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The Prodigal Son

By Israel ben [Avraham](avraham.html) and Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian)

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In this [study](study.html) I would like to take a look at the [remez](remez.html) illustration of the prodigal son. To understand this [remez](remez.html) illustration should be understood as hinting as something far more important than the simple understanding would seem to suggest. I believe that the older son represents the [Jews](gen-jew.html) and that the younger son represents the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) who will turn to [HaShem](hashem.html) because they have a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) soul. Amos the prophet told us this:

***Amos 9:7-9*** *Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir? 8 Behold, the* [*eyes*](body.html) *of the Lord* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the* [*face*](body.html) *of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*, saith* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. 9 For, lo, I will* [*command*](cmds613.html)*, and I will sift the house of Israel among all* [*nations*](nations.html)*, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.*

Thus we understand that the children of Israel have been dispersed among the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) and their souls have become inter-mixed.

This illustration is found only in Luqas which suggests that it should be understood primarily from a [remez](remez.html) perspective. I have indented and italicized the portions from Luqas and interspersed our comments without italics.

***Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 15:11-32*** *And He said, "A certain man had* [*two*](two.html) *sons; and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate*

(His share in the [olam HaBa](futures.html) – [salvation](salvation.html))

*that falls to me.' And he divided his wealth between them. "And not many days later,*

(The early [church](church.html) began to separate themselves from Torah, [HaShem](hashem.html)’s divine instruction for life, only about [three](three.html) hundred years after the ascension.

When today’s seminaries talk about early [church](church.html) history they only go back to about [three](three.html) hundred years AFTER the ascension instead of going all the way back to the times of the Nazarean Codicil.[[1]](#footnote-1))

*the younger son* [*gathered*](gather.html) *everything together and went on a* [*journey*](stages.html) *into a distant country,*

(A [Hebrew](hebrew.html) idiom for leaving Torah!)

*and there he squandered his estate with loose living.*

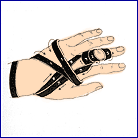
(A [Hebrew](hebrew.html) idiom for going your own way.) Consider Proverbs chapter 1:22ff[[2]](#footnote-2)regarding loose living.)

*"Now when he had spent everything, a severe* [*famine*](famine.html)

(I believe this is a [spiritual](physical.html) [famine](famine.html), he wasn’t being fed and I believe that in churches today, people aren’t being fed.)

*occurred in that country, and he began to be in need. "And he went and attached himself to* [*one*](one.html) *of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine*.

(When you’re taking care of pigs, and longing to [eat](eating.html) what they [eat](eating.html), it is a [Hebrew](hebrew.html) idiom to say “you’ve hit bottom” You’ve gone as far away from Torah as you can possibly get.)

*"And he was longing to fill his stomach with the pods that the swine were* [*eating*](eating.html)*, and no* [*one*](one.html) *was giving anything to him. "But when he came to his senses*,

(He now realized that his [Fathers](fathers.html) instruction was not bondage but rather [freedom](freedom.html)!! When [HaShem](hashem.html) gave the [ten](ten.html) [commandments](cmds613.html) in [Exodus](exodus.html) 20, what does verse 1 and 2 say?)

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 20:1*** *Then God* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *all these words, saying, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you* ***out*** *of the land of Egypt,* ***out*** *of the house of slavery.)*

(So whatever the [law](law.html) is, it’s the opposite of slavery and bondage.)

*he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! 'I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as* [*one*](one.html) *of your hired men. "'*

(As the younger son voluntarily turned against the Father and His [commands](cmds613.html), and therefore sent himself into [exile](galuyot.html), so also he voluntarily came to his senses and returned to the Father.)

*"And he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and felt* [*compassion*](file:///D:\Word\People\jonah.html) *for him, and ran and embraced him, and kissed him. "And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' "But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)

(What is this robe? Surely it must be a talit! This is the [garment](garment.html) of [salvation](salvation.html).[[3]](#footnote-3)

What is this ring? Surely it must be [tefillin](tefillin.html) which is worn like a ring as we are betrothed to [HaShem](hashem.html)! When a [Jew](gen-jew.html) dons his [tefillin](tefillin.html) each morning, he is putting on a [wedding](wedding.html) ring:

***Hosea 2:21-22*** *"I shall* [*betroth*](betroth.html) *you to Me forever; I shall* [*betroth*](betroth.html) *you to Me in righteousness and justice, in loving kindness and* [*compassion*](file:///D:\Word\People\jonah.html)*; I shall* [*betroth*](betroth.html) *you to me in faithfulness, and you shall* [*know*](daat.html)[*HaShem*](hashem.html)*."*

This [experience](experience.html) represents our placing the [wedding](wedding.html) ring of [HaShem](hashem.html) on our finger, portraying our perfect relationship with Him.)

