

FROM THE DARK PIT TO THE ROYAL PALACE



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Looking at the scars on his body that were there from childhood, he wrote thus, “I was penniless and was very weak and frail physically; I looked ugly, every one despised me; my persistent cough troubled me continuously; I was a coward. My presence was disliked by all as I used to stink”.

If we apply the psychological analysis of Sigmund Freud on this writer the conclusion will be that it is highly improbable that this person will become a great man, because the childhood that is ridden with bitter experiences is likely to present him with a grotesque future.

But I am forced to think differently after psychologically analyzing the life of the great writer Eric Arthur Blair. His life proved that it is not the birth but deeds and it is not the past experiences but circumstances and attitude that mould a person. The life of E.A. Blair, who adopted the pen name George Orwell and contributed to English literature the famous novels, 'The

'Animal Farm' and '1984', clearly shows that even those who are in the midst of unfavourable and adverse circumstances can become someone great. He was born on 25th June 1903, in Bengal, India, as the son of a Customs Officer. His journey from an ordinary person, E.A. Blair, to the famous stalwart in English literature, George Orwell was that of sheer hard work and firm determination. His life was not a bed of roses. It was the constant fight against the harsh realities of poverty and sickness that inspired Orwell's novels, articles, reviews and letters that had great literary and political significance (1920-50). The character George Bourington in his novel 'Coming up for air' published in 1939 represents the pain, anxiety and sufferings that George Orwell underwent in his life. In 1940, Orwell married an Irish lady, Eileen O'Shaughnessy. Together they ran a small poultry farm and a shop to earn their livelihood. But during the days of his poverty and suffering he turned his attention to reading. Only when he became well known as a writer did he adopt his pen name George Orwell. He blended the name of the national saint of England, St. George and the name of the river Orwell in Suffolk, to form his pen name.

The life of Orwell clearly tells us that one has to concentrate on one's strengths and not weaknesses. The example of Orwell who faced his life courageously even when he was running a small poultry farm to earn his livelihood is worth emulating. What is required is to lead a life trusting in the Lord without cursing the situations in life.

In the Book of Exodus we read how Joseph's jealous brothers tried to eliminate him by throwing him in the pit. Then he was sold as a slave. But Joseph did not grumble against his brothers or against God. He was able to see the hand of God even during this adversity. In spite of experiencing the pitch darkness of the pit he was able to tell his brothers, "I am your brother Joseph

whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.” (Gen. 45:4, 5). Do not forget that the same God, who lifted up Joseph from the painful experience of life, is waiting for you with an offer of promotion.

“Has anyone persevered in the fear of the Lord and been forsaken?” (Sirach 2:10). Despair and suicidal tendencies do not serve as a solution to any problem. Prayer and tearful waiting are the stepping stones to a successful life.

Success and achievements of life do not emerge and shine like a morning star on one fine morning, but it is the outcome of many dark nights of suffering, rejection and patient waiting. It is up to us to make our life attractive and meaningful.
