

the Lord's service. It is the same in every case. Nothing else that we have is common and equal—talents, opportunities, educational advantages, etc., are all variant, as well as physical and mental capabilities. Only from this standpoint of God's reckoning us perfect through Christ have we in any sense of the word a "pound" apiece to use in the divine service.

Each one during his life time is to use his pound, his opportunity secured *through his justification*. Each must trade with his "pound," must exchange it, if he would make increase. We do lay down or exchange *justified* earthly rights, earthly interests, for heavenly ones,—and in proportion as we have zeal and energy in so doing will be our standing at the inspection when the nobleman returns. He who sacrifices most zealously his *justified human nature*, not only by consecrating it, but by daily sacrificing it, will be the one who will have the ten pounds at the conclusion of the test, and to such the Lord would say, Have thou dominion over ten cities.

If, then, our reward at our Lord's hands is to be in proportion as we shall be diligent in using this "pound," opportunity received *through our justification*, let us lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, and strive with patience to do with our might all that our hands find to do. The faithful ones seeking opportunities will find them; the less faithful, the less zealous, will find fewer, while others will pass them by, and ultimately miss the reward, and the opportunities previously *theirs through justification* will be given to those more zealous.

LOVE THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW

Question.—In the Berean Bible Study on Love Question V is, "What is the difference between duty love (*filio*) and disinterested or divine love (*agapee*)? I am somewhat perplexed regarding this difference, and would thank you for a little more light on the subject.

Answer.—Three different words in our Greek New Testament are translated love. The principal word, which well corresponds to our word love in English, is *agapee*. This word is used whenever the highest type of love is described; hence we have designated it disinterested or *divine love*, as representing the highest type of love when used respecting the Lord and his people. Nevertheless, just like our Eng-

lish word love, *agapee* is also used in an inferior sense, as for instance when describing love for the world in the text, "If any man love [*agapee*] the world, the love [*agapee*] of the Father is not in him."—1 John 2:15.

The Greek word *philadelphia* signifies brotherly love, and of course is always used in a good sense, because the brethren of the Lord are all "holy brethren." We are exhorted to develop this love for the brethren (*philadelphia*), and it is given as a mark or indication that we are new creatures in Christ. Nevertheless the Apostle exhorts that we go on beyond this degree of love (*philadelphia*) and attain to the broader or divine love, the disinterested love (*agapee*). Note an instance of this: "Add to your faith patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness [*philadelphia*], and to brotherly kindness, charity—love [*agapee*]." (2 Pet. 1:7.) The Apostle thus uses the word *agapee* to indicate the broader and more comprehensive love as the highest attainment of Christian character. Similarly, when describing the greatest thing in the world, in 1 Corinthians 13:2, 3, 4, 8, 13, the Apostle uses the Greek word *agapee*, love—in our common version translated charity. The culmination of his argument is, "Now abideth faith, hope, charity [love—*agapee*], and the greatest of these is charity [love—*agapee*]." *Agapee* is also used in 1 John 3:1 where the Apostle says, "Behold what manner of love [*agapee*];" and "He that dwelleth in love [*agapee*] dwelleth in God." In the next verse also we read, "Herein is our love [*agapee*] made perfect." Again we find *agapee* used by the Apostle in the statement, "God commendeth his love [*agapee*] toward us"; and again, "Love [*agapee*] worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love [*agapee*] is the fulfilling of the law."—Rom. 5:8, 13.

The Greek word *filio*, rendered love, we have designated "duty love," but we fear that this does not give a sufficiently clear understanding of its meaning. The noun which is the basis for the verb is frequently translated *kiss* in the New Testament, and by implication the kiss belongs to the family and implies a love that is more or less respect, or we might say exclusive or selfish—not general—not for everybody. It represents more of an individual or family love, and is used either in a good or an evil sense, as, for instance, we read, "The Father loveth the Son" (John 5:20); and again, "The world will love its own."—John 15:19.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

CONCERNING FALLING STARS

Our Society's London representative writes as follows:—"London is getting a stir-up over 'The New Theology,' as it is called. A Rev. R. J. Campbell, who took Dr. Parker's place in London, thinks he has a mission. Ritual and dogma are nothing to him, and he is laboring to break them to pieces. Man and God are indivisible; God is the sum-total of the consciousness of humanity—whatever that may be! Jesus was a man as other men, and was born in the same way: the difference in him being that he had more consciousness of himself and of things. There is no need for the terms Unitarian and Trinitarian, since man and God are one. The teaching that the blood of the man Jesus Christ, who was killed nearly 1900 years ago, could in any way avail to cover a man from guilt and that through faith in it a man can find acceptance with God is both lamentable and mischievous. These are some of the things being said. Other wild things are that a company of actors giving their services to interest some poor cripples were doing such work as Christ did on Calvary, and that the songs they sung, though not as fine words as the Psalms, were beyond them in actual effort. At any rate, this is to be seen—that the preacher in turning so sharply on the creeds will do something towards the disintegration of churchianity."

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The Rev. Campbell proclaims himself not merely a higher-critic infidel but an atheist as well; but he does this in refined terms so as not to alarm the flock he is misleading. To him God is either "*it*" or "*him*," with "*it*" first and the "*him*" merely added as a concession to the ignorance and superstition of his hearers and readers. Then, to give his atheism milder form than some, he objects to calling the Creator merely "blind force," preferring rather the vague term "consciousness."

And what think you! This avowed infidel and atheist occupying the most prominent pulpit in Great Britain is about to instruct the preachers of Great Britain along these lines—"at their request." They are to assemble in various cities in conventions to hear this reverend D.D. prove to them the wisdom of David—"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." (Psa. 14:1.) What better evidence could we have that the harvest work is urgently needed? Do we not see that as between Infidelity and Atheism in the pulpits and Christian Science, Spiritism, fanaticism and demonism in the pews, only the "elect" can escape these "plagues,"—and that the elect need the Helping Hands and Bible Keys speedily?

We are fortunate in being able to quote Rev. Campbell's own words in the following extract from the *New Haven Union*:—

VIEWS OF THE REV. CAMPBELL—SAYS SAVIOR WAS DIVINE AND THAT EVERYONE IS

"The great modifications in religious belief which are taking place throughout the Christian world have recently been manifesting themselves with especial prominence in England. The leader in radical revision of faith is R. J. Campbell, pastor of the City Temple and the recognized head of the English Nonconformists. He is about to make a tour of the country, addressing gatherings of provincial pastors at their request upon the 'Restated Theology.' Inasmuch as Mr. Campbell rejects many of the chief dogmas of the Bible, such as the story of the fall of man, it will be seen how radically different from the old is the new theology, which is supplanting the religious beliefs of a generation ago in England.

"Mr. Campbell states his views with the utmost frankness in the London *Daily Mail*, and inasmuch as he is almost as well known in America as in his own country they will attract equal attention on this side of the Atlantic.

"'We object,' he says, 'to the formal statements of

belief which have distinguished the theology of the past. We object to ecclesiastical labels. Everyone knows that for the last twenty years there has been considerable uneasiness in the churches, due largely to the development of scientific knowledge, the progress of archæology and the study of comparative religion. This uneasiness has affected every church, even Rome. From the side of science the new theology is typified in the work of men like Sir Oliver Lodge. The lines of divergence between the old and the new go down deep, and there is great cleavage.

GOD AND HUMANITY THE SAME

"The new theology in common with the whole scientific world believes that the finite universe is one aspect or expression of that reality, but it thinks of it or him as *consciousness* rather than a *blind force*, thereby differing from some scientists. Believing this we believe that there is thus no real distinction between humanity and the Deity. Our being is the same as God's, although our consciousness of it is limited. We see the revelation of God in everything around us.

