

## Profligacy in Nigerian Governance and Possible Lessons from Luke 15: 11-32

Ogunlusi Clement Temitope {PhD}

*Department of religious studies ekiti state university, ado- ekiti*

**ABSTRACT:** The parable of the prodigal son is one of the most well-known and frequently referenced parables of Jesus. The parable, simple and profound, is narrated from three perspectives- that of the younger son, that of the father, and that of the older son. The work reviewed some scholarly works that gives exposition of the prodigal son's narratives. It shows a picture of self- centeredness, repentance, acceptability and jealousy. Using a descriptive method, these four main points were applied to Nigeria situation and therefore used as a challenge to end the culture of profligacy in Nigerian governance. Most Nigeria politicians and leaders in governance are likened to the prodigal son who engages in careless and wasteful spending. The paper noted that the money that could have been used for the collective good and welfare of the populace are in the hand of privileged few and self centeredness politicians who usually squandered it. The average Nigerians who are doing most of the job do not have access to the wealth of the nation, the politicians are the ones who earn more, despite the little efforts they put into the service of the nation. The work, therefore, argued that Nigerian leaders in governance, who are fond of unnecessary wastage, should follow the process of conversion that looms large in the parable of the prodigal son. In this regard the paper recommends that, Nigeria politicians with profligacy nature should return through contrition, through the conversion of the heart which means a desire to change and make a firm decision to improve the lots of the citizenry. When this is done, they will become a great hero been celebrated like the prodigal son. Also the entire populace should not feel bad when some decisions are made to cut down the expenses of the nation particularly the sponsorship of holy pilgrimages by some states. They should know that whatever decision made, is to reduce the profligacy of our society, and to make Nigeria a better place.

**KEYWORDS:** *PROFLIGACY, GOVERNANCE, POLITICS, PRODIGAL SON, NIGERIA*

### I. INTRODUCTION

It is not a new thing that the type of political structures that Nigeria operates is a very expensive one. One would ask: is it the process or the operators in the process that is expensive? Politics in Nigeria is more than expensive than governance. A situation whereby politics takes more money than development of human resources and infrastructures, such a nation cannot grow and no wonder majority are suffering and in abject poverty. Take for example, the amount that is being expended on general election every four years or amount used in maintaining party structures. What about the maintenance of numerous organs of government in which the recurrent expenditure take more than capital expenditure. What the stupendous and exaggerative awards and spending on capital projects many of which are not even durable or could stand the test of time. These can be considered as a bane to the progress, development and growth of this nation.

Profligacy in the Nigerian political system is not new and is a case that calls for concern. The rate at which Nigerian spent on politics, governance, award of capital projects and even the maintenance of its officials has really affected the economy of the nation negatively. This is where the case of the prodigal son should or speak to the conscience of Nigerians especially those who handle the affairs of governance and party politics. It is very clear that a nation or a country that operates recklessly with her resources without adequate plan for the future will end up like a baby who crawls and never progress to walking. This paper therefore seeks a way out of this uncontrolled spendthrift in our nation. For clarity purpose, the paper will be divided into four sections; first, an attempt will be made to present the interpretive responses of eight theologians in regards to this parable. After presenting these viewpoints, the paper will highlight the passage, John 15:11-32 and take a cursory look at Nigerian political structure vis-a vis its governance and the extent of their profligacy, then an attempt will be made to establish the fact that the story of the prodigal son can be used as basis to redress the uncontrolled extravagant life among Nigerians particularly among the political class. The paper will then offer a conclusion that suggests these varied positions work together as a resource for a better understanding of this parable within Nigeria contemporary society.

**The Text: Luke 15: 11-32**

The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) is one of the most all-encompassing parables told in the canon of the New Testament. It carries both the simplistic messages about faith in God and forgiveness of sin, making it accessible to those with the most rudimentary understanding of Christianity as a whole. The text goes thus:

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 men 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 men. 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.

