

gestion to make in such cases; for there are two ways of looking at the matter. One of these is the fact that the elder may be unable to meet at the hour set by the church. In that case the spirit of a sound mind would suggest the change of the hour of meeting to one which would be convenient for the leader. On the other hand, if the tardiness be the result of thoughtlessness, lack of character development or some similar reason, the spirit of a sound mind would prompt

us to elect a leader who had the interests of the church so much at heart that he would keep his engagements with the same degree of carefulness that he would exercise in the matter of any other business arrangement. In THE WATCH TOWER of Dec. 1, 1916, there is an article which deals with this very matter of punctuality—"Decorum in the House of God." It would be well for all who are habitually unpunctual to consider carefully its contents.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The circulation of the following books and papers is completely suspended during the period of the war:

THE FINISHED MYSTERY

Special Edition, March 1st, WATCH TOWER (ZG)

All BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLIES

ALL KINGDOM NEWS

Any classes or individuals holding any of the above literature belonging to THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY are hereby instructed to hold the same, subject to our orders. This is a confirmation of notice sent you last March.

VOL. XXXIX

BROOKLYN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1918

No. 19

REMOVAL NOTICE

Please address of communications in future to
WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY
FEDERAL AND RELIANCE STREETS
N. S. PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA.

The removal will delay about thirty days all orders received after August 26; but we know the friends will bear patiently with us for that length of time or even longer.

After prayerful consideration, and counsel with brethren in other places, it was decided by the Board of Directors of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors of the Peoples Pulpit Asso-

ciation, to move the offices of our Society from Brooklyn, N. Y., to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, North Side. Large and commodious quarters have been secured in the Martin Building, third floor, corner of Federal and Reliance streets. A beautiful reception and fellowship room has been provided for visiting friends; and all friends are cordially invited to pay us a visit. The Bethel home has been discontinued for the present.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

For nearly forty years this journal has sought from time to time to forewarn its readers against the peculiar trials and temptations of the period marking the closing years of the Gospel age. Especially has it endeavored to warn the Lord's people against the increasing activities of the demons, evil spirits, the "angels which kept not their first estate." During this period we have been much encouraged by the many letters received from a number of our readers, showing us that our efforts have not been in vain, but that their influence for good has been widely felt, not only in restraining the Lord's people from curious and dangerous investigation of occultism and various forms of spiritism, but also in opening the eyes of some—including a few mediums—who had been partially overcome by the wiles of the devil and his associated fallen spirits.—Ephesians 6:12.

Once more we would remind our readers that "the days are at hand, and the effect of every vision"; that the restraints under which the fallen angels have been held ever since the days of Noah were gradually to be relaxed during the closing years of the Gospel age, the time now present. The Biblical record is that the evil spirits, the demons, were "restrained [in Tartarus, the atmosphere of earth] in lasting chains of darkness unto the great day" of judgment for the world. (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4) As that great day drew near, the Watchers have noted many evidences that the chains have been gradually loosened, that evil spirits have greater liberty than ever before.

FALLEN HUMANITY EASILY DECEIVED

We are well aware that many intelligent people laugh to scorn the Scripture teaching along these lines. But God's Word forewarns us that those persons are in great danger who refuse to believe in the existence and the activity of the demons, and who regard as superstitious the Bible narratives of how our Lord and his apostles cast out demons, and who sneer at the Mosaic laws which strictly prohibited the Israelites from any dealings with witches, wizards, necromancers and others who held intercourse with unseen intelligences purporting to be the spirits of the dead. As a result of present day skepticism along these lines many of the self-confident have been easily caught in the demon trap, which is baited with curiosity. A visit to a medium, a seance with friends, a planchette or ouija board at a neighbor's home, etc., entrap the unwary to their destruction. At first their curiosity is aroused. Then they are gradually given what seems to them indubitable proofs of the existence of their beloved dead. Experiment follows experiment until finally they are fully convinced that they actually hold conversations with "those who have gone before." Thus little by little they are brought under the influence of the demons.

The Word of God repeatedly warns us that mankind are no match intellectually for the unseen intelligences that mas-

querade as the spirits of dead human beings. It declares that these are evil spirits, "angels that kept not their first estate," and that we need the protection afforded us in the counsels of the divine Word. In the end of the Jewish age many Israelites were afflicted with evil spirits; and a considerable part of the work accomplished by our Lord and his apostles was the freeing of the afflicted from the merciless persecutions of these fallen angels or demons. So prominent is this subject that the four Gospels contain no less than forty-two references to the demons—mistranslated devils.

SATAN'S ORIGINAL LIE STILL BELIEVED

A similar influx of evil intelligences is predicted to occur in the end of the Gospel age. St. Paul points out that at this time the Lord will send, or permit, a strong delusion to come upon professed Christians, to try them. He says: "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie [Greek], that they all might be condemned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thessalonians 2:11, 12.) Thank God that we see that this condemnation is not to be everlasting torture! The blasphemous misrepresentation of God's Word is one of the devices with which these wicked spirits have driven many honest men away from God, by which they have blinded men to the true character of Jehovah God. But now in the closing hours of the age these strong delusions are being permitted in order to differentiate between those who have really loved and obeyed the divine counsel and those who have failed thus to do and are about to be judged unworthy of the high reward soon to be given to the faithful overcomer.

In the context the Apostle points out that these strong delusions which will characterize the close of the old order of things will ensnare mankind because "they received not the truth in the love of it." The truth here referred to is the statement which God made to father Adam in Eden: "In the day thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die." (Genesis 2:17, margin) In other words, it is the fact that the dead are dead, and cannot re-live except by the exercise of divine power for their awakening from the death-sleep. This plain truth, abundantly set forth in the Scriptures, is not relished by any except the truth-hungry. The majority of mankind do not like to believe thus. On the contrary, they prefer to think that the dead are really more alive than they were before they died. Rejecting the plain statement which God made to Adam in Eden, they prefer the monstrous lie which Satan there declared to mother Eve: "Ye shall not surely die." (Genesis 3:4) All who thus reject the foundation truth are easy marks for the demons, who have continued to repeat the original lie told in Eden. Indeed, so thoroughly have they succeeded that all mankind except a few followers of Jesus are thoroughly indoctrinated with this fundamental untruth. All

literature, whether historical or mythological, perpetuates this egregious falsehood; and throughout the centuries since its first inception the demons have used every means within their power to impersonate the dead and thus to give an appearance of truth to Satan's original lie—the lie. See John 8:44, Diaglott.

BELIEF IN SPIRITS WORLD-WIDE

"Missionaries in heathen lands tell us that the demons are working today as they did of old, and that the New Testament description of demoniacs would be equally applicable to cases under their observation in heathen lands.

"The old traditional ideas and belief in demonism are intensively reproduced in the great civilized nations of modern times. It is not called 'demonism,' now, but 'spiritualism,' 'psychic science,' 'spiritism,' etc. But call it by what name we will, it bears the same stamp, the same earmarks, the same brands, as the old demonism. The wonders performed by the ancient wizards, necromancers, sorcerers, magicians, are in these days repeated a hundredfold in the seances that are held continually throughout Christendom.

"It is impossible to tell the number who are avowed spiritualists or are its adherents. The organization is as loose and consistent as its teaching. Algernon Pollock says that there are 60,000,000 spiritualists in the world, with 200 journals devoted to its propaganda. . . . In the United States the number is estimated all the way from 2,000,000 to 16,000,000.

"The great war, with its millions of dead, the intense anxiety of relatives for their beloved ones, the strong advocacy of the belief by men like Sir Oliver Lodge, who has recently embodied in a book long communications from a spirit which he believes to be his son Raymond, who was killed in this war in France—all have tremendous influence in making converts. Now if we add to these the countless heathen hordes in China, India, Japan, Africa and the islands of the sea, we get a faint idea of the extent of spiritualism, and the reason for its consideration here.