"The new theology holds that human nature should be interpreted in terms of its own highest; therefore it reverences Jesus Christ. It looks upon Jesus as a perfect example of what humanity ought to be, the life which perfectly expresses God in our limited human experience. So far as we are able to see, the highest kind of life that can be lived is the life which is lived, in terms of the whole, as the life of Jesus. EVERY MAN IS A POTENTIAL CHRIST, or rather a manifestation of the eternal Christ—that side of the nature of God from which all humanity has come forth. Humanity is fundamentally one; all true living is the effort to realize that oneness. This is the truth that underlies all noble efforts for the common good in the world today.

"The new theology watches with sympathy the development of modern science, for it believes itself to be in harmony therewith. It is the religious articulation of the scientific method. It therefore follows that it is in sympathy with scientific criticism of the important religious literature known as the Bible. While recognizing the value of the Bible as a unique record of religious experience, it handles it as freely and as critically as it would any other book. It believes that the seat of religious authority is within (not without) the human soul. Individual man is so constituted as to be able to recognize, ray by ray, the truth that helps him upward, no matter from what source it comes.

"The new theology, of course, believes in the immortality of the soul, but only on the ground that every individual consciousness is a ray of the universal consciousness and cannot be destroyed. It believes that there are many stages in the upward progress of the soul in the unseen world before it becomes fully and consciously one with its infinite source. We make our destiny in the next world by our behavior in this, and ultimately every soul will be perfected.

"The doctrine of sin which holds us to be blameworthy for deeds that we cannot help we believe to be a false view. Sin is simply selfishness. It is an offense against the God within, a violation of the law of love. We reject wholly the common interpretation of atonement, that another is beaten for our fault. We believe not in a final judgment, but in a judgment that is ever proceeding. Every sin involves suffering, suffering which cannot be remitted by any work of another. When a deed is done its consequences are eternal.

"We believe Jesus is and was divine, but so are we. His mission was to make us realize our divinity and our oneness with God, and we are called to live the life which he lived."

"THE NEW THEOLOGY"

Under this caption *The Christian World* (London) says:—

"It is an old saying that Englishmen have two interests, politics and theology. It would be more correct to make the duality a trinity, for if a census of tastes were taken it would probably show that sport is the largest preoccupation of our modern public. But that theology is in this country still a very live subject is sufficiently illustrated by the daily newspaper columns of the last few days. The latest press sensation is what is being everywhere called 'The New Theology.' Mr. Campbell, of the City Temple, its leading exponent, is the topic of the hour. His portrait is exhibited, columns are occupied with impressionist sketches of him, with interviews, with leading articles, and correspondence on his views. Presidents of colleges and well known preachers are being solicited for their opinions on the disputed points. There is the usual clash of diametrically opposite views which we have learned to look for as the Englishman's way of

expressing himself on any subject of interest. The veterans shake their heads. Some declare that the new preaching is a denial of New Testament Christianity; others denounce the preacher as an ignoramus who has had no proper theological training. 'It is simple Unitarianism,' says one party. Another demands a resurrection of the City Temple trust deed and an arraignment of the preacher as violating its conditions. Meanwhile the crowd goes to hear Mr. Campbell, and both old and young, dissentients and disciples, agree that a crisis has arisen for the churches and pulpits of the land.

"Are we in for a new Reformation? Vinet, himself an evangelical theologian, said long ago that one was necessary and inevitable, and there are features about the present upheaval which remind us curiously of that old one of nine hundred and four centuries ago. It is difficult for an age to recognize the meaning of its own doings. To us Luther's movement comes as part of our orthodox creed. But we have only to go back to the literature of the time to see the enormous strain it put upon the faith of the world. The translation of the New Testament and its diffusion amongst the people, to us so essentially religious a work, was to orthodox churchmen the most dangerous and subverting of acts.

"The time is one of sifting, when each man must examine his own foundations. Let him not lose his temper or his charity in the process. The day of the *odium theologicum* ought to be over. We may leave the topic with another word of Milton which could hardly be bettered as a present admonition:—'A little generous prudence, a little forbearance of one another, and some grain of charity, might win all these diligences to join and unite into one general and brotherly search after truth.'"

LEAGUE OF "NEW" THEOLOGIANS

The Tribune, another English daily, under the above title, states that a meeting of ministers interested in the new theology was held at the City Temple, when the "New Theology League" came into definite existence. Its subtitle is as follows:—

"A society for the encouragement of progressive religious thought." The membership is to be confined to ministers and laymen in association with Congregational churches. The Rev. R. J. Campbell was elected president, and the Rev. T. Gilbert Sadler (Wimbledon) and the Rev. W. Evans Darby (of the Peace Society) secretaries. It is proposed to propagate the views of the League by means of pamphlets, but for the present at any rate no attempt will be made to formulate a creedal definition of belief. Those present considered it was wiser to focus a common outlook and attitude rather than attempt creed-making.

* * *

The Tribune publishes the names of sixteen ministers who have endorsed Rev. Campbell's position. Error grows much faster than does truth. The people are more ready for it, and name and fame and salary are not thereby risked.

Meantime some one has created a sensation by the discovery that the trust deed to the London City Temple has a clause which restricts its use to ministers who teach as well as profess the Westminster Confession. Dr. Campbell and his followers are pained that they should thus be interfered with. They are willing to profess what they do not believe, but think the time ripe for telling the people of their unbelief.

The Express states that it is proposed to ask Parliament to pass a law voiding the restrictions of the trust deed. It says:—

"Mr. Campbell's 'New Theology,' as so far developed:—

"1. Denies the 'fall of man.'

"2. Rejects the Atonement.

"3. Denies 'final judgment,' and says that judgment is always going on.

"4. Denies the virgin birth of Christ.

"5. Says that sin involves suffering which cannot be avoided.

"Mr. Campbell is not entitled to preach the 'New Theology' as pastor of the City Temple, nor is it legal for the trustees to allow him to do so, as they are equally bound by the deed, and have no power to alter it.

"The position is so acute that it has been proposed to apply for parliamentary power to vary the deeds, and at a recent meeting of the Free Church Council Mr. Reekitt, M.P., a leading supporter of Mr. Campbell's Church, said, 'We must act, because it is competent for any one to raise the whole question, and for ministers to be ejected from every chapel.'"

RELIGION IN FRANCE

In the days of the Empire the French coins bore the usual legend, declaring that the Emperor reigned "*by the grace of God*" (i.e., as authorized by the Papacy). When the Republic superseded the Empire the coins' inscription was changed and now reads: "*God protect France.*" The French Congress has recently directed that this be changed, and new coins will instead bear the words, "Liberty, Equality and Equity."

This is quite proper. The Government no longer recognizes the Papacy or its appointees, and gradually the French are realizing that their Government is no part of the Kingdom of God, and that special divine protection is not to be expected. When will other nations similarly awaken? They are all "kingdoms of this world," under "the prince of this world"—Satan. Only when he shall have been bound by the new King of glory will the French and others be prepared to become kingdoms of God's dear Son.

NEW TABERNACLE ILLUSTRATIONS

The Berean Studies of the Tabernacle has stirred up a great interest amongst the friends of Present Truth. To meet a growing demand we have prepared a good-sized diagram of the Tabernacle, showing the various parts and furnishings in colors. These are printed on fine paper and have metal mountings and hangers. Another sheet of fine paper shows the High Priest in "garments of glory and beauty," also in his sacrificial robes, also one of the under priests. These are

The bishops' mansions, the seminaries, etc., vacated by their former occupants because of their unwillingness to obey French laws, are to be fitted up for and devoted to educational and museum purposes.

