

# RESET!

## Spirit·Mind·Body



### RESTORED!

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*Luke 15:11-32 KJV*

*"And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.*

*And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!*

*I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.*

*And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry."*

If a Jewish son lost his inheritance among Gentiles, and then returned home, the community would perform a ceremony, called the *kezazah*. They would break a

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large pot in front of him and yell, “You are now cut off from your people!” The community would totally reject him.

In the first century, however, a Middle Eastern man never — never — ran. If he were to run, he would have to hitch up his tunic so he would not trip. If he did this, it would show his bare legs. In that culture, it was humiliating and shameful for a man to show his bare legs.

So, here’s the question: If it was shameful for a man to run in that culture, why did the father run when his son returned to him? What motivated him to shame himself? He probably ran in order to get to his son *before* he entered the village. The father runs — and shames himself — in an effort to get to his son before the community gets to him, so that his son does not experience the shame and humiliation of their taunting and rejection. The village would have followed the running father, would have witnessed what took place at the edge of the village between father and son. After this emotional reuniting of the prodigal son with his father, it was clear that there would be no *kezazah* ceremony; there would be no rejecting this son — *despite what he has done*. The son had repented and returned to the father. The father had taken the full shame that should have fallen upon his son and clearly shown to the entire community that his son was welcome back home.

The amazing application for our own lives is crystal clear. Our heavenly Father has taken our shame through his Son, Jesus, who willingly endured the cross on our behalf. He took our sins’ shame so that we would not have to. As a result, we can be forgiven, **restored** — accepted. We do not have to fear going home to our Father and confessing our sins, no matter what we have done, or how many times we have done it (remember, Jesus taught his followers to forgive 70 times seven).

In the parable, only the father could restore the son to full sonship in the family. In our case, we are sinners, and there is nothing that we can do to restore our lost relationship with the Holy God of the Universe. He calls us and waits — a single repentant step in his direction, and he is off and *running* to welcome us back home!