"During the last twenty years spiritualism has spread apace. The planchette, or ouija board, has had tremendous sales. Private and amateur circles have been formed. Scientists of the highest repute and many others 'under every test condition that expert scientific knowledge and trained detective ingenuity could devise' to eliminate fraud, prevent deception, and shut out the invisible human element, have come to the conclusion that there are intelligences behind the manifestations."—World Problems.

PERISHING FOR LACK OF DIVINE WISDOM

There is a reason for this increased activity on the part of the demons. As the world has approached "the judgment of the great day," the chains of darkness which have restrained the demons throughout the centuries since the Deluge have gradually been unloosed; and as a consequence they have more liberty than they have had for many centuries. So successfully are they able to impersonate the dead that they are able more and more to deceive the whole civilized world except those who have heeded the warnings of the Word of God along these lines. Even the wisest among mankind are being deceived into thinking that they can hold communion with the dead, for they have rejected the divine Word as unreliable and as a collection of old wives' fables which no intelligent mind can believe.—1 Corinthians 3:19.

Rejecting the Scriptural teaching that the dead are dead under the sentence pronounced upon Adam for his disobedience in Eden, and accepting in its stead the monumental lie which Satan there foisted upon their first parents, men have unwittingly aided the demons in their age-long deception of the professed church of Christ. When the tide turns—and turn it surely will—Christian people will examine the teachings of the Word of God, and will realize that, despite all the advantages of Bible study which characterize our day, they have not understood the first principles of the Scriptures, but have ignorantly taught and believed "the doctrines of demons."—1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-9.

During the past forty years a marked change has taken place in the attitude of scientific men toward the subject of religion. At one time perhaps the majority were purely materialistic in their views. While some believed in the existence of God, perhaps none had faith in Christ as the Redeemer of the world, or in life on any other plane than the material. In 1882 a number of eminent British scholars founded the Society of Psychical Research, for the purpose of making an organized and systematic attempt to investigate all spiritual phenomena. The members were some of the most noted statesmen and scholars of our day. In 1884 an American society was established for the same purpose; and in 1890 it was incorporated with the British society. Similar societies have since been established in other countries. The

growth of these societies has been so rapid the past few years that hundreds of cities have flourishing branches.

SCIENTISTS ALSO MISLED

As a result of the work of these organizations the subject of spirit phenomena has attracted many of the brightest minds of our time; and many who were once skeptical materialists have now swung to the opposite extreme and are credulous spiritists. Ignorant of the Bible teachings in regard to the work of the evil spirits these wise men and women have fallen prey to the demons, who have played all manner of tricks upon them. But instead of realizing that men have been duped by evil spirits, poor humanity thinks that it has proved the existence of life beyond the grave, and that the spirits of dead human beings really communicate with mankind. So far has this work of deception been carried that books have been written to describe life in what is called Spiritland. There the dead are said to live much the same as they did on this side the grave. Music, the arts, intellectual and spiritual (?) knowledge and progress are said to have increased. People build, plant, carry on business, etc., much as before death. In fact, life beyond the grave is merely a repetition of present day conditions on this mundane sphere. Very different indeed are the Scriptural descriptions of the joy and peace which will obtain during the "times of restitution," under the beneficent rule of the Messianic Kingdom.

A careful scrutiny of various communications from these spirits show us that the fallen angels are shrewd enough not to reveal anything concerning conditions beyond the human plane of existence, but that they do all in their power to impress upon the minds of their dupes the original lie which Satan told in Eden. To those who do not know the truth as it is set forth in the Word of God, however, these communications give something tangible, something with which to mitigate their sorrow of heart at the death of their loved ones. As a result many who have lost friends and relatives on the battlefield are becoming spiritists or theosophists in the vain hope of coming into touch with their dead, so the daily press informs us. It is said that in London lectures on occult subjects are crowded with women, including royalty. Doubtless a similar condition prevails elsewhere.

APPEALS TO THE HUMAN SENSES

To illustrate the insidious nature of the attempts made to entrap the unwary, we give an excerpt from a book purporting to be the work of a young physician who died a short time ago:

"Listen! Son speaks to you. He is not far away today; he is close by you. Did he enter as you turned away to hide your tears? You did not hear his footstep, but he came and stood close beside you. Doors do not keep him from entering."

Such words as these could not fail to appeal very strongly to a mother who is grief-stricken at the death of her boy. But to those who are well versed in the Scriptures relating to the subject of death the deception is easily seen. But while the Bible is explicit in regard to the present state of the dead, yet remarkably few people know anything about the real teachings of the Word of God. Hence when death enters the family circle they know not which way to turn in order to get comfort. Under such circumstances they fall an easy prey to such appeals as the above excerpt; for these give the natural mind something on which to build hope.

MODERN FICTION PERMEATED WITH OCCULTISM

Since the beginning of the Gospel harvest the reading public has multiplied four or five times, as a result of the impetus given to education during this period; and cheap editions of popular novels have brought them within the reach of all classes. Meantime the demons have not been slow to take advantage of these conditions, as the following excerpt shows:

"The application of modern science to supernaturalism or of the supernatural to modern science is one of the distinctive features of recent literature. . . . Each advance in science has had its reflection in supernatural fiction, and each phase of research contributes plot material, while some of the elements once considered wholly of the devil are now scientific. The transition from the sorcerer, the wizard, of older fiction, to the scientist in the present has been gradual. . . . Hypnotism enters largely into the fiction of modern times. It borders so closely on the realm of the uncanny, and is so related to the science of today as well as to the sorcery of the past, that in its earlier stages it was considered as distinctly diabolic, used only for unlawful purposes, being associated with witchcraft. Only in more recent times has it been rehabilitated in the public mind, and thought of as a science which may be used for helpful ends. . . .

"That there is at present a definite revival of interest in the

supernatural appearing in the drama, in poetry and in fiction, is evident to any one who has carefully studied recent publications and magazines. Within the last few years, especially in the last two years, an astonishing amount of ghostly material has appeared. I hesitate to suggest a reason for this sudden rising tide of occultism at this particular time, but it seems clear to me that the war has had much to do with it. . . . But whatever may be the reason for this revival of the ghostly, the fact remains. . . . Now the weird and the ghostly have regained a popularity which they never surpassed even in the heyday of medieval fiction. . . . The rising tide of the unearthly in art shows itself in all literary forms, such as dramatic, narrative and lyric poetry."—The Supernatural and Modern English Fiction.

ANTAGONISTIC TO SCRIPTURE

That psychic research must greatly modify the teachings of the church is the firm belief of Sir Conan Doyle, the noted writer, who is deeply interested in occult phenomena. In the January Metropolitan he says:

"Christianity must change or perish. That is the law of life—that things must adapt themselves or perish. Christianity has deferred the change . . . until her churches are half empty, until women are her chief supporters, and until the learned part of the community on the one side and the poorest class on the other, both in town and in country, are largely alienated from her."

The reason for this condition is then given. To those who know nothing of the philosophy of the Ransom, but who have been indoctrinated in Evolution theories, the explanation may seem to be very logical. But to those who know the Word of God it is a poor substitute for the soul-satisfying portion on which the Lord's people are fed. The noted writer continues:

"One can see no justice in a vicarious sacrifice, nor in the God who could be placated by such means. Above all, many cannot understand such expressions as 'the redemption from sin,' 'cleansed by the blood of the Lamb,' and so forth. As long as there was any question of the fall of man there was at least some sort of explanation of such phrases; but when it became certain that man had never fallen—when with fuller knowledge we could trace our ancestral course down through the cave-man and the drift-man, back to that shadowy and far-off time when the manlike ape slowly evolved into the apelike man—looking back on all this vast succession of life, we knew that it had always been rising from step to step. Never was there any evidence of a fall. But if there was no fall, then what became of the atonement, the redemption, of original sin, of a large part of Christian mystical philosophy? . . . Too much seemed to be made of Christ's death. It is no uncommon thing to die for an idea. Men die continually for their convictions."

