

PRODIGAL SONS: Part 13 - The Last Oasis

"I am looking forward to our last oasis," Michael told his brother when they stopped for a short while before proceeding on.

"I am looking forward to Mark's wonderful sharing on this Jesus of Nazareth," Abe responded excitedly. It had been a long time since he had felt this way, almost the young-again feeling of excitement.

"How much we have changed brother," Michael said shortly. "This journey has changed us both more than I had expected."

"What were you expecting," Abe asked a little inquisitively.

"Well," Michael said, pausing, while he collected his thoughts. "My main reason was to go on a journey with you while we still could, health-wise and be more honest with each other."

"Yes, we are getting older," Abe said. "I have always wanted to travel like you did when we were young, only you beat me to it."

"I couldn't stay around much longer," Michael confessed. "I just needed to get away from it all with the same old routine, and to get out and see the world."

"I must confess," Abe said seriously, "I hated you and yet I envied you. It must have taken a lot of courage to just leave and enter the great unknown."

"Not really," Michael admitted. "Even though I had planned to get away for some time, but there was no way to plan for the unknown. I did feel guilty about leaving you behind with all the work."

"I must admit, that the worst part of it all," Abe confessed, "was how wonderfully our father treated you when you returned. I was furious!"

Michael thought a while then said, "I was prepared to be a servant and live with the servants, and somehow make it up to you."

"I never would have believed you...at that time," Abe confessed. "Sorry! I was really upset."

"What changed your mind?" Michael asked.

"I remember the good times we had together," Abe said, "and decided I didn't want to lose those." Abe responded almost crying now. "I missed you and I was pissed off at you at the same time."

"I knew there was nothing I could say or do," Michael said, "to change your mind. I could only wait and hope and try to live a better life."

"The other thing that helped me change my mind and attitude," Abe admitted, "was that I didn't treat our father any better. I was ashamed of myself. He would have been better off without me."

"Now you're not being fair to yourself," Michael started to defend him. "You had always worked harder for him and better than any servant we had."

"That was the problem," Abe said. "I felt I was just a servant, not realizing how much our father really loved us both." Abe was crying now. "How I miss him, now that he is gone and will never see his grandchildren."

"I believe he is watching us now," Michael said. "That is why I believe this man from Nazareth has a lot to do with where we are now, together, and at peace."

"I truly began to change when I realized how much you had also loved me, especially through my sons," Abe said proudly. "You have always loved them and treated them like they were your sons!"

"To be honest, I didn't want to make the same mistake with them as happened with us."

"They are wonderful sons," Abe said proudly. "They have the best fathers in the world."

"Back to this man from Nazareth," Michael pushed, "what do you think Abe?"

"It seems our whole trip has been nothing but about this Jesus ben Joseph," Abe said, "even if indirectly through others."

"That is what I find interesting," Michael said excitedly. "Here we are, introduced to this man from Nazareth through others, and it has been a blessing ever since."

"And..." Abe also was getting excited, "...I think our sons and daughters-in-law may know more about this Jesus of Nazareth."

"Did you say our sons?" Michael looked at him with a smile.