Some Catholics, in accord with the new French law, began the organization of a "Cultural Association," so as to have the use of the church edifices; but the bishop of that diocese, Mgr. Dizien, following instructions from the pope, ordered the withdrawal of their parish priest as a punishment—for this means to Catholics no one to forgive their sins, no one to help their dead out of purgatory, no one to baptize their infants or preserve those dying from an awful future.

Thus is the poor world staggering on out of the darkness toward the light, but still hopeless except as our Lord's prayer shall be fulfilled, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven."

printed in nine colors and are really quite artistic in effect.

In the ordinary way of business the two illustrations would sell for not less than \$1.00, but preparing them in large quantities we are enabled to supply *both for 35c, postage included*, in pasteboard tubes; 3 sets together, \$1.00. Or by express at your charges, 100 sets for \$25.00.

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"AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHISEDEC"

"Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."—Ps. 110:4.

A priest, in the only true sense, is a mediator between God and fallen creatures, the object of such mediation being to restore and establish harmony on a legal basis.

The office of the priest or mediator between God and man is to restore to perfection and consequent harmony with God a race of human beings condemned to death or already dead or dying. Hence the priest of necessity must be "mighty to save." (Psa. 89:19.) He must have both the right and the power to recall the dead to life, and ability to instruct and discipline, and thus to lead every willing subject back to the perfect estate from which Adam and the race in him fell. To secure this right he must first satisfy the demands of justice, which required the extinction of the human race; and these demands of justice could only be met by a corresponding sacrifice—a human life for a human life. The life of Adam and all in him could only be redeemed by another perfect human being. And so it was—"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead." (1 Cor. 15:21.) By the sacrifice of a perfect human existence is secured the right of the priest to restore.

But beyond the right or privilege of restoring, the priest must have the power, and power would of necessity presuppose his own everlasting existence. He must have power to create, since to restore to being that which had completely lost existence is to re-create it, and is a greater work even than the first creation; he must also have perfect knowledge, both of God's requirements and of human necessities, as well as perfect ability to guide a race so destitute back to the glorious heights of perfection and blessed harmony and communion with God.

What an office! Who would presume to assume such a title? It belongs really and only to Jehovah's Anointed. Even Jesus, "the Anointed One, did not glorify himself to become a high priest," but he has "been declared by God a high priest according to the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 5:4, 5, 10—*Diaglott*.) Jehovah honored him by inviting him to that position, and giving him all power to fill it. In harmony with God's plan, not only has Jesus, his Anointed one, been chosen as the chief, or high priest, but the "little flock," who follow him in sacrifice now, are called to be joint-heirs with him in the same honor. "If we suffer with him we shall also be glorified together." Jesus alone is the great High Priest; but the Gospel church, redeemed by his death and associated with him now in sacrifice, and to be associated with him in divine power hereafter, is counted in with him, and, together with him, will constitute the great Prophet, Priest and King promised, to liberate and bless the groaning creation—the seed of promise.—Gen. 22:18; 28:14; Gal. 3:29; Acts 3:20-23; Psa. 110:4.

From these considerations it should be plain to all that our High Priest is truly a king, in whose hands absolute

power is vested. And in looking back to the types God has given us we find Melchisedec, to whom we are cited as an illustration of this priesthood both by the Psalmist and the Apostle Paul. (Psa. 110:4; Heb. 5:5, 10.) They show that Melchisedec, who was a priest upon his throne, represented the Christ in glory and power, while in the Aaronic priesthood the special features of the redemptive sacrifice were shadowed forth—its perfection, its completeness, its acceptableness, as also the share which the church has with Christ in that sacrifice.

Christ was not constituted a priest of the Aaronic order: that priesthood was only the type or figure. The Aaronic priesthood sprang from the tribe of Levi, while "our Lord [according to the flesh] sprang from the tribe of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood"; and the members of his body, the church, are chosen chiefly from among the Gentiles. As a man Jesus was not a priest, neither as men are the saints members of the royal priesthood; but as "new creatures" they hold and execute their office. Jesus as a "new creature," "partaker of the divine nature" (to which he was begotten at the time of his baptism), was the priest, and as a priest he offered up his perfect human nature an acceptable sacrifice to God. He consecrated or offered himself in sacrifice on becoming the priest, and he received a special anointing for the office which was necessary to enable him to accomplish the sacrifice as well as to apply its benefits to men. His human nature, when sacrificed, could do nothing more—it must remain a sacrifice forever; but the new nature, fully developed in the resurrection, has "all power in heaven and in earth."—Matt. 28:18.

The priestly office of the new nature is not of the Aaronic order; it does not trace its lineage to any human source. This fact is strikingly typified in the priesthood of Melchisedec, whose lineage and death are not recorded. He was a priest without having inherited the office from his father or his mother—thus typifying Christ's priesthood, which came not of the lineage of the flesh, as did the Aaronic priesthood, which Israel thought to be the real. Neither was Melchisedec's death recorded nor a successor named (Heb. 7:3, *Diaglott*), that thus might be typified the continuity of Christ's priesthood. In this type the work of sacrifice is not shown, as Melchisedec represents the Christ glorified and reigning after the work of sacrifice has been completed, and the divine nature fully perfected.

In Heb. 7:4-10 Melchisedec is declared to be greater than Abraham, thus showing that the divine Christ will be greater, and therefore able to bless every "friend of God" on the human plane.

"Wherefore he [Christ] is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a High

Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens [lifted higher than the highest—to the divine nature].” (Heb. 7:25-27.) And this blessed assurance of such a priest, so “mighty to save,” is confirmed unto us by the oath of Jehovah. (Heb. 7:21; Psa. 110:4.) What strong consolation, then, may those have, who have fled to Jehovah’s Anointed for refuge: “Jehovah has sworn and will not repent: Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.” What believer, justified by faith, who has offered himself a living sacrifice, may not read his title clear to joint-heirship with the Head in that glorious anointed body? He is authorized and is able to save completely all that come unto God by him now, as well as all who shall hear and come in the Millennium.

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and high Priest of our profes-

sion, Christ Jesus; . . . for we have become associates of the Anointed, if indeed we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm to the end.”—Heb. 3:1, 14, *Diaglott*.

We conclude then, that while the Aaronic priesthood furnishes typical illustrations of the sacrifices and sufferings of Christ and the blessings to follow, it did not completely illustrate the glorious, everlasting and unchangeable character of his priesthood during the Millennial age; and for this cause Melchisedec was presented as a type, that thus might be shown his glorious office of priest and king—a priest upon his throne. Here, too, the body of Christ is no longer shown as separate individuals, but as one, complete. In the work of sacrifice we have seen the head or chief priest and the under priests more or less separately sacrificing, as represented in Aaron and the under priests; but all will unitedly share in the future glory represented in Melchisedec alone.

“TRANSFORMED”

Through a cloud of earthly senses
Bursts upon my raptured sight
Such a vision of my Father
In his glory and his might,
In his justice and his wisdom,
In his tender, watchful care,
Manifested in my Savior,
Rich in blessing everywhere.

Oh, it thrills with love and longing
Every fiber of my soul,
To be with thee, in thy presence,
While the countless ages roll.
Then a voice, “This be thy pattern,
See that thou in all thy ways
Make according to the pattern,
To my glory and my praise.”

Thou the pattern, blessed Savior,
How can I a copy be
Of that gracious, sweet perfection
Manifested, Lord, in thee?
“Keep thine eyes upon the pattern,
Look not thou aside, behind,
And beholding but my glory,
Thou shalt be transformed in mind.”