**Analyses of the Parable of the Prodigal Son Story:**

The Parable of the Prodigal Son is a story, a wonderful story that Jesus told to illustrate the Father's joy at the repentance of a lost sinner. The parable at once simple and profound, is narrated from three perspectives- that of the younger son, that of the father, and that of the older son. Many Biblical scholars such as: Mary Ann Tolbert Bailey, Kenneth E. Jacob & T Dodd, C. H. Donahue, John R., S. J Hedrick, Charles W. Hendrickx, Herman Jeremia Joachim and Linnemann Eta have given different interpretations to this passage and some of their viewpoints will be briefly discussed. Tolbert been the topmost here, views the parable of the prodigal son through the lens of psychoanalytic theory, and the teachings of its founder, Sigmund Freud.<sup>1</sup> John R. Donahue examines the parable of the prodigal son in terms of its "dramatic structure," rather than its reflections of psychoanalytic thought.<sup>2</sup> Although, in *The Parables of Jesus*, Joachim Jeremias recognizes the love of the father characterised in the story as an "image" of God, he maintains that the parable is not an allegory, but a story drawn from life"<sup>3</sup> Eta Linnemann similarly interprets the parable as "the answer of Jesus to the protest of the Pharisees against his table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners".<sup>4</sup> After critically evaluating the parable as one unit that includes the two parables preceding it in Luke 15, Kenneth E. Bailey concludes that "all three are symbols for God, and that all three evolve into symbols for Jesus" in Jacob & the Prodigal.<sup>5</sup> C.H. Dodd, in the same vein, seeks to analyze the parable by comparing and contrasting it to the two parables that precede it in the gospel of Luke. He states that the third parable in this series "is not exactly parallel with the other two." According to him, the first two parables seem to focus on a person's delight after finding a lost possession that an "outsider" might consider "trifling".<sup>6</sup> B.T.D. Smith considers the parable in terms of the presentation of its multiple parts. He notes that the story is divided unequally, with a greater emphasis placed on the actions of the younger son rather than the elder son.<sup>7</sup> Herman Hendrickx provides a detailed exegesis concerning the verses of the parable as they appear in the gospel in *The Parables of Jesus*. He particularly notes the words spoken by the father to his elder son at the conclusion of the parable, stating that the term *teknon* means child, which is understood to be more "affectionate and reconciliatory" than the term *huios*, or son. By addressing the elder son in this manner, the father "assures him that his rights are not affected by the grace shown to his younger brother."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Tolbert, Mary Ann. *Perspectives on the Parables*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 97.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremias, Joachim. *The Parables of Jesus*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), 128.

<sup>3</sup>John R.J Donahue, *The Gospel in Parable*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 152.

<sup>4</sup>Eta Linnemann., *Jesus of the Parables*, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966), 73-76.

<sup>5</sup>Bailey, Kenneth E, *Jacob and The Prodigal*, (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 2003), 57-101.

<sup>6</sup>C.H Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), 92-93.

<sup>7</sup>B.T.D Smith, *The Parables of the Synoptic Gospels*, (Cambridge, The University Press, 1937), 193-194.

<sup>8</sup>Herman Hendrickx, *The Parables of Jesus*, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1983), 159.

**Facts that could be deduced from the Narrative:**

In view of what scholars have given above it is imperative to say here that there seems to be no singular interpretation that holds precedence over the others. They all present viable points that merit reflection and consideration in further study, and they all illumine aspects of the parable's plot in compelling and meaningful ways. However, the following could be additional interpretations:

- He squanders his money. The Greek word is *diaskopizo*, "scatter, disperse" and in our passage "waste, squander." [5]
- His focus is "riotous living" (KJV). The Greek adjective is *asotos*, "dissolutely, loosely," from the noun *asotia*, "debauchery, dissipation" [6] (see Ephesians 5:18; Titus 1:6; 1 Peter 4:4).
- The English word "prodigal," which is often used to name this parable, comes from a Latin word *prodigere*, "to drive away, squander." [7] His brother protests to the father that the prodigal brother has wasted all his inheritance on prostitutes (15:30). No doubt the Prodigal Son enjoys wine, women, and song until his funds run out.<sup>9</sup>
- The Parable of the Prodigal Son follows two shorter parables in which something that was lost is searched for and found, followed by a celebration. Each of them illustrates that, "there is God's joy at the repentance of a lost and wayward son".

