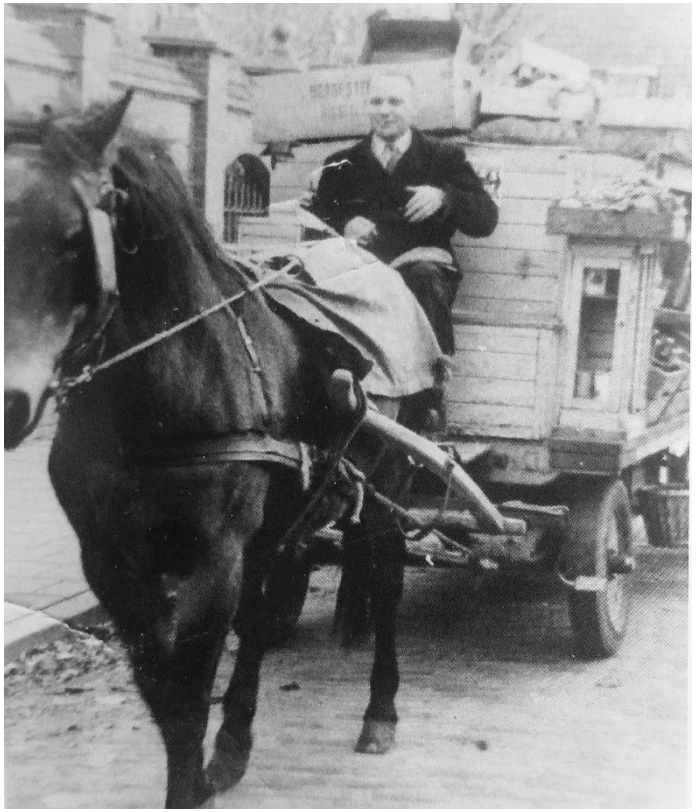
Servant or Family?



Father going door to door with the horse and cart.

I was raised in a family that had its own small business of buying and selling vegetables. We had a person that was paid to work in the family business. A real nice guy. He helped father loading and unloading. Taking care of the horse etc. Mother kept the books and us 6 kids helped out, when school permitted.



Our 'knecht' helping in the market

My brother and I joined the business after finishing school. However, I noticed that there was a distinct difference between us children as family and the servant or 'knecht' as you say in Dutch.

Although we had fun while working together in the business space; the warehouse, the shop and the markets, he seldom came upstairs into our living room. He would try to get our attention through the intercom system. If he would ever come upstairs, he would not out of his own volition enter into the living room and sit down. He would respectfully stand at the door.



Me, nine years old

While, we kids would run in, sit at the table, eat with mum and dad and would from time to time discuss the business. As far as financial matters, these were handled by mum and seldom discussed.

Yet, we were trusted and I remember being 9 years old going on my bicycle to the vegetable auction house, about 5 km away to pay our weekly or monthly bill of some 1100 guilders, which was a huge responsibility for me. Financial matters were done by the family and not the servants. Dad was sharp with buying; my brother and I joined the business and did the selling, it grew, sisters helped on the markets; the horse had become a truck.

Why am I telling you all this? It is mainly to show the special place that children have in a family business, which can hardly be compared to the place of a servant.

*"And they shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and **I will spare them, as a man spares his own son that serves him**."* (Malachi 3:17)

I can totally understand that verse as my parents loved me and my father was proud of me when I joined the business at the age of 15/16. I could hardly do anything wrong, at night I used to do sculpture, sometimes even in the living room, mainly to be around my family. Mum would not complain when she cleaned up the woodchips that were stuck in the carpet.

At the age of 19, I smashed up my father's car when I was drunk, as was the other guy, but I was spared the lectures, since I worked with my parents in the business.

When I turned 21, I was given a third of the business assets, as long as I stayed in the business, because legally my third stayed part of the business.



At the age of 22, I made the best decision of my life and decided to serve the Lord, which caused quite an upheaval at the time, but later on in life my family respected my choice. Although I decided to leave the business, I very much understand the difference between being a son and being a 'knecht' or servant in a family business.

