

LESSON IV.

THE PRODIGAL SON

October 28, 1900

Luke 15: 11-24. Commit to memory vs. 20-24. Read Luke 15.

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 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 wasted his substance with riotous living.
 14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land: and he began to be in want.
 15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country: and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.
 16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.
 17 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 with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and 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 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.
 21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.
 22 But 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:
 23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and 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.

Revised Version—1 Thy substance; 2 Country; 3 One of the citizens; 4 Been filled with the husks; 5 But; 6 Here; 7 In thy sight; 8 I; 9 While; 10 Afar off; 11 Was moved with; 12 Quickly; 13 Omit hither; 14 Make.

GOLDEN TEXT

I will arise and go to my father. Luke 15: 18.

DAILY READINGS

M.—Luke 15: 11-24. The prodigal son.
 T.—Luke 15: 25-32. Lost and found.
 W.—Eccles. 2: 1-11. The world unsatisfying.
 Th.—Prov. 13: 1-15. The way of transgressors.
 F.—2 Chron. 33: 1-13. Learning by adversity.
 S.—Jer. 50: 1-7. Returning and weeping.
 S.—Hosca 14. Return!

TIME AND PLACE

As in last Lesson, of which the present passage is the completion. Probably in January, A. D. 30, and somewhere in Perea beyond Jordan.

CATECHISM

Q. 47. What is forbidden in the first commandment?

A. The first commandment forbiddeth the denying, or not worshipping and glorifying the true God as God, and our God; and the giving of that worship and glory to any other, which is due to him alone.

LESSON PLAN

I. At Home, 11, 12.
 But not content. He wants his own portion of goods and his own way.
 II. From Home, 13-16.
 Having received his portion, and being free to follow his own will, he spends all in rioting, and comes to want and shame.
 III. Home again, 17-24.
 Poor, penitent, welcome, and forgiven.
 LESSON HYMNS
 Book of Praise—93 (Ps. Sel.); 590; 579; 144; 587; 161.

EXPOSITION

Prof. Falconer
 Connecting Links—In this third parable of the series, a new element is added, the sinner turning towards the Father, who is waiting to receive him. The two parts—the younger and the elder son—are really two pictures to illustrate the same truth, that the Father receives with overflowing joy him whom He feared was lost. The parable of the Prodigal Son is the pearl and crown of all parables. "It is a world of wisdom and hope condensed into a few words, as a whole landscape is painted on the retina of the eye." It is, verily, the gospel in miniature.

I. At Home, 11, 12.

V. 11. A certain man; representing the Heavenly Father. Two sons; who are two types, the elder of the Pharisees and their sort, the younger of penitent publicans and sinners.

V. 12. The younger; who would have a smaller portion of the estate and less inter-

est in its improvement. The portion; i.e., one-third of the father's possessions. (Deut. 21: 17.) He divided. Often an old man might renounce his whole property to his sons, but they were required to support him in comfort to the end of his days. In this story the father still retains the chief authority over the estate. His living; lands and flocks and herds.

II. From Home, 13-16.

V. 13. Not many days after. He had already made up his mind what to do. Gathered all together; and so had no further claim on the home when he finally quitted it. It was a sad parting for the old father, but the young man went forth with a light heart now to be his own master. Far country; beyond reach of the restraints of home, so far indeed that his father thought he was lost.

V. 14. A mighty famine; not uncommon in Palestine. (Acts 11: 28.) Coming as it