Oh, my Father, in thy mercy
As I gaze with unveiled face,
Let me see, as in a mirror,
All thy brightness, all thy grace.
So in looking, so in longing,
Shall my homely features glow
With the radiance of thy glory,
And thy matchless beauty show;

All my days be crowned with gladness,
From the center of my heart,
Praise to thee that in the blessing
Thou wilt let me have a part.
So then, in a faithful service,
For the loving service’ sake,
Changed from glory unto glory,
I shall in thy likeness wake.

I shall see thee in thy beauty,
I shall in thy beauty shine,
All the loving, all the longing,
Merged in purest love divine.
Satisfied with the full sweetness
Of the bliss of heaven above,
All my future spent in blessing,
All my being lost in love.

CARRIE BEATTY.

ISAAC’S PEACEFUL CAREER

Genesis 26:12-25.—MARCH 10.

Golden Text—“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.”—Matt. 5:9.

Isaac, the child of promise, in whom centered for the time the riches of God’s gracious provision for the world of mankind, was not remarkable, either as a boy or a man. His experiences were rather commonplace as a rule. But is it not so with the majority of the Lord’s people? Not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many noble, not many rich, hath God chosen, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom. (1 Cor. 1:26-29; Jas. 2:5). If all the characters of the Scriptures were notable, the majority of us would feel ourselves so commonplace as to excite our fears that the Lord would have no place for us amongst his elect. We are glad that in divine providence some have prominence, greatness, almost thrust upon them by the necessity or interests of the Lord’s plan. We are glad also for those less prominent, in whose hearts the Lord works equally a work of grace, purification, strength of character, to make them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. A lesson in this connection is that strong characters may be developed and high ideals attained in the heart and in deed amongst the lowly and obscure. The majority of the Lord’s elect are of this kind—“Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.”—Matt. 11:26.

The name Isaac signifies laughter, yet it would appear to be a misfit so far as the boy and the man were concerned. Retiring, peace-loving, meditative, quiet, he had not the rollicking disposition that might be represented by the name. A probable suggestion is that the laughter connected with his name was the remembrance of the experience of his parents in that matter. (1) We read, for instance, in Genesis 17:17 that Abraham laughed at the idea of a son being born to those so old. (2) In Gen. 18:12 we read that Sarah

laughed at the idea of her having a son in old age. (3) In Gen. 21:6 we read that Sarah laughed with joy at the birth of her son. Another thought is that as Isaac was a type of Christ (Gal. 4:28), and the joy typified by his name was a prophecy of the blessing that is yet to come through the glorified Christ to all nations, in harmony with the prediction of the angels—“good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people.” (Luke 2:10). But as Isaac was not peculiarly mirthful or joyous, neither was Jesus, his great antitype, nor yet the church, the body of Christ. Nevertheless there are joys of the Lord which the world cannot appreciate—the experience of all of those who have the divine peace and blessing.

ISAAC’S YOUTH AND MARRIAGE

Of a very different character indeed was Isaac’s elder half-brother, Ishmael—domineering, tyrannical. Not amenable to restraints and reproofs, he made life miserable for Isaac until Abraham, in harmony with the Lord’s direction, treated him as an incorrigible, and refused to him and his mother the privileges of the home. (Gen. 21:12). We are informed that Hagar also had a sneering spirit. (Gen. 16:4). Separation was not only wise but necessary to the type, as St. Paul shows. Ishmael was 13 years old, or 18 if, as some think, this occurred in Isaac’s fifth year. We are to remember the Apostle’s explanation of this incident, that it was typical: that Hagar and her son Ishmael represented the Law Covenant and the Jews, while Sarah and her son represented the original Abrahamic Covenant and the church of this Gospel age. The persecution of the Isaac class at the first advent was very manifest, and as a result the Ishmael class, the Jews, have been cast off from divine favor and have had a

time of trouble ever since. It is with pleasure that we see in the type, as well as in the direct statement of the Apostle, that the time will come when God's favor shall return to them and they shall return to the Lord, and he shall abundantly have mercy upon them, and we rejoice that this time is now near at hand, even at the door.

When Isaac was forty years of age, according to the custom of the time Abraham selected a wife for him—not that this was an invariable custom of the time, either, for we find that Isaac's two sons, Jacob and Esau, selected their own wives; but as Isaac was intended to be the type of Christ, so the bride of Isaac was intended to be the type of the church. Hence the selection of the typical bride must be after the manner of the selection of the antitypical bride. Thus as Abraham sent his servant to select the bride for Isaac, so the Scriptures inform us the heavenly Father sends the holy Spirit to make selection of those who may constitute the bride of Christ, for, as Jesus declared, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him." The story of the selection is a beautiful one, and fits well to the calling of the church, thus:—

The divine guidance was sought and had in the matter of the selection, and this guidance was along practical lines—the approved maiden showed herself hospitable and kindly disposed in that she proffered the drawing of water for the camels which Abraham's servant had brought. It demonstrated her physical strength as well as her quality of heart. So those who are drawn of the Father to the Son must have certain elements of character to begin with, however these may be afterwards shaped and polished. The kindly, the generous, seem always to have the divine approval; hence we all should be on the alert to cultivate these qualities in our hearts and lives, and as parents and preceptors of the rising generation we should endeavor to cultivate this same quality in those under our care, having in mind the fact that such will be the more likely and the more ready to receive divine blessings of various kinds.

REBECCA'S FAITH AND ITS REWARD

As soon as Abraham's servant recognized the character of Rebecca he perceived that she would make a suitable wife for his master's son—that the Lord had guided him to her. He at once rewarded her kindness with an earring and bracelets and went with her to her home, where the matter was related to the family, and where Rebecca, with the consent of her parents, accepted the marriage proposal. Thereupon the servant brought forth more jewels and presented them to her, and they came on the journey and met Isaac at the well Lahairoi.

As the limitation for Isaac's bride was that she must belong to the family of Abraham, so the limitation of those called to be members of the bride of Christ is: (1) That they shall not be sinners, not of the world, but of the "household of faith." Sinners are called to repentance, but not called to be the bride of Christ—only believers are honored by this call. (2) Only those who have something of generosity and amiability in their characters are approached. (3) The self-sacrifices of these bring blessings in advance from the Lord, typified by the earring and bracelets of Rebecca; for no one can receive the truth and render service thereto without experiencing a blessing from the Lord. (4) After this came the information respecting the riches of God's grace and the invitation to become members of the bride, the Lamb's wife. The acceptance of the proposition could not be possible if it were with hesitancy; it must be prompt and hearty, and then the servant, the holy Spirit, opens up further treasures and presents them to the betrothed, and the journey begins. (5) That journey not only represents the individual experiences of our lives as we travel on under the guidance of the holy Spirit, looking forward to the time when we shall meet the Bridegroom, but it represents also the experiences of the church as a whole for the past eighteen centuries, approaching to and hoping for the meeting of the Bridegroom and the marriage feast, the joys and blessings that are to follow when we shall be forever with our Lord, the heavenly Bridegroom. (6) As Isaac went out and met the bridal party on the way, at the well, so Christ meets his church at the end of the journey. (7) The account tells us that when Rebecca recognized Isaac she put on a veil and alighted from the camel. Applying this to the antitype we see that at the end of our journey the church shall pass beyond the veil and alight from the accessories of the present journey, and be thenceforth under the direct guidance and blessing and in the presence of the heavenly Bridegroom. What joys, what blessings, what glories are implied in this! As Isaac had but one wife, so Christ has but the one bride,

and the present period is for the testing of those who will be acceptable for that position. Respecting the type, Rebecca, Doctor Abbott writes that "Rebecca's noblest monument is found in the fact that in the prayerbook of the Church of England in the marriage service is the statement, 'that as Isaac and Rebecca lived faithfully together, so these persons may truly perform and keep the vow and covenant between them.'"