But looking beyond the above, His apology includes four essential points:

1. He confesses sin against God -- expressed in Jewish fashion as "against heaven" -- for his sinful lifestyle and moral failures.
2. He confesses sin against his father for squandering property that legally and morally should have been conserved to support his father.
3. He renounces any legal claim to sonship. Though he is a son by birth, his father would need to use his older brother's resources to support him, since his father has already divided the property. He recognizes that he has no legal claim to the rights of sonship.
4. He asks to be hired as a servant at the estate. While his father no longer legally owns the estate, he is still running it, and will do so as long as he is physically able.

The father, of course, represents God the Father. The Prodigal Son represents those who have rebelled against God, who have repented, and return to God. Here are other main issues that could be deduced from the parable:

1. God does not prevent us from using our will or making choices. We have freedom to do so.
2. Repentance is necessary for us to return to God. Without repentance we act as if we have a right to something. Repentance recognizes and confesses our moral bankruptcy and changes direction. Repentance is a strong theme here, since Jesus mentions it in each of these three parables (15:7, 10, 17-19).
3. Even though he loves us immensely, God waits patiently until we "come to our senses." We can't talk, pursue, or persuade people into repenting. It is a conviction they must come to by themselves with the help of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8).
4. The sinner is morally bankrupt and has absolutely no claim on the Father, only the Father's love.
5. God our Father is ready to show abundant mercy. The son deserves nothing, but the father heaps upon him love and even the sonship he already lost. It's not due to merit but to mercy. This could be said to have the interior form of the love in the New Testament that is called *agape*. Part of the relevance of this story is the utter graciousness of the father contrasted with the stinginess and jealousy of the older son.<sup>10</sup>

Then we may want to ask at this juncture that, how does the above apply to Nigerian situation. In Nigeria over times there are evidences of prodigality that has eaten deep into the fabric of the society. This to a large extent is even getting worse on a daily basis. The next subheading will therefore address this in details.

<sup>9</sup> Dake Jennings Fins, *Dakes Annotated Reference Bible*, (Lawrenceville Georgia: Dake Publishing Inc, 2015), 1239.

<sup>10</sup> Jose Maria Casciaro et.al, *The Navarre Bible New Testament*, (New York: Scepter Publisher, 2008), 139.

### The Extent of Profligacy in Nigerian Governance:

In Nigeria, one of the problems with our democracy is that people elected into public office do not regard themselves as servants of the public who elected them and is paying their salaries. They regard governance as a right for them to do as they like with public money and even with lives of the masses. They see being in offices as a privilege to amass wealth, wield to themselves authority and undue rights and see themselves beyond and above anyone else. Many scholars have lamented the high rate of corruption and decadence in our modern society which is surfacing as a result of this kind of generated attitudes. For example, Oke Olusegun resounding the thoughts of Abogunrin is of the opinion that:

Our major ethical problems include tribalism, armed robbery and pen-robbery and corruption, greed and dishonesty, indolence and murder, cheating. . . . . The prodigal display of ill-gotten wealth by emergency contractors and politicians, retired civil servants and military officers have increased the thirst of most Nigerians for the Naira. It is now common to spray in dollars or pound sterling in order to really prove that one has made it.<sup>11</sup>

Also, Omoregbe states that the political setting in Nigeria is made of dishonest and fraudulent people whose main purpose of coming to government is to enrich themselves.<sup>12</sup> What could be said is happening in the nation is the fact that we do not have a truly representative democracy where credible, free and fair elections are conducted. Nigeria is said to run about the most expensive, profligate and wasteful democracy in the world. Looking at it this way:

- The presidency and state governors appoint a despicable number of aides, and what could be understood from this appointment is that, they are just saying “thank you” to these aides, or fixing up their kin whose contribution to the well-being of this country is at best, spurious and undefined. Some state governors may have as much as 50 special assistants and special advisers.
- Governors, aside their salaries, received over 100 million Naira monthly in what is called Security Votes, which they don’t have to account for. Beside this largesse, they still loot the treasury, demand and receive massive imprest, bribes, waste money and neglect the people.
- The lawmakers, federal, state and local governments practically laugh all the way to the banks without any iota of work or service to show for what they are paid to do, and what they steal. Their service to the nation is hardly commensurate to the huge sums they allocate to themselves as salaries, allowance and perks; yet, they still run around to secure government contracts for themselves. They want to have it all.
- Whenever election time is drawing near, and most elected (or should one say, selected) officials abandoned their employment and duty post in governance and begin to spend public funds on getting themselves re-elected (or re-selected, as it may be).
- Some state Governors seeking second tenure, purchase hundreds of vehicles to campaign for re-election and hardly attend to the functions of governance. In most cases funds for re-election campaigns do not come from their personal pockets; it is state money.
- Those governors not seeking a second term because the Constitution, fortunately does not allow for a third term, are now busy tidying up loose ends, destroying evidence of corruption, murder, etc and still looting the treasury<sup>13</sup> to the end.