How true it is that the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God! Of a similar class in his day the great Apostle to the Gentiles said: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things." (Romans 1:22, 23) His clear, cold logic deals a mortal blow to all evolutionary theories. He fully believed in the fall of man. His masterly presentation of the philosophy of the Ransom Sacrifice offered on Calvary has never been surpassed.

DEVICES FOR ENTRAPPING THE UNWARY

That a great wave of mysticism is breaking over the civilized portion of the world is claimed by many. The demand for planchettes and ouija boards is said to be beyond the ability of the manufacturers and jobbers to supply. The ouija board consists of a little table with three wooden legs, which moves about on a polished plank bearing the letters of the alphabet, the basic numbers and usually the words, "Yes" and "No" and "Good-by." Two or three persons sit around the board with their finger tips resting lightly on the table; and the "messages from the dead" are spelled out as the triangular table moves about on the board, pointing out the letters with the table leg at the top of the triangle. The causes of the movement and the origin of the messages are still much in dispute among spiritists. But the Lord's people can easily trace these phenomena to the demons, who seek to destroy mankind by breaking down the barrier of the will.

Professor Olin, of Akron University, is quoted by the Akron Beacon Journal (March 1, 1918), as warning people not to take the ouija board too seriously. "Many people, falling victims to its lure, have been mentally unbalanced," said the gentleman, who has made the ouija board the subject of careful study. A similar warning has come from Sir Godfrey Raupert, who has investigated psychical subjects both in America and in Europe. The end of the study of occultism

and of various experiments connected therewith, Sir Godfrey declares, is in many cases the sanitarium or the insane asylum. Often what seemed to be a simple means of amusement has led to the loss of reason.

Everywhere about us the signs deepen that the evil spirits are invading the human mind as never before. Our literature is steeped with occultism. Our psychological laboratories are given over to experiments in hypnotism. Our periodicals are filled with advertisements of books which show people how to use hypnotism and spiritism to take advantage of their fellow men. Not in vain do the Scriptures warn us that "as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man"—at the time of our Lord's second advent. Truly "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against the wicked spirits in heavenly places."

"The devil and his angels are old. They are masters of craft and cunning. With satanic ingenuity they have been practising upon the mortal human race for millenniums. They have been studying the art of impersonation and deception for thousands of years. They have been adapting the beliefs, the customs and the inventions of the humans to their own deceptions. They know all the details of the man's life history that his own relatives could know; and in the secret cabinet and the seance they recall them, and counterfeit dress, voice and manner."—World Problems.

A WARNING TO THE CHURCH

Our beloved Pastor Russell, the Messenger to the Laodicean stage of the church, has written much upon the subject of Spiritism. Those who have heeded his warning along the lines of occultism have been enabled to escape these snares of the adversary. We quote from his well-known sermon on "Spiritism Is Demonism":

"On the basis of human credulity—the supposition that the dead become more alive when they appear to die—the demons have advanced their deceptions and sought to enthrall humanity. Invisible to men, yet fully informed respecting all human affairs, they can readily personate the dead. The fallen angels, since the Deluge deprived of the power to materialize, use as channels of communication such individuals as they can deceive into being their servants—mediums. Many of these are noble characters, and many of them the reverse; but vicious or ignorant or good, the demons use such as they can control, none being too debased for their service.

THE BASIS OF ERROR

"Working on the credulity of their dupes, they use the lips or the pencil of the medium to describe the dead one, who is supposed to be very anxious to communicate with the living. And the description generally fits well to the dupe's last knowledge of the person—age, sex, clothing, all. So deluded do people become that they fail to remember that the children of two or ten years would, ten years later, if alive, be twelve or twenty years of age, and proportionately larger, and certainly not content to wear in a spirit land the same clothing they wore when last seen by the dupe. The demons' power to discuss matters known only to the dupe and the deceased carries conviction.

"And all the teachings of all the denominations, that the dead are not dead, are helping on with the deception. The venerable minister, deceived by the doctrines of the dark ages, tells his hearers at the funeral that their deceased is hovering over them; and that if he could speak, he would say, 'Weep not for me.' The medium and the clairvoyant announce that they are under spirit control and that the departed one can speak through them. Is it any wonder that the deception is a powerful one with many? The antidote for all the doctrines of demons is the message of the Word of God:

- (1) That the dead are really dead;
- (2) That Christ died on our behalf;
- (3) That at his second coming and kingdom, 'there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust.'—Acts 24:15.

"Let those who deny that there are invisible evil spirits explain what Jesus meant when he gave his disciples power over all manner of disease, and over unclean spirits. Let them explain what the apostles meant when they returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject unto us in thy name.' It is for them to explain, too, what really took place at Gadara, where the Scriptures declare Jesus cast a legion of these evil spirits out of one man. That legion, permitted to go into the swine, were sufficient in number to craze the entire herd.

"Let us also have an explanation of what St. Paul meant when he turned to rebuke the young woman who had the power of divination, and commanded the evil spirits to come out of her. (Acts 16:16-18) Let them explain why her

soothsaying prognostications were at an end, when once the evil spirit was gone forth. Let us also remember that there is not a suggestion anywhere in the Bible that these evil spirits were even human beings in any sense of the word, or at any time. Let us all remember that these are the same evil spirits dealt with at the time of the Deluge.

"Immediately after the Flood, they began their attack upon humanity, their attack upon the truth, their endeavor to make humanity believe the lie—that the dead are not dead. To whatever extent they succeeded in so deceiving humanity they prepared mankind proportionately to be their dupes. The goal of their ambition is possession, everything else being merely accessory to this end.

"Spirit mediums recognize the demon character of the spirits communicating through them; and they dread them and warn each other against the danger of allowing their wills to come completely under spirit influence, knowing that surely the result will be possession, demonization. And this in our day is called insanity, although many physicians realize the difference, and candidly say that not one-half the cases in an insane asylum are due to functional disorder. The majority are cases of possession by evil spirits.

SUGGESTION, DIVERSION, IMPRESSION, POSSESSION

"These are the four steps along which those who do not put themselves under the guidance of the Lord are in danger of being led by the demons. And every step of the way should be fought with a determination of the will, if the 'wiles of the adversary' would be escaped. The vacant, unoccupied mind is the most open to suggestions of the demons. The purposeful, earnest, energetic, have a protection in their activity.

"But if suggestions, or imaginations, have been entertained, the second step will soon follow—diversions. The mind will be diverted from the lines of thought—study, prayer, or what not. The power of suggestion becomes so strong as to interfere with proper thinking and reasoning.

"This leads on to the third step—impression. Some are naturally more impressionable than are others, and can receive promptings, or suggestions, from the evil spirits with so little difficulty that they do not realize the source of the impression, but rather wonder if it is a power of their own. Really it is the outside power impressing them, and more and more bringing them under occult influence.

"Finally comes the last stage—possession—and the evil spirit gets full power and control of the will, and ignores the human will entirely. This is not always accomplished without more or less of a struggle—sometimes covering years. In the struggle, sometimes by clairaudient powers, sometimes

through mediums, the spirits will seek more and more the confidence of the dupe. If he be inclined toward evil, the leadings will be that way. If he have a religious tendency, he will be counseled to pray or read the Bible, then be chided, the object always being to bring him into full submission of his mind, in a manner that none should yield himself, except to the Almighty, whom the evil spirits sometimes even dare to impersonate in their speech.

WITCHES, WIZARDS AND NECROMANCERS

"Many today laugh at the stories of witchcraft handed down from the past. Quite probably some executed as witches may have been good people, misunderstood by their neighbors. This does not, however, alter the fact that witches, wizards and necromancers are not mere myths. The Bible tells us of them as realities, and explains the demon power operating through them.

"In olden times, the divine law forbade any witch, wizard, or necromancer (one claiming to have communications from the dead) to live in the land of Israel, or to practise their black arts. (Deuteronomy 18:9-14) Through the prophet the Lord asks the people why the living should seek unto those who peep and mutter and claim to have communication with the dead [for wisdom, knowledge, guidance, etc.], and not unto the living God? 'Should not a people seek unto their God?'—Isaiah 8:19, 20.