ISAAC PROSPEROUS BUT PEACEABLE

The record shows that Isaac inherited the great wealth of his father Abraham, flocks, herds, gold, silver, servants, etc. And that he increased this considerably is shown in our lesson—"The man waxed great and grew more and more until he became very great: for he had possessions of flocks and of herds and a great household: and the Philistines envied him." At the time of this lesson a drought had prevailed in the more southern part, and Isaac had moved his establishment to the vicinity of Gerar north to the Mediterranean coast, because of the better pasturage and water. The Philistines had recognized God's favor with Abraham in his great growth, and now they saw the same in respect to Isaac. Not wishing to encourage this growingly influential family they had stopped the wells that the herdsmen of the north should not come their way; but Isaac's herdsmen, not taking the hint, had dug the wells afresh, and this led the king or chief of the Philistines to come out plainly and request Isaac and his retainers to move to other parts, saying, "Go from us; for thou art mightier than we." They knew not when the strife between the herdsmen might mean a civil war, and in the interests of peace they urged Isaac not to remain too close a neighbor.

We see a similar spirit manifested in various parts of the world today toward the posterity of Isaac—Russians, for instance, use these very words to the Jews, "Go from us, for you are mightier than we." The Lord's blessing has been with the seed of Abraham in a very remarkable manner, notwithstanding their chastenings during this Gospel age. No wonder, then, that other men feel somewhat envious of them and desire not to sit under their shadow. If the Russians merely asked the Jews to remove it would not be so bad, so unjust, provided, of course, that they would purchase from them their property at a reasonable value. But, coming far short of the spirit of the Philistines, they are ready to kill, to rob, to destroy the Jews.

In compliance with the request, Isaac did change the seat of his encampment a distance down the valley, but again trouble broke out. The Philistines were still jealous and claimed the water wells found by Isaac's herdsmen. But the man of peace would not permit of strife and moved his home again. Still angry feeling continued, and again he moved still farther away, and rejoiced that although the country was poorer, less advantageous every way, nevertheless he had peace for himself and his possessions.

"BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS"

There is a lesson for the Lord's people here, a lesson of peace: Blessed are those who are peaceable and who are peacemakers—blessed of God. They may not always prosper as well in outward and temporal matters, but they surely will be prosperous in their hearts, in their heart experiences, in their relationship to the Lord; they surely will make the better progress in the fruits and graces of the spirit, and be the better fitted and prepared for the glorious opportunities soon to come, when, as the antitypical Isaac, associated as members of the Prince of Peace, they shall engage in the work of uplifting and refreshing and blessing all mankind. True, there are times when "backbone" is necessary, when principle is involved, and when retreat would be absolutely wrong; but these cases are rare. Undoubtedly we can often yield, and, as Isaac did, in so doing may find a provision of the Lord for our prosperity. Had the requirement of Abimelech been that Isaac should renounce the worship of the true God we can readily see that the principle involved would have hindered Isaac from yielding; and so with us, we are to note carefully and stand by everything involving principle.

Had Isaac and his servants been less numerous than the Philistines there would have been less merit in his conduct. We are to remember that, according to the words of the Philistines themselves, Isaac's clan was greater than that of the Philistines. For the greater to be submissive, yielding, peace-loving, is peculiarly commendable. Too frequently it is the case that might makes right, and the stronger one declares to the weaker, "Go yourself," with the result of clashing, bitterness, resistance, etc. Let us as the followers

of the Lord in such matters take the course of Isaac, and, as the Apostle exhorts, "So far as lieth in you live peaceably with all men," do not stand upon your rights—be willing to sacrifice for the interests of others, or at least to preserve peace between yourselves and others.

"THE LORD HATH MADE ROOM FOR US"

The Scriptures exhort, "In all thy ways acknowledge him." This is a matter which we feel is too frequently neglected in our day, even amongst the Lord's consecrated people. But Isaac did not forget the source of his blessing—the naming of the well indicates this, "Now the Lord hath made room for us and we shall be fruitful in the land." Our blessings increase in value and in efficacy and in the joys they bring to us in proportion as we recognize that they come from above. Let us then more and more—in all the little affairs of life as well as in the great—look to the Lord for his blessing and guidance, and give him thanks and acknowledgment as we perceive his hand in our affairs. So doing we learn to trust him more, and to have blessing ourselves as well as become a blessing to others.

It was at this time that the Lord appeared to Isaac in a vision, or through an angel perhaps, and assured him that the promise made to his father Abraham under divine blessing was sure to him, and he built an altar unto the Lord, rendering worship. Possibly Isaac was fearful that the course he was pursuing, the course of peace, was an unwise one, and that the Philistines thereby would be encouraged to more and more take advantage of him. Many in his place would have thought, However much we are disposed for peace we must give these Philistines a lesson, and let them know there is a limit to our gentleness—a point beyond which if they go they will find a stern resistance and serious injury. Such would have been worldly wisdom and quite probably such

thoughts did come to Isaac. It was at this time, then, that the Lord manifested himself especially to him and gave him especial assurances of his protecting care, and that all the good promises made to Abraham respecting that land and his own posterity would be absolutely fulfilled.

ABIMELECH SEEKS A TREATY

To Isaac's surprise Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, with Phicol, the chief captain of his army, visited him at his new home. "Isaac said unto them, Wherefore art thou come unto me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?" "And they said, We saw plainly that the Lord was with thee, and we said, Let there now be an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; that thou wilt do us no harm, even as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the Lord."

What an illustration Isaac here had of God's overruling providence! By his course of peace he had not only gained the respect and friendship of those who were envious of him, but additionally he had honored his God and incidentally honored himself in that these men recognized the fact that the favor of God was with him. And is not this the case with the Lord's people who seek to follow the counsel of his Word? Is it not better that we should suffer some disadvantages at times and keep the peace and accept the Lord's spirit, thus holding up a light before the world, than that we should give way to wrangling and quarreling and give evidences of a carnal spirit and of doubt of God's power to protect us? Surely we may learn a lesson in this, and appreciate more and more the Master's words, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

SELLING THE BIRTHRIGHT

Genesis 27:15-23, 41-45.—MARCH 17.

Golden Text—"Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but they that deal truly are his delight."—Prov. 12:22.

To Rebecca were born two sons, twins, Esau being by a moment the elder. They were the heads or fathers of two nations nearly as dissimilar as themselves. The family of Jacob became known as Israel, God's peculiar people, inheritors through their father of the great Abrahamic promise. Esau's posterity were subsequently known as Edomites, and are well represented today in the Bedouin tribes of Arabia. At the birth of the twins the divine prophecy was that the elder should serve the younger, and the Apostle Paul called attention to this as an indication of God's foreknowledge of the difference in the characters of the two, and which he would choose to be the one through whom the Abrahamic promise would descend.—Rom. 9:12.

The narrative seems to show that these were very different types of men—the one, a jolly hunter, evidently lived what might be termed at that time a fast life, associating with the heathen peoples surrounding, and, as the heir-apparent of two-thirds of his father's estate under the Hebrew custom, he was doubtless well received everywhere. On the contrary, we are told that Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents—that is, he was a plain farmer, who gave his attention to caring for the estate. When the brothers were thirty-two years of age an incident occurred which had a most important bearing upon the interests of both for all future time. Esau had been away on a hunting expedition, and returned ravenously hungry at a time when Jacob had just prepared for himself a dinner of red lentils of which both brothers were very fond. Alexander White thus narrates the incident in graphic style, and we believe truthfully. He says:—

"Esau was a sportsman, boisterous, wild, clumsy, full of the manliest interests and purposes, and was a proverb of courage and endurance, a success in the chase. . . . He had an eye like an eagle. His ear never slept, his arrow never missed the mark. A prince of men, a prime favorite with men, women and children—all the time more animal than man."

