

# HOME STUDY LEAFLET.

LESSON 9.

MARCH 4th, 1894.

1st QUARTER.

Selling the Birthright. Gen. 25: 27-34.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment." Luke 12: 23.

COMMIT TO MEMORY verses 31-34. CHILDREN'S HYMNAL—78, 33, 94, 133.

PROVE THAT—Godless people make bad bargains. Isa. 52: 3.

SHORTER CATECHISM—Quest. 91. How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?

## DAILY PORTIONS.

(The Selections of the International Bible Reading Association.)

| MONDAY.        | TUESDAY.      | WEDNESDAY.     | THURSDAY.      | FRIDAY.       | SATURDAY.     | SABBATH.      |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Gen. 25: 27-34 | Gen. 27: 15-2 | Gen. 27: 30-40 | Heb. 12: 11-17 | John 2: 12-17 | Mark 8: 34-38 | Mark 6: 25-34 |

To the Teacher.—Do not credit any Scholar with having prepared the lesson who does not at least try to answer the questions. Take the leaflet home and assign a value to each answer, announcing the result on the following Sabbath. Take, or send, the Leaflet to absent scholars.

Always bring your Bible and Shorter Catechism to the Sabbath School.

## HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY.—Abraham was dead and Isaac himself was now an old man with sons of his own. Their names were Jacob and Esau. They were twins and about 32 years old. God had told Rebekah, their mother, that the elder should serve the younger, and no doubt Jacob knew that in some way he would obtain the rights of the firstborn which Esau possessed. Had he left it all to God, the sad story in our lesson would never have been written. But he thought that he could manage the matter better than God, or he was impatient with waiting so long. Esau only lost what he was not worthy of having, but Jacob did a shameful thing when he made his famishing brother pay such a price for a bowl of pottage.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Parties to the Sale. vs. 27, 28. II. The Transaction. vs. 29-34.

I. THE PARTIES TO THE SALE. 27. How different from one another these two boys were. Our different tastes and talents were given to us that we might fit into different places in the world. Nobody is perfect, but everybody has some good points, and some bad traits. God calls us to cultivate our virtues and correct, by self-control, our faults. Esau could never have grown into a Jacob, but he might have become a much better Esau, and perhaps a grander man than Jacob. Esau was a cunning hunter—There was nothing wrong in that. Where would we get our furs, and many kinds of food if there were no hunters? But every occupation has its moral as well as physical dangers. The hunter's life was not the best one for a man like Esau. The business one likes best is not always the one he ought to follow. We live for a higher purpose than to please ourselves, or to make money. We live to become men and women who have made the most of the good abilities that God gave them, through the Holy Spirit's help. Jacob was a plain man—He was not a "perfect" man, but he had some qualities that Esau lacked. He really loved God and valued religion. A good man may sometimes do very mean things, but if, like Jacob, his whole life is an effort to conquer his weakness, we ought to respect him more than one who is naturally generous but disregards the claims of God and neglects his religious duties. We can't

Published weekly at 5 cents a year, for the Sabbath School Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, by Rev. T. F. Fotheringham, M. A., Convener, St. John, N. B.

help liking a man of Esau's stamp,—brave, frank, bubbling over with vitality,—any more than we can help despising one like Jacob. But both need our help, and the one we admire needs it most. Here are two pieces of ore, which has the gold in it? "Oh, that one all glittering with yellow specks, of course," you say. But you are mistaken. I put them in the fire. See, the bright gold comes from the dingy piece, and the other is burnt up smelling like sulphur. Which of these pieces represents Jacob, and which Esau?

II. THE TRANSACTION. 29. Jacob sold pottage—"sod" is the past tense of "seethe" to boil, and "pottage" is the same word as "porridge," but includes soup, or anything boiled in a pot. Jacob's soup was made of lentils—a grain resembling a flattened pea or bean. In growing it resembles the pea, but is only about a foot and a half high. It is cheap, nutritious and palatable. Very tempting to a hungry hunter. The color of the pottage was a brownish red. The Hebrew word for "red" is "Edom." Esau was called Edom because of his ruddy complexion, as well as from the pottage for which he sold his birthright. Jacob would have deserved no great thanks if he had given his hungry brother all the broth and made a fresh potful for himself. On the other hand, if Esau had felt as he should about such a thing as his birthright, he would have said, when Jacob asked him to sell it. "Keep your soup. My birthright is not for sale at any price. I'll find some one less stingy than you, or I'll wait till I can prepare something for myself." A man who could walk home, would not die of hunger for an hour or two at least. Both brothers were wrong, but Esau was the worst of the two, for he should have held his birthright dearer than life a thousand times over. It did not mean merely, the headship of the tribe after Isaac's death, and a double portion of the inheritance. These he might have parted with, although it would have been disgraceful. But he was, as Isaac's heir, the heir of the covenant, stood in relations of holy friendship with God, and was the ancestor of the promised Messiah. The man who would sell these privileges would sell his soul, and all heaven, if he could, for present satisfaction, pleasure, or worldly advantage. Jacob was mean to take advantage of his brother, but he was wise and good enough to hold these as priceless. He would have given Esau any thing he liked to ask. It wasn't his fault altogether that Esau was satisfied to take a bowl of soup for them. It was the submitting of such things to barter, and disposing of them by a bargain of any kind that was the shamefullest aspect of the shameful transaction, and here the most shame lies with the man who would sell at all. But are there not Esaus still? Persons who sell health, for the pleasures of eating and drinking and late hours. Character, for money or position. self-respect, for empty honors or covetousness; their Christian privileges, for the pleasure the world gives. Everything that keeps you from becoming a true Christian is a price received for your birthright.

**To the Scholar.**—Study the lesson carefully, turning up the marginal references and reading the "Daily Portions." Then close your Bible and try to answer in writing the questions following *without accepting aid from any quarter* after you have begun to write. Then bring this leaflet to Sabbath School with you on the day of its date. If you cannot come, fill out the blank and send the leaflet (with the answers written out) to your teacher by some friend, or by mail, and you will receive credit for the work done as if you had been present. If your excuse is satisfactory, you will not lose in record of attendance.

- 1—Which brother was the eldest? (3)
- 2—What occupation did he follow? (3)
- 3—What did he sell to his brother? (3)
- 4—What did he get for it? (3)
- 5—What did the birthright include? (7)
- 6—Why was he willing to part with it? (6)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Teacher,—Please excuse my absence from Sabbath School to-day, I cannot come because \_\_\_\_\_ I have read the "Daily Portions" and answered the questions as well as I could. I have committed to memory \_\_\_\_\_ verses in addition to the Golden Text, and \_\_\_\_\_ Questions in the Catechism and have recited them to \_\_\_\_\_ I was at church \_\_\_\_\_

I send with this my Weekly Offering of \_\_\_\_\_ cents.