

the region farthest away from the benign Father. **He began to be in want.** The larger a soul is the more it hungers and thirsts, and if it does not turn to the Fount of every blessing, who only can appease the cravings of the human heart, it must pine and suffer with famine.

15. Joined himself. He glued himself. He stuck against the man's will. He was hungry, starving, and did not care how much of a bore he made himself to others. All his riotous living, which doubtless included many a banquet and many a spree, had been unavailing to win him a single friend. The freedom of sin had been turned into slavery. **He sent him into his fields to feed swine.** The most contemptible work that the ancients had to do, and especially loathsome to a Jew. Jesus is here picturing a man who was as wicked and wretched as the publicans and sinners whom the Pharisees hated, and it would seem by thus associating him with the pigs, which were a detestation to the nation, he would emphasize the degradation to which the young man went, so as in turn to make plain the abundant welcome of his father.

16. He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat. He was eager to quiet the pangs of hunger with the earob pods that were given to the pigs. They are the color of chocolate and the shape of beans; they have a sickening, sweetish taste, but are no good for food, at least not for human food. **No man gave unto him.** Because no man cared for him. This was perfectly natural, though it was very wrong. Jesus does not utter one word in this parable which justifies otherwise good men in holding in contempt their fallen brothers and sisters. Every soul that it was worth while to make it is worth our while to save, and you cannot save a man by scorn. Satan cares not to alleviate the distress of his victims. (2) **Sin is selfish.** It is in Christian lands, by Christian people, that charities are founded and maintained. The miseries of the sinner's life: (1) Degradation; (2) Enslavement; (3) Need; (4) Helplessness.

17. Came to himself. He had been living to Satan; now his better sense again tries to rule. (3) **The first step toward salvation is to realize the wretchedness of sin.** **Hired servants.** (4) **The humblest saint is happier than the highest sinner.** **Enough and to spare.** (5) **Those look for nothing who labor for God.** **I perish.** (6) **Even in this life sin gives but a barren, unsatisfying recompense; and what of the life to come?** The first motive which prompts the sinner to repentance is sometimes the lowest one, the pressure of necessity. (7) **Any motive is worthy that leads to the abandonment of sin and the search after God.**

18. I will arise and go. It is a great, good deed to form a good resolution; it is a greater, better deed to carry it out. Put all your good resolu-

tions into action at once. It is better to make a good resolution and break it than not to make a good resolution. But why make it and break it? One prompt step out on the road of virtue will lead to countless others and give you a healthful impetus toward goodness. **I have sinned against heaven.** "Heaven" stands for the God of heaven, the goodness of our Father who is in heaven. He had sinned against Providence, against every revelation, and every appearance of good. It was well for him to acknowledge this first of all. (8) **Nothing so well becomes the sinner as humble confession.** But the words may mean, "I have sinned as high as heaven." **Before thee.** He had greatly wronged his father, and felt that he must directly confess the wrong he had done.

19. No more worthy to be called thy son.

(9) **One of the tokens of true repentance is deep consciousness of unorthodoxy.** Well said Mr. Moody, repentance is right about face.

20. To his father. It should read "toward his father." His father did not let him come to him, but met him a great way off. His loving eyes had wearily watched for his bad boy's return. **Had compassion.** Characteristic of God and the god-like man. **Ran.** (10) **God hastens to meet the repentant sinner.** **Fell on his neck.** Like a true oriental, who never hides his emotion. **Kissed him.** Over and over again. Professor Wright phrases it, "He rained kisses upon him."

21. The son said. He begins a mournful confession which was too profoundly felt to be ever forgotten, but he was cut short by his father's demonstrative affection.

22. But the father said. "When the far-away wanderer came back," says Dr. Cuyler, "he found six things: a father, a home, a welcome, a ring, a feast, and a song." **Bring forth the best robe.** The long embroidered robe which was worn by all Jews of quality. **Put a ring on his hand.** A token of dignity and power. Poor men in the East do not wear rings. **Shoes on his feet.** The shoes were really sandals. This, too, was symbolical. Shoes were worn only by freemen, never by slaves. The sinner saved is after all not a hired servant. He is received as a loving son, and his service henceforth is a service of love.

23. The fattened calf. Reserved for an occasion of feasting. **Kill it.** In the warm climate of the East meat must be eaten very soon after being killed. **Eat, and be merry.** Christ often represents his religion by the figure of a feast, never by that of a funeral. Flesh food is a luxury in the Orient, and the eating of it is often accompanied by noisy demonstration, such as wine drinking would produce at the present time.

24. Dead. Death is a figure of unrepented sin. **Alive again.** (11) **True life begins when the sinner, dead in trespasses, is awakened to life again by the voice of righteous men.**