"We all remember the story of the witch of Endor, and how King Saul, when he could not have communication with the Lord, sought communication with Samuel the prophet, who was dead. Saul saw nothing and heard nothing. The witch described to him an old man with a mantle, and Saul recognized the description as corresponding with that of the Prophet Samuel. The witch was guided by the demons, however much she might have supposed that the visions she saw and the words she heard were from the dead prophet. Her prophecies were all from the evil spirits, the demons. (1 Samuel 28:7-19; 1 Chronicles 10:13, 14) So in all heathen lands, the demons have had to do with the people.

"The lesson to God's people is full loyalty to God, strict attention to his inspired words through the prophets and the apostles. These are the only sure protection against the wiles of the adversary. How glad we are that the lessons to angels and to men, built upon God's permission of a reign of sin and death for the past six thousand years, will soon be finished! How glad we are to know of a surety that the end will justify the permission of all the evil which has come to pass! How glad we are to know that eventually all the blinded ones will be enlightened and that eventually all the wilfully evil shall be destroyed, and that without remedy!"

THE HEAVEN-CENTERED MIND

"Center your mind on things above."—Colossians 3:2.

One thing is certain: we cannot have everything. If we let our minds go wandering off down the pleasant by-paths of human interest we shall never reach the Celestial City. Even in the world choice between things must constantly be made. A young man approaching life's responsibilities must choose his vocation. He cannot hope to become highly proficient in more than one field; at best he may have an avocation, or field of secondary interest.

The Apostle's words are perfectly plain: "Center your mind on things above," or, as the King James' version states it: "Set your affections on things above." The same thought of concentration is expressed by the Master when he said: "If thine eye be single, thy whole body will be full of light."

The first chapter of Paul's letter to the Church at Colosse deals with Christ the Head; the second admonishes the church not to be led away from Christ the Head, either into false Greek speculations or into ascetic Jewish practises; chapter three urges those who have risen with Christ to live as they should live—in fellowship with their exalted Head.

RISEN WITH CHRIST

Of the first seventeen verses of chapter three the first four contain general exhortation, placing before the mind the glorious privilege, the manifest ideal of the new creature; verses five to eleven suggest the things to be discarded; and verses twelve to seventeen enumerate the things to be acquired.

Our motives for action are drawn from the past, present and future. We were raised from that burial with Christ in baptism (2:12); we do seek for the heavenly things; and our Lord is represented as at God's right hand in assurance of rest after conflict and victory.

"Seek" points but vaguely to the outward conduct. One might seek after the rainbow; but the exhortation, "Center your mind," is subjective and definite. It tells how we can

most effectively accomplish what we need. Seeing then that at our conversion we shared not Christ's death only but his resurrection also, let us go where he sits at God's right hand. Let our whole thought be set on heavenly, not on earthly things.

Again, in the third and fourth verses the Apostle's consecrated mind sweeps the past, present and future of our experiences. We died the death to self; our new life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, our life, shall appear then shall we also appear with him in glory.

NEW CAPACITIES OF MIND

When we were raised from our consecration burial to walk in newness of life, the new life which we there began was not new from the standpoint of outward environs, but rather new because a new dominating force was in control, a new standard for thought and conduct—the will of God. This change is perhaps feebly illustrated by the taking off of colored glasses. The scenery is the same as it was before; but it looks different, the perspective has changed, the color relationships are altered. Again, the newness of life may be pictured by a change of presidents in the White House. The chairs, the tables, the pictures on the wall are the same, but the president is different; he has different policies of government to carry out. Thus the new will comes into the same mind that existed before; it uses the same mental machinery, so to speak; but its aims are different.

From another standpoint, it may be said that we receive new capacities for every organ of our brain. By our spirit begettal we receive the capacity to consider and work upon spiritual things instead of merely natural matters. But this new capacity does not operate with ease. It requires the exertion of force on the part of the new will to set or center our attention on heavenly things when all our natural desires and proclivities cling to things on the earth. Then when the

attention grows lax it requires the exertion of more energy to redirect the mind to spiritual thoughts. The Apostle speaks of this new capacity of mind when he says: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit, for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Corinthians 2:9, 10.

We died with Christ and our union with him is a hidden life in God. It is not always to remain hidden. At Christ's second coming, it will be revealed; for Christ is our very life, so that his manifestation involves ours.

MORTIFY THESE THINGS

To whatever we give our heart's devotion, that we make our God. A story is told of an old minister and a youthful one. The young man was perplexed because he found it impossible to get the young people to listen to his earnest preaching. The old man said, "That is easily explained: they worship elsewhere." One may pay homage to various desires of his own flesh, be they sinful or proper in themselves.

We should realize the experiences already ideally ours, by putting our sins to death, impurity and covetousness, those hidden vices which draw down God's wrath, and which we once practised, or the tendency to practise which we find in our flesh. God's wrath is the expression of his disapproval, the attitude which he must bear toward sin and unrighteousness. It should be kept separate in our minds from the manifestations of man's puny wrath, which are, as likely as not, mere acknowledgments of impotence.

The Apostle exhorts us to put away anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, abusive speech, lying; for the old self has been discarded and the new self has been put on, which is being renewed by a deeper knowledge into conformity with the Creator's image.

Blasphemy may be committed unknowingly. It consists (1) in ascribing to God what should not be ascribed to him; (2) in not ascribing to God things which should be ascribed to him; (3) in ascribing to another what should be ascribed to God. It will be seen, therefore, that the worst form of blasphemy is not that thoughtless profanity which one may hear on the street, but such misascriptions of divine power or purpose as may be made by intelligent men in responsible positions.

RENEWED BY KNOWLEDGE

The Apostle tells us that the new man is renewed, refreshed, invigorated by knowledge. But can he mean knowledge of a general character? No; for such knowledge is a mere array of facts, the possession of which may only encourage a spirit of pride of self-sufficiency. The kind of knowledge which is here referred to is mentioned in the ninth verse of the first chapter of this same epistle of the Colossians.

There the loving and faithful Paul expressed his joy at hearing of the progress in the truth which the Colossian brethren had made. He expressed his desire that they might be filled with a knowledge (epignosis, exact or accurate knowledge) of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. A knowledge of God's will means more than the knowledge that he has a will. It indicates an intimate acquaintanceship with, a deep appreciation of the motives of the Almighty. It means such an acquaintanceship with God's holy will which would lead us, if we had the power, position and authority of God, to do exactly the same things that he does, and which knowledge or acquaintanceship does lead us to do the same things that he does, in the measure that we have power, position and authority of any kind.

Such knowledge as this is surely refreshing and invigorating to the new creature. This new creature is God's creature, God's child, though the creative work is not yet complete. Every influence which tends to perfect this new man brings him into closer and closer conformity to Christ, the image of the invisible, the express image of the Father's person.—2 Corinthians 3:18.

Where there is such a new nature, and to the extent that it is ascendant, all previous distinctions of race, religion, civilization and social position are annulled, and Christ is all and in all the relationships of life.

ACQUIRE THESE THINGS

As probationary members of the body of Christ our characters should be graced with sympathetic deeds of mercy, with kindness, with humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, love, peace, thankfulness. All of these are heavenly qualities in the sense that they emanate from God and have his approval. If our minds are centered upon these graces and our attention turned to their admiration and their development, we are fulfilling the Apostle's command in the

only feasible way. He does not wish us to be gazing at the clouds by day and the stars by night.

Surely the world is in need of sympathetic deeds! Our opportunities for practical assistance may be very limited now, but the sympathy can well be shown for the poor world in its distressed condition. In this matter we have need of wisdom that our attitude be not patronizing.

The word here translated kindness means to supply what is needful. It therefore suggests tact, suavity, and goodness of heart. To be truly kind we must have the welfare of others at heart. Their happiness must occupy a place in our hearts at least as great as our own happiness, so that we shall have the tendency to share what we have, if other people's supply of happyfying medium falls below the average.

