

Lesson V. THE PRODIGAL SON—TEMPERANCE LESSON May 3, 1914

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—There is no break between to-day's Lesson and that for last Sabbath.

GOLDEN TEXT—I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight.—Luke 15: 18 (Rev. Ver.).

Memorize vs. 17-19. THE LESSON PASSAGE—Luke 15: 11-24. Study Luke 15: 11-32.

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of ¹ goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there ² wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that ³ land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to ⁴ a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have ⁵ filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

17 ⁶ 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 ⁷ with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say

Revised Version—¹thy substance; ²he; ³country; ⁴one of the citizens; ⁵been filled with; ⁶But when; ⁷here with; ⁸in thy sight: I am; ⁹while; ¹⁰afar off; ¹¹was moved with; ¹²quickly; ¹³Omit hither; ¹⁴make merry.

Daily Readings—(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)—M.—The prodigal son, Luke 15: 11-24. T.—The prodigal son, Luke 15: 25-32. W.—The cry of the penitent, Ps. 51: 9-19. Th.—Turn ye and live, Ezek. 18: 26-32. F.—The Father's pity, Ps. 103: 8-18. S.—The riches of God's mercy, Eph. 2: 1-9. S.—A father's counsel, Prov. 3: 1-6.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. THE DEMAND.—11, 12. A certain man; not any very exceptional person; any true father would act like the one in the parable. Two sons; of very different dispositions. The younger; representing such people as the publicans and Jews other than the Pharisees, who claimed the first place in God's favor for themselves. Give me. Such a demand was not unusual in Palestine, where younger sons frequently left the land to join one of the many Hebrew colonies on the Mediterranean. The portion; half the elder son's share and therefore one third of the father's estate (see Deut. 21: 17). Divided . . . his living; giving, as would be only fair, the elder son his portion also.

II. THE DESTINATION.—13, 14. Not many days after. He could not too soon get where he would have his full swing. Gathered all together; selling land or jewels and calling in loans, greedily sweeping everything in. A far country; the farther the better; he could not, for very shame's sake, run his evil course near his old home. Wasted his substance; spent all his money. Riotous living; living in which a free rein was given to every passion. Mighty famine. Famine was a usual occurrence in various parts of the world in the days of Jesus. In want; the result of his wastefulness and the scarcity of food.

15, 16. Joined himself; literally, "glued himself to,"—"foisted himself on." A citizen; one of another nation, a heathen as we may naturally suppose. He sent him; not that he was needed, but out of a sort of good-natured pity. To feed swine; a peculiarly hateful task to a Jew, since swine were looked upon as specially unclean. Husks; the pods of the carob tree or locust tree common in Palestine. The pods are very sugary, and are used about the

unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and ⁸ before thee.

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But ⁹ when he was yet ¹⁰ a great way off, his father saw him, and ¹¹ had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and ¹² in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 ¹³ But the father said to his servants, Bring forth ¹⁴ the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

23 And bring ¹⁵ hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and ¹⁶ be merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

Mediterranean for swine's food. No man gave; not even the companions of his vices. These forsook him as soon as his money was gone.



PODS OF THE CAROB TREE

III. THE RESOLVE.—17-19. Came to himself. In his rioting he was not himself, he was "beside himself." The sinner has not only forsaken God, he has left his real self. Repentance is a return to the real self. Hired servants; chance laborers ¹⁷ worse than slaves, like tramps hired by a farmer for harvesting. I will arise; definite action without which mere words of regret would have been in vain. My father. Not even his sin could change that relationship. Will say. Open confession flows from real penitence. Sinned against heaven; that is against God. In thy sight (Rev. Ver.). in thy judgment; he knows