

The Signs of the Times, Vol. 16 (1890)

January 6, 1890

"Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 8:8-13" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 1.

E. J. Waggoner

(Lesson 16, January 15, 1890.)

1. What was the old covenant that was made with Israel? Ex. 19:5-8; 24:3-8.
2. How does the second covenant compare with the first? Heb. 8:6.
3. What was the necessity for the second covenant? Verse 7.
4. Since the second covenant is better than the first, in that it is founded upon better promises, wherein must the first have been faulty? Ans.-In the promises.
5. What were the promises of the first covenant? Ex. 19:8; 24:3, 7.
6. What was God's covenant which the people promised to perform?
7. What is said of the nature of those commandments? Ps. 19:7; 119:172.
8. What of those who do them? Ps. 119:1-3; Eccl. 12:13.
9. Then could the children of Israel have promised anything better than to keep God's commandments?
10. Wherein, then, was the fault? Heb. 8:8, first part.
11. What did the people really promise to do? Ex. 19:5, 6, 8. See note.
12. What cannot the law do? Rom. 3:20.
13. What renders the law thus powerless? Rom. 8:3.
14. What is all human righteousness? Isa. 64:6.
15. What is the only true righteousness? Phil. 3:9.
16. In the terms of the first covenant do we find any mention of faith, or of divine assistance?

NOTES

Let the student note that the promises in the old covenant were really all on the part of the people. God said, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant [the ten commandments], then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people. . . . and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." God did not say that he would make them such, but that they would be such a people if they obeyed his commandments. It could not be otherwise. The keeping of God's holy law would constitute them a holy people; and as such they would indeed be a peculiar treasure, even as are all who are zealous of good works. All that was set before them was simply what would result from obedience to the law, and that covenant contained no promises of help in doing that. Therefore the first covenant was a promise on the part of the people that they would make themselves holy. But this they could not do. The promise was a good one; with it alone there could be no fault; the fault lay with the people. The

promise was faulty, through the weakness of the people who made it; just as we read in Rom. 8:3 that the law was weak through the flesh.

The first thought in the minds of many, on learning that in the first covenant the people made a promise which they could not possibly fulfill, is that God was unjust to require such a promise. And since they know that God is not unjust, they conclude that the first covenant must have contained pardon and promise of divine assistance, although it contained no hint of it. If the student will wait until the subject of the covenants is concluded, he will see the justice and the mercy of God's plan. But right here let us fasten these two thoughts: First, if the first covenant had contained pardon, and promise of divine assistance, there would have been no necessity of any other covenant. Pardon and divine aid are all that any soul can get, and if the first covenant had had these, it would not have been faulty. But, second, let it not be forgotten that the fact that there was no pardon, and no Holy Spirit's aid, in that covenant does not imply that there was no salvation for the people who lived under it. There was ample provision for them, but not in the first covenant. What the provision was, and why the first covenant was given, will be learned later.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The preliminary steps of the old covenant are recorded in Ex. 19:5-8. We have (1) the words of the Lord to the people setting forth the conditions on which the people would be his peculiar treasure above all other nations; (2) the conditions, obedience to God's voice, or covenant; and (3) the promise of the people that they would do this. The Lord then utters his voice in the "ten words," and the covenant is afterward ratified, as recorded in Ex. 24:3-8.

God's covenant which he commanded the people to perform is expressly stated to be the ten commandments. Deut. 4:12, 16. They are spoken of as "covenant" because they are the basis of every covenant which God ever made with man or concerning man. They are God's will, they reflect of his character. They were not, however, the covenant made at Horeb, for that was made concerning the ten commandments, or God's voice. Israel promised to obey God's voice before that voice was heard, and when it spoke it uttered the ten commandments and no more. Deut. 5:22.

The old covenant was broken when Israel disobeyed God. They then forfeited their blessings and privileges, and the covenant became null and void. But their disobedience did not affect the holy law of God. The transgression of a law could not change it; and the proof that Israel transgressed God's law and thereby forfeited, or lost, their covenant blessings, proves the binding obligation of the law. If the transgression of a law would abolish it, no government would stand, and all authority and rule would be at an end; for it is true that from time immemorial men have transgressed law, and will transgress as long as the heart of man remains unregenerate.

The covenant made at Horeb is called the "old covenant" because it was first ratified, while in point of fact what is called the "new covenant" was made first, even in the beginning, with the race immediately after the fall. Its blessings and

light were embraced through faith by righteous Abel. In fact, it was through faith in all the covenant implies that Abel became righteous. The same covenant was confirmed by the promise and oath of God unto Abraham. It was believed in by patriarch and prophet on the promise of God of what was to be. The covenant was at last ratified by the death of Christ upon the cross, when "the blood of the everlasting covenant" was shed. Heb. 13:20; Luke 22:20.

It is to the "new covenant" that the term "everlasting covenant" refers. This is spoken of as the covenant made with David, but it in that case refers to David's seed, Christ, through whom the covenant was to be established, around whom all the blessings of the covenant clustered, through whom they all came. See 2 Sam. 23:5; Ps. 50:5; 89:28; Isa. 24:5; 55:3; 61:8; Jer. 32:40; Eze. 16:60, et al. It is called the "everlasting covenant," because it is the only means through which the blessings of God have come to fallen man from the beginning to the close of probation. It is synchronous with the "everlasting gospel." Rev. 14:6. The everlasting gospel is the glad tidings, or good news, of the everlasting covenant.

True righteousness embraces true motives. God judges acts by motives. If the act is to be worthy, the motive, and the heart which prompts the motive, must be pure and right. But man's heart is by nature dominated by evil, is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Mark 7:21-23; Jer. 17:9. As the fountain is therefore corrupt, the deeds must be. In order that man do righteous acts the heart must be made right. This God cleanses by his wondrous grace and mighty power through faith. He gives us a new heart. He imputes to us the righteousness of God. That righteousness covers all past sins, it issues through the life in present good works.

The old covenant, or the covenant at Horeb, knew no forgiveness. It gendered to bondage. Gal. 4:24. Bondage came from it. If man could have perfectly obeyed God's law, and had been released from all past sins, he would have had liberty under the old covenant. But that covenant could not forgive sin, neither could it change the heart. It gendered to bondage. But in the new covenant there is forgiveness, change of heart, light and knowledge of God, and a sinless life forevermore.

January 13, 1890

"Relation of Civil Governments to the Moral Law" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

Among right-minded persons there can be no question as to the right of earthly governments to exist. There is a class of persons known as "Anarchists," who deny that there is any necessity for government or law, or that one person has a right for exercise authority over another; but these persons, true to their name, believe in nothing; had they the power, they would cast God down from the throne of the universe as readily as they would the earth monarch from his limited dominion. With such persons we have nothing to do. It is useless to argue with those who will not admit self-evident propositions. The only argument that

that can effectually reach them is the strong arm of the law, which they hate. Our argument shall be addressed to those who acknowledge God as the Creator and the supreme Ruler of the universe, and the Bible as the complete and perfect revelation of his will concerning his creatures on this earth. With such, the declaration of the prophet, that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (dan. 4:25), and the statement of the apostle, that "the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:16), together with many other Scripture references to earthly governments, are sufficient evidence that nations have a right to exist.

Admitting that earthly governments are in the divine order of things, the next question is, For what purpose? The word itself indicates the answer: Governments exist for the purpose of governing, or, in other words, for the purpose of enforcing laws by which justice and harmony may be maintained. The apostle Peter says that governments are sent by the Lord "for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well." 1 Peter 2:13, 14. Paul says also that the ruler is God's minister to execute wrath upon them that do evil. Rom. 13:4.

The next step in the investigation would naturally be to find out what laws earthly rulers are to execute. This is plainly indicated in the text first referred to. If the ruler is a minister of God, then the laws against which he is to execute *wrath*, need be such laws as God can approve—they must be in perfect harmony with the laws of God. Indeed, it could not be otherwise; for since God's law is *perfect* (Ps 19:7), covering in its range every act and thought (see Eccl. 12:13, 14; Heb. 4:12; Matt. 5:20-22, 27, 28), even, human law must be embraced within its limits. No one can dissent from this proposition. It is one of the fundamental principles of human law, as will be seen by the following extract from Blackstone's commentaries:-

"Upon these two foundations, the law of nature and the law of revelation, depend all human laws; that is to say, that no human laws should be suffered to contradict these. There are, it is true, a great number of indifferent points in which both the divine law and the natural leave a man at his own liberty, but which are found necessary, for the benefit of society, to be restrained within certain limits. And beside it is that human laws have their greatest force and efficacy, for with regard for such points as are not indifferent, human laws are only declaratory of, and act in subordination to the former. To instance in the case of murder: This is expressly forbidden by the divine, and demonstrably by the natural law; and from these prohibitions arises the true unlawfulness of this crime. These human laws that assess a punishment to it, do not at all increase its guilt, or superadd any fresh obligation, *in foro conscientia* [in the court of conscience], to abstain from its perpetration. Nay, if any human law should allow or enjoin as to commit it, we are bound to transgress that human law, or else we must offend both the natural and the divine."-*Blackstone, vol. 1, p. 36.*

The State, then, according to both sacred and secular testimony, has no power to contravene the law of God, it cannot declare an act to be right or wrong unless God's law so declares it, and in that case the innocence or guilt arising from the performance of the act is due solely to the enactments of God's moral law, and not to the human enactment, the latter being subordinate to the former.

The indifferent points, in which, as Blackstone says, human laws have their only inherent force, are such as regulate commerce, the tariff upon imported goods, etc. These are simply matters of convenience or expediency.

These questions being settled, the last and most important one is this: How far in morals have human laws jurisdiction? or, For how much of the violation of the moral law has God ordained that earthly rulers shall be his ministers to execute wrath? The Bible, which settles every important question concerning man's duty, must also divide this. We shall find the answer in the thirteenth chapter of Romans, a portion of which must be briefly examined:-

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good." Rom. 13:1-4.

The "high powers" do not include the *highest* power. While every soul is to be subject to earthly powers, some are absolved from allegiance to God. The service of the two will not be incompatible, so long as the earthly powers fulfill the object for which they are ordained, viz., to act as ministers for *good*. When they forget this, their subjects are bound to follow the example of the apostles under similar circumstances, and say, "We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 2:28.

The verses above quoted from the thirteenth of Romans show plainly that earthly governments alone are the subject of consideration in that chapter. The following verses show, with equal clearness, the extent of their jurisdiction:-

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13:8-10.

"He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law," and "love is the fulfilling of the law." What law?-Why, the law concerning which earthly rulers are the ministers. The law of God is summed up in the two great commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." See Matt. 22:36-40. The second great commandment, defining our duty to our fellow-men, is expanded into the last six precepts of the decalogue, showing to what law he refers when he says, "He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." To make this still *more* emphatic, he closes his enumeration of the commandments composing the last table of the decalogue, with the statement that "love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is *the fulfilling* of the law." Now since the apostle is speaking only of earthly governments, and the duty of their subjects, we know that he who does no ill to his neighbor-loves his neighbor as himself-has fulfilled all the law of which these earthly governments are empowered to take notice.

Thus it is seen that Paul's argument concerning the office of civil government is confined to the last six commandments of the decalogue. But let it not be supposed that human governments can recognize all violations of even these last six commandments. Earthly governments are solely for the purpose of securing to their subjects mutual rights. So long as a man does no ill to his neighbor, the law cannot molest him. But any violation of the law of God affects the individual himself first of all. For example: Christ said that the seventh commandment may be violated by a single lustful look and evil desire; but such look and desire do not injure anyone except the individual indulging in them; it is only when they result in the commission of the open act of adultery, thus injuring others besides the adulterer himself, that human governments can interfere. To God alone belongs the power to punish sins of the mind.

Of the sixth commandment we are told that whosoever hates another has violated it; but the State cannot prevent a man from hating another, nor take any notice of hatred until it culminates in open crime.

There are innumerable ways in which the fifth commandment may be violated, for which the civil government has neither the right nor the power to punish. Only in extreme cases can the State interfere. A man may be covetous, and yet he is not liable to punishment until his covetousness results in open theft or swindling. Yet before the *act* is accomplished, of which the State can take notice, a man's covetousness or lying or hatred may work great annoyance to his neighbors.

We see, then, how imperfect are human governments even within the sphere allotted to them. God alone has the power to read the heart, and he alone has the right to "bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." With matters of purely a religious nature-those which rest solely upon our relation to God, and not to our neighbor-human governments have no right to interfere. Concerning them, each individual is answerable to God alone. E. J. W.

"Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 8:8-13" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

(Lesson 17, January 22, 1890)

1. With whom was the old covenant made? Jer. 31:31, 32.
2. With whom did the Lord say he would make a new covenant? Heb. 8:8.
3. Have Gentiles any part in the covenants? Eph. 2:11, 12.
4. What were the promises of the old covenant?
5. What did the people really bind themselves to do?
6. Wherein was that covenant faulty?
7. What made the promises faulty?
8. In what was the second covenant better than the first? Heb. 8:6.
9. Repeat the promises of the new covenant. Verses 10-12; Jer. 31:33, 34.
10. Who makes these promises?
11. What is the order of their fulfillment? See note.

12. What is meant by putting the law into the minds of the people? Ans.-So impressing it upon their minds that they would not forget it, and causing them to delight in it, and acknowledge its holiness. Rom. 7:12, 22.

13. What is meant by writing it in their hearts? Ans.-Making it the rule of their lives, the spring of all their actions. In other words, making it a part of them.

14. What is said of those in whose hearts the law of God is? Ps. 119:11; 37:31.

15. Whom will such a one be like? Ps. 40:7, 8.

16. What will be the characteristic of those who have the law written in their hearts? Titus 2:14.

17. Is not this the object set before the people in the first covenant? Ex. 19:5, 6.

18. Then wherein is the great difference between the first covenant and the second? Ans.-In the first covenant the people promised to make themselves holy; in the second, God says that he will do the work for them.

19. In order that this work may be done, what must men do? James 4:7, first clause; 1 Peter 5:6; Rom. 6:13.

20. What is the reason why man who profess to desire righteousness do not obtain it? Rom. 10:3.

21. If they would humble themselves and submit to God, what would he do for them? Isa. 61:10.

22. Through whom alone can this righteousness be obtained? Rom. 5:17, 19.

23. What is the condition on which it is given? Rom. 3:22.

NOTES

The first of the blessings of the gospel is the forgiveness of sins. The term for this in the quotation in Hebrews is. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness." The next is the writing of the law in the hearts of the people. Then comes the final blotting out of sins: "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." And then comes the close of probation, and the eternal inheritance, when "they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." Jer. 31:34. Then all the people will be taught of the Lord. Isa. 54:13.

Israel were indeed be called the people of God; but his dealings with them abundantly prove, what the New Testament plainly declares, that only the faithful are really Israel, and no others were truly his people. The Lord sent word to Pharaoh, saying, "Let my people go, that they may serve me." Again he said, "Israel is my son, even my firstborn." He also said he had seen the affliction of his people, and had come to deliver them, and to bring them into the land of Canaan. He did indeed deliver them out of Egypt, but of all the host that went out, only two were brought into the land of Canaan. The rest fell in the desert because of their unbelief. When they rebelled against God, they cut themselves off from being his people. And as he said in the prophecy, and in the text we have been

considering, when they refused to continue in his covenant, he regarded them not. To be the people of God in truth, we must have his law in our hearts.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The old covenant was made with Israel, at Horeb; the new covenant was ratified with the house of Israel when Jesus died upon the cross. To Israel belonged "the covenants," both the old and new. Rom. 9:4. The Gentiles have no promise in that covenant whatever, only as they become a part of Israel. Paul says in Eph. 2:12 that the Gentiles were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise." It is sometimes said that the Sabbath is "Jewish," but those who say this hardly realize the import of their words. If the Sabbath is Jewish, so also is the new covenant, through which all the blessings and promises come, so also is our Lord. "Salvation is of the Jews." John 4:22.