Humbleness of mind, or humility, suggests a willingness to occupy our appropriate position in respect to the Lord and his providences. If the Lord's providence leads us into the limelight and our natural preference is for the quiet shadows, it is not humility but self-will, if we resist his leadings and stay in the shadow. If we love the limelight, but find ourselves in the shadow of social obscurity and the Lord does not lead us out, we would be on very dangerous ground indeed to take matters into our own hand and seek to bring ourselves forward. We may have, in fact very likely will have, our own preferences, prejudices or judgments concerning a matter; but if the Lord's Word or the Lord's leading indicates another path than that we would naturally tread, the only humble way is to say: "Not my will, but thine be done."

Meekness is teachableness of mind and tractableness of heart. It is closely identified with submissiveness. Meekness is the kind of conduct which a humble heart inspires. It is possible to think of being meek for policy's sake, without being truly humble; but it would seldom, if ever, occur unless for purposes of deception.

Longsuffering is a quiet carriage in the midst of exasperating circumstances. It implies the control of natural combativeness. Forbearance comes from a proper regulation of the organ of destructiveness. We have plenty of things to destroy—the spirit of the world, the deceitfulness of the flesh and the wiles of the devil—as these influences operate against our Christian progress.

Forgiveness means a complete dispensing with a charge against a person, without regard to what brought about the satisfaction. The Anglo-Saxon prefix *for* suggests a completeness of the action described in the verb. The word therefore means literally to give completely away—to rid one's self entirely of something, and, by custom, of something objectionable or unpleasant, especially an unpleasant or unfavorable attitude of mind which we may hold toward a person who has done us wrong.

Jehovah holds sinners in disfavor because, wittingly or unwittingly, they have transgressed the laws which his justice framed. He can forgive or change his attitude toward the sinner only when some kind of satisfaction is made for his outraged laws. Since man was unable to make this satisfaction for his cardinal sin, God in his goodness sent his own Son to die for us, that we might live. On the basis of this redemptive work the prophet long ago foretold: "He will forgive your transgressions and remember them no more." When an account is once settled, God is too courteous ever to refer to it again. It is completely dismissed from his calendar.

The Apostle continues, in substance: And let love, which binds Christians in one, do its perfect work. Let the peace of God control your life; do nothing to ruffle it, and be thankful.

Love is that good will which, apart from obligation, delights to give. It appreciates the privilege of sacrifice. It delights in every good principle. Peace of mind is a condition which is made possible by the operation of justice in our conduct. When we have done justly, then we have peace of mind, we have a good conscience.

Thankfulness is repeatedly urged upon us by the Apostle Paul. In his first epistle to the Thessalonians he says: "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Thankfulness is the habitual expressing, by word or demeanor, of the spirit of gratitude in the heart. Gratitude is appreciation for boons and blessings which we did not expect or which we had no right to demand.

Wisdom is the discreet application of God's word to our own hearts and to our own life problems. It should dwell in us richly; for the discernment, the discretion which enables us to apply the Word to ourselves and ourselves to the Word, may be had for the trustful asking.

IN WORD OR IN DEED

Divine power is called forth by the admonition: "Whatever we do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord

Jesus." Love prompts, wisdom devises, justice directs, but power performs.

If we habitually and persistently set our thoughts on things above, surely we shall have accomplished in us that which the Master desired to see. No matter how improbable the outlook may seem, it is not our power but his that is pledged to the fulfillment of all that which he has purposed in Christ Jesus. He shall change this body, now so humiliated, and

fashion it unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

The lotus bulb finds itself in the mud and slime of the river bed. The sun shines through the water upon it. Figuratively speaking, it sets its heart to respond to the light. It reaches up, disregarding the slime of its native rooting, and finally bursts, a pure and lovely flower, to glorify its Maker.

THE WORK OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM

"The creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of sin and death into the glorious liberty of the sons of God."—Romans 8:21.

Death, not eternal torment, was the penalty which God placed upon Father Adam. (Genesis 2:17) Over four thousand years after the fall of man, our Lord Jesus came into the world to pay that penalty; and thereby with his own life he made arrangements for the ultimate purchase of all mankind. He has laid down the price, and eventually will take over the purchase. He has not yet completed his work, but thus far has merely made an imputation of the merit of his sacrificial death on behalf of the church class. As soon as the church shall have been completed, they will be glorified as the body of Christ, his associates in the heavenly nature, glory, honor and immortality. Then will come the time for the Christ—Jesus the Head and the church his body—to inaugurate the great Messianic Kingdom, which God has long promised, and for which we pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

Attentively considering the transaction by which Jehovah is to turn over the world to become responsible to his Son Jesus Christ, we perceive that it is pictured in the Jewish day of Atonement. When the high priest had completed his work of making satisfaction for the sins of the Israelites, he forthwith had the divine authority to begin to bless the people. So when Christ, the great antitypical High Priest, shall have finished the work of offering the "better sacrifices," and when the last member of the body of Christ shall have been glorified, then the merit of those "better sacrifices" will be made applicable to the whole world. (Hebrews 9:23) As in the one man Adam all mankind were constituted sinners, so in the one Man Jesus Christ both Adam and all of his children will be justified from the original condemnation, that which came upon the human race because of Adam's disobedience.

TRANSFER OF ADAM'S ACCOUNT

This squaring off of accounts will be accomplished by the transfer of Adam's account to the account of Christ. The death of Christ will be found to be the full equivalent for the sin of the whole world; and as far as the divine judgment is upon the world, mankind will be set free from the sentence which came upon father Adam in Eden. Forthwith Christ will take possession of the whole world. His Millennial Kingdom is for the very purpose of lifting the Adamic race out of sin, degradation and death, and of restoring them to human perfection. But he does not purpose, nor is it the Father's plan, that any one be forced to receive the divine blessing. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Revelation 22:17.

Under the beneficent rule of the Messianic Kingdom the light of the glory of the goodness of God will be manifest to all mankind. They will be made to know that restitution to all lost in Eden is God's provision for the world. When they shall have come to the knowledge of the divine goodness, it will be their part to conform their lives to purity and righteousness. They will retain their own individual will, however; and if any one should will to do otherwise than what is right, he will have the opportunity to do so. But he will not be permitted to do that which is injurious to others; for the power of Messiah will be exercised at such a time, and will not permit any one to work injury. Under the full light and opportunity of that blessed time, a sinner who makes no progress towards perfection will be cut off from life at the end of a hundred years of trial. Having had every possible incentive to do right under that glorious Messianic reign, he will have no excuse for wrong-doing. If he does not yield to the regulations of that righteous rule, he will thereby demonstrate that he loves iniquity.—Isaiah 11:9; 65:20.

WORK OF THE MILLENNIUM OUTLINED

God purposes to give life everlasting to those only who manifest a disposition to become loyal and obedient to him, and who by patient perseverance will develop a character worthy of being raised up to perfection of life. Those who manifest the right disposition will be lifted up out of their fallen condition to the full standard of human perfection as it was originally in father Adam. This work of human uplift will be the work of Christ and the church through the

various agencies of that time. The world will then be free from the condemnation which came upon Adam because of his disobedience in Eden. God is willing to give them everlasting life upon condition of obedience to his righteous law. But they will be expected to cooperate in this matter; and in their endeavor to rise out of sin and degradation they will have everlasting life; but the unwilling and disobedient will be cut off from life—in the second death.

Manifestly, then, there will be an interim between the time when mankind are legally forgiven and the time when they will either reach perfection or die the second death. During this interim they will still be of the Adamic race. So when the hosts of sleeping dead are awakened, they will not come forth from the tomb as children of Christ, but as children of Adam. Under the arrangements of the Messianic Kingdom they will be given the opportunity of renouncing their allegiance to Adam and of accepting the life everlasting that Christ will give those who demonstrate their loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness. So far as the world is concerned, this work of Christ will continue until the end of the thousand years of the Messianic reign. Then mankind will be perfect, ready to be turned over to the Father, as the Apostle Paul points out.—1 Corinthians 15:21-28.