These are money that should have gone into providing healthcare, good urban roads, schools, the attendance education of the future generation, potable water, electricity, railways, clean environment, etc. Some of them did not even try to change things and of course did very little to impact on citizens’ lives. There is always this pretense that they want to serve, yet they serve only themselves and some other selfish sectional, tribal or religious interests. In fact, most of them shun accountability. Imagine the waste of monies and resources, opportunities, wasted individual and collective brilliance; wasted generations! How many of the governors embark on aggressive revenue drive to supplement shortfalls from their allocation? Only few! They all wait on

<sup>11</sup> Oke Olusegun Peter, “Curbing the menace of corruption for Good Governance: the Role of Religious Leaders” in Ayantayo, J.K et.al (eds), Religion and Governance in Nigeria, Ibadan, Samprints & Graphic Co., 2012, p. 90.

<sup>12</sup> J.J Omoregbe, *Ethics: A systematic and Historical Study*, (Lagos:, Joja Educational Research and Publishers Ltd, 2004), 32

<sup>13</sup> Akintokunbo Adejumo, “ A Democracy of Profligacy and Outright Treasury Looting, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010, [www.nigeriamuse.com](http://www.nigeriamuse.com)

the monthly allocation, and even when that comes, profligacy, corruption and mismanagement begins. Half of the money disappears into private bank accounts, leaving capital projects starved of funding; hence the bad roads, the poor schools, poor healthcare, lack of security etc, and meanwhile Nigerians are dying unnecessarily.

Comparison, though they say, could be odious but sometimes has its positive side. On this note, using the Compare to other western countries, Quote (Elombah Perspectives): "President Barack Obama's salary is \$400,000 per annum. A Nigeria Senator collects ₦48 million per quarter. At the end of the year, each senator's haul will be in the neighborhood of \$1.7 million. Each of the 360 members of the House of Representatives will receive ₦35 million, that's \$300,000 per member per quarter. At the end of the year, each member of the House would have collected a cool \$1.2 million". Past surveys of salaries and benefits of public office holders from the Baltic to the Bahamas, the Americas and the Far East and everywhere else, has showed that Ministers and Federal Legislators in Nigeria are the highest paid in the world, despite the country being among the poorest in terms of per capita income, security, social provision and living standards. On the other hand, Nigerian workers are one of the lowest paid in the world. The Nigerian Minister earns more than his American, British or German counterpart, and of course enjoys perks of office those ones cannot even dare dream of.<sup>14</sup> This is a wasteful, reckless, licentious and decadent system of governance<sup>15</sup> with no sensitivity to the plight of those they claim to serve.

It suffices it to say that the democracy that is been practiced in Nigeria is really a form of fraud and scam committed against the Nigeria people. No wonder then that, in 2007, the ex-president, Obasanjo said politics is a "do-or-die" affair for many potential politicians in Nigeria. It is obvious that the reason why most people are motivated into politics is greed and personal aggrandizement; not to serve the country and the people, but really to serve their pockets, and to be served by the people of Nigeria. According to reports, "each Senator will pocket 720 million Naira (called constituency allowance), in four years, while each House of Representative member will get 540 million Naira. Apart from being illegal, it is obscene, insane and unwarranted, in a country where a huge chunk of the population lives on less than 1 US dollar per day. Little wonder, Nigerians are yet to see the dividends of democracy 20 years going! Nigeria practices the most expensive democracy on the planet such that something needs be done to avert a looming danger. As it is presently, if nothing is done quickly to stem the official looting tide, soon there will be no money to run the government beyond paying the bloated salaries and allowances of public office holders," rightly said the Action Congress party. The fact is, Nigerian politicians have turned themselves into instant millionaires just for being members of the National Assembly, paying themselves huge, obscene and unjustified salaries and allowances not commensurate with their very low productivity and without doing anything worthwhile for the country or for humanity. There is an unwritten consensus that politicians are only interested in looting the treasury. But Nigeria cannot make progress that way.<sup>16</sup> The prodigal administration has led Nigeria, a nation 'full of milk and honey' and where citizens have no reason to be poor, or workers not receiving their salaries and pensions regularly and as at when due to the most deplorable state that could ever be imagined. This phenomenon is replicated in the States' Houses of assemblies down to the Local Government Council Chambers.