But his tastes and appetites, desires and pleasures, were surely of an earthly kind. He had little interest in his father's God and the great Abrahamic promise in which his father trusted. From this standpoint he had already sold his birthright—that is to say, it had already in his estimation lost all of its great value, it was not comparable with the sensuous pleasures in which he delighted. Jacob, on the contrary, inherited more of his father's disposition of

steadfastness and earnestness, and had great respect to the Abrahamic covenant, deploring the fact that by the apparent accident of birth he had lost the birthright which his brother did not appreciate. Doubtless, too, he had heard through his mother of the prophecy that the elder should yet serve the younger, which implied that in some sense of the word it might be God's will that he should eventually become the heir of that promise.

GOD'S PROMISE APPRECIATED

How Jacob's heart dwelt upon the possibilities of so great an inheritance, the blessing of God, and that his posterity should be ultimately used of the Almighty in blessing all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues! Doubtless for years he had sought opportunity to purchase from Esau the birthright which the latter evidently did not appreciate. And now, when his brother was hungry and desired the mess of pottage, was not this his opportunity for giving his brother what the latter preferred and for getting from him what he did not appreciate, but which Jacob esteemed beyond all things of earthly value? On this Mr. White says: "Everybody knew that Esau's birthright was for sale: Isaac knew, Rebecca knew, and Jacob knew. Jacob had for a long time been watching his brother for a fit opportunity." This at last came when his brother returned hungry from the chase just at the time Jacob's dinner was ready. So when Esau said, "Jacob, I am ravenously hungry; figuratively speaking, I am famishing for some of those delicious red lentils of your cooking," Jacob's answer was in effect, "Yes, you may have them and I will go hungry, but on one condition: You are the elder, and therefore will have the right to inherit the birthright blessing. But what is that to you? What do you care for Grandfather Abraham's blessing? If now you want this pottage more than you want the blessing, say so and it shall be yours. The blessing is a matter of faith, the pottage a matter of fact. I know you have little faith respecting the promise, and I know that you are quite hungry and quite fond of this pottage. I am fond of it also, but I will go without if you give me the birthright blessing in exchange."

Esau's retort was in effect, "Take it, Jacob; it may be good some day, though I confess I have not much confidence in it. It seems to me that these people round about that father Isaac calls heathen are good fellows, some of them fine neighbors, and I might say without prejudice to you, Jacob, that I think that your doting over that promise has

had the effect of making you too sober, almost morose. Why do you not come out and have a good time with the rest of us? However, if you want my share in the Abrahamic promise for that soup you are welcome to it—give me the soup.” “Wait a moment,” said Jacob; “let us do this thing properly. Make an oath to the effect that this is a *bona fide* transaction for all time.” “I will do it,” says Esau; “here goes—now give me the soup.” Thus was bartered the great oath-bound covenant of God and the wonderful blessings which it embraces, present and future. Neither man knew fully what he was doing, for not until this Gospel age has the mystery of God in respect to that covenant been disclosed; and now, as the Apostle tells us, it is made known only to the saints, to those who receive the holy Spirit of adoption.

OBTAINING THE BLESSING

Twenty-five years rolled around after the above barter of the birthright. Esau, still a hunter, still fraternizing with the heathen peoples about, and married now to two Canaanitish women, was, despite his profligacy, his father's favorite. Jacob was still a God-fearing man, hoping for the realization eventually of his purchase, so highly prized. Isaac was old and had become blind, and considered that it was the right time to put the management of the estate in the hands of the elder son, Esau. Accordingly he made it known that he was about to bestow his patriarchial blessing, and under his instruction Esau had gone forth to prepare some savory venison as a feast for his father before the formal pronouncement of the blessing. Rebecca remembered the prophecy that the elder should serve the younger, and Jacob confided to her the fact that he had purchased the blessing of his brother and taken the latter's oath. They watched to see whether or not Esau would regard his oath and the sale of the blessing, but finding that he was disposed to disregard it and to violate all of his obligations, mother and son determined to use their every power to secure the fulfillment of Esau's engagement respecting the blessing. But considering that Isaac would not hear to this, they conspired together to deceive him.

As Esau's name indicated, he was a hairy man: so they arranged that Jacob should put on Esau's fine raiment, speak as much as possible in his tone of voice, and present kid's flesh to his father and receive the blessing while Esau was still absent hunting. Lest Isaac should mistrust the deception, Jacob's neck and arms were covered with the fine hairy skin of a new-born kid. The deception was carried out, and Isaac—after saying, “The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau”—gave the blessing. Of course, the unprincipled Esau, who, after selling the birthright and confirming the sale with an oath, was about to take it to himself, was angry that his brother should have outwitted him and obtained the blessing—not apparently that he cared so much for the Abrahamic promise and blessing thus entailed, but he feared that in some way his prominence in the family would be jeopardized and that he might perhaps lose the major part of the inheritance, the two-thirds, and get only Jacob's portion, namely, one-third. Anger, malice, hatred, strife, envy, murder, were in his heart, and he said to himself, “It will not be very long until father dies; then will I slay my brother Jacob and the entire inheritance will be mine.”

JACOB A FUGITIVE BECAUSE OF HIS FAITH

Esau's murderous intentions reached the ears of Jacob's mother, who informed Jacob and advised that he go for a time at least and live with her father. Jacob, then over fifty-seven years of age, following this counsel, started out to carve his own fortune, leaving the entire estate in the hands of Esau, holding on only to the covenant promise. Here was another demonstration of his faith in God. He might have regretted his bargain, he might have renounced the blessing in Esau's favor. But no; he would hold to this, cost him what it might—possessions, a home, family association. He would go out in the fear of the Lord; he would attest his devotion to God and his faith in his promise. Is it with any wonder that we read that in his journey the Lord appeared to him at Bethel and assured him that he would be his exceeding great reward? Jacob's faith and zeal were of the kind which God approves, the kind which he has blessed from Abraham's day until the present time.

JACOB'S DECEPTION OF ISAAC

Do we excuse Jacob and his mother, and approve of their telling lies to Isaac both by word and act? No, we cannot approve of this course, and yet it seems evident to us that we must not judge Jacob's actions according to the standards which we would apply to ourselves. We, as new

creatures in Christ Jesus, begotten of the holy Spirit, have and ought to have still clearer views of the Lord's will in such matters, still greater faith than Jacob exercised. But what more could we expect of a natural man than we find in Jacob's conduct? We must gauge our conceptions of right and wrong by the divine standard, and while we cannot suppose that God approved of the course adopted by Jacob and Rebecca, we must check ourselves and others from too rabid denunciation of Jacob's proceeding by noting the fact that, according to the record, at no time did God charge up this matter against Jacob or reprove or punish him for it. On the contrary, we find the Lord appearing to him and manifesting his favor in visions and revelations and assurances of divine protection and care, without mention of the deception by which the ends were gained. Where God keeps silence, is it wise for us to say very much in the way of reproof?

What better course could Jacob have taken? We answer that if he had possessed still greater faith he might have waited for the Lord and permitted divine providence to bring to him a blessing which he craved, which God had foretold should be his, and which he had purchased at more than its value according to the estimation of Esau, though at far less than its value according to Jacob's estimation. Some point us to the difficulties and trials and perplexities which came to Jacob as a result of fleeing from his father, declaring that these were God's punishments upon him. But we reply that Jacob did not so regard these; that the Scriptures remind us that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and he particularly told Jacob of his love for him. So it is with the best and truest of the Lord's people today. The fact that they have trials and difficulties and disappointments and persecutions, so that sometimes they must flee for their lives, by no means proves that the Lord's favor is not with them; rather these things, as the Apostle assures us, are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Similarly, Jacob's trials and difficulties and sorrowful experiences worked out for him a blessing of heart and character.