But God has not rejected the Gentiles nor barred the way to their salvation. Those who were aliens may become citizens with the saints. A way has been opened, a "new and living way," even the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for all, and brings the Gentiles nigh by his blood. If we accept of his gracious provisions of this new covenant, if we through faith lay hold on this divine Redeemer, we become a part of Israel. Eph. 2:13-20. We are "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29. Becoming through faith in Christ a part of the Israel of God, we will not only heed the precepts to Israel, but will share the promises. We will not reject God's moral law as Jewish, but will rejoice that that law in its entirety and fullness may all be written upon our very hearts.

He who has an abiding affection for the law of God, will not fail of His kingdom. He will not sin against God (Ps. 119:11); none of his steps shall slide (Ps. 37:31); he will have no stumblingblock (Ps. 119:165, margin). Men's failures are our stumbling-blocks. Those who fail generally lay the blame to that or those over which or whose acts they stumble. But that over which they stumble is not the cause of stumbling, it is only the occasion; it is simply used for an excuse. They would stumble over something else if not that.

Many stumble over some act of a brother or sister which they do not consider right. They have had some deal with their brethren, have not gotten a good bargain, and they say, "If such a man is a Christian, we will have no more to do with religion," and off they go, their steps slide. The brother with whom they dealt may have done wrong. Others may have upheld him in that wrong, but is all this and a thousand times more, a reason why anyone should turn from the Lord? We are not called to serve man, but God. Rev. 14:6, 7. All men are frail and erring. God never fails. If we are serving him, if we love his law, none of

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these things will move us. It may lead to less confidence in man; it should not shake confidence in God. "Great peace have they which have thy law, and they have none occasion of stumbling." Ps. 119:165, margin. Revised Version. There is not only no cause, but they will take nothing for an occasion or excuse. Let us always remember that whenever we make anyone else's failure to do right an

occasion of doing wrong ourselves, our heart is not right, the law of God is not written on the heart. God will not fail us; he cannot fail.

Submission from the heart is most precious in God's sight. It implies humility, meekness, and faith. We would not submit to God unless we believed him. We would not submit unless we were willing to learn his way in the spirit of meekness. We would not submit unless we realized our own nothingness and God's greatness. Therefore it is only the humble, meek, trusting heart that truly submits to God. Such God will clothe with his righteousness and will keep from evil.

January 20, 1890

"What and Where Is Paradise?" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee to-day, shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke 23:42, 43.

This language will be recognized at once as the request of the penitent thief who was crucified with Jesus, and the reply of our Lord. It has been the subject of an unlimited amount of controversy, and doubtless will be as long as men choose to interpret the Bible according to their system of theology, instead of deriving their system of theology wholly from the Bible. We do not design at this time to give a detailed exposition of the text, but simply to note a few points concerning paradise.

From Christ's language to Mary, recorded in John 20:17, three days after the crucifixion, it is very evident that he did not go to heaven on the day when he gave the thief the solemn assurance that they should meet in paradise. On account of this text, many who cling tenaciously to the idea that Jesus did not actually die, argue that Christ did go to paradise that day, but that paradise is not in heaven. Then they connect this text with their erroneous reading of 1 Peter 3:18-20, and conclude that paradise is a sort of half-way house-an intermediate place between earth and heaven-where all souls, both good and bad, are retained until the judgment. In short, paradise is made identical with hades. A very few texts will suffice to show that this is a most erroneous conclusion.

First, however, we wish to call attention to the fact that if this definition of paradise were true, the Saviour's promise to the thief would be made nonsense. If paradise were only a place where souls remain between death and the final judgment, then Christ's promise to the penitent thief would amount simply to this: To-day shalt thou be with me in the place of the dead! There would certainly be nothing very comforting about that, and nothing that would require the exercise of much faith, seeing both Jesus and the thief were at that time hanging on the cross; but this is what Christ's answer meant, if the theory be true that paradise and hades are identical. This fact alone should be sufficient to show the fallacy of such a view.

There are only three places in the Bible where the word "paradise" is used. One is in the text quoted at the beginning of this article. The second is in 2 Cor. 12:2-4, which we quote:-

"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth); such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth); how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

This text proves conclusively that paradise is not an intermediate place between earth and heaven, but that it is heaven itself. In the first place, Paul says that he (for he speaks of himself) was caught up into the third heaven, and then in repeating the statement for emphasis, he says that he was caught up into paradise. Then Christ's promise to the thief on the cross involved nothing less than that the thief should be with him in the third heaven.

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In Rev. 2:7 we find the following promise, given by the Spirit:-

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

From this text we learn that paradise contains the tree of life. Turn now to Rev. 22:1, 2, and read: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it (that is of the city, see preceeding chapter), and on either side of the river, was there, the tree of life." Here we learn that the tree of life is in the midst of the New Jerusalem, which contains the throne of God. But the tree of life is in the midst of the paradise of God (Rev. 2:7); therefore we must conclude that the paradise of God is in the midst of the city of God, and that whoever goes to paradise goes into the immediate presence of God.

"Paradise" is an Anglocised Greek word meaning a park or a beautiful garden. Earthly cities have parks and pleasure gardens, and the heavenly Jerusalem has one also, but as much more beautiful than earthly gardens as the city who builder and maker is God is grander than cities built by man. Now compare this with Eze. 28:13: "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the ardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold." Read with this the description of New Jerusalem, which contains the paradise of God, that "there shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Rev. 21:27. This, together with Rev. 2:7 and 22:14, teaches us that entrance into paradise, and enjoyment of its delights, is to be the reward of them who shall overcome through faith in Christ. But the righteous are rewarded only at the coming of the Lord in his kingdom and the resurrection of the just (Matt. 16:27; 23:31; Luke 14:14); and that was just what the thief asked for in the words, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." E. J. W.

"Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 8:6-13" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

(Lesson 18, February 1, 1890)

1. In what does the difference between the old covenant and the new consist? Heb. 8:6.

2. What were the promises of the old covenant?

3. What are those of the new?

4. Was there any promise of pardon in the old covenant? See Ex. 19:3-8; 24:3-8. These scriptures contain the complete record of the making of the old covenant, but they contain no hint of pardon, or of any help through Christ.

5. Then how did people under the old covenant find salvation? Heb. 9:14, 15.

6. Was there actual forgiveness for the people at the very time they sinned? or was forgiveness deferred until the death of Christ? Ps. 32:5; 78:38. Enoch and Elijah were taken to Heaven, which shows that they had received the same fullness of blessing that those will receive who live until the Lord comes.

7. Since there was present and complete salvation for men who lived under the old covenant, and forgiveness of the transgressions that were under the first covenant came only through the second, what must we conclude? Ans.-That the second covenant really existed at the same time as, and even before, the first covenant.

8. Tell again what is included in the blessings of the second covenant?

9. What will be received by those whose transgressions are forgiven through the new covenant? Heb. 9:15, last clause.

10. Whose children are all they who are heirs of the eternal inheritance? Gal. 3:29.

11. Of how many is Abraham the father? Rom. 4:11, 12.

12. Did Abraham have righteousness? Gen. 26:5.

13. How did he obtain this righteousness? Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6.

14. Through whom did Abraham receive this righteousness? Gal. 3:14, first part.

15. Then could the covenant with Abraham have lacked anything? Ans.-No; having Christ, it had all that can be desired-"all things that pertain to life and godliness."

16. Since all the blessings which people receive through the new covenant, they receive as children of Abraham, can there be any difference between the second covenant and the covenant with Abraham?

17. How long before the old covenant was the covenant with Abraham made? Gal. 3:17.

18. Then why was that "first" covenant made? See notes.

NOTES

The question has often been asked, How could any be saved under the old covenant, if there was no pardon in that covenant? That there was no pardon in

that covenant is readily seen: 1. There is no hint of pardon in the covenant itself, as recorded in Ex. 19:5-8, or in the reiteration and ratification of it in chap. 24:3-8. 2. In the sanctuary service there was no blood offered that could take away sin. Heb. 10:4. There was therefore no chance for pardon in that covenant. But to say they were under that covenant settles nothing as to what was in the covenant. All were under that covenant who lived while it endured. But that was not all. They were "beloved for the Father's sake." As children of Abraham, they were also under the Abrahamic covenant, of which their circumcision was the token. John 7:22; Gen. 17:9-14. This was a covenant of faith, already confirmed by the word and oath of the Lord, in Christ, the Seed, and it was not disannulled by any future arrangement. Gal. 3:15-17. All who were of faith were blessed with faithful Abraham. Verses 6-9. Overlooking this plain fact, which indeed lies at the very foundation of gospel faith in the new covenant, which is but the development of the Abrahamic, some have ascribed salvation to the covenant at Horeb. But, according to both Scripture and reason, if salvation had been possible in that covenant, there was no need of the second. Heb. 7:11; 10:1, etc.

Though much dissatisfaction is expressed by commentators with the received rendering of Heb. 9:1, their suggestions do not make it very greatly different. The first covenant is said to have had ordinances of divine service and a sanctuary for this world. But these were superadditions, not at all necessary to the covenant, but quite necessary as types of the sacrifice and priesthood of the new covenant. They all recognized the existence of sin; but no sin was taken away by them. Heb. 10:3, 4. As a sanctuary of this world, and offerings that could not take away sin, were connected to that covenant, these things themselves were but recognitions of the fact that there was no pardon in that covenant. By those things the people expressed faith in the mediation of the new covenant. If any pardon had been contained in that covenant, we must conclude that some means would have been devised to make that fact manifest. But there was not.

The word sanctuary means a holy place, or the dwelling-place of God. Indeed, the same word is often used in the Hebrew for sanctuary and holiness. All can see that it is derived from a verb which signifies to sanctify or make holy. The sanctuary being a holy dwelling, and being divided into two rooms each of course was a holy place. And each is called *the holy*. See Lev. 16:2. Here the word "holy" is used, and we learn only by the description-within the veil before the mercy-seat, which is upon the ark-that the inner holy is meant. Inasmuch as in the second was placed the ark, containing the tables of stone on which were the commandments-the most sacred things committed to them,-it was called the most holy, or, properly, according to the Hebrew, the holy of the holies.

What was in the ark? Few subjects have occasioned more perplexity than this description of what was in the ark. The apostle specifies, as being in the holy place, only the candlestick and the table upon which was the bread; whereas it is certain that the golden altar of incense was also therein. Moses had direction to put the two tables of testimony in the ark. Ex. 26:16, 21. This order he obeyed. Ex. 40:29; Deut. 10:5. But we do not read of his putting anything else in the ark, or of his being ordered to do so. In 1 Kings 8:9 it is distinctly said that "there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb,

when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel." This was spoken of the time when the vessels of the sanctuary were brought into their appropriate places in the temple built by Solomon. Dr. Clarke says:-

"As Calmet remarks, in the temple which was afterwards built, there were many things added which were not in the tabernacle, and several things left out. The ark of the covenant and the two tables of the law were never found after the return from the Babylonish captivity. We have no proof that, even in the time of Solomon, the golden pot of manna, or the rod of Aaron, was either in or near the ark. . . . We need not trouble ourselves to reconcile the various scriptures which mention these subjects, some of which refer to the tabernacle, others to Solomon's temple, and others to the temple built by Zorobabel, which places were very different from each other."

That changes took place is evident. If Paul wrote of the tabernacle in the days of Moses, then the rod of Aaron and the pot of manna had been removed from the ark before the time of Solomon, which some suggest might have occurred while the ark was in the hands of the Philistines. Or, otherwise, Paul was speaking of things as they existed some time after Solomon, of which we have no account in the Scriptures. Which is the case is not at all material.

None should allow themselves to be confused by the terms first covenant and second covenant. While the covenant made at Sinai was called "the first covenant," it is by no means the first covenant that God ever made with man. Long before that he made a covenant with Abraham, and he also made a covenant with Noah, and with Adam. Neither must it be supposed that the first or old covenant existed for a period of time as the only covenant with the people before the promise of the second or new covenant could be shared. If that had been the case, then during that time

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there would have been no pardon for the people. What is called the "second covenant" virtually existed before the covenant was made at Sinai; for the covenant with Abraham was confirmed in Christ (Gal. 3:17); and it is only through Christ that there is any value to what is known as the second covenant. There is no blessing that can be gained by virtue of the second covenant that was not promised to Abraham. And we, with whom the second covenant is made, can share the inheritance which it promises only by being children of Abraham. To be Christ's is the same as to be children of Abraham (Gal. 3:29); all who are of faith are the children of Abraham and share in his blessing (verses 7-9); and since no one can have anything except as children of Abraham, it follows that there is nothing in what is called the second covenant that was not in the covenant made with Abraham. The second covenant existed in every feature long before the first, even from the days of Adam. It is called "second" because both its ratification by blood and its more minute statement were after that of the covenant made at Sinai. More than this, it was the second covenant made with the Jewish people. The one from Sinai was the *first* made with that nation.

When it is demonstrated that the first covenant-the Sinaitic covenant-contained no provisions for pardon of sins, some will at once say, "But they *did* have pardon under that covenant." The trouble arises from a confusion of terms.

It is not denied that *under* the old covenant, *i.e.*, during the time when it was specially in force, there was pardon of sins, but that pardon was not offered in the old covenant, and could not be secured by virtue of it. The pardon was secured by virtue of something else, as shown by Heb. 9:15. Not only was there the opportunity of finding free pardon of sins, and grace to help in time of need, during the time of the old covenant, but the same opportunity existed before that covenant was made, by virtue of God's covenant with Abraham, which differs in no respect from that made with Adam and Eve, except that we have the particulars given more in detail. We see, then, that there was no necessity for provisions to be made in the Sinaitic covenant for forgiveness of sins. The plan of salvation was developed long before the gospel was preached to Abraham (Gal. 3:8), and was amply sufficient to save to the uttermost all who would accept it. The covenant at Sinai, was made for the purpose of making the people see the necessity of accepting the gospel.

January 27, 1890

**"The Wickedness of Church and State Union" *The Signs of the Times*
16, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the last number of the last volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in answer to a question, we showed how impossible it is that civil government should have anything to do with the moral law. The argument, in brief, was that the law is spiritual, and civil government cannot enforce spirituality, nor punish for the lack of this. In continuation of that line of thought, we wish to show the consequences that must necessarily result from carrying into practice the idea that it is the province of the civil government to enforce the divine law. We shall do this by making a few quotations. In the Senate document containing the hearing (December 13, 1889) before the Committee on Education and Labor, on the Sunday-Rest bill, we find on pages 65, and 66 certain statements made by Senator Blair, the chairman of the committee, and the author of the bill. He first asked Dr. Lewis the following questions:-

"Suppose that human beings trying to live in accordance with the will of God, re-enact his law and write it in their statute-book; is it wrong for society to put in the public law the requirement of obedience to God and his law?"

And then after a few words he proceeded to answer his own question in the following manner:-

"The will of God exists. He requires the observance of the seventh day just as he prohibits murder; and so we re-enact his law, in making a law and enforcing it against murder, so all the States have enacted laws against the desecration of the Sabbath, going further or not so far, according to the various Legislatures."