During those thousand years the Father will ignore humanity altogether. He will have turned the whole Adamic race over to the Christ, who will have full charge of mankind. While the Messianic Kingdom is in power, neither the Father himself nor any one else except the Christ will have anything to do with humanity. But when at the end of the Millennium, Christ will present the perfected race to the Father, it will then be for God to receive them.

ALL CONDEMNATION SET ASIDE

Speaking of the human family, the Apostle Paul says, "The creature himself was made subject to vanity [frailty], not willingly." (Romans 8:20) That is to say, the Adamic race did not become imperfect through any will of their own. Father Adam got out of touch with his Creator. Sin invaded his domain, and he was led astray. Condemnation to death came upon him; and through the law of heredity all of his posterity were involved in his condemnation. But "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Our Lord Jesus is ready to redeem these who have come unwillingly into sin, if they will accept his terms and conditions. The first-fruits of his work form the church of the Gospel age. (James 1:18) The expression "first-fruits" suggests others—after-fruits. In other words, the church are not the only ones who are to be saved, but a first gathering only. It is theirs to share with their Lord in his kingdom of glory, honor and immortality. Then all mankind will have their opportunity—the creature itself which was made subject to frailty, and which is to be delivered from the bondage of corruption.—1 John 2:2.

Eventually the whole world will have the opportunity of getting away from the bondage of death. First, there is the legal phase of the condemnation upon the race. This legal condemnation will be set aside at the beginning of the Millennium. Then there is the actual condemnation—death and all of its concomitants. Mankind have become so infected with the virus of death that their bodies have become diseased. "There is none righteous, no, not one." Everybody is wrong, imperfect, out of the way; and the race will still be in this condition of imperfection after the legal phase of the condemnation has been set aside.

When at the beginning of the Millennium Christ presents the merit of his sacrificial death on behalf of the world, forthwith the race will be turned over to him. But, on being raised from the dead, the world would soon come into condemnation again, were they not in the hands of the Mediator between God and man. (1 Timothy 2:5, 6) If any one had his sins forgiven and then stood forth in his own strength before God for even one day, by nightfall he would again be under condemnation unless he could live sinless for that one

day. Because of their inability to stand before him, God will pass the world over to the ministry of Messiah, and will ignore mankind until the end of the Millennium.

SONS OF GOD ON THE HUMAN PLANE

The work of the Christ will be to effect the deliverance of humanity from the bondage of corruption, from which they are unable to deliver themselves. Christ will set the groaning creation free from the power of sin and death, and will bring the willing and obedient back into the full liberty of the sons of God. Whoever will then may become a son of God on the human plane, perfect as was Adam before he fell from divine favor. When Adam was a son of God, he was not "sold under sin"; but, on the contrary, he was perfect, the

image and likeness of his Creator—"very good." And so it is with the holy angels. They are the sons of God on the spirit plane. Thus does God design that it shall be with his human sons. They shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the full liberty of the sons of God.—Romans 8:19-21.

Father Adam was originally called the son of God. (Luke 3:38) So when humanity shall have been restored to perfection, "then shall the Son deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father," when he shall have put down all insubordination. Then all those whom God will receive will enter into the glorious freedom of the children of God. They will be perfect, in the image and likeness of their heavenly Father.

HOW TO PLEASE OUR NEIGHBOR

"Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification."—Romans 15:2.

Suavity, or the quality of being gracious and pleasing to others, is a good trait, especially when properly used, as the Apostle here suggests. There are some people naturally so constituted that they desire to please others. This may at times, however, become a trap and a snare to them. There is too great a willingness to please. In order to please, one might do things that would not be wise or right. There are some, for instance, who indulge in joking, seeking thus to please and entertain others. There may be harmless jokes, but there are some that are not harmless. Those who are thus constituted are in danger of carrying the thing too far or of being frivolous and thus greatly injuring their influence for good. The Lord's children are instructed to be sober-minded.

Others are naturally inclined to be crusty and taciturn. Some are fault-finding, naturally inclined to be combative. Both classes need to curb their dispositions in these directions. They need to learn to be more suave and kindly in manner, to have a greater desire to please others and to make themselves agreeable, to be gentle and considerate, to avoid strife.

Our text addresses the Lord's people—"Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good." The neighbor may be a brother in the church, those with whom we are particularly identified. We are to seek to be pleasing to them, that our company may be desirable, that we may be a comfort to the brethren, helpful to them. The same principle, however, will apply to our intercourse with our worldly neighbor. To whatever extent we have opportunity we should seek to do the things pleasing to our neighbor rather than the things displeasing to him. There are plenty of things in this world that are irritating. We should desire to do what will give pleasure to others, so far as is wise and proper. We must not deny nor compromise the truth nor do what is wrong to please our neighbor. We must not go to places that are contrary to the

spirit of the Lord, in order to please man. Principle is always to rule with the church. But we should have a loving, kindly sentiment, which desires, so far as loyalty to God will dictate, to give happiness to all.

This principle is referred to in the latter part of the text. We are to please our neighbor for his good, for his edification. We might tell him something that would be very disadvantageous, very ill-advised. It might be pleasing to him to hear the thing, yet it might be sowing seeds of discontent or pride or evil-surmising. We are to endeavor to please by politeness, by kindness and neighborliness—seeking to be helpful. We are to remember the standards of the Lord—justice, purity, truth. We are to do only those things that would be for the real good and edification of our neighbor.

The word edification has in it the thought of instruction, benefit. In our relationships with each other as the Lord's children, we are exhorted by the Apostle to build one another up on the most holy faith. It is so easy to tear down faith by some suggestion of error or doubt. The children of God should do only good works. The adversary has plenty of devices for tearing them down. We all need to be constructive, building each other up and helping to be strong in the faith.

The church of God are not to be scandal-mongers, not to do or say things that would be destructive to character, but the very reverse. We are to assist one another in the upward way, which is toilsome and often very difficult. Those who are seeking to rebuild others of the Lord's flock are sure to be rebuilding themselves at the same time. Thus we are coming nearer and nearer to the perfect standard. St. Paul also exhorts in another place, "Let no evil communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers".—Ephesians 4:29.

APPETITE AND GREED

NOVEMBER 3.—GENESIS 25:27-34.

A MARKED ILLUSTRATION OF DIVINE FOREKNOWLEDGE—TWIN BROTHERS WHO WERE VERY UNLIKE IN DISPOSITION—THE ATTITUDE OF EACH TOWARD THE GREAT ABRAHAMIC COVENANT—DIFFERENT VIEWS REGARDING THE SELLING OF THE BIRTHRIGHT—A REASONABLE QUESTION AND THE REPLY—HOW SPIRITUAL ISRAELITES MAY SELL THEIR BIRTHRIGHT—ESAU A TYPE OF CARELESS CHRISTIANS—WHY THIS INCIDENT IS RECORDED IN SCRIPTURE.

"Every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible."—1 Corinthians 9:25.

Isaac and Rebecca had two sons, Esau and Jacob, twins, Esau being the elder by a moment or so. These sons became in due time the heads or fathers of two nations nearly as dissimilar as were the twins themselves. Jacob's family became known as Israel, the peculiar people of God, inheritors of the great Abrahamic Covenant, through their father. Esau's posterity were subsequently known as Edomites, and are well represented today in the Bedouin tribes of the Arabian desert. At the birth of the twins the divine prophecy was that the elder should serve the younger. The Apostle Paul called attention to this prophecy as an indication of God's foreknowledge of the difference in the characters of the two children and of the divine choice as to the one through whom the Abrahamic promise would descend.—Romans 9:12.

When the twins were about 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 had returned ravenously hungry at a time when Jacob had prepared for himself a dinner of red lentils, of which both brothers were very fond. Alexander White thus graphically relates the incident:

"Esau was a sportsman, boisterous, wild, clumsy, full of the manliest interests and purposes. He was a proverb of courage and endurance, a success in the chase. His eye was like that of the eagle. His ear never slept; his arrow never missed the mark. A prince among men, a prime favorite with

men, women and children, he was all the time more animal than man."