Here our Golden Text applies—“Lying lips are an abomination unto the Lord, but they that deal truly are his delight.” Jacob was not one of those who made clean the outside of the cup while within it was impure. He was at heart of the character mentioned in the Golden Text, “They that deal truly.” Neither can we say that he was graspingly selfish with his brother, for we find in his general character a breadth of liberality rarely met with. We recall that he never asked even for the younger son's one-third interest in the estate, but that returning later he instead proffered Esau a present of cattle, sheep, etc. If we must charge Jacob with the lying lips we can at least credit him with the honesty of heart. He lied in order to secure justice and because his faith was not sufficiently strong to permit him to trust the Lord implicitly respecting a matter which he so highly esteemed and was willing indeed to give everything but life to possess.

A lesson for the spiritual Israelite is that we not only should esteem as Jacob did the value of the divine promise and favor and blessing, but that to a similar zeal we should add still more faith, so that we could trust the Lord to give us the blessings he has promised. This was the example which Abraham set, but which Jacob evidently had not fully appreciated. Abraham was called upon to sacrifice his son Isaac, the heir of the promise, through whom the Lord had declared the promise should be fulfilled. Abraham's faith was sufficient, and in due time God settled the matter in that Isaac was received from the dead in a figure. (Heb. 11:19.) We cannot doubt that if Jacob had possessed a similar degree of faith God in some manner would have given him the blessing, despite his father's intentions to the contrary and Esau's dishonesty and violation of his oath.

THE APOSTLE'S APPLICATION OF THIS

The Apostle refers to the main incident of this lesson, the sale of the birthright, and in very round terms denounces the spirit of Esau—the spirit that is not appreciative of God's mercy and blessing which he has in reservation for them that love him. He speaks of Esau as that “profane person who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.” (Heb. 12:16.) He was profane in the sense that all the Gentiles or heathen were recognized as profane—godless, not reverent, unbelieving, preferring the things of this present time, the good and the bad, to the better portion of the future, which they have not the faith to realize nor the appreciation to enjoy. The fact that Esau was evidently birth-marked and by heredity a wild man, loving the more animal and natural things, so far from being to

his condemnation is rather in his favor. If his failure to appreciate the spiritual things was the result of an inherited depravity of taste, then we can say that the redemption provided in Jesus' sacrifice covers that entire blemish and guarantees eventually to Esau an opening of the eyes of his understanding and an enlightenment of his mind to appreciate the better things—when in due time, during the Millennial age, the Redeemer shall be the Restorer. (Acts 3:19-21.) For Jacob to have taken the course of Esau would have been a much more heinous matter, because by nature he had a loftier mind, a more reasonable soul, less impaired by the fall.

So, too, when we apply this principle today we find that there are many natural men of the Esau type who have no interest in or appreciation of spiritual things: we sympathize with them rather than blame them, and look forward with pleasure to the time when the Lord's mercy shall be extended toward them in measure proportionate to the degree of their share in the fall—to assist them by the judgment of the Millennial age (its rewards and punishments) to see the right way and to learn righteousness therein, and eventually (if they will) to attain perfection and eternal life. On the other hand, if by the grace of God we have been favored in being better born, born the children of believers—especially if by the grace of God our eyes have been opened to an appreciation of the heavenly spiritual promises—how great is this blessing! What advantage we have every way over the others of the Esau type. What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness! Surely the Lord may expect much more of us, and we should expect much more of ourselves than of our Esau neighbors.

SELLING THE SPIRITUAL BIRTHRIGHT

Examining the Apostle's argument still more closely, we find that he especially addresses the church, not the world, in this exhortation that we appreciate God's grace and do not sell our birthright. The world has no birthright to sell at the present time: as children of Adam they were all themselves "sold under sin." The Lord addresses those who have by the Lord's grace escaped from this slavery, being justified by faith in the precious blood of Christ. We were in bondage, but are now made free—and "whom the Son makes free is free indeed." (John 8:36.) After being made free we received, as a further grace of God, an invitation to be heirs of the Abrahamic Covenant—the very one for which Jacob was willing to sacrifice everything. We come into this relationship, as the Apostle points out, by our acceptance of our Lord Jesus and our full consecration unto death with him. The point of the Apostle's argument is that all of the consecrated ones are in the position of these two sons of Isaac: the inheritance of that Abrahamic Covenant lies between us somewhere—some will get it and some will not.

The Apostle wishes us to see the character of this class that will inherit the promise—they must not be, like Esau, careless, worldly minded, thoughtless of God and unbelieving respecting the future provision. If they are thus disposed they will be sure to find opportunities for bartering their inheritance—it would surely slip from them to others who have a higher appreciation of its value, as the inheritance of this covenant slipped from Esau and was secured by Jacob.

"FOR ONE MORSEL OF MEAT"

True, Esau had a whole mess of pottage, yet the Apostle

in speaking of it minimizes it, saying, "One morsel." He felt that what Esau got was of such trifling value that he could hardly express it in terms; it seemed as nothing, as merely a bite, though to Esau himself, doubtless, the pottage made a very good dinner for the time. So it is with us: from one standpoint we could sell our birthright for considerable, from the other standpoint we get practically nothing for it.

Let us notice various ways of selling the birthright, remembering that only those who have come into covenant relationship to God through Christ have the birthright at all, so they could dispose of it.

The Esaus amongst the Lord's people are those who love the world and the things of the world, who set great store by the pleasures of the present time. The enjoyment of these means the approval of the world, fine houses, fine clothing, plenty to eat. If in the Lord's providence such blessings come to us they would necessarily be trials, testings of our faith, because the world at the present time is in an undone condition through the fall and through the machinations of the adversary. The testing time comes when we see duty and faithfulness to the Lord to be on one side of the question and either the rejection of these blessings or the securing of them on the other side. We cannot serve both God and Mammon, and we must then choose. Happy is he that chooses as Jacob did, to lose all earthly advantages that he may gain the heavenly promise. Unhappily it will be for him who loves the present world, its joys, its pleasures, its emoluments and wealth, so that he is willing to dispose of his birthright that he may have these. True, the seller does not always realize what he is parting with, nor perhaps intends to part with at all, even as in the case of Esau, but the testing comes nevertheless, and each one must be prepared therefor.

Perhaps no class of the Lord's people have more temptation along the line of selling their birthright privileges than have the preachers. As the truth comes to them it brings responsibilities, and they realize these, and if then they allow love of ease or name or fame or wealth or standing to lead them to unfaithfulness the effect will be the loss of the inheritance. We do not say that they will be eternally tormented, God forbid! We do say with the Scriptures that the inheritance of this Abrahamic Covenant can only go to those who appreciate it and are willing to let it cost them everything to gain it. This is God's arrangement that he might test, might prove, every son whom he receiveth under this Abrahamic Covenant, every member of the body of Christ.

A little while and the clouds will pass, and we shall see clearly the riches of God's inheritance in the saints and the exceeding greatness of their reward; a little while, and how miserable appears the choice of those who, like Esau, have sold their birthright for business advantages, emoluments, honors of men, etc. O, how in the light of that glorious day all these things that are so highly esteemed amongst men will be counted as less than one morsel of meat—one moment of trifling earthly pleasure or satisfaction! Now is the time for all to choose of which class we will be; now is the time to lay aside every weight and every besetting sin and to fully count the cost, to lay everything on the Lord's altar, sacrificing all of the earthly interests that we may be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together.—Rom. 8:17.

ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM FAITHFUL WORKERS

Dear Brother Russell:—

I desire to acknowledge receipt of route sheet. I cannot express how deeply I appreciate your kind words. I am well aware that the indicated necessities of the field govern the routes of the Pilgrims, and you may be assured that I am sufficiently grateful to the dear Lord for the privilege of the service that the place and the time are gladly left to the disposition of his will.

Beloved Brother Russell, the joy of this blessed service is more like such as one might expect to experience beyond the veil than that which would be known in the flesh. The spirit of the dear Master as it is manifested in his true-hearted ones is seemingly becoming more and more precious and like that of the other side. If the closing scenes of our earthly experience are to be especially severe, surely he is preparing us for them by the abundant outpour of his blessings now.

As we often have painful examples of the power of

a strong personality in doing evil among the classes, it is most refreshing to observe the beneficent influence of complete devotion to the Lord. From every side come most heartfelt expressions of love and greeting to yourself, dear Brother Russell. My own deep love I earnestly desire to add to the large measure from the Lord's dear ones I am communicating, and my appreciation of the comfort and strength that the knowledge of your sympathy, your prayers and your love gives me.

In the sacred bonds of Christ, your brother in his service,
M. L. Herr—Pilgrim.

Dear Brother Russell:—

After two years' walking in the light of Present Truth, may I add a few paragraphs to my glad testimony of its blessing? Recalling that from the Methodist hymnal we used to sing:

"We praise thee that the Gospel light
Through all our land its radiance sheds,"

and remembering that I then believed we were singing the truth and that Methodism was a very great factor in spreading that Gospel light, no wonder I esteemed mine a very happy experience. But, oh! to know God's glorious Plan of the Ages—to be able to discern as error what I once believed as truth, and consciously to turn away from blind misstatements having but a "form of godliness," and receive, in place of husks, the satisfying portion of God's meat in due season—is delight inexpressible.

And then, out in the great harvest field, to be counted worthy of association as laborers together with the great Chief Reaper, our Lord; to be privileged to bear his message, which is to garner the true wheat; to have, in contact with those "who oppose themselves," a little taste of enduring hardness and trying that it be "as a good soldier of Jesus Christ"; to know just the little, even, that I have been privileged to learn, of suffering with him; knowing also the great and precious promise of which our light affliction is the condition—Oh, when I try to pin down, with pen or pencil, expression of these experiences, I feel how powerless I am!

To realize that one is making progress, instead of going over the same ground year after year, knowing no more at the close than at the beginning—the sordid matter of so many dollars raised for expenses being the acme of one's attainment, growth in grace and in knowledge of our Lord being only incidental matters, if not entirely omitted from consideration; or, at "revival time" to "work for souls," mainly for the purpose of their financial help—oh, what a relief to have forever laid aside such mockery of religion and really to have that knowledge that causes one really to grow in grace! What joy to experience that Christ dwells in our hearts by faith; that we may be rooted and grounded in love and be able really to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height and really to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge that we might be filled with all the fullness of God! This makes the narrow way bright with his radiance, for

"We are traveling home to God,
In the way our Savior trod."

Yes, and

"In the hour of trial we
Watch thy footprints, Lord, to see,"

because we are able to recognize God's loving purpose in even the persecutions that are heaped upon "this way," and find that their outcome is to bind us all more and more closely together and to him whose prophecies those persecutions fulfil.

Gratefully and lovingly remembering always that through you, dear Pastor, the exposition of God's great plan and of the real, true meaning of his wonderful Word of Truth, was given, as "meat in due season for the household of faith,"

Yours in his ever blessed service,

ELIZABETH GILLETTE.—*Colporteur.*

My Dear Brother Russell:—

I have often thought of writing to you and asking if you would bear with me if I would tell you a little experience of how the Truth came into my life, and now I take this opportunity to carry out my intention, trusting that you will bear with me. About four years ago my most intimate friend got hold of Vol. 1. She received it from a young Jewess who said she was not interested in it. My friend about ten years previously had united with the Baptist Church, and I did likewise the following year. She was very devoted to the church until within two years of receiving "The Plan of the Ages," when she became cold and indifferent to everything connected with the church and was determined to see some of the world. I prayed for her and did all that I could to get her back, but she seemed to think there was nothing there to hold her. Sunday after Sunday I stopped for her to go to Sunday School or Church service, and thinking I could get her to promise me she would go the next week, but all my efforts failed. After this dear sister got Vol. 1 in her possession and began to devour its contents, I was the first to whom she told the "glad good news." We both lived in the country, and on Sunday afternoons as I came from Sunday School I would stop on my way home, and she would always walk part of the way home with me and carried "The Plan of the Ages" under her arm. As we came to the wood between our two homes we sat down and talked until dark, and I well recall the tears

running down her cheeks as she explained to me God's glorious plan. She seemed completely carried away by its teachings, and I was led to question, Could this possibly be true? or is this dear acquaintance being led astray? The latter I believed to be the fact, but never criticised her to another because I saw her earnestness and believed it to be genuine. Well, she gave me no rest, kept at me continually, gave me Vol. 1 and I read it to please her, then Vol. II I read also to please her, and finally Vol. III. Then she began to question me concerning certain teachings. With some I could agree with the author, with some I could not; in fact; I had not studied them enough to know whether or not they were Scriptural; in short, I did not know what to do. I was very uneasy; we had been friends so long that I did not like to drop her, for I realized her worth. She talked some of going west with some friends; I was only hoping that she would decide to go and then I would be at my ease.

I thank our dear heavenly Father that now I rejoice in that comfort and ease of mind and that "peace which passeth all understanding." I believe it was through this sister's prayers and also the prayers of some others of the Lord's dear ones that I at last became interested and that the interest grew and still grows. It was while reading Vol. V that I became alive to my duty of making an entire consecration—presenting my body a living sacrifice, which is my reasonable service. But, oh, "the adversary goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." I ask you to pray for me, dear brother, that I may become more like our pattern, the Lord Jesus.

Yours in the one faith,

(Miss) M. A. THOMPSON,—*Pa.*

Dear Brother in Christ:—

The other day, having read the 15th chapter of Genesis, the 9th verse seemed to suggest that the years mentioned had some meaning, and, doing a little figuring, here is the result. In the 8th verse Abraham asked some proof that he should inherit the land promised him in the seventh verse. In verse 9 the Lord said to Abraham, "Take me an heifer three years old, and a she goat three years old, and a ram three years old, a turtle dove and a young pigeon." Now a bird is usually considered young up to one year old. So I figured three years each for the heifer, goat and ram—nine years—and one year each for the birds, eleven years in all. Eleven prophetic years of 360 days each equals 3,960. A day for a year gives us 3,960 years. On page 42, Vol. II, of the DAWN we have the chronology as follows:

From the Covenant to the giving of the Law....	430 years
To the division of Canaan.....	46 "
Period of the Judges	450 "
" " Kings	513 "
" " Desolation	70 "
Thence to A. D. 1.....	536 "

Total from the Covenant to A. D. 1.....2045 "

2045 taken from the 3960 years leaves 1915 years from A. D. 1, which seems to be the proof Abraham asked of the Lord whereby he should know that he would inherit the land. This seems at least to be a remarkable coincidence.

Wishing you God's rich blessing, I remain yours in the blessed Redeemer,

GEO. MATTHEWS,—*Ohio.*

Dear Friends:—

In our Volunteer work last year we put out 155,000 tracts, or over 3¾ tons. These, if laid out flat, tightly pressed, would make a pile 260 feet high, or 35 feet higher than Bunker Hill monument. This report encouraged the friends here greatly. All through the dark ages the truth has been kept down to earth, but now we can see where

Truth
Rises
Up
To
Heaven

in a glorious fashion, both in a figurative and a literal sense. About an average of fifty workers were in the field.

Yours in his name,

JOHN R. JONES,—*Mass*