Let the reader give particular attention to the idea advanced by Senator Blair, that human beings may re-enact the law of God. The same idea was advanced by Mr. Crafts in the *Christian Statements* of May 30, 1889. Said he:-

"The laws of our statute-books that re-enact the seventh commandment are as distinctly biblical in their origin as the laws that re-enact a part of the fourth commandment."

In what position does this place civil government? The only answer that can be given is that it puts it in the place of God, and makes it at least equal with God. Nay, more, in putting it in the place of God, it puts it above God; for if the State re-enacts and enforces the law of God, supposing such a thing to be possible, it takes the law out of his hands, leaving him nothing to do, and requires men to give supreme allegiance to the State. This will be more apparent when we quote another statement made by Senator Blair, in the connection before referred to. Said he:-

"Now the question comes right to this point: God having ordained the Sabbath, as you concede with all religious organizations, here is the national government, which alone can make that law of God operative in this sphere of national action. Why shall not the civil government, then, re-enact that conceded law of the Almighty and make it effective?"

Do we not say truly that the National Reform idea, as voiced here by Senator Blair, puts the State in the place of God? He believes that national government alone can make the law of God effective. We say, with as much reverence as the subject will allow, that we cannot see what use those who hold such an idea can have for God. They have usurped his prerogative.

In the second chapter of 2 Thessalonians the apostle Paul describes a certain power, known as the "man of sin," the result of the working of the "mystery of iniquity." This power is described as opposing and exalting itself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, and claiming really to be God. It has generally been considered that this language is a description of the Papacy, and we believe that that interpretation is correct; but surely it describes nothing more accurately than a government which should attempt to do just what Senator Blair says this government ought to do. Therefore, everyone who believes this language of Paul to refer to the Papacy must admit that a government according to the National Reform idea would be nothing more than an image to the Papacy.

But there is another point to be noticed in this connection, and that is the inevitable result of putting such ideas into practice. If it were universally conceded that the civil government has the power and the right to re-enact and enforce the law of God, that would involve the conclusion that there is no more to the moral law than civil government can enforce. The result would be the universal prevalence of immorality, and immorality of the worst kind, insomuch as the individuals would suppose themselves to be acting in harmony with divine law.

For example, take Mr. Blair's statement to the effect that as we re-enact the law of God in making a law and enforcing it against murder, so all the States have enacted laws against the desecration of the Sabbath. Suppose the National Reform scheme has become triumphant, and it is understood that the government takes the place of God, and enforces the divine law against murder, the result would be that any individual who did not in his envy and hatred toward his fellows go to the extreme of depriving them of life, would consider himself a

moral man, although he might be full of hatred, malice, and envy. Take Mr. Craft's idea that the State re-enacts the seventh commandment. It needs no argument to show that the State cannot punish man for vicious thoughts, or evil desires, or for any grade of licentiousness short of the overt act of adultery. But ministers and law-makers teach that the State enforce the seventh commandment; therefore the conclusion which the libertine would be warranted in making would be that he is a moral man if he abstains from violence. And so, when this National Reform idea shall be carried into effect, we shall have the State actually teaching vice and immorality.

Such a condition of things would be a union of Church and State in its fullest extent. The Dark Ages stand as the great example of the effects of the union of Church and State, yet all that was done then was the enforcement by civil government of what the church claimed was the law of God. We think that our friends can readily see from this that when the United States, or any other government, legislates concerning any one or the whole of the commandments, it effects just to that extent a union of Church and State; and the argument already given shows how dangerous to morality and pure religion is such a union. The state of morality will be just as much below the true morality as the power that pressures to enforce the law of God is below God. Are there any of our Christian readers who wish to see such a condition of things in the United States, or who will lend their influence to bring it about? E. J. W.

"Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 9:1-7" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

(Lesson 19, February 8, 1890)

1. What does the apostle say that the first covenant had? Heb. 9:1.
2. Were these a part of that covenant? See Ex. 19:3-6; 24:3-8.
3. What is meant by ordinances of divine service? Ans.-Ceremonies of divine appointment. There is no divine service without divine appointment.
4. What is meant by a worldly sanctuary? Ans.-A sanctuary of the world, in distinction from the one in heaven.
5. Where is the only real sanctuary? Heb. 8:1, 2.
6. What relation did the worldly sanctuary and its services sustain to the heavenly? Verse 5.
7. How many apartments were in the tabernacle? Heb. 9:2, 3.
8. What were the two apartments called? -/b. See note.
9. What was in the holy? Verse 2; Ex. 40:23-27.
10. What was in the holiest of all? Heb. 9:4.
11. What was in the ark? Compare Ex. 25:31; 1 Kings 8:9. See note.
12. What was the cover of the ark called? Heb. 9:5; Ex. 25:21.
13. Why was it called the mercy-seat? Ans.-It was there that mercy was dispensed. The sanctuary was God's dwelling-place; the ark represented his throne; and from his throne he dispenses grace, or favor, or mercy. See Heb. 4:16.

14. How often did the priests go into the sanctuary? Heb. 9:5.
15. How often was there service in the most holy? Verse 7.
16. Why was this service performed?
17. What alone is sin? 1 John 3:4.
18. What was the basis of the old covenant?
19. What, then, was it that made it necessary for that covenant to have ordinances of divine service connected with it?
20. Does the new covenant have ordinances of divine service? Heb. 9:1. The word "also" indicates that it had already been shown that the second covenant had ordinances of divine service. This was done in chapter 7 and 8.
21. Then what must be the basis of the second covenant?

NOTES

Hebrews 9:1 is a text that hinders many from seeing that all of God's blessings to man are gained by virtue of the second covenant, and not by the first. That text reads: "Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary." This, together with the fact that when men complied with these ordinances of divine service, they were forgiven (Leviticus 4), seems to some conclusive evidence that the old covenant contained the gospel and its blessings. But forgiveness of sins was not secured by virtue of those offerings; "for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." Heb. 10:4. Forgiveness was obtained only by virtue of the promised sacrifice of Christ (Heb. 9:15), the Mediator of the new covenant, their faith in whom was shown by their offerings. So it was by virtue of the second or new covenant that pardon was secured to those who offered the sacrifices provided for in the ordinances of divine service connected with the old or first covenant.

Moreover, those "ordinances of divine service" formed no part of the first covenant. If they had, they must have been mentioned in the making of that covenant; but they were not. They were connected with it, but not a part of it. They were simply the means by which the people acknowledged the justice of their condemnation to death for the violation of the law which they had covenanted to keep, and their faith in the Mediator of the new covenant.

In brief, then, God's plan in the salvation of sinners, whether now or in the days of Moses, is: The law sent home emphatically to the individual, to produce conviction of sin, and thus to drive the sinner to seek freedom; then, the acceptance of Christ's gracious invitation, which was extended long before, but which the sinner would not listen to; and lastly, having accepted Christ, and being justified by faith, the manifestation of the faith, through the ordinances of the gospel, and the living of a life of righteousness by faith in Christ.

The Bible, to one who is in the habit of devotedly reading it, begets in the soul a consciousness that excludes all doubt as to its truth. To that consciousness it comes with a self-evidencing power that is both sufficient and conclusive. That man spontaneously believes, and really has not time, or taste, or place in his soul for doubts.

February 3, 1890

"Obedience Past and Present" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

We have a letter from a lady in Alabama who is very much interested in the work of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the *American Sentinel*, and who is doing good work in distributing them among her friends. She writes a very kind and appreciative letter, and asks several pertinent questions, stating, what may readily be seen from the tone of the letter, that she is standing for truth and is open for conviction. The questions which she asks will receive due attention, but before answering them we wish to set our correspondent right upon other points which she incidentally mentions in her letter. We quote a paragraph:-

"I believe that Christ was the end of the law of Moses. He was the fulfillment of the law. Moses' law was only emblematic. While they kept it, it was imputed to them for righteousness. When Christ came he gave the same law only in a spiritual sense. It was to be written upon our hearts. The Jews kept the form of the law, while they were a cruel, wicked, and vindictive people."

It is evident that our correspondent has in mind the law of ten commandments when she speaks of the law of Moses being emblematic. We have no fault to find with the expression "law of Moses" with reference to the moral law, for it is sometimes so used in the Bible, although that title is not distinctive. As to its being emblematic, the writer herself furnishes proof that it was not, by saying that Christ gave the same law. A thing cannot be emblematic of itself; but it is true that the law that Christ taught in the sermon on the mount is the same law that the Jews were taught, and it is also true that Christ was the author of it in the beginning.

The idea of the writer is evidently, as shown by the last expression, "The Jews kept the form of the law," that the Jews had simply an outward religion, while Christ taught spirituality; that the Jews had the form of the law, while Christ taught the same law in reality. But Christ in his sermon on the mount did not give anything new concerning the commandments, not even concerning the sixth and seventh. He did not teach whereas they had been informed that it was wrong to kill, he would not give them another and better commandment. Not by any means. He simply showed those people who had lost sight of the true religion that the sixth commandment does not simply forbid the taking of human life, but it forbids evil thoughts. This it did from the beginning. When the commandment was spoken from Sinai, it comprehended just as much as it does to-day. So with the whole law. Paul says in Rom. 7:14 that "the law is spiritual." This is true of the whole law, and was true of the whole law from the beginning. The law was never satisfied with anything short of spirituality.

Now it is true that many of the Jews, perhaps the majority, kept the law only in appearance. But that does not prove that there were some among the people in that day who knew the extent and depth of the law, and that it required spiritual obedience, any more than the same thing is proved by the fact that the great

majority of the people in these days have only an outward morality which is not real godliness. God makes no greater demand upon us than he did upon his people anciently. It is no more true now than it was in the days of Moses that love is the fulfilling of the law; neither is it any more true to-day than then that God designed that the law should be enshrined in the heart to be the spring of every act and thought. This is shown by the following scripture:-

In Deut. 6:5, 6 Moses addressed the people on behalf of God as follows: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." In Deut. 20:6 Moses says: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and that thou mayest live." The psalmist David in all his writings shows a clear perception of the spirituality of the law, and the extent of its requirements. In Psalms 27:31 he speaks thus of the righteous man: "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide;" and in the eleventh verse of the one hundred and nineteenth psalm he says, "Thy word have I his in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Many other texts might be cited to show that heart religion,-that is, a religion not of form, but of fact; a religion taking hold of the very life and character, and every thought,-was known to the conscientious Jews to be what God required, and that there were those who had experience in just such religion.

Again, our friend says that "while they kept the law it was imputed to them for righteousness." This is a slight mistake. Moses, in Deut. 7:20, says, "It shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us." If they kept the law, that was their righteousness. But imputed righteousness is a different thing. The Scripture says that "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." That is, the righteousness of God was counted to Abraham as his own, because he had faith in God. This is the way in which the ancient worthies were accounted righteous. Paul, in the book of Hebrews, says that Abel by his faith obtained witness that he was righteous, that Noah became heir of the righteousness which is by faith, and, finally, that all the worthies "through faith wrought righteousness." Righteousness was imputed to them, the same as to us, by faith in Christ.

And this is the meaning of Paul's language in Rom. 10:4, which our friend quoted, that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The law is so pure, its standard so high, its requirements so great, that no man has the power to fulfill it; but Christ has the law dwelling in him in that he is the author of it. It proceeds from him; he is righteousness; he is the truth and the way; and to those who have implicit faith in him, he becomes righteousness and truth. In other words, men can obtain in Christ, through faith, the very same righteousness which the law requires, but which, because of the weakness of their flesh, they cannot derive from the law itself. The Author of the law, in whom grace as well as truth dwells, can impart to them the righteousness which the law demands; and thus the object of the law is obtained, namely, the formation of a perfect character, and finally the inheritance of everlasting life, to

which the law was ordained. See Rom. 7:10. The reason why so many of the Jews failed to obtain righteousness was because they failed to seek it by faith. The "obedience of faith" is the only obedience that God could accept since the fall of Adam. E. J. W.

"The Puritan Idea" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

In Dr. Herrick Johnson's address on "Sunday Newspapers," which has been circulated widely as a campaign document by the abettors of religious legislation, occurred the words, "Oh, for a breath of the old Puritan," meaning that what the speaker wanted was a return to Puritan habits and customs. In the recent annual meeting of the Iowa Sabbath Convention, Mr. Gault said that what was wanted in laws was a wave of Puritanism. From these and other expressions we learn that the Puritan idea of government is the model for National Reformers of whatever stripe. A few quotations from a standard work may enable those who are interested to know just what kind of government a Puritan government would be. In a late work by Professor Fisk of Harvard College, entitled, "The Beginnings of New England," is the following in connection with the account of the exodus of the Puritans from Holland:-

"All persons who came to Holland and led decorous lives there, were protected in their opinions and customs. By contemporary writers in other countries this eccentric behavior of the Dutch Government was treated with unspeakable scorn. All strange religions flock thither,' says one; 'It is a common harbor of all heresies, a cage of unclean birds,' says another; 'The great mangle of all religion,' says a third. In spite of the relief from persecution, however, the Pilgrims were not fully satisfied with their new home. The expiration of the truce with Spain might prove that this relief was only temporary, and, at any rate, complete toleration did not fill the measure of their wants. Had they come to Holland as scattered bands of refugees, they might have been absorbed into the Dutch population, as Huguenot refugees have been absorbed in Germany, England, and America. But they had come as an organized community, and absorption into a foreign nation was something to be dreaded. They wished to preserve their English speech and English traditions, keep up their organization, and find some favored spot where they could lay the corner-stone of a great Christian State."

This language is not written in any spirit of captious criticism. The author manifests a spirit of fairness, and writes in an impartial manner, simply giving historical facts. That he did not charge the Puritans with inconsistency is seen from the following, which very clearly sets forth the Puritan idea:-

"It is worth while to inquire what were the real aims of the settlers of New England. What was the common purpose which brought these men together in their resolve to create for themselves a new home in the wilderness? This is a point concerning which there has been a great deal of popular misapprehension, and there has been no end of nonsense talked about it. It has been customary first to assume that the Puritan migration was undertaken in the interests of

religious liberty, and then to upbraid the Puritans for forgetting all about religious liberty as soon as people came among them who disagreed with their opinions. But this view of the case is not supported by history. It is quite true that the Puritans were chargeable with gross intolerance, but it is not true that in this they were guilty of inconsistency. The notion that they came to New England for the purpose of establishing religious liberty, in any sense in which we should understand such a phrase, is entirely incorrect. It is neither more nor less than a bit of popular legend. If we mean by the phrase 'religious liberty' a state of things in which opposite or contradictory opinions on questions of religion shall exist side by side in the same community, and in which everybody shall decide for himself how far he will conform to the customary religious observances, nothing could have been farther from their thoughts. There is nothing they would have regarded with more genuine abhorrence. If they could have been forewarned by a prophetic voice of the general freedom-or, as they would

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have termed it, license-of thought and behavior which prevails in this country to-day, they would very likely have abandoned their enterprise in despair. The philosophic student of history often has occasion to see how God is wiser than man. In other words, he is often brought to realize how fortunate it is that the leaders in great historic events cannot foresee the remote results of the labors to which they have zealously consecrated their lives. It is part of the irony of human destiny that the end we really accomplish by striving with might and main is apt to be something quite different from the end we dreamed of as we started on our arduous labor. It was so with the Puritan settlers of New England. The religious liberty that we enjoy to-day is largely the consequence of their work, but it is a consequence that was unforeseen, while the direct and conscious aim of their labors was something that has never been realized, and probably never will be.

