

closely." **And the son said**; confessing what he had done, not grieving over what he had lost. **But the father said**; cutting the son short, before he asked to be made as a hired servant. (Compare Psalm 32: 5; Isa. 65: 24.) **The best robe**; kept for special occasions. (Compare Zech. 3: 1-10.) **A ring**. "The ring, in the East, is only worn by men of position or property. It is equivalent to armorial bearings in European countries." **Shoes**; not worn by slaves, therefore showing he was free. **The fattened calf**; kept in readiness for festal occasions. **Was dead**. Compare Rom: 6: 13; Eph. 2: 1. **Was lost**. God feels His loss of the sinner more keenly than the sinner feels his loss of God.

DAILY READINGS

M.—Lost and found, Luke 15; 1-10. T.—The Prodigal Son, Luke 15: 11-24. W.—Joy in the house, Luke 15: 25-32. Th.—The Deceitful heart, Jer. 17: 1-11. F.—Punishment and mercy, 2 Chron. 33: 1-13. S.—Repenting and returning. S.—Return! Hosea ch. 14. **Lesson Hymns**—Book of Praise, 129; 152; 76 (Ps. Sel.); 144; 560 (from Primary Quarterly); 151.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 22. *How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?* A. Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.

Prove from Scripture—*That the Lord is full of compassion.*

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Juniors—Who had found fault with Jesus? Name the parables in the Lesson chapter.

11-13 (a). How many sons spoken of in the Lesson? What request made by the younger? Why did he ask this? Whither did he go?

13(b)-16. How did the prodigal live at first in the "far country"? What brought this kind of life to an end? From whom did he ask help? At what work did this man set him? How hungry was he?

17-19 (a). What did the wanderer resolve to do? What led him to this resolve? Of what place did he think himself unworthy? Why?

19(b)-23. How did the father receive him? What did the son say? How did the father interrupt? How did he show his joy?

Seniors and the Home Department—Explain the purpose of the three parables in the Lesson chapter.

ter. What difference between the first two and the third?

11-16. What two classes represented by the two sons? What separates men from God? (Isaiah 59: 2.) How are they made nigh to Him? (Eph. 2: 13.) What is said of "the pleasures of sin"? (Heb. 11: 25.) Where can we find enduring pleasures? (Ps. 18: 11.)

17-19 (a). To what is sin here compared? What is repentance unto life? (S. Catechism, Ques. 87.)

19(b)-23. Show that God is willing to forgive? (Isa. 1: 18.) The condition of forgiveness? (1 John 1: 9.)

Seek Further Questions—In what Psalm is God likened to a father? Give a Bible promise of forgiveness to the penitent.

Topics for Brief Papers (To be ready on the day of the Lesson)—1. The fault-finding Pharisees. 2. The way back to God.

THE LESSON IN LIFE

1. God answers swift and sudden on some prayers; And flings the thing we have asked for in our face, A gauntlet—with a gift in it.

—Elizabeth Barrett Browning

2. There is a Jewish saying, "When Israel is reduced to the carob-tree, they become repentant."

3. To try to be happy away from God is sure failure. As the great Augustine said—and he had gone all lengths in sin—, "Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it repose in Thee."

4. The hope of the prodigal lay in his power of choice. He could say, "I will;" and when he made his great decision, the gulf was bridged between the swine-trough and his father's house.

5. Though our sins were like the waters of the ocean, they could not quench the eternal fire of God's love to us; though they were piled up like the Andes, they could not check the stream of love that flows from His heart.

6. A step at a time will accomplish a long journey. The farthest away from God has but these two steps to take and find himself already at home—to turn from sin; to turn to God.

7. Just as thou art, without one trace
Of love, or joy, or "inward grace,
Or meetness for the heavenly place,
O guilty sinner, come!"

8. The feast indicates the joy of a forgiving God, and the joy of a forgiven man.

FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS

1. What foolish choice did the prodigal make?

2. What wise resolve afterwards?

3. Describe God's receiving of the penitent.