#### **Application of Luke 15:11-32 to Nigeria Governance**

Nigeria is currently passing through a political and social process that needs thorough retrospection due to her profligacy nature. The consequences of this continuous wastage of resources has led Nigeria, an oil rich nation, to a beggar nation, and a nation where God's given wealth has been squandered through serial stealing of public funds diverted into private pockets. What needs to be done is to go back to the basis, in order words, for national developments to be fully realized Nigerians, especially those in governance, should be humble enough to do the needful as will be suggested below:

1. Our present predicaments in terms of economic instability should make our leaders, particularly people in power to have a rethink just like the prodigal son. In other words, there is need for re-modeling of the public spending habits and pattern to reflect the current economic realities. The young man having realized his mistake

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<sup>14</sup> Akintokunbo Adejumo,

<sup>15</sup> "In A Lighter Mood: The Way We Seriously Feel About Our Leaders" 29th August 2007 (<http://www.nigeriavillagesquare.com/articles/akintokunbo-a-adejumo/in-a-lighter-mood-the-way-we-seriously-feel-about-our-leaders.html>),

<sup>16</sup>Kabir Daluwa, "Nigeria's Political Profligacy and the Sad Story of Bauchi State, <https://www.Dailytrust.com.ng>.



made a desire to change his lifestyle. He says, "I will arise and go to my father and will say to him, father I have sinned against heaven and before you....." (Luke 15:18). His condition brought him to his senses and he realized his end if he continued thus. He put away pride and humbles himself by going back home and pleads for the lowest place in the household (v17-18). This is true repentance, genuine sorrow and humility.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, to the Nigerian leaders particularly the politicians, the expenditure patterns, official squander mania and profligacy should be the least expected of the managers of the country at a critical period like this, when an average Nigerian lives below one dollar per day.

2. Avoidance of misuse of freedom or access to wealth. Politicians in Nigeria have always been flaunting, before our face, the commonwealth with impunity and that has become a common culture till date. The freedom and respect that Nigerian leaders have and enjoy should not be misused or taken for granted. There is need to avoid insensible crave and display of crass materialism and raw power by the political class. Abiding by this is the only way to make meaningful development in the country. The prodigal son misused the opportunity he had and became an object of humiliation which later was followed by poverty. He lived a worldly fleshly life- living for the pleasure of his life only, meaning careless spending, drunkenness, partying, dressing to attract and the likes.<sup>18</sup> He surely must have thought to himself like the rich fool, "you have plenty of good things laid up for many years, take life easy, eat, drink, and be merry (Luke 12: 19).

3. Our leaders should be ready to sacrifice their comfort and equally bury their pride, remain and live less ostentatious lives so as to make life easy and bearable for others. Note that the prodigal was at the end of the *robe*. All his natural confidence is gone. He realizes he can't go forward on his own and therefore return home as a slave, but to his surprise, he was restored. He would have to get up" that is, turn from and leave the distant country with its pleasure, but with no pleasure, and go to his father.<sup>19</sup> As for Nigerian leaders in governance, there is need to arise, turning away from wishful spending and moving towards caring for the citizens.