"The aim of Winthrop and his friends in coming to Massachusetts was a construction of a theocratic State which should be to Christians, under the New Testament dispensation, all that the theocracy of Moses and Joshua and Saul had been to the Jews in Old Testament days. They should be to all intents and purposes freed from the jurisdiction of the Stuart king, and so far as possible the texts of the Holy Scriptures should be their guide, both in weighty matters of general legislation, and in the shaping of the smallest details of daily life. In such a scheme there was no room for religious liberty, as we understand it. No doubt the text of the Scriptures may be interpreted in many ways, but among those men there was a substantial agreement as to the important points, and nothing could have been farther from their thoughts than to found a colony which should afford a field for new experiments in the art of right living. The State they were to found was to consist of a united body of believers; citizenship itself was to be co-extensive with church membership; and in such a State there was apparently no more room for heretics than there was in Rome or Madrid. This was the idea which drew Winthrop and his followers from England at a time when-as events were soon to show-they might have staid there and defied persecution with less trouble than it cost them to cross the ocean and found a new State."

The Puritans simply followed the customs of their time. Religious liberty was a thing unknown. Roman Catholicism and intolerance have been synonymous from the beginning. The Church of England was as intolerant as the Roman Church. The Puritans had not advanced far enough to perceive the error of the principle of religious intolerance, only they did not want the intolerance extended to them. They did not think that the Church of England ought to be intolerant, because they could see her errors, but, feeling sure that they themselves were right, they were equally sure that their opinions ought to prevail, and ought to be imposed upon others. In all New England, in the days of the Puritans, there was only one man who was far enough ahead to perceive that religion was a matter that rests with the individual, and not with the civil government, and that man was Roger Williams.

Although the Puritans were intolerant, and persecuted others even as they themselves were persecuted, they are not to be stigmatized as bad men. They thought they were right. They were but little removed from the darkest period of Roman superstition and oppression, and they had before them no example of perfect religious freedom. In consideration of their circumstances we can make allowance for the ideas of government which they had, and honor them for that spirit of independence which was perpetuated in their children, and which resulted in the complete religious liberty which was finally established in this country. But while we may make allowance for those men, considering their time, what allowance can be made for men who have before them the history of one hundred years of religious liberty in the United States, and who can compare its glorious work with the work of the religious despotism of the Old World. Those who in this age would institute the Puritan idea of government, must be either deplorably blind or else wickedly selfish. E. J. W.

"Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 9:8-14" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

(Lesson 20, February 15, 1890.)

1. What did the first covenant have connected with it?
2. Who performed the service in the worldly sanctuary?
3. How often was service performed in each apartment? Heb. 9:6, 7.
4. What was signified by this? Verse 8.
5. What was that sanctuary? Verse 9, first part.
6. How much was accomplished by the service? -*lb.*
7. Who is our real high priest?
8. Where does he minister? Heb. 8:1, 2; 9:11.
9. Is it necessary that he offer something? Heb. 8:3.
10. What does he offer? Heb. 9:12.
11. What does his blood do for us? Verses 13, 14.
12. With what are we redeemed? 1 Peter 1:18, 19.
13. What is the blood of Christ called? Heb. 13:29.
14. Did Christ minister as a priest while he was on earth? Heb. 8:4; 9:8.

15. When did the first sanctuary cease to stand as a sanctuary? Matt. 23:38; 27:50, 51.

16. What secured the pardon of transgressions that were committed under the first covenant? Heb. 9:14, 15.

17. Since Christ did not begin his priestly work of offering his own blood until after the crucifixion and ascension, how could this be? Gal. 3:17; Heb. 6:13-18.

NOTE

The ordinances of divine service that were connected with the first covenant had no efficacy whatever. They could not make the comer thereunto perfect as pertaining to the conscience. All transgressions committed under that covenant that were pardoned, were pardoned by virtue of the second covenant, of which Christ is Mediator. Yet although Christ's blood was not shed until hundreds of years after the first covenant was made, sins were forgiven whenever they were confessed. That covenant, as we have seen, was for the purpose of directing the minds of the people to the Abrahamic covenant, which God confirmed in Christ. Gal. 3:17. This confirmation was by an oath, in addition to the promise. These "two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie," made the sacrifice of Christ as efficacious in the days of Abraham and Moses as it is now. This is made still more evident by the statement that these two things given to Abraham are the things which give us strong consolation.

"What the Gospel Teaches" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

"And he said unto him, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:15, 16. These words were spoken by our Saviour after his resurrection, and shortly before his ascension. They are perfectly in harmony with his words recorded in Matt. 24:14, that "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." There is no mistaking the extent of territory in which the gospel must be preached—nothing less than the whole world. And how long must it be preached? Read the whole of Matt. 24:14: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Then the gospel is to be preached until the end. The end here referred to is the same that is mentioned in verse 3, "The end of the world." That this "end of the world" is in connection with the coming of the Lord, is shown by the words of the disciples in the verse last mentioned, and by the words of Christ in Matt. 13:40-43; 24:30, 31.

The fact that by divine command the gospel is to be preached in all the world until the coming of the Lord and the end of the world, proves conclusively that until the Lord comes, a necessity for its being preached will exist in all the world. This needs no further argument, for it is nowhere disputed. We will therefore turn

our attention to a consideration of what the gospel is, and what creates the necessity for its being so long and so extensively preached.

The word "gospel" means, literally, "a good message;" Webster's first definition is "glad tidings." According to its derivation, it might be applied to any good news; but in the Bible it is used with exclusive reference to one thing; what that thing is, we may easily learn from the Bible itself.

In Luke 2:10 we find these words, addressed by the angel of the Lord to the shepherds in the field: "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings [a gospel] of great joy, which shall be to all people." The next verse tells what this gospel is: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Then the gospel which is to be preached to all people is the announcement of a Saviour. It is from this that Webster derives his specific definition of the gospel, as, "especially, the good news concerning Christ and his salvation."

But the simple heralding of Christ, without stating the nature and object of his work, would not be the preaching of the gospel. The "good news" consists in the fact that Christ the Lord is *a Saviour*. That Christ comes as a Saviour, necessarily implies that there are people to be saved, and something from which they must be saved. Turning to Matt. 1:21, we read the angel's declaration before the birth of Christ: "And thou shall call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Paul says (1 Tim. 1:15): "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." So it is manifest that the preaching of the gospel consists in the announcement that Christ will save people from sin.

But while the gospel is the good news that Christ brings salvation from sin, it is evident that that simple announcement would not suffice to produce the desired results, viz., that men should believe and be baptized. For there are millions of people who virtually say that they are "rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," not knowing that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." No matter how destitute a man may be, it would be of no use to offer him money if he were ignorant of his necessities, and perfectly satisfied with his condition. So no man can feel any interest in the gospel as a means of salvation from sin, unless he (1) knows what sin is, and (2) is convinced that he is a sinner, and (3) understands the nature and results of sin, so as to realize that it is something to be shunned. Therefore the gospel, with its announcement of salvation from sin, must also make known what sin is. This it does, as we shall see.

John, the evangelist, so called because it is he who more than anyone else dwells on the love of God and Christ in the salvation of man, defines sin. He says: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for *sin is the transgression of the law*." 1 John 3:4. In harmony with this, Paul says that "where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom. 4:15.

And "sin is not imputed when there is no law." Rom. 5:12. Volumes could not define sin more clearly than do these three texts. We have found out, then, (1) that "gospel" means good news; (2) that the gospel of the Bible is the good news

of a Saviour-Christ the Lord (Luke 2:10, 11); (3) that Jesus saves from sin (Matt. 1:21; 1 Tim. 1:15); and (4) that "sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

So that, in short, the gospel announces the way by which man may be saved from the transgression of the law, and from the consequences of such transgression. Sin is the disease; the gospel is the remedy. And since the gospel is to be preached in all the world, until the coming of the Lord, it follows that "all the world," yea, "every creature," has sinned. This we read in Rom. 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

It must also be true that sin will be in the world till the Lord comes. And this we verify by a comparison of Gen. 6:5 and 13:13 with Luke 17:26-30. But since sin is the transgression of the law, it also necessarily follows that "the law" will be in full force in all the world until the coming of the Lord. In other words, sin is the disease, and it cannot exist where there is no law. Rom. 4:15. The disease, sin, does exist in "every creature" in "all the world;" for the remedy, the gospel, is to be thus extensively made known, and the great Physician would not send the remedy where it is not needed. "They that be whole need not a physician; but they that are sick" (Matt. 9:12); and therefore the law, by which alone "is the knowledge of sin"-the disease-is binding upon "every creature" "in all the world." Now since "the wages of sin"-the transgression of the law-"is death" (Rom. 6:23), it is important that all men know just what that law is, the transgression of which brings death, and just what its nature and requirements. These points will therefore next claim our attention.

February 10, 1890

"A Sunday Law for the District of Columbia" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

On the 6th of January, Mr. Breckenridge, of Kentucky, introduced into the House of Representatives a bill which is entitled, "A Bill to Prevent Persons from Being Forced to Labor on Sunday," which was read twice, and referred to the Committee on the District of Columbia. It reads as follows:-

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in congress assembled, that it shall be unlawful for any person, or corporation, or employe of any person or corporation, in the District of Columbia, to perform any secular labor or business, or to cause the same to be performed by any person in their employment on Sunday, except works of necessity or mercy; nor shall it be lawful for any person or corporation to receive pay for labor or services performed or rendered in violation of this act.

"Any person or corporation, or employe of any person or corporation, in the District of Columbia, who shall violate the provisions of this act, shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine of not more than \$100 for every such offense; *provided, however*, that the provisions of this act shall not be considered to apply to any person or persons who conscientiously believe in and observe any other day of the week than Sunday as a day of rest."

The bill is misleading in its nature. To give the proposed law the appearance of moderation and benevolence, it is entitled, "A Bill to Prevent Persons from Being Forced to Labor on Sunday." If that were really what the framers of that bill are exercised over, they might save their labor; for there is no more necessity for a law to prevent people from being forced to labor on Sunday, than there is for a law to prevent them from being forced to wear woolen clothes in the summer-time. If a person wishes to wear woolen in the summer-time, he has the privilege. If he prefers cotton or linen, he can wear that. So, if people wish to labor on Sunday, they usually do; and if they don't want to, there is no power that can compel them to. For section one of the thirteenth amendment to the constitution says that-

"Neither slavery or involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

The title of the bill would imply that there are some people in the United States who are compelled to labor on Sunday against their will. If there are any such, they should demand the right which the Constitution of the United States guarantees to them.

It is a fact that a great many people in the United States labor on Sunday; and it is also a fact that those who labor on that day do so because they do not regard the day as sacred. If they did not labor they would spend the day in amusement. That the bill does not mean what its title says, is further shown by the very first clause, namely, that it shall be unlawful for any person or corporation, etc., to perform any labor or business. Anyone would naturally suppose that a capitalist or company of capitalists would not be in a position to be forced to labor by anybody. They can labor or not as they choose. And when they labor on Sunday it is because they choose to, and not because they are forced to. Therefore when the bill says that it shall be unlawful for anybody to perform labor on Sunday, it contradicts its title, which says that its purpose is to prevent people from being *forced* to labor on that day.

Again, why is the adjective "secular" used before "labor or business"? Why is it that only secular labor or business is to be forbidden on Sunday? *Secular* is the opposite of *religious*; and the reason why secular labor is specified is that Sunday is regarded as a sacred or religious day, upon which it is by many considered wicked to perform secular labor. Therefore the bill spears on the face of it to be in the line of religious legislation.

The fact that this is simply a piece of religious legislation is further shown by the exemption at the close of the bill, where it is provided that the act "shall not be construed to apply to any person or persons who conscientiously believe in and observe any other day of the week than Sunday, as a day of rest." Civil government has nothing whatever to do with the conscience of men. But this bill takes into account conscientious convictions. It is a bill for the purpose of compelling everybody to conscientiously observe some day of the week as a day of rest, or, if some have no conscience in the matter, to compel them to act as though they had.

So far as the exemption is concerned, it amounts to nothing. If the bill should become a law, the condition of things would be the same as it is now; for since the world stood, nobody ever heard of a Sunday law being enforced, when it had an exemption clause. If it is determined to compel people to observe Sunday, the clause must be left out. If the exemption is retained, and the bill passes, it will be a nullity. In showing the inconsistency of this bill, we make no reflection on the honorable member who drew it up. He doubtless did the best he could with a bad job. The statesman never yet lived who was wise enough to frame a Sunday law which should be consistent with itself and with civil rights. E. J. W.

"Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 9:15-20" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

(Lesson 21, February 22, 1890.)

1. What was effected by the blood of the old covenant?
2. Was any sin ever removed by that covenant?
3. What can the blood of Christ accomplish?
4. What provision is made for transgressors under the first covenant? Heb. 9:13.
5. What law did they transgress under the first covenant?
6. Then if Jesus is Mediator for their transgressions, in behalf of what law is he the Mediator?
7. By what means did he become their Redeemer? Verse 15.
8. Who are meant by them which are called? Ans.-All, of all ages and nations, to whom the word of salvation comes, or whom the Spirit of God moves to accept the word. See Acts 2:39.
9. What may they receive through the priesthood of Christ? Heb. 9:15. See note.
10. What is necessary where there is a testament? Verse 16.
11. Why is this the case? Verse 17.
12. How was the old covenant ratified? Verse 18.
13. What did Moses speak to the people? Verse 19.
14. Where is this transaction recorded? Ex. 24:3-5.
15. What did Moses send young men to do? Verse 5.
16. Of what did their burnt-offerings consist? Compare Heb. 9:18.
17. What did Moses do with the blood? -*Id.*, Ex. 24:6, 8.
18. With what did he sprinkle the blood?

NOTES

Verse 15 has a fund of instruction underlying the first glance at the language. It is made very sure that Jesus is the Mediator between the people who lived under the first covenant, and the law which God proclaimed to them, of which they were transgressors. And it is absurd to suppose that God will judge the

family of Adam, moral agents, by different moral standards. It is the law given to the Jews, which David says is perfect, that it is righteousness, etc. It is the same law that Solomon says contains the whole duty of man, and by which God will bring every work into judgment. The commandments given to Israel in the wilderness are the lively oracles which Stephen said they received to give unto us. Acts 7:38.

In verse 15 is again introduced the contrast which was so successfully argued in chapter 4. Though the children of Israel rejoiced that they had had rest from their wanderings, and that the Lord had subdued their enemies before them, and given them homes for themselves and their children, they were yet subject to cares, to sickness, pain, and death. Joshua gave them a temporal rest. But a greater than Joshua had become the leader of his people, and the rest that remains is an eternal inheritance. And God is so wise and merciful in the provisions of his grace that the faithful even under the first covenant may share their inheritance.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

The primitive signification of *diatheke*, the Greek word translated "covenant," is "will," or "testament." It comes from a word which signifies to put, set, make, to dispose of. Covenant, in the sense generally understood, that of "contract or agreement," is only a derived meaning. The new covenant is the will and testament of our God, conveying, by as solemn ratification as the death of Christ could make it, what God bequeaths to his children. These things he had promised in the beginning; these promises he had repeated from time to time; but when Christ came the covenant, or the bequeathed blessings, were brought together into the last testament of him who was heir of all, and who gave his life for the world. Voluntarily he died to prove the strength of the promises which God made to his people, and of the great love of God for them. It had ever been sure in the purpose of God, but when Christ died, angels and men could doubt no longer.

