

Away From the Father's House

“11 Jesus continued: 'There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. 13 '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. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. 17 '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! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' 20 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. 21 'The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. ' 22 '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. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.” (Luke 15:11-24)

The above parable speaks about a man who had two sons. One of them decided to leave his father while the other preferred to stay. The father of the two sons in this parable represents God who created everything and who owns everything; power, majesty, authority and glory belongs to Him. The parable demonstrates to us the consequences of rejecting God, and living a life away from God. As well as, it shows us how much blessings we receive as we got to Him and live under His care.-

The younger son asked his father for his inheritance, and this is what most of us often do; in prayer we ask many things from God and God gave tremendously – material blessings, knowledge, education, good health, strength, power, authority, prestige, honor, etc. At the end, we think all these things come from our own determination, hard work, wisdom and strength. We assume that we do everything and live independently from God. But this is not true. Without God we can do nothing! As the parable depicts, it is impossible to live a good life away from God:

1- Living away from God makes us always in need: When God created Adam and Eve, He placed them in the Garden of Eden and God Himself was walking with them. They lived in the midst of bountiful blessing that God had created for them. God had supplied all their needs, but when sinned against God they found themselves away from the bountiful resources of God's provision. The same way we can say about those who live away from God; they live in poverty – material resources, relationship, reputation, and dignity. After the fall of man in sin, there was a big gap between man and God – that man cannot reach God. But God's love remains; he made a way so that man can come to Him. He sent His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus died on the cross paying the price of our sin, and through this payment He reconcile us with God the Father. The Bible says, ***“Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to***

present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation.” (Colossians 1:21-22) “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2Corinthians 5:21)

Jesus is the only way to reach God the Father. Jesus said, ***“I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)*** Whatever status of life we have, if we don't believe in Jesus and accept Him as our personal Savior and Lord we are away from God. We are like that son who took good things from the father and left, thinking he could manage alone. But the Bible says, he squandered his wealth and also famine came to the land. This is the situation if we are away from God; we would not have the wisdom to manage our resources, or when famine comes we would surely be in need. The famine in the parable may represent any calamity that may fall on us because we are away from God: family disorder, broken relationship, joblessness, accident, etc. our life is dry, without joy, without blessing, and even if we have much of everything we don't enjoy life but seems like only a routine for us. We are always in need of something; no satisfaction and no contentment in life. ***“I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content in whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.” (Philippians 4:11-13)***

2- Living away from God makes us slaves: In the parable we realized that the son who left his father refused to submit his life to the headship of his father until he felt degraded and demoted himself from being a child to slave. Many people refuse to accept the Lordship of Jesus Christ in their lives so they decide to stay away from God the Father, and accept to live as slaves of the world with modern rules and trends of the society. People who are away from God are slaves to what they honor and delight. They are slaves to their business, job, or to people with influence; they work hard to collect more money instead of using money to make their lives easy. We find some people slaves to knowledge, logics, philosophy and sciences, instead of living by God's word, the Bible. We find others slaves to cultures, traditions and observing certain rules made by men. We find them slaves to politics, economy and global events instead of focusing to the One who created everything – the author of their lives, the Lord Jesus Christ. ***“For by Him all things were created; things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him.” (Colossians 1:16)***

My dear and beloved: The younger son came to his senses and decided to go back to his father. He was tired living away from his family and he was longing to go back where he would find rest, peace and life full of blessing. Are you not longing for the same? The father was so happy when he saw the son coming back. Our father in heaven is waiting for you to come back to Him through Jesus Christ our Lord. He is waiting; so come to Him in prayer.

My Prayer: *“Heavenly Father, I come before you in the name of Jesus who died for me on the cross to give me eternal life. Father God, I have sinned against heaven and against You. Forgive me all of my sins, and accept me as your child to live under your care, to enjoy the peace and blessings unto eternity. Thank You, Oh Lord, for writing my name in Book of Life. This is my prayer in Jesus' name, Amen.”*