

Prodigal



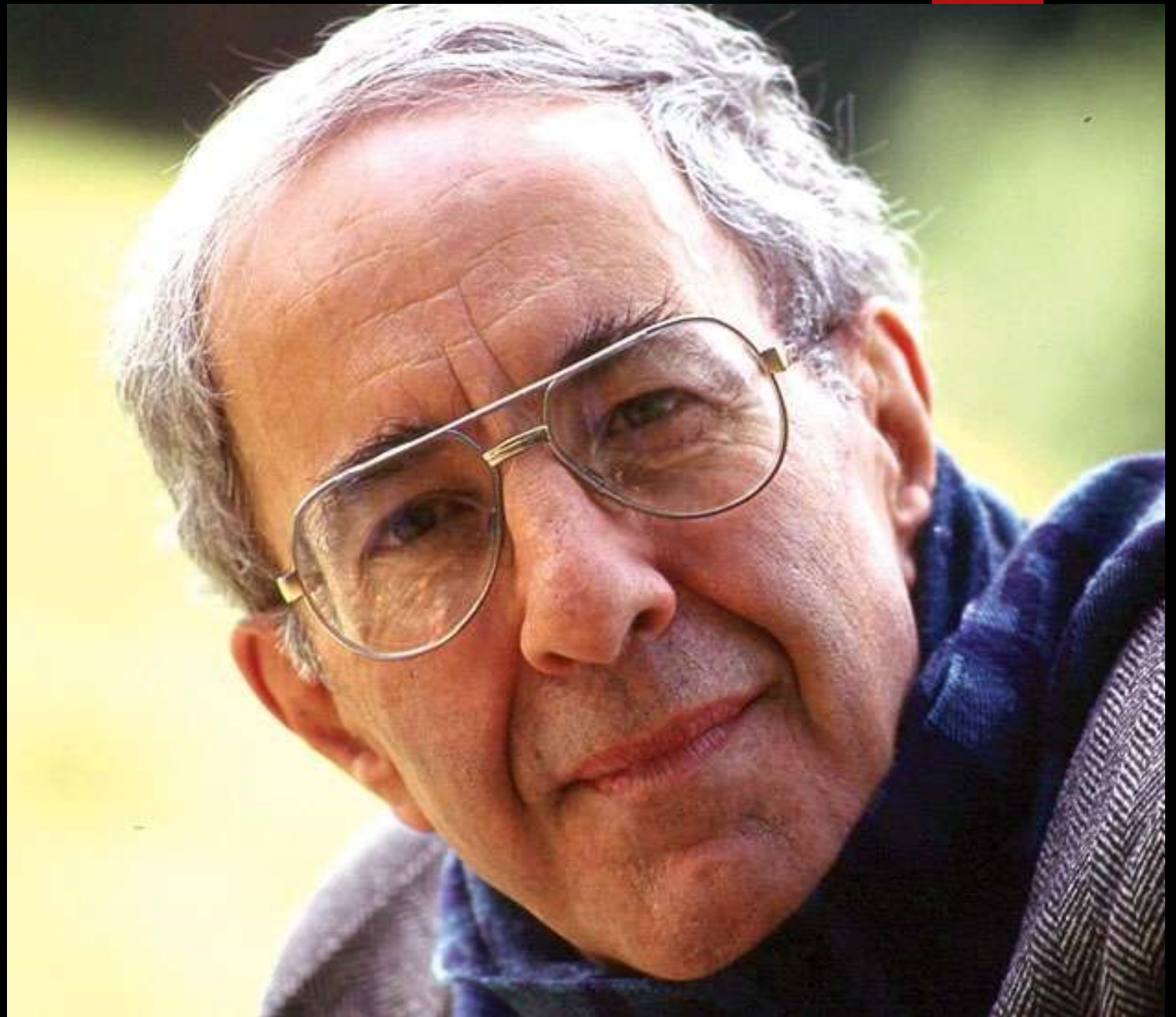
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THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL SON