February 17, 1890

"Sunday-Law Petitions" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

We have just received the American Sabbath Union's *Monthly Document*, No. 13, bearing date of December, 1889, the last page of which contains a copy of the new petition, which is being circulated in behalf of the national Sunday law. The following is a copy of the petition to be presented to the United States Senate, a duplicate being furnished for presentation to the House of Representatives:-

Petitions Gather by the... Sabbath Association.

For a Sunday Re T Law.

The petition which follows was endorsed by a standing vote of. . . . to. . . (men and women of 21 years of age or more) by a meeting of citizens of the State (or Territory) of. . . County of. . . City (or Town) of. . . on

Attest. . . . Presiding

The petition which follows was endorsed at regularly called meetings by the following churches, labor societies, temperance unions, and other organizations of the above-named locality: . . . Church. . . members, by vote of. . . to. . . Attest: Church. . . members, by vote of. . . to Attest: . . .

To the United States Senate:

The above organizations and undersigned adult residents (21 years of age or more) of the place aforesaid, hereby earnestly petition your honorable body to pass a bill, forbidding, to the United States mail and military service, and in interstate commerce and in the District of Columbia and the Territories, all Sunday traffic and work, except works of real necessity and mercy, and such private work by those who religiously and regularly observe another day of the week by abstaining from labor and business, as will neither interfere with the general rest nor with public worship.

[Individual signatures to their own handwriting, preceded by Mr. or Mrs., or Miss. Add more paper for individual signatures.]

There can be no question but that, in a certain sense at least, there is no attempt to deceive in this petition. It is about as bold an attempt to perpetrate a fraud as was ever conceived. It is presumed that petitions represent the will of the petitioners; but here is a deliberate plan to represent people as petitioning who have never expressed an opinion. The securing of the individual signatures is a secondary matter. If they are secured, more paper must be added; but on the petition paper there is no provision made for this. Wholesale representative indorsement is all that is planned for.

The reader will notice that the only chance for definiteness of statement in filling out the petition is the number of persons belonging to the church or organization voting. The number of people voting is left indefinite. For instance, if the matter were presented at a meeting of an organization containing 300 members, a part of whom were present, and a portion only of those present voting, the petition would be filled out, stating that the petition which followed was indorsed at a regularly-called meetings of the Blanktown Methodist Church, 300 members, by vote of 125 to 175. Which one of these numbers would be taken as representing the number of petitioners?-Of course it would be the largest number. They would not take the smallest, and they could not use the next larger, as that would not be definite; and so, following the old custom, where there is a doubt, they will count everything and thus be sure to have enough. Of course the exact number voting in any meeting might be ascertained by a simple count, but that would take too long; and the number of petitioners could not be increased so rapidly as by this method.

It is evident from the framing of the petition that it is not designed in any instance that the number of voters shall be counted. Only a few moments ago a friend was telling about a Sunday-law meeting which he attended in Milwaukee, which was conducted by Mr. Crafts. At the close those who favored the petition

were requested to rise. Then Mr. Crafts said that they would not take time to count those who voted, as it was somewhat late, but that the pastor knew the number of sittings in the church, and he could fill out the petition. Since this is the way the work of securing petitioners for a Sunday law is carried on, we cannot see why they go through the formality of taking a vote; for it is not individual influence that is represented, but church pews.

We commend this work to the careful consideration of all who think that the passing of a Sunday law would be a righteous act. If Sunday laws are righteous, how is it that so much iniquity and deceit are indulged in to secure them? Do these people believe in doing evil that good may come? If they do, let them be warned by Rom. 3:8. E. J. W.

"Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 9:20-23" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

(Lesson 22, February 22, 1890.)

1. Who spoke to Israel in behalf of the Lord when the first covenant was made?

2. What did he do with the blood?

3. What did he then say? Ex. 24:8; Heb. 9:20.

4. Is there any difference in these texts? Ans.-The first says, made; the second, enjoined. The Hebrew word used has a number of significations. The conditions of the covenant were not arranged between the parties, but were matters enjoined.

5. What similar language did Jesus use in establishing the new covenant? Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24.

6. What more did Moses sprinkle with blood? Heb. 9:21.

7. In the typical law, were all things purified by blood? Verse 22.

8. What was the nature of the exceptions? See Num. 19. See note.

9. What is necessary to the remission of sin? Heb. 9:22.

10. Why was the blood chosen to make atonement? Lev. 17:11.

11. What is meant in Gen. 9:6 by the words, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood"? Ans.-As the life is in the blood, it is equivalent to saying, Whoso taketh man's life.

12. What should be the fate of him who sheds the blood of man? Gen. 9:6.

13. What does this teach? Ans.-That only blood, or life, can atone for life.

14. Whose lives are forfeited to the law? See Rom. 3:19, 23; 6:23.

15. Must we still depend upon blood to be cleared before the law? 1 John 1:7; Eph. 1:7.

16. What was necessary in the earthly sanctuary? Heb. 9:23.

17. Were the earthly holy places purified by the blood of bulls and goats? Lev. 16:14, 15, 19.

18. What are the earthly things called? Heb. 9:23.

19. Do the heavenly things need purifying? -*Ib.*

20. How did the patterns become defiled? See note.

21. Who takes away our sins? John 1:29.

22. Why did Christ take our sins upon himself? Ans.-Because he is our High Priest; the priest bears the judgment of the people. Ex. 28:29, 30.
23. Where is he filling his priestly office? See Heb. 8:1, 2.
24. Are the heavenly things defiled by our sins going to our priest?
25. With what is it necessary for the heavenly things to be cleansed? Heb. 9:23.

NOTES

Here again in verse 21 is a statement of that which we do not find in the writings of Moses. But we learn that the Jews had a tradition that such was the case, and in this instance their tradition must have been correct. In the account of the erection of the tabernacle, and the dedication of the holy things, it is recorded that they were anointed with oil, but the sprinkling of blood is not mentioned. This, however, does not involve any contradiction.

The fact that some things, and in some cases persons, were purified without blood, see Numbers 19, does not disagree with the reasonable statement that without shedding of blood is no remission; for, in cases of purification with oil, or water, there was no sin. There were misfortunes, as in certain sicknesses, or accidents, fleshly defilements. But the wages of sin is death, always, and where the penalty is death nothing but life can meet the demand of the law. Now as the blood is the life of man (Deut. 12:23), it is given to make atonement. Lev. 17:11. The offering of blood for life signifies life for life. Hence the statement that we have redemption through the blood of Christ. It means that our lives are purchased with his life, God's appointments are in strict accord with reason and justice.

No objection against the true doctrine of the atonement is more persistently urged than this, that there can be nothing in heaven that needs cleansing. Such pleading for heaven reminds us of the zeal of Peter in vindicating his Lord. Matt. 16:21-23. But to prove that the heavenly sanctuary does need cleansing because of our sins taken by our Priest, and that nothing but the blood of Christ can cleanse it, is the whole drift of the apostle's argument. Take away this great truth, and his labored argument would be without any logical conclusion. Not only were the earthly sacrifices typical of Christ's sacrifice, and the earthly priests typical of his priesthood, but the earthly sanctuary was typical of the heavenly holy places. And of course the cleansing of the sanctuary on earth with the blood of bulls and goats was typical of the purifying of the heavenly things with better sacrifice. In the whole argument of this remarkable letter, nothing is made more plain than this.

February 24, 1890

**"A Movement to Unite Church and State" *The Signs of the Times* 16,
8.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of January 6, there appeared the text of the joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, "respecting establishments of religion in free public schools." This, as was then stated, is but the repetition, in slightly modified form, of the resolution proposed by Senator Blair at the last Congress. The resolution is contradictory, in that, while it says that no "State shall ever make or maintain any law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," it provides that "each State in this Union shall establish and maintain a system of free public schools adequate for the instruction of all the children living therein, between the ages of six to sixteen years inclusive, in the common branches of learning, in virtue and morality, and in the knowledge of the fundamental and nonsectarian principles of Christianity." That is, while it professes to be constitutional, and to be opposed to any State establishment of religion, its whole intent is to provide for that very thing. For we shall show that for the States to establish schools for the purpose of teaching the principles of Christianity, would be to unite Church and State.

The resolution calls for the instruction of children in the "fundamental and nonsectarian principles of Christianity." Now what are the fundamental principles of Christianity? It is self-evident that Christianity pertains to Christ, and that nothing can be taught in regard to Christianity without teaching Christ. Where do we learn about Christ? and what shall we teach about him? We learn of Christ in the Bible, and nowhere else. All we know of Christ is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament, and therefore that which is taught of Christ, in teaching the fundamental principles of Christianity, must be what the Bible reveals concerning him. So the very first thing in teaching Christianity is the consideration of who Christ is. And what about him? What does he do for us? What is the nature of his work? The simple answer to these points, according to the Bible, would be that Christ is the Son of God; the divine word who was in the beginning with God, by whom all things were created; who was made flesh and dwelt among men; who died and rose again to redeem men and to save them from sin. And this brings up the fact that men have sinned against God; they have broken his law. And so, to teach the fundamental principles of Christianity is to teach the law of God, which points out sin, and to teach Christ as the Saviour from sin; to teach his power and majesty as the one who is able to save from sin; in short, the fundamental principles of Christianity are all there is of it. You cannot teach anything about Christianity without teaching these very things. For Christianity may be summed up in a word as the way of salvation from sin, through Christ.

Suppose now the State enters upon the work of giving this instruction to all children within its borders. What is it doing?-It is doing the very work for which the church of Christ exists. Christ instituted a church here upon earth that it might be the light of the world, that it might spread abroad in the earth a knowledge of him and of his truth. That is all the church is for. Now when we have the entire government doing this work in every school district, we have simply the State organizing itself into a universal church. That would be a State Church, a union of Church and State. Nothing less than this can be made of it.

Again, the bill says "the fundamental and *non-sectarian* principles of Christianity." By that is meant those principles which are not peculiar to any sect, but which all denominations can unite upon. Please consider the fundamental principles of Christianity, as we have referred to them, and see upon which one of them all denominations are agreed. Christianity means the doctrine of Christ. Who is Christ? Some say he is the divine Son of God, and others deny this. Some say that his work was vicarious, others that he simply lived and died as an example. There has been disagreement upon the very first principles of Christianity ever since the church existed. So that if the public schools are to teach the principles of Christianity, they must teach principles that are held by some denominations and disbelieved by others.

In his book, "Romanism versus the Public-School System," page 170, Dr. Daniel Dorchester says:-

"It is plain that in all classes are to use the public school, there must be no specific religious instruction. It cannot be imparted consistently with the American system of government; if religious instruction is given, it will be almost certain to savor of some particular sect."

The same thing is put more forcibly by the Honorable Stanley Matthews, in a speech in reference to the Bible in the schools of Cincinnati. Said he:-

"The Gentlemen on the other side say they limit the religious instruction demanded to what they call a 'broad Christianity.' I have already once or twice averted to the term. I do not know that I understand it. If I do, it is a vain and unmeaning generality. It is a definite and positive thing. It means something or it means nothing. In my view it is a supernatural scheme of redemption-a revelation from God of his gracious purpose and plan of salvation to a race 'dead in trespasses and sins,' through the mediation and atonement of Jesus Christ, who, being God from eternity, became incarnate for sin, made expiation for it, and, having risen from the grave, ascended into heaven, and there sitteth on the right hand of the Father to make intercession for his people. The whole character and value of such a religion consists altogether in being, as it claims to be, a supernatural plan of salvation from sin. Otherwise it is irremedial. Strike out from the Bible the parts which disclose, reveal, and teach that scheme, and the rest is insignificant. And any instruction or education in religion which does not teach the facts which constitute that scheme, and which cannot be stated even, except as conveying dogma, is no instruction in the Christian religion whatever."

This is the truth clearly and forcibly stated. If the principles of Christianity are to be taught at all, the whole must be taught. Christianity is a unit, and the whole of it is contained in the fundamental principles. If the State is going into the business of teaching this, then we ask, How will the work of the school-teacher differ from that of the Sunday-school teacher and the minister of the gospel? And the only answer is that their work will be a little more comprehensive. They will be doing the work of the minister and the Sunday-school teacher, and, together with that, will be giving instruction in the sciences. So that, as we said before, for the public schools of the United States to teach the fundamental principles of Christianity would be to establish a State Church, to effect a union of Church and State in the most complete manner possible.

We have already shown that nonsectarian instruction in religion cannot be given. Such instruction will necessarily savor of some particular sect, as Dr. Dorchester says. And this, it is admitted, would be to effect a union of Church and State. Thus, in the book before referred to, on page 65, Dr. Dorchester, in referring to an appropriation by the State of New York to certain Catholic schools, says:-

"The people thus found themselves taxed for the support of sectarian education, the Roman Catholic faith being taught in the schools thus supported. The State and the Church were then virtually united."

It is plainly evident that whatever way we consider this proposed amendment, it is really an amendment to effect a union of Church and State. We have not in this article touched upon some of the pernicious results that would necessarily grow out of the adoption of the amendment, except as the readers may infer for themselves some of the evils that would result from a Church and State union. In another article we shall show some of the wickedness that would follow its adoption. E. J. W.

"Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 9:24-28" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

(Lesson 23, March 8, 1890.)

1. With what were the earthly holies purified?
2. Whose office was it to cleanse the sanctuary?
3. Do the heavenly things need cleansing?
4. Where has our High Priest entered? Heb. 9:24.
5. Why could not Christ act as priest in the earthly sanctuary? Chap. 8:4.
6. If the earthly was the pattern of the heavenly, must there not be two holy places in the heavenly? Heb. 9:23, 24.
7. What does the word "true" mean in verse 24? Ans.-The true holy places-holy places understood.
8. Where are the true holy places? Verse 24.
9. How often did the high priest enter the most holy on earth? Verse 25.
10. How often does Christ enter the heavenly sanctuary for us? -*Ib.* See Verse 12.
11. What is meant by the end of the world, verse 26? Ans.-The last dispensation.
12. For what hath Christ appeared? -*Ib.*
13. Whose sins did he come to put away? Compare chap. 7:25.
14. Whose sins does he put away? Ans.-Only those who cease to sin. They who continue to transgress the law of God never have their sins put away; they retain them. Matt. 7:21.
15. How did he accomplish this work? Heb. 9:26.
16. What is appointed to all men? Verse 27.
17. What comes after death? -*Ib.*

18. What is implied by introducing the judgment as following death? Ans.-That the judgment is consequent upon this life, and for one probation only.

19. What analogy is shown between our probation and the death of Christ? Ans.-As we die one, living but one life, having but one probation, so Christ once died to bear sins.