The other day I listened to someone's NDE (Near Death Experience). The person was genuine. He flatlined and had medical records to back it up. During the time he flatlined, he left his body and an angel showed around heaven. He shared all the amazing things that he saw, from many children playing and having fun; to his dogs that had died, which came running up to him.

Visit to the Throne Room

Then the angel showed him the throne room where the Father and Jesus are the main ones, besides the 24 elders and some far-out animals with eyes all-over.



When they entered the throne room, the angel knelt and bowed, but gently pushed the person forward to go on to go to the Father and Jesus.

Jesus gave him a hug and then whispered in his ear: "Trust me."

After they left the throne room, he asked his guiding angel: "Why did you stop and kneel, while you put your hand on my back to push me forward?"

Listen carefully to what the angel answered him,

"You see I am a servant and serve the Lord; I respect my Master and give him reverence… BUT YOU, YOU ARE FAMILY."

End of NDE experience

Personally, I was shocked by that statement of the angel, because if I compare the throne room to our living room, I totally understand the difference between being a servant or being a son in the Father's Business.

I always thought that I was serving the Lord. But **suddenly I was catapulted from being a servant to a son as part of the family. I am family and not a servant. I own part of the business. It opens up a completely new dimension; I have a voice in the family business; I help make decisions; I help to plan how things can progress. It's no longer just following instructions; it is looking for opportunities of moving the business forward and to present these ideas and to see if my Father and older brother agree.**

Suddenly it became so clear that is why it says, *"He that overcomes shall **inherit all things**; and I will be his God, and he shall be **my son**."* (Rev.21:7) As **only family inherits**.



A family photo with my grandparents.
Mum and Dad's 12½ year marriage feast (koperen bruiloft)

If Father is the great "I AM", then I AM part of the great "I AM" and I AM the son of "I AM"; I AM Family; I AM no longer a servant of the "I AM"; No, I AM part of the "I AM"; I AM a co-heir in the Family; I AM Jesus' younger blood brother; I AM the son of the Almighty. I no longer need to discover myself as "I AM who I AM."

*"For both the One who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are of **the same family**. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them **brothers**."* (Hebrews 2:11)

With my personal older brother, although we had our ups and downs, I loved him and love him till this day, as 'Blood runs thick'.

How much thicker is the 'Blood Bond' to my oldest brother Jesus, who has my blood group and gave his last drop of blood for the transfusion to save the life of his unstable and dying younger brother, me.

It is entirely beyond me; that much love is totally incomprehensible for me. I can understand someone giving one of his kidneys for someone he loves, but every last blood of drop is outside my thinking.

Now the story of the prodigal son and the father-son relationship becomes so much clearer.

And Jesus said, "A certain man had **two sons**: And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that should come to me.' And he divided unto them his living. *(This must have rent his father's heart in two as this is what he worked for all his life.)*

And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted what he had with crazy living. And when he had spent everything and had no money left, there arose a mighty famine in that land. So he started to work for a citizen of that country; who sent him into his fields to feed pigs; he would have loved to fill his stomach with the husks that the pigs ate, but nobody gave him.



When he stopped to think it over, he said, '**How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare, and I am dying of hunger**!

I will swallow my pride and go to my father, and will say, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and against you, and am **no longer worthy to be called your son: make me as one of your hired servants**.' *(Here we see again the distinction between a son and hired servant.)* 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 to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

(Don't worry, we'll discuss all that later, but I am so happy to see you and we are first going to have a party.)

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 out 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; he's back!'

And they began to be merry.

Now the older brother was in the field: and as he came close to the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants, and asked, 'What's going on?'

And he said to him, 'Your brother is come; and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.'

He was angry, and refused to go in: so instead his father came out, and implored him. And he answered his father, 'Look, these many years do I serve you, and always did what you asked of me: and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might have some fun with my friends: But as soon as this son of yours was come, who has wasted your living with drinking and prostitutes, you have killed for him the fatted calf.'

And he said unto him, 'Son, you are always with me, and **all that I have is yours**. It is good that we celebrate and be happy: for your brother was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.'" (Luke 15:11-32)

My life story of growing up in Holland and learning what the Lord had planned for me. I adhere to no religion as I have the honour to be one of God's sons, and am inspired by the amazing, sacrificial life of Jesus.
Voor nederlandse vertaling, klik HIER.



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