SELLING THE BIRTHRIGHT

Esau's tastes and appetites, his desires and pleasures, were surely of an earthly kind. He had little interest in his father's God and in the great Abrahamic promise that through Abraham's posterity all the families of the earth would one day be blessed. Being naturally of a less religious turn of mind than was his brother Jacob, he set more store by his inheritance of his father's possessions than in his rights as the firstborn to the divine covenants and mercies pertaining to the future. Jacob on the contrary, had an opposite estimate of values. He was quite willing that his brother should have every earthly advantage; but he coveted the special blessing of God, which had been promised to his grandfather Abraham and in which his father Isaac trusted.

From this viewpoint Esau had already sold his birthright, in that it had already in his estimation lost all of its great value, that it was not comparable with the sensuous pleasures in which he delighted. On the contrary, Jacob inherited more of his father's disposition of steadfastness and earnestness, and had great respect for 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, through his mother he had heard the prophecy that the elder should 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 the promise.

The incident related in today's lesson, which should be considered together with chapters 27 and 28, is one which is generally viewed as casting great reproach upon Jacob, while Esau is regarded with sympathy and pity. Jacob is supposed to have been an unprincipled deceiver, and Esau an innocent dupe, overpowered by unfortunate circumstances and by his brother's ambitious cunning. But since the special favor of God attended the transaction, it is evidently wise to reconsider the matter, lest haply our conclusions may be found to be against God as well as against Jacob. And so we do. We find that which God could commend and reward, and which when properly viewed was entirely right.

RIGHT OF PRIMOGENITURE

In patriarchal times, the birthright, the chief inheritance in estate and authority, belonged naturally to the eldest son of a family. In the case of Isaac, the father of Jacob and Esau, it included not only personal possessions, but also covenant blessing which God had especially promised to Abraham and which had been inherited by Isaac. As Isaac reached advanced age, he began to realize that this great covenant blessing was not to be fulfilled in himself personally, but was to be transmitted to his posterity. This was also indicated to Rebecca, Isaac's wife, when she was told that "the elder should serve the younger." Thus Jacob was shown to be the divinely chosen line through which the covenant blessing should be realized.

How Jacob's heart must have dwelt upon the possibilities of so great an inheritance, the blessing of God, and of the blessing of all the families of the earth through his own posterity! Doubtless for years he had sought opportunity to purchase from Esau the birthright which the latter evidently did not appreciate. Now, when Esau was hungry and desired the mess of pottage, was not this Jacob's opportunity for giving Esau what the latter preferred and for getting from him what he did not appreciate—the birthright which Jacob esteemed beyond all things of earthly value?

On this point 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." At last this came when Esau returned hungry from the chase just at the time when Jacob's dinner was ready. So when Esau said in substance: '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 and blessing. But what do you care for Grandfather Abraham's covenant? If now you want this pottage more than the blessing, say so; and it shall be yours.'

In effect Esau's reply was: 'Take it, Jacob. It may be good some day, although I confess that I do not have much faith in it. To me these people round about, whom our father calls heathen, seem to be good neighbors; and I might say without prejudice that your doting over that promise has made 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 Abraham's promise in exchange for that soup, you are welcome to it. I prefer 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!' cried Esau. '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. Even now, as the Apostle tells us, it is made known only to the saints, to those who receive the holy Spirit of adoption.

A REASONABLE QUESTION

Some one may ask: 'Why did Jacob take from his brother the birthright and the blessing? Why did he not give Esau the pottage, since the latter was hungry?'

We think it fair to infer that both Jacob and Esau were hungry; for if Jacob were not so, he would not have prepared the pottage. Since we have no evidence to show that one was hungrier than the other, let us suppose that they were equally so, and that there was not pottage enough to

furnish a meal for them both. After Esau had made it known that he desired something to eat, Jacob evidently thought this a proper time for him to secure something which Esau had, but which he did not really appreciate, did not value.

The transaction was a fair one. If one buys a house at a bargain, and if both buyer and seller are satisfied with the transaction, we would not say that it was cheating or robbery. And so it was with Jacob. St. Paul calls our attention to the matter and declares that Esau was profane. That is, Esau did not account the promise which God made to Abraham as worth anything. He was willing to sell it for a mess of pottage, as though he were getting the better of the bargain. Probably he reasoned thus with himself: 'This poor brother of mine does not know what life is. If only he would take a few lessons from me, he would begin to live. He actually believes something which God said to our grandfather, and he thinks that some day he will get something wonderful out of it. For my part I do not think it worth considering.' And so he probably thought that he was the gainer in getting the savory meal.

ESAU CARED ONLY FOR EARTHLY THINGS

Jacob knew that he would get into trouble if he would try to get the blessing; and yet he was so desirous of obtaining it that he was willing to forego everything else. As a matter of fact Esau did not value the birthright except from the earthly standpoint. He had no confidence in the promise. Of course it is possible that there is something not written in the record that might give a different view of the matter, one more easy to comprehend. The Apostle Paul commends Jacob's faith, but counts Esau's act of selling the birthright as reprehensible, and warns the church not to be like the "profane person who sold his birthright." In this statement the Apostle seems to intimate that there may be some who will desire to sell their birthright, and others who may wish to buy.—Hebrews 12:16.

In our Lord's day the Jews who failed to accept the invitation of the Lord, and who were not Israelites indeed, sold their spiritual opportunities for the mess of pottage of earthly blessings and earthly favor. As a result we who are Gentiles by birth, and to whom this right did not appertain by nature, have been invited in to see whether we shall appreciate the privileges and win the prize. Those who have the right appreciation of the heavenly favor will be more than conquerors, and will get the birthright. But the Esau class will not "so run as to obtain."

ESAU A TYPE OF CARELESS CHRISTIANS

It will be remembered that after Esau had sold his birthright, the name Edom was given to him. This name was also subsequently applied both to the people descended from him and to the country in which they lived. Consequently the name Edom is an appropriate symbol of a class who during this Gospel age have similarly sold their birthright for a consideration as trifling as was the mess of pottage which influenced Esau. The name Edom is frequently used by the prophets in reference to that great company of professed Christians sometimes called the Christian world, or Christendom.

Like Esau, the masses of Christendom have sold their birthright of special and peculiar advantage. By the term masses we mean the great majority of worldly professors of the religion of Christ, who are Christians in name only, but who lack the life of Christ in them. These have preferred the mean morsels of present earthly advantage to all the blessings of communion and fellowship with God and Christ, and the glorious inheritance with our Redeemer promised to those who faithfully follow in his steps of sacrifice even unto death.

The Lord made types of these twin children of Isaac and Rebecca in order to illustrate what he foreknew would be the condition among his professed people hundreds of years after Jacob and Esau had died. The election of Jacob to be a type of the overcoming class was certainly a blessing to him, even though it cost him considerable. But the election of Esau to be a type of the earthly-minded was nothing to his disadvantage. It did not mean that he would go to eternal torment; nor did it mean that he would suffer anything as a result during the present life. On the contrary he was blessed, even as worldly, natural men today have blessings of a kind which the Lord graciously withholds from the New Creation, as being less favorable to their spiritual interests.

"COULD YE NOT WATCH WITH ME ONE HOUR?"

Gethsemane! Gethsemane! the Savior's last dark hours!
In agony of soul he sought to know his Father's will;
Three times he prayed, and thrice he came unto his chosen
three

For some sweet word of comfort from the lips of those he loved.
Alas! with weariness their eyes were heavy and they slept.
Ah, me! did e'er the Man of Sorrows utter sadder words

Than these: "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" And then in tones of tenderest sympathetic love, "Sleep on and take your rest," He knew their frame, remembered they were dust, and hushed the cry Of longing in his breaking heart. But he who never sleeps Nor slumbers heard his well-beloved Son in that he feared, And sent his holy angel to assure him all was well.