20. For how many did he die?-*Ib.* Compare chap. 2:9.

21. What is meant by the words, "He hath once appeared," Heb. 9:26? Ans.-He has made one advent to this world.

22. Will he appear again? Verse 28.

23. How will he appear?-*Ib.* See note.

24. For what purpose will he appear?-*Ib.*

25. To whom will he appear unto salvation?-*Ib.* See 2 Tim. 4:1, 8.

26. How will he appear to those who do not look for him, nor love his appearing? 2 Thess. 1:6-8; Rev. 6:15-17.

NOTE

It is to be regretted that commentators have so generally overlooked the true intent of Heb. 9:28, and construed it to mean "without a sin-offering." The original word occurs seventy-three times in the New Testament, and is rendered "sinful," once; "offense," once; "sin," seventy-one times. It is never claimed that it can bear the sense of sin-offering in the New Testament, except in 2 Cor. 5:21, and Heb. 9:28. And we are very confident that it does not in either of these texts. In 2 Cor. 5:21 the contrast and the force are measurably lost by so rendering it. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who himself knew no sin." Our iniquity was laid upon him; he was bruised for our sakes-in our stead. He bore our sin, and suffered as if he had actually been the sinner. The Scripture doctrine of substitution is entirely too strong and clear to admit of this text being changed into sin-offering. In Hebrews 9 there is presented a series of events, mostly in contrast with the things of the earthly service, each of which occurs without being repeated. He offered one sacrifice; he offered it but once; he entered once into the heavenly sanctuary. Man dies once (therefore there is but one probationary life); and after this one death, the judgment. So Christ was once offered to bear sin; and he will once more (a second time) come, without sin. He was once offered to bear sin; he bore it on the cross; he bears our judgment-the iniquity of his priesthood-before the throne. As a priest he has continually taken sins, except from those who choose to retain them. But when he comes again, he will be separated from sin; he will bear sin no more. As it reads, it signifies that at his second coming his priesthood, his act of sin-bearing, is forever ended.

The difference is evident and material. He might come without a sin-offering, he might not renew his sacrifice, and yet not make an end of his priestly service. He has made but one offering in more than 1,850 years, and his priesthood has continued all these centuries by virtue of that one offering. And it might continue indefinitely, in the same manner, by that one and the same offering. All these centuries he has been receiving the sins of penitents. But he comes without sin, separate or apart from sin, as it really means. This indicates that he will bear sin

no more; that he has put it from him. Then he that is unjust must so remain. Rev. 22:10-12.

The following remarks from Dr. Barnes on this text, concerning the coming again of our blessed Saviour, are interesting:-

"There is a propriety that he should thus return. He came once to be humbled, despised, and put to death; and there is a fitness that he should come to be honored in his own world.

"Every person on earth is interested in the fact that he will return, for 'every eye shall see him.' Rev. 1:7. All who are now in their graves, all who now live, and all who will hereafter live, will behold the Redeemer in his glory.

"It will not be merely to gaze upon him, and to admire his magnificence, that they will see him. It will be for greater and more momentous purposes-with reference to an eternal doom.

"The great mass of men are not prepared to meet him. They do not believe that he will return; they do not desire that he should appear; they are not ready for the solemn interview which they will have with him. His appearing now would overwhelm them with surprise and horror. There is nothing in the future which they less expect and desire than the second coming of the Son of God, and in the present state of the world his appearance would produce almost universal consternation and despair. It would be like the coming of the flood of waters on the old world; like the sheets of flame on Sodom and Gomorrah."

March 3, 1890

"Good Words in a Sunday Convention" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

In previous numbers of the SIGNS we have shown the fallacy of the idea the civil government may enforce any portion of the moral law, and we have also shown the evil consequences which would necessarily result from an attempt to put such a fallacious idea into practice. We are glad to present in this number a corroboration of our views by a minister of the gospel. And we are the more glad because the argument which we shall quote was made in a Sunday convention, in the second annual meeting of the Sabbath Association of Iowa, which was held in Des Moines, November 12, and 13, 1889. Rev. J. K. Fowler, of Cedar Rapids, gave an address on "The Basis of the Civil Sabbath," which was printed in full in the *Iowa State Register* of November 13, from which we quote. Speaking of the laws already existing, and of the Sunday laws which the association is seeking to make, he said:-

"If these laws are right, why are they right? There needs to be a clearing up at this point. The ideas of many are vague and faulty as to the genius and intent of these Sunday regulations. Many in the church and out imagine that they prescribe a precept of the Christian religion; that they are simply a transcript of the fourth commandment to our statute-books. More than that, many ardent defenders of the Sabbath justify them on that ground. They say, God has enjoined the observance of the Sabbath, and the State should do the same. But

God has demanded that we be good stewards of his bounty, and give liberally to him. Is the State therefore to command this? God has commanded that we be given to hospitality. Is the State to see to it that this be accomplished? God has commanded that we honor one another and in honor prefer one another. Shall the State undertake the enforcement of these divine laws? It is time we had done with arguing for Sabbath legislation before Congress or other legislative bodies on plea of its divine institution and scriptural authority. It is utterly untenable according to the spirit of our charters of government."

In this paragraph the question is fairly stated, and the statement in the closing sentence is correct. After referring to certain judicial decisions on certain laws against crime, the speaker continued as follows:-

"The civil law forbids these, not as offenses against God, but as crimes against man. The law has to do with the relations of men to each other, and not with the relations of men to God. To base these Sunday laws thus upon a divine command, as the civil ground, is to that extent to join Church and State, and to violate the fundamental principles of the State and federal governments."

In the above paragraph we have a just distinction made between sin and crime. Sin is the violation of the moral law. Crime is a violation of human law. We wish the reader to notice the latter part of the paragraph just quoted. In agreement with arguments we have before presented, he shows that for the State to base its law upon divine command, or to attempt to enforce any one of the divine commands, is the union of Church and State. This was wholesome truth to present before a Sunday convention. We wish every Sunday convention could listen to similar talk. Mr. Fowler continued as follows, concerning the idea that the State could enact a Sunday law on the basis of the divine commandment:-

"But such a basis of the Sunday law is not only illegal, but it may be even unscriptural. The Bible itself does not warrant us in inscribing upon the civil statute-books whatever we find to be the mind of the Lord. The Bible does not give us a divine standard of moral duty, by which we may discriminate between right and wrong. But it also gives a divine model of wise legislation. It shows there are some things reasonable and some unreasonable to undertake by the civil statute, that statutory law is not to be framed always into exact correspondence with the criterion of individual duty. And this scriptural lesson is one of the very first importance for a Christian citizen of a republic like ours to learn."

We wish every citizen of this republic might learn this scriptural lesson. The fact that the great body of the National Reformers desire to have the State attempt to re-enact and enforce the law of God, shows, according to Rev. Mr. Fowler, of Cedar Rapids, that they are very deficient in scriptural knowledge; and in this we agree with him. Again Mr. Fowler said:-

"If our zealous, well-meaning, but deluded friends of the Sabbath, desire to defeat the very ends they aim at, they want to push to the front, and press upon the law-makers this scriptural command for the basis of Sunday laws, until a furor of public feeling like that of 1826 again sweeps the country and takes with it every vestige of Sabbath legislation. Many good people, even of these boasted

days of religious liberty, fail to understand that the State is not competent to enjoin divine precepts because they are divine. The law against murder is not on the civil statute-books because it is in the decalogue, but because society could not exist without such a law. The law against stealing is not in the civil code because it was found essential to maintain the rights of property. Government exists to secure to men life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, to maintain a peaceful and orderly, a mutual, helpful condition of society. Hence its laws simply aim at these ends. They are passed because of some supposed public need, because it is believed the general good requires them. We are bound thus in the matter of the Sunday laws to stand outside the Bible and argue for them on the same line as all the other laws, because the public need and advantage require them. If we cannot indicate them on these grounds they can claim and deserve no place on the statute-books."

With this also we heartily agree; only one statement might have been made a little stronger, and that is, that laws passed to secure men life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, are passed on account of some supposed public need. There can be no supposition about it. If there is to be any public at all, it is an actual necessity that life and liberty be preserved. But in all these paragraphs which we have quoted the speaker has shown a clear perception of the limitations of human government, and we would that all could read his argument and see the force of it, and agree with him that, if Sunday laws are made to stand, it must be because the public good requires them. The next and closing paragraph of this speech shows how impossible it is to make it appear that the public good requires a Sunday law, and that the Sunday should be enforced for the same reason that laws are enacted against stealing. Said he:-

"That a law-guarded rest-day is one of these agencies will hardly be questioned by any reasonable man. On that day peace of God settles down over Sabbath-keeping land. The din of labor ceases, and the din of strife and merry-making, and a few quiet hours are given in which the most engrossed and toil-burdened soul may at least have the opportunity, if it will, to worship God and learn of truths that bear upon a right life. Remember that the law makes no attempt to enforce religion, or even religious observance, on Sunday. It simply institutes a weekly civil holiday, and surrounds it with safeguards such as subserve the interests of morality and makes as favorable as possible."

In this paragraph the speaker went against all he had so clearly stated before. His attempt to show that society requires such a law, by stating that on Sunday, if enforced by law, peace settles down over the land, and a few quiet hours are given in which all may have the opportunity to learn of God and truths that bear upon a right life, shows that such laws are at least an attempt to enforce morality. There is not the slightest ground on which a so-called civil Sunday law can be based consistently with justice. If it is said that man needs one day in seven for rest, then we will point to the thousands who are observing the seventh day of the week, and to the scores of thousands who are observing the first day of the week, without any law compelling rest. That is sufficient evidence that no such law is needed. If the law is asked only in order that man may have one day in the week to rest, why is it that many who have strictly and quietly rested on the

seventh day have been persecuted for not resting on the first day? They have surely rested one-seventh of the time, and nobody can claim that resting upon the first day of the week will do a man more good than resting upon the seventh. Of course it will be said that the seventh day is not the day that the law recognizes; that the great body of Christians recognize the first day, and therefore the law should demand rest on that day. So then the whole question of the civil Sunday law is given up, and it is admitted that the basis of the law is some supposed superiority of Sunday over other days.

It needs no argument to show that all the physical good that may be gained by resting on Sunday is gained to an equal extent by resting on Saturday, and as to the good of society we challenge anyone to demonstrate that a society observing the seventh day is not outwardly, to say the least, as good as one which observes the first. But in spite of Mr. Fowler's little defection at the close of his speech, we think it is a good one, and commend it to the careful perusal of our readers. E. J. W.

"Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 10:1-9" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

(Lesson 24, March 15, 1890.)

1. What was the nature of the law of sacrifices? Heb. 10:1.
2. Was it exactly like the things of which it was the shadow? -*lb.*
3. What differences were there between the priesthood of Aaron and that of Christ?
4. Could the sacrifices of that law make anyone perfect? -*lb.*
5. If they could, what would have been the result? Verse 2.
6. Why would they have ceased to be offered? Ans.-They would have had the same power as the offering of Christ, and would not have needed to be repeated.
7. What is meant by their being remembrances of sin? Ans.-Their continued sacrifices were continual acknowledgments of sin. Verse 3.
8. Why were their sins kept in continual remembrance? Verse 4.
9. What is Christ represented as saying when he came into the world? Verse 5.
10. Did this mean that the Lord would not have any sacrifice?
11. From what scripture is this quoted? Ps. 40:6-8.
12. For what can we say a body was prepared him? Ans.-For a sacrifice in contrast with those undesirable ones that could not take away sin.
13. Where was it written that he should thus come? Heb. 10:7. The volume of the book doubtless refers to the Pentateuch; for the Saviour said that Moses wrote of him, and that all things written in the law of Moses concerning him must be fulfilled. John 5:46; Luke 24:44.
14. For what did he say he came? Heb. 10:7.
15. What two things are spoken of in verses 6 and 7? Ans.-Burnt-offerings and the will of God?

16. What do we learn concerning the will of God in the verse from which this is quoted? Ps. 40:8.

17. Is the law the will of God? Ans.-There is no difference between the will of God and the law of God. The law of any ruler is his will. See Rom. 2:17, 18, etc.

18. Where did Christ say the law was? Ps. 40:8.

19. Where did God promise to put his law, in the new covenant? Heb. 8:10.

20. Who is the mediator for the fulfillment of this promise?

21. Would he make the sacrifice that he did, to accomplish this, if the law were not in his own heart?

22. What is meant by his taking away the first? Heb. 10:9.

23. What is the second, that he came to establish? See note.

NOTE

Verse 9 has also been obscured by the unwarranted additions of theologians, who have put their theories into their translations. In a certain translation of the New Testament, of high pretensions, it is made to read, "He taketh away the first will that he may establish the second." But there are no two wills spoken of in the text. The rendering is intended to be equivalent to this: He taketh away the first covenant, that he may establish the second. No one is warranted in putting an idea into a text which is not written in the text, merely because the idea may be true. That construction is altogether foreign to the apostle's train of reasoning. There is a contrast presented throughout in verses 5-9, as follows:-

1. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire." "I come to do thy will."

He takes away the first, that he may establish the second. In this is found the only contrast in the argument, and it is made very prominent. The sacrifices and offerings of the Mosaic law could not perfect the conscience, could not reform the life, could not write the law of God in the heart. These are taken away, that he may come in whose heart is the law, and who alone can fulfill the promise of the new covenant.

March 10, 1890

"Religion and the Church" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

When so much is said *pro* and *con*, about a union of Church and State, it is fitting that we know exactly what is meant by "the church." Many people erroneously suppose that the term refers to some particular denomination, as the Methodist, Baptist, or Presbyterian. But this is not the case. To use the term in that sense would be manifestly unfair. If in speaking of the church "we should refer to some special denomination, we would thereby imply that no other denomination could be a part of "the church." With the exception of the Catholic, nobody uses the term "the church" with reference to any particular sect.

In the Bible "the church" is declared to be the body of Christ. In one place Paul says of Christ that "he is the head of the body, the church" (Col. 1:18); and

again he says that God "hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body." Eph. 1:22, 23. Baptism is universally recognized as the entrance to the church, as Paul says, "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body," and that this body is Christ is shown by the words, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

"The church," then, in the strict sense of the word, is composed of those who are "in Christ," who have been converted, "born again," and are consequently "new creatures." From this it is very evident that, strictly speaking, no one religious sect, nor all of them together, can be called "the church." Everybody is willing to admit that in every denomination there are those who are really members of "the church," because they are united to Christ; but nobody will claim that all of any denomination are truly Christian.

Since we cannot always distinguish the true professor from the false one, it is evident that the extent of the church is known only to Him who can read the heart; but it is not convenient always to make this fine distinction in our conversation, neither is it possible; and therefore we speak of all who profess the religion of Jesus as members of his church. Thus we *assume*, since we cannot *decide*, that such individual's profession is an honest one.

Now mark this fact: the religion of Jesus, or the profession of that religion, is the distinguishing characteristic of the church. It is that which makes the church, and without that there is no church.

With this matter clearly in mind, we are prepared to decide for ourselves whether or not the Religious Amendment party is in favor of a union of Church and State. And this decision shall be made from the published statements of that party. In the New York Convention of the National Reform Association held in 1873, Dr. Jonathan Edwards of Peoria, Ill., said:-

"It is just possible that the outcry against Church and State may spring rather from hatred to revealed religion than from an intelligent patriotism. But where is the sign, the omen, of such Church and State mischief coming upon us? Who will begin and who will finish this union of Church and State? If you think the Roman Catholic can do it in spite of the watchfulness of the Protestant, or that one Protestant sect can do it amid the jealousy of all other sects, or that all these sects would combine to effect a joint union with the State, you have a notion of human nature and of church nature different from what I have. Church and State in union, then, are forever impossible here, and, were it never so easy, we all repudiate upon principle. There are enduring and ever valid reasons against it. But religion and State is another thing. That is possible. That is a good thing-and that is what we aim to make a feature in our institutions."

Exactly, and right here do we see the omen of a union of Church and State. We do not expect that in this country the Catholic Church will be

the State Church, nor that any one of the Protestant sects will be honored by an alliance with the State. Neither do we look for all the sects to combine and sink their individual names and thus form a union with the State. But we do look for a desperate effort to unite Church and State, and we claim that this effort will be made by the so-called National Reform party. And further, we claim that Dr.