A Story of Homecoming

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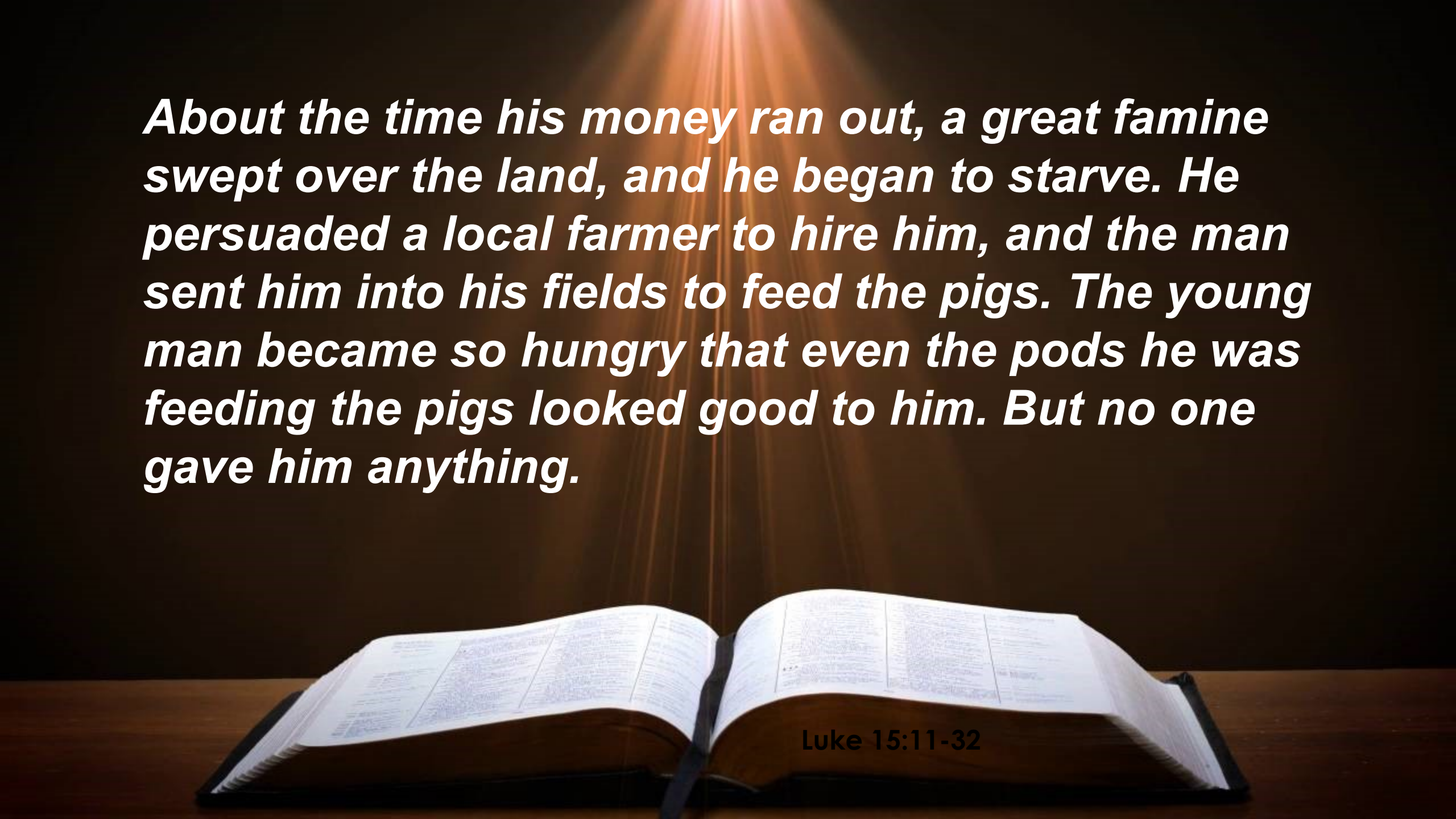
To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: “A man had two sons. The younger son told his father, ‘I want my share of your estate now before you die.’ So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons.

“A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living.



Luke 15:11-32

About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything.

An open Bible is shown from a high angle, lying flat on a dark surface. A bright, vertical beam of light shines down from the top center of the frame, illuminating the pages of the Bible and creating a soft glow. The text on the pages is visible but slightly blurred due to the lighting and perspective.

Luke 15:11-32

“When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, ‘At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! I will go home to my father and say, ‘Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.’”

Luke 15:11-32

“So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. His son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.’



Luke 15:11-32

“But his father said to the servants, ‘Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.’ So the party began.



Luke 15:11-32

“Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, and he asked one of the servants what was going on. ‘Your brother is back,’ he was told, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf. We are celebrating because of his safe return.’

Luke 15:11-32

“The older brother was angry and wouldn’t go in. His father came out and begged him, but he replied, ‘All these years I’ve slaved for you and never once refused to do a single thing you told me to. And in all that time you never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends. Yet when this son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!’

Luke 15:11-32

“His father said to him, ‘Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and everything I have is yours. We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!’”

Luke 15:11-32



The Son who Left

“We are the son who left home when we seek unconditional love and approval from sources where it cannot be found.”

“I leave home every time I lose faith in the One that calls me the Beloved and follow the voices that offer a great variety of ways to win the love I so much desire.”



The Son who Left

In what ways do I prefer the distant country over being at home?

How do I find myself seeking unconditional love from other sources than God in my daily life?



The Son who Left

“We short-change God’s grace when we seek to be servants rather than sons and daughters.”

“There is something in us humans that keeps us clinging to our sins and prevents us from letting God erase our past and offer us a completely new beginning.”



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The Son who Stayed

“We are the son who stayed home when we substitute duty for joy.”



The Son who Stayed

In the lost sheep, the shepherd left the 99 to seek the 1 lost sheep. But in the lost son, the father leaves the party to seek the son who stayed.

“The father wants not only the younger son back, but his elder son as well. The elder son, too, needs to be found and led back into the house of joy.”



The father

We are the prodigal father when...
we delight in sharing all we have.
we refuse to compare.
we throw a lavish party for all who return.
we love whether it is reciprocated or not.
we lavish love, forgiveness and restoration