

PRODIGAL

(A poem based on the beautiful parable of the prodigal son, as told by the Lord Jesus in Luke chapter 15 verses 11-32.)

I was blessed and didn't know it – but it wasn't enough for me –
From the constraints of home I just yearned to be free;
There was an exciting big world promising so much more,
And my itchy feet its delights were longing to explore.

So I went to my father and said 'Dad, it's high time
I made a life for myself now, give me what is mine,
That I may go and find myself, and life at its fullest,
And pursue, unhindered, my own happiness.'

I could see the sadness welling up in his eyes,
But he did not try to stop me, condemn or criticise;
'Travel safely, my dear son, free from danger, want and fear,
But ne'er forget that there always is a home for you here.'

So, with money in my pocket, though scant regard for its source,
To a far land, within days, I followed a straight course,
Where, with reckless extravagance, and to my great shame,
I squandered dad's hard-earned money, and sullied the family name.

He'd faithfully taught me the difference 'twixt right and wrong,
But, as I took now my fill of wine, women and song,
I silenced the voice of conscience, and ignored dad's wise advice
In pursuit of fake 'love', that was only mine at a price.

Good times were here forever, I had friends a-plenty –
Or at least that's how it seemed, till my pockets were empty;
Then I woke up one morning, and was horrified to find
My so called 'friends' all had proved themselves of the fair weather kind.

Then famine the land ravaged, I was in abject poverty,
Where no man regarded, or cared for, or shared aught with me;
So an unpaid job I took, feeding pigs on a farm,
Gone now were the soft pillows – my sleeping place was a barn.

When I left home that first morning, little then did I know
That my quest for the 'high life' would lead to this all-time low –
Sharing food with the pigs, in the mire and the dirt,
My situation was dire, and how bitterly it hurt.

In the squalor and ignominy of a moment like this
The home I'd taken for granted I now so, so did miss –
'Why should I starve and die here, when I've a home still, maybe,
When my father's hired servants fare much better than me?

'I will return to my father, and will say unto him
Father, I've played the fool, and in heaven's sight I've sinned;
Of the honoured title 'son' I'm no longer deserving –
Will you take and make me as one of your hired servants?'

Would my father still love me? How would he react?
I must confess to not knowing quite what to expect.
So, with great trepidation, homeward bound I hurried,
Unsure of my reception – but I needn't have worried.

As I trudged up our laneway, and at last our house viewed,
I saw dad running to meet me, just as fast as he could,
The broadest smile brightly beamed, and love shone from his face
As he kissed me, and held me, in a bear-like embrace!

My sincere, humble plea I hesitantly shared,
But I didn't get far, and could scarce believe what I heard –
Dad interrupted me before I was even half-way through,
Assuring me 'You're forgiven; my dear son, I love you.'

Then, beckoning with his hand for a servant to come,
He said 'Bring forth the best robe, and put it on my son;
Put a ring on his finger, and shoes on his dusty feet,
And kill the fatted calf, come, let us rejoice and eat.

'Tis right we celebrate, for, after a long, anxious spell,
The one I so feared was dead, he's alive, home and well;
My prayers have been answered, my boy's back safe and sound,
My son, who was lost, praise the Lord, he's now found.'

Maybe you, too, have strayed far, far down a wrong track,
And seriously questioning – could God really take me back?
But God's love is relentless to each prodigal daughter or son –
His arms outstretched in welcome, as He tenderly bids you 'Come.'

If your Heav'nly Father you've spurned in seeking satisfaction,
And, emptied, hunger for home, but fearful of His reaction;
Yet that day you'll return God's been long anticipating,
He's ne'er stopped loving and longing, and watching and waiting.

Naught can lessen or extinguish the Father's love for His child,
So why tarry any longer? Come and be reconciled;
He will welcome and receive you; refresh, revive and restore,
That the fulness of His blessing you may experience once more.