Edwards has admitted, even while denying it, that such union is the avowed object of that party. We leave it to the candid reader if the short argument at the beginning of this article, defining "the church," taken in connection with Dr. Edward's positive declaration, does not prove that a union of Church and State is the grand object sought by the Amendmentists.

"But," says one, "do you not teach that a man should carry his religion into his business? Why then should you object to religion in the State?" We do believe that if a man *has* religion he should manifest it in his business transactions as well as in church; but if he has it not, we would not have him simulate it. So likewise we believe in religion among individuals everywhere, for only individuals can be religious. No man can be religious for another, neither can one man or any number of men make any men religious. And therefore we are not in favor of upholding religion by the laws of the State.

Perhaps it may be made a little plainer that religion in the State is Church and State united. We say that the possession of true religion marks one as a real Christian—a member of the church of Christ. The association together of a body of people professing religion constitutes, outwardly at least, a branch of the church of Christ. And so, likewise, the profession of religion by the State constitutes a State church. This is all the union of Church and State that has ever existed. And will be the result? Just this: Religion and patriotism will be identical. No matter how pure some of the principles upheld by the laws may be, they can have no vitalizing, spiritual effect on the hearts of the people, because they will stand on the same level as the law defining who are eligible to office, and regulating the length of the presidential term. In short, the incorporation of religion into the laws of the State, marks the decline of religion in the hearts of the people. And this is what the Religious Amendment party is pledged to bring about.

Ought not all lovers of pure Christianity to enter a hearty and continued protest against such a proceeding? E. J. W.

"Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 10:10-20" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

(Lesson 25, March 22, 1890.)

1. For what did Christ take away the sacrifices of the law of Moses?
2. What do we learn in the Scriptures is the will of God?
3. What is done for us by this will? Heb. 10:10.
4. What is the law called in Ps. 119:142?
5. What did the Lord Jesus say in his prayer for our sanctification? John 17:17.
6. Is the truth necessary for our sanctification? Ans.—It is; error, however fine in appearance, however firmly believed, has no sanctifying influence.
7. Are we sanctified by hearing the truth? Compare John 3:19; 15:22; Matt. 7:26, 27.
8. Are we sanctified by believing the truth? James 2:14, 17, 20, 26.

9. What is necessary in order to be sanctified through the truth? 1 Peter 1:22.
10. Can all truth be obeyed? Ans.-It cannot. To be obeyed it must be in the form of law. There can be no obedience where there is nothing commanded.
11. Is that truth sanctifying which does not call for obedience? James 2:19.
12. Is it therefore of no profit because it will not sanctify? See note.
13. What did God say the children of Israel should be if they would keep his commandments? Ex. 19:6.
14. Can we, then, be sanctified by our obedience to the law? Ans.-We cannot. See note.
15. How does Paul say that we are sanctified by the will of God? Heb. 10:10. Compare 2 Tim. 3:15.
16. After our High Priest offered his sacrifice, where did he go? Heb. 10:12.
17. What is he expecting-waiting for? Verse 13.
18. Who puts his enemies under his feet? Ps. 110:1. Compare 1 Cor. 15:27, 28.
19. Where have we liberty to enter? Heb. 10:19.
20. What is meant by the holiest? Ans.-It is, literally, the holies, that is, the heavenly sanctuary.
21. By what means do we enter there? -*lb*.
22. Do we enter there actually, or in person? Ans.-No; we enter in the person of our Priest as a man is said to appear in court when his advocate is there for him.
23. By what manner of way do we enter there? Verse 20.
24. With what is the new and living way in contrast? Ans.-With the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, which were dead when their blood was offered in the sanctuary.
25. What is that way? -*lb*. See note.

NOTES

By 2 Tim. 3:16, 17 we learn that all truth is profitable, but truths are not all of the same nature, and are not all equally profitable. Some truths are primary, some are secondary. In James 2:19 we are told that we do well if we believe that there is one God; that is a very important truth, which, unfortunately, some nations of the earth have entirely forgotten. But it does not call for obedience-nobody can obey an abstract statement of that kind. It only calls for belief. And the demons believe it, and they remain demons still, even though they tremble before that truth. They are not sanctified by their belief, because it works no change of character; it is dead. But he who does the will of that one God is sanctified thereby, because he thereby forms a character in harmony with that will. While the law of God is that primary truth, which directly sanctifies, other truth is secondary; it can only work indirectly in our sanctification. But it leads toward sanctification, even indirectly, only when it leads us toward the law-to the way of obedience.

We could be sanctified by obedience to the law if we had never forfeited our justification and destroyed our ability by disobedience. Instead of now being

justified by the law, we already stand condemned, for we have all disobeyed it. Rom. 3:9, 19, 23. Sin has perverted our natures, so that alone we can do nothing. John 15:5. But that does not destroy the fact that the law is perfect, and is justifying in its virtue. That the law cannot justify us is not the fault of the law-it is our own fault. The law did not fall in the fall of man; the law does not become sin because we sin. Rom. 7:7-14. The law is the measure and rule of the righteousness of God; it witnesses to that righteousness. Rom. 3:21. By our fall we are far below the righteousness of the law, and we are now dependent upon another to raise us up to where its righteousness may be fulfilled in us. Rom. 8:4.

There is a fund of instruction in this expression

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in Heb. 10:20. It is not a "way of life," as some have construed it, but a way ever new, ever living. Our Sacrifice is alive forever, and his blood is ever fresh, precious, incorruptible. 1 Peter 1:18, 19. This great truth is denied by the Catholics by their doctrine of transubstantiation. They affirm that there is no sacrifice now available for man, except upon their altars, where the water and wine are turned into the actual body and blood of Christ. In that doctrine the sacrifice of Christ is not even new, but needs ever to be renewed; the body and blood need a constant re-creating. By it the contrast between the daily offerings of the old law, and the one offering of Christ, is utterly destroyed.

March 17, 1890

"Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 10:21-25" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

(Lesson 26, March 29, 1890.)

1. Where is our High Priest? See Heb. 8:1, 2.
2. To what purpose did he go to heaven as a priest? Heb. 9:26.
3. Are we said to go into the sanctuary, or holies? Heb. 10:19.
4. How may we approach the throne? Verse 22, first part.
5. How does faith come? Rom. 10:17.
6. What is necessary to full assurance of faith? See note.
7. What is a true heart? Ans.-A heart that clings to the ground of faith, the word of God.
8. What is said to be done to the heart? Heb. 10:22.
9. What is said to be sprinkled upon the heart to purify it? See 1 Peter 1:2; Heb. 12:24.
10. Is the heart literally sprinkled with blood?
11. How is the blood of Christ applied to our hearts? Ans.-By our faith and the work of the Holy Spirit.
12. What is said to be done to the body? Heb. 10:22, last part.
13. Is the body literally washed with water?

14. Is either of these words ever used for baptism? Ans.-They are not. Washing is used for the object or end of baptism in Acts 22:16. Baptism describes the action, by which the washing was accomplished.
15. How should we hold our profession of faith? Heb. 10:23.
16. What is said of him that wavereth? James 1:6.
17. Why are we encouraged to hold fast without wavering? Heb. 10:23, last part.
18. What is meant by considering one another? Ans.-Having regard for; watching over for good. Verse 24.
19. What is meant by provoke? Ans.-To incite; to stimulate.
20. Unto what should we incite one another? -*lb.*
21. What should we not forsake? Verse 25.
22. What should we do in our assemblies? -*lb.*
23. Is the duty to exhort one another confined to meetings?
24. Does the apostle specify any particular time for assembling?
25. What special reason is given why we should exhort one another?
26. To what day does the apostle here refer? Ans.-The day of which he has spoken, when our Redeemer will come again. He has introduced no other.
27. Is it, then, true that we can see the day approaching? Matt. 24:3, 32, 33, etc.

NOTE

Many people mistake strong feeling for an assurance of faith, though they are essentially different. Strong feeling may be an accompaniment of faith, though it is not faith itself. And many suppose that there can be no faith without a happy state of feeling, which is a great mistake. Paul had great faith, though circumstances caused him to have great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart. Rom. 9:2. Compare Isa. 50:10; Matt. 5:4. Faith rests entirely upon the word of God, but feeling is often the outgrowth of impressions, produced in various ways. Self-complacency, deep satisfaction over one's own experience, is very often mistaken for assurance of faith, while, oftentimes, the individual has no faith at all-no clear conception of the teachings of God's word. Full assurance of genuine faith is unwavering confidence in God, with knowledge of his word and implicit belief of the word. The clearer the word is to our understanding, the better is the chance for full assurance of faith; for how can we have faith in that of which we are ignorant? The mystical system of interpreting the Scriptures, by which they are made to mean anything that can be imagined, precludes faith. Under that system the mind is filled only with fancies, while faith is something substantial. This subject is fully considered in the next chapter.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." God has made man a social being. Intercourse with his fellows is a law of his nature, and man cannot reach his full development as a man without this. This is especially true as

regards Christian character. God has set in his church different gifts, which are likened to different members, or parts of the human body. (See 1 Corinthians 12.) As each part of the body is mutually dependent to a greater or less extent on every other part in order to full and perfect development, so the various members and gifts in the church need the aid and instruction to be received from all. They are to "edify [or build up] one another" (1 Thess. 5:11); to "comfort one another" (chap. 4:18); and, if connected with Christ, the head, they will in this way be "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16).

He who thinks to live a Christian life, separate from his kind, will find himself dwarfed in the end. That hill of corn, or maize, best filled and more nearly perfect is not found alone, or on the outskirts of the cornfield, but in the middle of the field. The pollen of its neighbors fertilizes then every kernel represented by the "silks." One hill standing alone will be wanting. It needs the aid and abundance of the many to supply its wants; as it also may unite with the many in supplying others needs. Stones become polished by contact; characters are somewhat similar. Therefore the people of God should meet together to warn, exhort, instruct, and comfort, and so build one another up in the most holy faith. He who can meet with others of like precious faith and fails to do so, will bring only barrenness to his soul.

But someone will say: "I am all alone. I live near no one who believes as I do. Those truths so dear to me I cannot talk with others. What shall I do? Am I to grow spiritually poor because of that which is not my fault?" Not at all. God asks no more of us than what it is possible for us to perform through grace. If we can meet with the living members of Christ's body, that is our duty; if we cannot, there are other means which God will provide. There are his holy word, the writings of his faithful servants in good books and papers; there is the soul communion with him. God "giveth more grace" to the lonely ones who trust him and improve their opportunities. Neither are those who do meet with each other, to neglect the aids of the word of God, prayer, and instructive reading. Greater privileges bring greater responsibilities.

"And so much the more as ye see the day approaching." This does not mean that we should meet more and more frequently, continually increasing the times of assembling; for this would after awhile lead to continuous meeting; and continuous meeting alone will not develop Christian character. The character must be settled, hardened, established, by meeting in the grace and strength of Christ the trials and conflicts of life. It means that we should so much the more not forsake the assembling of ourselves together and exhorting one another. As the day of God draws near, perils thicken around the little flock; the enemy brings upon them sorer temptations. So much the more ought they not to neglect every means of grace. Courage and faith in God should be their watch word.

Yet as the day draws near there will be strong temptations not to do this; there will be apparent duties to plead, physical disability or physical disinclination will be presented as an excuse. The "enchanted ground" lies just before the land of Beulah. And as Christian and Hopeful could only resist its influence by talking

over the things of God, so will the people of God in the last days have to use every means of grace or be overcome by its baneful, deadly opiate. Prudence and safety demand a fulfillment of duty in meeting together whenever possible.

There is another side. God makes precious promises to those who will do this. When only two or three meet in his name there will the Lord be. Matt. 18:20. And in speaking of the time when "that day" is near, the Lord thus speaks through the prophet: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Mal. 3:16, 17.

We can see, or perceive, that the day of the Lord is approaching by the signs which God has given in his prophetic word, compared with the condition of things in the last days. The multiplying events in the physical world, in Church and in State, will show the fulfillment of God's word, and will thereby strengthen faith and assure us that the day is nigh. It will, however, be ushered in by no great physical portent or omen. God will decide the time in heaven, Christ will leave his priestly throne; and the eternal fiat will go forth (Rev. 22:11, 12). That day will come upon the earth as a thief (2 Peter 3:10), but it will not overtake the faithful, watchful brethren in Christ (1 Thess. 5:3). The thief spoils the house of him who sleeps and watches not; but to the faithful watcher every sign and omen is noted. "Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober."

March 31, 1890

**"Another Sunday Prosecution in Tennessee" *The Signs of the Times*
16, 13.**

E. J. Waggoner

In Troy, Obion County, Tennessee, Mr. R. M. King has just been tried for working upon Sunday, and upon conviction has been fined seventy-five dollars and costs. The circumstances of the case are somewhat peculiar, and are very significant. The indictment read as follows:-

"The Grand Jurors of the State of Tennessee, elected, impaneled, sworn, and charged to inquire in and for the body of the county of Obion, in the State aforesaid, upon their oath present, that R. M. King, late of said county, laborer, heretofore, to wit: on the 23rd day of June, A.D. 1889, and on divers other Sundays before and after that date, and up to the taking of this requisition in the county of Obion aforesaid, then and there did unlawfully and unnecessarily engage in his secular business and performed his common avocation of life, to wit: plowing on Sunday, and did various other kinds of labor on that day, and on Sundays before that day, without regard to said Sabbath-days. Said work was not necessary, nor done as a matter of charity; and the doing of said work on said day was and is a disturbance to the community in which done, was offensive to the morals of the public, and is a common nuisance. So the Grand Jurors

aforesaid present and say that said R. M. King was in manner and form aforesaid guilty of a public nuisance by such work on Sunday, in a public place, prejudicial to public morals, contrary to the statute, and against the peace and dignity of the State."

The first and chief witness for the prosecution did not see the defendant at his work for more than five minutes, as he was not in sight of any place of public worship. On cross-examination he said that the work was very annoying to his feelings, on the ground that it was a violation of sacred and civil law. He admitted that Mr. King was in other respects a quiet, peaceable, law-abiding citizen, and a pious, Christian gentleman, but that he did not favor Mr. King's religious views. It should be stated that Mr. King is a Seventh-day Adventist.

The judge ruled that the questions as to the defendant's religious character were not in order. The lawyer for the defense drew from two of the witnesses that they and certain others had bound themselves by a written pledge to prosecute every violation of the Sunday law. The defendant offered to prove that others who made no pretense of observing any other day than Sunday, did at the same time engage in reaping wheat with a machine, rating logs, etc., on Sunday, but this evidence the court would not allow. Of course this evidence would not make the defendant's guilt any less, if there were any guilt attaching to Sunday labor, but it would show the animus of the prosecution.

The cross-examination showed that the third, fourth, and fifth witnesses for the prosecution were themselves engaged in secular labor when they saw Mr. King at work. But they had not rested on the seventh day.

The defendant also offered to prove, which was a fact, that he had been tried before a justice of the peace, and had been fined for the identical work which was cited as the principal offense in the indictment, namely, plowing on the 23rd of June last, but this evidence the judge would not allow.

The speed of the prosecuting attorney was a tirade against Seventh-day Adventists, and was full of indecency, which was calculated to please the vulgar. Said he:-

"I wish to God we had more Methodist Churches, and more Baptist Churches, and more Presbyterian Churches, and more Episcopal Churches, and more Catholic Churches, until every man was brought under the benign influence of these churches; but, in the name of God, I do not want any of these Adventist Churches, or Mormon Churches. Gitteau, when he had a revelation from God (and I expect he had a Seventh-day Adventist lawyer to defend him), took a pistol and shot down the ruler of the nation, and they hung him; and that is what they ought to do with all these fellows."