4. Consciousness of the gravity of wasteful spending and make amends: At the centre of the prodigal son's consciousness, the sense of lost of dignity emerged. The prodigal son in the story came to himself and said, "how many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and here, I perish with hunger; I will rise and go to my father, and I will say: I have sinned against heaven, and before thee" (v17&18). There was a firm decision to improve his lifestyle and which, is expressed in humility, sacrifice and self-giving. In view of this, the father restored him. Three things were given to him which symbolizes his restoration. The "robe" restored him to a position of sonship and honor. The "ring" restored him to a position of authority in the estate. The "sandals" immediately restored and elevated him above servanthood, which means he became a freeman.<sup>20</sup> The "celebration that follows his restoration gives us a picture of reconciliation and full acceptability that follows full repentance.

The point here is that Nigerians, particularly our leaders, will become a great hero being celebrated by the world over if only the profligacy nature becomes things of the past. The celebration received by the prodigal son represents what the leaders of this great country will receive from the masses (and even foreign observers) upon their selfless, caring and loving attitudes towards the well-being of the citizenry. There should be a conscious efforts to make use of the resources available for profitable things like provision of portable water, good sanitary condition, healthy and balanced diets, health care delivery, effective mass transportation system, regular and constant electricity, creation of jobs for the teaming unemployed youths and the likes. When they do this honor and dignity will be accorded them.

5. Utilization of the resources at our disposal in a positive way. The masses which otherwise represent the prodigal son brother on their own part too should be concern on how to utilize the potentials they have and not necessarily wait till the so-called leaders make final and total amends. Everybody has a part to play in delivering our country from profligacy. We should not be consumed with anger, jealousy or complaint against any decision made to stop some excesses in spending.<sup>21</sup> The brother of the prodigal son, out of anger, could not see the celebration worthwhile. Meanwhile, it should be noted that Nigeria gets to the level of retreat or redressing the past anomalies by a reasonable government, the masses who represent the elder brother in our study should accept the idea in a good faith. For instance in recent time, the move by some state governments to stop the annual sponsorship of pilgrims to Jerusalem and Saudi Arabia should be welcome developments.<sup>22</sup> One expects too that further moves should be made to cut or reduce the emoluments and expenses of the legislators, governors and others. This also should be a welcome shift and should be embraced. This becomes important so

<sup>17</sup> *The Preacher Outline Sermon Bible*, (Chattanooga TN: (Leadership Ministries Worldwide, Vol. 1, 2000), 136.

<sup>18</sup> Dake Jennings Fins, 1239.

<sup>19</sup> William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible, The Gospe of Luke*, (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1994), 315.

<sup>20</sup> Dake Jennings Fins, 1242.

<sup>21</sup> *The Preacher Outline Sermon Bible*, (Chattanooga TN: Leadership Ministries Worldwide, vol 1, 2000), 137.

<sup>22</sup> "Thisday live.com " Profligacy in the Name of Religion"

that money saved from such can be ploughed back to finance infrastructural projects and other developmental programmes. Thus, these efforts should not be frustrated by the masses actions and inactions.

### Conclusion

The main thrust of this paper is that, the cost of running Nigeria's democracy is too high, and especially given our penchant for lack of accountability and corruption, this has to be brought under rigid and strict control. Our unscrupulous political class should be discouraged and deterred from going into government to make money. Governance should be made attractive not for money sake but as a means to serve the nation. This becomes possible when drastic reduction of unduly bogus remuneration of lawmakers and other political offices is done. Such will make political offices unattractive to potential thieves and looters while only those with sincere intentions to serve will see such small remuneration as enough motivation to contest elections to these offices, be contended and be committed to good governance and delivering desired results. The current system is very profligate, expensive and attracts thieves and breeds mediocrity. Expenses must be for attendances, cost of keeping constituency offices open, and if they have to be given car, housing and transport allowances, these must be properly allocated, scrutinized, monitored and commensurate with the service provided by these people.

As John Quincy Adams has rightly said, "the good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life."<sup>23</sup> The point is this, the prodigal had nothing on earth to help him. He had wrapped his life up in the pleasure of the world; but now, when it's all gone, there was nothing left to help him. He stood bare, empty, alone and destitute. Therefore for our country not to get to this level, God is waiting for us, like the father in the parable, with open arms, even though we don't deserve it. It doesn't matter how great our debt or profligacy is, just like the prodigal son, all we need to do as a country is to open our heart with nostalgia and passion for our country, help our people who are suffering and make them happy, fulfilled and comfortable.

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