Dear Lord, oh, let me ne'er grow weary or lie down to sleep While thy dear "feet" are glowing like fine brass in crucible! Oh! help me watch with them "one hour"—this last sad darksome one. Oh! touch my lips with coals of fire from off thine altar, Lord, That I may strengthen, calm, inspire and bless thy faithful ones, Until together we shall hear, "It is enough, come home!"

JACOB DECEIVES HIS FATHER

NOVEMBER 10.—GENESIS 27:18-29.

OBTAINING THE BLESSING—ESAU'S ANGER AT HIS BROTHER—WAS JACOB'S COURSE JUSTIFIABLE?—EVIDENCES OF DIVINE APPROVAL OF HIS ACTS—HIS FAITH NOT THEN AS STRONG AS LATER IN LIFE—ESAU'S DISHONESTY AND VIOLATION OF HIS OATH—ST. PAUL'S APPLICATION OF THIS INCIDENT—PROVISION FOR THE SPIRITUALLY BLIND.

"Speak ye truth each one with his neighbor."—Ephesians 4:25.

Many years rolled around after the transactions recorded in our last lesson. Esau, still a hunter, still fraternizing with the heathen peoples about, had married by this time two Canaanitish women, and despite his profligacy, was 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 into the hands of the elder son. Accordingly he made it known that he was about to bestow the patriarchal 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 had taken the latter's oath. They watched to see whether or not Esau would regard this oath and the sale of the blessing; but finding that he was disposed to disregard it and to violate all of his obligations, both mother and son determined to use their every power to secure the fulfillment of Esau's engagement respecting the blessing. But knowing that Isaac would not accede to this, they conspired to deceive him.

As Esau's name indicates, 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. After Isaac had said: "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau," he gave the blessing to his younger son.

JACOB A FUGITIVE BECAUSE OF HIS FAITH

Of course the unprincipled Esau, who, after selling the birthright and confirming the sale with an oath, was about to take it 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 I will slay my brother Jacob, and the entire inheritance will be mine."

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 the promise. Is it with any wonder that we read that in this journey the Lord appeared to him at Bethel and assured him that the Almighty 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.

THE DIVINE STANDARD—PERFECTION

Do we excuse Jacob and his mother, and approve of their telling lies to Isaac both by word and act? No, we cannot approve 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. As new creatures in Christ Jesus, begotten of the holy Spirit, we have and ought

to have still clearer views of the Lord's will in such matters, still clearer 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 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 favor in visions, revelations and assurances of divine protection and care, without mention of the deception by which the ends were gained. Where God keeps silent, is it wise for us to say very much in the way of reproof?

What better course could Jacob have taken? We answer that had he possessed greater faith he might have waited on the Lord and permitted divine providence to bring to him the blessing which he craved, and 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, trials and perplexities which came to Jacob as a result of fleeing from his brother 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 that God 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, difficulties, 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 experiences, as the Apostle assures us, are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Similarly, Jacob's trials, difficulties and sorrowful experiences worked out for him a blessing of heart and character.

A LESSON FOR SPIRITUAL ISRAELITES

Jacob was not one of those who made the outside of the cup clean while within it was impure. He was at heart of the character which the Lord approves. 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 for even 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 lying lips, we can at least credit him with 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 to give everything to possess.

A lesson for the spiritual Israelite is that we not only 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. (Hebrews 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 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 of the 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." (Hebrews 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.

DIFFERENCES IN HEREDITY

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 the 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 which Esau had taken would have been a much more heinous matter; for by nature he had a loftier mind, a more reasonable soul, less impaired by the Adamic 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 born the children of believers, how great is this bless-

ing, especially if by the grace of God our eyes have been opened to an appreciation of the heavenly spiritual promises! 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.

APPRECIATING OUR 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; for as children of Adam they were themselves "sold under sin." The Lord addresses those who have by his 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 followers of Christ 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, and be given to others who have a higher appreciation of its value, as the inheritance of this covenant slipped from Esau and was secured by Jacob.

FAITHFULNESS IN WELL-DOING

The law of Christ is one of service and of self-sacrifice until death. All who wish to do right, to live according to the lines marked out by the holy Spirit through the words of Jesus and his apostles, should not only start out well by making a full consecration to God, but should continue faithful, and not grow weary of the battle against sin and unrighteousness. God is seeking to develop and to crystallize character in his people. Therefore in due time, after they shall have suffered awhile, battling against the weaknesses of their flesh, they will reap the reward. They will get the new bodies which God has promised them, the resurrection bodies. Then their trials will be ended; for the new bodies will be in perfect accord with the new will, and there will be no cause of conflict between them. Then the work of grace will go grandly on, for the blessing of all the world.

For this reason, the Apostle says, let us not merely

avoid harshness toward those who have been overtaken in a fault; let us not merely guard ourselves that we shall sow to the spirit and not to the flesh; let us not merely avoid weariness in this good way; but let us additionally, "as we have opportunity, do good unto all men, especially to those of the household of faith." In so doing, we shall be copying the character of our heavenly Father. He is the Fountain of Blessing. From him come the blessings of the present life, the sunshine and the rain, upon both just and unjust.

As our heavenly Father is continually giving blessings, rather than seeking favors, so we as his developed children are to have the same character likeness, the same disposition, the same mind. Let us endeavor always to do good to everybody, but especially let us earnestly desire to do good unto all who are the children of God, members of the household of faith.

LETTERS FROM AFIELD

AN EXHORTATION TO "WALK IN THE LIGHT"

DEAR FRIENDS:—

I have been deeply impressed by several sentences in Volume 3, *STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES*, lately brought to my attention. In the light of recent events these words of our beloved Brother Russell seem almost prophetic. Speaking of the Reformation, he says on page 23:

"Many faithful souls in the days of the Reformation walked in the light, as far as it was then shining. But since their day Protestants have made little progress because, instead of walking in the light, they have halted around their favorite leaders, willing to see much as they saw, but nothing more."

Again, on page 25, we read:

"Nor is it sufficient that we find ourselves now in the path of light; we must 'walk in the light,' continue to make progress; else the light, which will not stop, will pass on and leave us in darkness. The difficulty with many is that they will sit down, and do not follow on in the path of light."

Moreover, it is a fact that repeatedly our beloved Pastor declared: "Perfection of knowledge is not yet here; we are not yet in the fullest light of the perfect day." He never claimed to have all the truth, or all the light, but simply such light and such truth as were due to be revealed at this time to the faithful student of the Word of God.

The foregoing seems to apply to many of those who once walked with us, in that they declare their willingness to accept and believe whatever Brother Russell wrote, but decidedly reject the later truths which are most evidently a part of the light now due to the household of faith. My de-

sire, my prayer, is that I may walk in the light, may continue to make progress and to be daily more and more prepared to appreciate and expect still further unfoldings of our Father's plan. With continued confidence and unceasing prayers that you may be guided by His eye, I remain

Yours in His service.

SISTER G. W. S.

LOSING EARTHLY THINGS, GAINING HEAVENLY ONES

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Have just returned home after one of the most blessed and happy tours of my life. The blessing of the Lord surpasses all our expectations. Inclosed find the usual reports. The classes are doing splendidly. Many of them surprise me with the number, growth in grace and the keenness of their interest. Much of this, no doubt, is because of the very helpful character of *THE WATCH TOWER* articles recently. Surely the Lord is gracious and has abundantly supplied all our need through this most wonderful medium. The brethren are reading and studying it as never before.

All seem to greatly appreciate the example of our beloved brethren along the lines of cheerful submission; and this spirit is more and more taking complete control of the church. They seem to be fully grasping the thought that, seemingly in losing all things, they gain all things, and that they in reality do not lose anything. God's name be praised and his will be done! In much love to you, every one, I am

Your fellow servant,

O. L. S.—N. J.

ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM THE SOUTH

BELOVED BRETHREN:—

Greetings in our blessed Redeemer's name! It would cheer