*and sandals on his* [*feet*](heel.html)*;*

(Shoes (sandals) suggest that he was given [physicality](physical.html), because we specifically do NOT wear shoes on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html) is order to become more [spiritual](physical.html). However, shoes enable us to [walk](walking.html) in the [commands](cmds613.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html).)

*and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us* [*eat*](eating.html) *and be merry; for this son of mine was* ***dead****, and has* ***come to life again****; he was lost, and has been found. 'And they began to be merry. "Now his older son was in the* [*field*](field.html)*, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. "And he summoned* [*one*](one.html) *of the servants* *and began inquiring what these* *things might be. "And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.' "But he became angry, and was not willing to go in; and his father* *came out and began entreating him.*

([Yeshua](yeshua.html)'s listeners understood that when he made reference, in the parable of the prodigal son, to “killing the fatted calf”, upon the return of the prodigal, he was not just referring to the throwing of just any party, he was referring to the joyous presentation of a zevach, or [korban](korbanot.html) shalem. This [korban](korbanot.html) was never “required,” or even “suggested.” It is not about “[law](law.html)” [and never has been], it is about drawing near to [HaShem](hashem.html) - expressing thanks to Him, and rejoicing in His goodness and His blessing. Something wonderful happens, a prodigal comes home for example, and a man's [heart](body.html) wishes to respond to the blessing with thanksgiving, in a way that will honor [HaShem](hashem.html) - the source of every blessing. [Korban](korbanot.html) Shalem (a peace [offering](korbanot)) is the appropriate outlet in such a case. [Korban](korbanot.html) shalem was not a ritual anyone had to perform. It was a natural, joyous response to the blessedness of living in [covenant](covenant.html) with [HaShem](hashem.html)!)

*"But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you, and I have never neglected a* [***command***](cmds613.html) ***of yours****;*

(I’ve never forsaken your Torah.)

*and yet you have never given me a kid, that I might be merry with my friends; but when this son of yours*

(not: “my brother”)

*came, who has devoured your wealth with harlots, you killed the fattened calf for him. '"And he said to him, 'My child, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. 'But we had to be merry and rejoice, for this brother of yours was* ***dead***

(Another [Hebrew](hebrew.html) idiom for leaving Torah.[[4]](#footnote-4))

*and has* ***begun to live***,

(A [Hebrew](hebrew.html) idiom for returning to Torah[[5]](#footnote-5))

*and was lost and has been found.' "*

This return of these [Jewish](gen-jew.html) souls was foretold by the prophet:

***Nehemiah 1:8-9*** *Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the* [*nations*](nations.html)*: 9 But if ye turn unto me, and keep my* [*commandments*](cmds613.html)*, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, yet will I* [*gather*](gather.html) *them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my* [*name*](name.html) *there.*

**\* \* \***

The prodigal son is an illustration of [salvation](salvation.html) for all of those with [Jewish](gen-jew.html) souls, prodigal sons, as spoken by the prophet:

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 61:8-10*** *For I* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *love judgment, I hate robbery for* [*burnt offering*](korbanot)*; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *with them. 9 And their* [*seed*](flower.html) *shall be* [*known*](daat.html) *among the* [*Gentiles*](gen-jew.html)*, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the* [*seed*](flower.html) *which* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *hath blessed. 10 I will greatly rejoice in* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of* [*salvation*](salvation.html)*, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.*

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1. Our name for the so called “New Testament”. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ***Mishlei (Proverbs) 1:22*** *"How long, O naive ones, will you love simplicity? And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing, And fools hate* [*knowledge*](file:///D:\Word\People\knowledge.html)*? "Turn to my reproof, Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you. "Because I called, and you refused; I stretched out my hand, and no one paid attention; And you neglected all my counsel, And did not want my reproof; I will even laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes, When your dread comes like a storm, And your calamity comes on like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come on you. "Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they shall not find me, Because they hated knowledge, And did not choose the fear of the Lord. "They would not accept my counsel, They spurned all my reproof. "****SO THEY SHALL EAT OF THE FRUIT OF THEIR OWN WAY****, And be satiated with their own devices.* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 61:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Vayikra (Leviticus) 18:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)