. The one who stayed close and was faithful, was surely aware of the Laws of Creation, of which Jesus tried to bring to the consciousness of his listeners, unfortunately unsuccessfully in most instances. Nevertheless, the older brother would have been aware of the path to spiritual forgiveness. As such, he would not have wanted to knowingly put himself through such a painful path, for a baseless reason. As proven by the fact that the younger brother came back with regret, and nothing spiritually attractive to show for his rash behavior.

It is not unlikely that one or more evangelist in grappling with how to resolve the silence about the older brother in the story, made an addition to the end of the original parable, to give questioners some way out of their dilemma. However, it is obvious that this effort did not resolve the question fully. Even to this day, the added statement of the father, :*'My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours'*, does not silence that nagging question.

Because, if as stated earlier, one can go live a prodigal life and return to a great welcoming feast, without recourse, what is the incentive against such willful action? Why the effort in energy and cost of lives of prophets and spiritual helpers in trying to help and to advise humanity against going astray.

Surely, the laws are inviolable, and would eventually have brought us, through suffering the consequences of our actions, to see the light.

Perhaps, therefore, all of this effort has been to help save us from the deep and painful experience that we have to undergo as we work our way slowly towards attaining spiritual forgiveness for ourselves.

This also brings into sharper focus the meaning and purpose of The Love behind the missions of Jesus, and all other Truth Bringers, through to modern times.