Much more of the same sort, and much worse, was given, all of which showed that the spirit of the prosecution was not zeal for Sunday as the Sabbath, nor for good morals, but hatred for the Sabbath, and for those who observe it. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court of the State, where it will soon be heard.

Thus we have another instance of the working of religious legislation. From the days of Constantine down, evil and nothing but evil has come from State laws in favor of any religious practice. Would that men would learn that "God is a spirit,

and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," and not by civil enactments. E. J. W.

April 21, 1890

"Sound Speech from a Baptist" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

On the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of April, a "Bible-Readers' Conference" was held in the First Baptist Church in Oakland, which was conducted by the Rev. Drs. W. H. Pendleton, A. J. Frost, and Daniel Read. The subject for consideration the afternoon of the first day was "The Lord's Day," by the Rev. Daniel Read, L.L.D., of Los Angeles. After presenting his arguments to show that Sunday is the Lord's day, and should be kept holy, to the satisfaction of the most of his audience, opportunity was given for questions, when the subject of the propriety of civil Sunday laws was introduced, and an hour was spent in discussing it. The doctor showed himself to be master of the subject, answering every one of the numerous questions without a moment's hesitation, and in the best possible manner. Following are the principal points brought out.

In answer to the first question, he stated that the State had no right to enact Sunday laws, and that the church has no business to ask for such legislation. "Not even to stop the saloons?"-"No; we have no right to ask that saloons be closed because the first day of the week is the Lord's day. Saloons should be closed every day."

A member then asked if railroad employeEs should not be protected from being compelled to labor on Sunday. The doctor's reply was that they needed no protection. Nobody forces them to labor, and nobody can compel them to labor if they don't want to. The railroad simply presents the alternative of working on Sunday or quitting. In this country nobody is forced to work for another if he doesn't want to. To the statement that the loss of a position in consequence of refusal to work on Sunday, would present to some the alternative of starving, he said: "Let them starve, then; Christians have died, and even starved to death, for their religion; and we are no better than they. A religion that is not worth suffering inconvenience for is not worth anything. We have no right to compel other people to come to our ideas, in order that we may not suffer inconvenience." He called attention to the fact that the church made its greatest advancement, and was the purest in doctrine and practice, when the laws instead of favoring it were all against it.

The doctor said further that, so far as society is concerned, a man has as much right to work on Sunday as on any other day of the week. He believed that every body ought to keep the first day of the week holy; but if his conscience doesn't lead him to rest on that day, nobody has any right to compel him to rest. God takes no delight in force. Rest without religion is worth nothing, and there is no religion in Sunday rest that does not spring from conscientious conviction. Moreover, he said, enforced idleness leads to crime, since Satan will always find mischief for idle hands. Therefore, to compel men to rest on Sunday, when they

have no religious conviction in the matter, is to increase wickedness, and this is the reason why there are more cases in the police courts on Monday mornings than on other meetings.

In line with this thought, the doctor added that for the church to ask aid from the civil law is to reject God. Just to the extent that the church asks the State to enforce religion it separates itself from God. "As Baptists," said the doctor, "we cannot afford to go back on all Baptist principle and tradition." To the statement that Christian people are in the majority in this country, and to the question if they should not see that laws are passed in harmony with the Bible, he replied: "Certainly; but, unfortunately, the Bible gives no sanction to force. It nowhere gives the State authority to legislate in matters of religion."

The question of protection to Sunday worship was then introduced, and the doctor stated that it should certainly be protected from disturbance, but just to the extent that the Seventh-day Adventists and the Jews were protected in their worship on Saturday. "We have no right," he said, "to ask for any more protection than others." He said that if a band was playing near a church on Sunday, they should be compelled to stop, and that likewise a force of carpenters at work on a building near a Seventh-day Adventist house of worship, should stop work during the time of service.

Someone then raised the query: "Suppose that there are but a handful of Adventists worshipping in their church on Saturday, and there are very many carpenters at work on the house close by, who should be protected, the majority or the minority?" The reply was that it is not a question of numbers, but of right. If there is only one man, and he a Chinaman, he is entitled to protection.

A lady then arose and made a pathetic plea for the closing of saloons on Sunday, in order to protect the boys on their only idle day. Said she: "Are we to be obliged to send the boys out as lambs among wolves, to be devoured? Shall not we close the saloons on this day, and thus protect the boys?" The doctor's reply was, "I would go a great deal farther than the sister would, and close the saloons on every day." That, of course, answered the question perfectly, but he did not let the matter rest there. He said that as to sending the boys out as lambs in the midst of wolves, that is just what the Saviour did: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." But we could have this assurance, that the great Shepherd never forsakes the sheep. The doctor thought that the protection of the great Shepherd was better for the lambs than that of the law.

As to protection to the boys, he further said that parents had that in their own hands. Teach the boys that whisky and narcotics are poisons; show them the evil of their use; ground them thoroughly in moral principle, and the Sunday saloon will not affect them.

In the above we have given in general only the substance of what was said. No point has been overstated; on the contrary, the positions were taken much more strongly than we have put them. It would be impossible, even with a verbatim report, to give an adequate idea of the force with which the doctor met every argument in favor of Sunday laws. We wish that every Baptist in the land could have been present; and we hope that in the coming campaign in California, in which it is designed to make the Sunday-law question play a prominent part,

every Baptist, and every church member of every other denomination, could listen to Doctor Read's masterly arraignment of Sunday laws. We believe that if they could, many would be convinced that loyalty to true Christian principle calls not for Sunday laws, but for earnest protest against any such device to destroy spiritually and to foster crime. E. J. W.

April 28, 1890

"The Fresno Camp-meeting" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

If the first camp-meeting of the season in California is an indication of what the remaining camp-meetings of the season will be, we are sure that it will be a good year for the cause in this State. The attendance exceeded that of any other camp-meeting in that part of the State. The number of tents on the ground was seventy. But the success of the meeting was not due to the number present, but to the Spirit of God, whose presence all felt and acknowledged.

The preaching was mainly directed to the imparting of instruction in church duties, the responsibilities of church members, their relation one to another, etc., and to unfolding the simple principles of the gospel. By the grace of God these efforts were so successful that many were led to rejoice in increased light and courage.

Sister White was present the last five days of the meeting, and her testimony was greatly blessed. Her oft-repeated assurance that "the Lord can do more for us in a minute than we can do for ourselves in a life-time," was not without effect, and those who had been endeavoring to help themselves out of trouble, were moved to yield themselves to the Lord.

A special effort was made in the line of practical Sabbath-school instruction. This was appreciated, and many teachers will take hold of their work with more intelligent zeal than ever before. Much attention was also given to the canvassing work, and the cooking class was well attended.

During the meeting, and at its close, the expression, "This is the best meeting I ever attended," was very frequently heard. It was not because of any great enthusiasm, or because feeling ran high, but because the Spirit of the Lord directed the minds of preachers and teachers, to bring forth from the word just those things that were needed at the time. The promise of Christ concerning the Spirit, "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you," was verified.

The cause in Central California certainly stands in a better condition to-day than before the meeting. The people are prepared to take hold of the work more intelligently than ever before; and if they continue in the things which they have learned and have been assured of, eternal victory will certainly be theirs. To God be the praise for the victories gained by the truth in Fresno, and may all the people thank him and take courage. E. J. W.

May 12, 1890

"Saving Faith" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

"But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above); or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. 10:6-9.

May we accept these words, especially the statement in the last verse, as literally true? Shall we not be in danger if we do? Is not something more than faith in Christ necessary to salvation? To the first of these questions we say, Yes, and to the last two we say, No, and refer to the Scriptures for corroboration. So plain a statement cannot be other than literally true and one that can be depended on by the trembling sinner.

As an instance in proof, take the case of the jailer at Philippi. Paul and Silas, after having been inhumanly beaten, were placed in his care. Notwithstanding their lacerated backs and their manacled feet, they prayed and sang praises to God at midnight and suddenly an earthquake shook the prison, and all the doors were opened. It was not alone the natural fear produced by feeling the earth rock beneath him nor yet the dread of Roman justice if the prisoners in his charge should escape, that caused the jailer to tremble. But he felt in that earthquake shock a premonition of the great judgment, concerning which the apostles had preached; and, trembling under his load of guilt, he fell down before Paul and Silas, saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Mark well the answer; for here was a soul in sorest extremity and what was sufficient for him must be the message to all lost ones. To the jailer's anguished appeal, Paul replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16:30, 31. This agrees exactly with the words which we quoted from Paul to the Romans.

On one occasion the Jews said unto Jesus, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" Just the thing that we want to know. Mark the reply: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." John 6:28, 29. Would that these words might be written in letters of gold and kept continually before the eyes of every struggling Christian. The seeming paradox is cleared up. Works are necessary, yet faith is all-sufficient, because faith does the work. Faith comprehends everything and without faith there is nothing.

The trouble is that people in general have a faulty conception of faith. They imagine that it is mere assent and that it is only a passive thing to which active works must be added. But faith is active and it is not only the most substantial thing but the only real foundation. The law is the righteousness of God (Isa. 51:6, 7), for which we are commanded to seek (Matt. 6:33), but it cannot be kept except by faith, for the only righteousness which will stand in the Judgment is

"that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. 3:9.

Read the words of Paul in Rom. 3:31. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." Making void the law of God by man is not abolishing it; for that is an impossibility. It is as fixed as the throne of God. No matter what men say of the law, nor how much they trample upon it and despise it, it remains the same. The only way that men can make void the law of God is to make it of none effect in their hearts by their disobedience. Thus in Num. 30:15, a vow that has been broken is said to have been made void. So when the apostle says that we do not make void the law through faith, he means that faith and disobedience are incompatible. No matter how much the law-breaker professes faith, the fact that he is a law-breaker shows that he has no faith. But the possession of faith is shown by the establishment of the law in the heart, so that the man does not sin against God. Let no one decry faith as of little moment.

But does not the apostle James say that faith alone cannot save a man and that faith without works is dead? Let us look at his words a moment. Too many have with honest intent perverted them to a dead legalism. He does say that faith without works is dead and this agrees most fully with what we have just quoted and written. For if faith without works is dead, the absence of works shows the absence of faith; for that which is dead has no existence. If a man has faith, works will necessarily appear and the man will not boast of either one, for by faith boasting is excluded. Rom. 3:27. Boasting is done only by those who trust wholly in dead works or whose profession of faith is a hollow mockery.

Then how about James 2:14, which says: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him?" The answer necessarily implied is, of course, that it cannot. Why not? Because he hasn't it. What doth it profit if a man say he has faith, if by his wicked course he shows that he has none? Must we decry the power of faith simply because it does nothing for the man who makes a false profession of it? Paul speaks of some who profess that they know God but who deny Him by their works. Titus 1:16. The man to whom James refers is one of this class. The fact that he has no good works-no fruit of the Spirit-shows that he has no faith, despite his loud profession, and so of course faith cannot save him; for faith has no power to save a man who does not possess it.

This is but a brief presentation of this subject. Much more ought to be said, and many difficulties that arise in honest people's minds ought to be met, and this will be done in due time. But the scripture cited should be sufficient to cause us to heed the exhortation to hold fast the profession of our faith, without wavering, "knowing that he is faithful that promised." E. J. W.

May 19, 1890

"A Few Principles of Interpretation" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is an expository journal. The main object for which it was established was to present Scripture truth in the simplest and clearest manner possible. It will ever be our endeavor to make it meet this object. We here wish to lay down for our readers a few of the principles which we shall invariably follow in our interpretation, and which, if followed in a prayerful and candid spirit, cannot fail to lead a person to a proper understanding of the sacred word.

1. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. We accept this fully, and apply it to the entire Bible. The Bible does not simply contain the truth, but it is the truth, and the whole truth. Aside from the Bible there can be no moral or spiritual truth and light. And whatever disagrees with the Bible, whether it be in the realm of morals or of science, must be false. The principle here laid down must underlie all sound biblical exegesis. If this be not admitted, it can be of no use to try to study the Bible.

2. The Bible is one connected, consistent, harmonious book. It is composed of many books, but these books form only one book. They are not independent one of another. This book was written by many different persons, yet it has only one author, and that is the Spirit of God. The different parts are inspired by the same Spirit, and have one purpose; there is a vital connection between them. They are characterized by oneness of thought. As Christ prayed that his disciples might be one, so that the world might know that the Father had sent him (John 17:21), so the perfect harmony between the various parts of the Bible is proof that it came from God. If we accept the Bible as the inspired word of God, we must expect to find it harmonious throughout, for God cannot deny himself. So whoever wishes to study the word of God with any degree of satisfaction, must first fix in his mind the fact that the Bible cannot contradict itself.

As a corollary to this principle it might be stated that the Bible does not need to be "harmonized." To attempt that is a thankless task, because the Bible is already harmonized. It is an instrument that was tuned by the Almighty himself, and every string vibrates in harmony with every other. All that the Bible student has to do is to study the harmony that already exists. If two texts seem to be contradictory, the student may rest assured that he does not understand one or the other, or perhaps either one. But when the position which he holds on one text is upheld by other texts bearing on the same point, and is not contradicted by any other text; that is, when a position taken in regard to any text is consistent with the entire Bible, that of itself is evidence that that position is correct; for the Bible could not agree with a false position.

3. The Bible must interpret itself. By the Bible man may be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works;" hence it cannot need the addition of matter outside of itself.

4. One part of the Bible cannot be fully understood when taken by itself, apart from its connection, or without reference to the remaining portion of the Bible. This might also be called a corollary to the second proposition laid down. If the Bible is one connected whole, then all the parts are necessary to the formation of

that whole. There is a mutual dependence between all the parts, and therefore in considering one part, attention must be given to the other parts. True, we may not misunderstand one portion of the Bible even though we study it by itself; but it is certain that we cannot have a complete understanding of it until we study it with reference to an entire book of the Bible as it is of a single text. There is no book of the Bible upon which light is not thrown by every other book in the Bible. To say that any two books in the Bible have no connection, is almost equivalent to saying that the Bible is not all inspired by the same Spirit.

4. Terms used in one place in the Bible, with a certain signification, must have the same meaning attached to them in every other place where they occur, provided the same subject is under consideration. If this be not true, then we have no certain means of knowing what the Bible teaches. Let us apply this principle. In the eighth chapter of Daniel we find a symbolic prophecy in which certain days are mentioned. Now to say that these days mean literal days of twenty-four hours each, would make nonsense of the prophecy, for we should have several great kingdoms covering a period of only a little more than six years. But in Eze. 4:3-6 we find another prophecy, also symbolic, in which a day is expressly declared to stand for a year. So we conclude that in every prophecy where a day is used as a symbol, it signifies a year.

In like manner we find horns used as a symbol in the seventh and eighth chapters of Daniel, in both of which chapters they are plainly declared to symbolize kingdoms. Therefore we justly conclude that wherever in the Bible a horn is used as a symbol, it represents a kingdom or a nation.

Let the reader study these principles well, and get them fixed in his mind, and they will help him out of many a difficulty in his study of the Bible.

May 26, 1890

"Things We Should Know" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

As finite beings, our knowledge is necessarily limited. There are many things that it is impossible for us to know. In fact, that which we know is a very small amount in comparison with that which we do not know; and much of that which we think we know is only conjecture. People sometimes think they know a great deal about nature, but such ones only think so because of their ignorance of the vastness of God's works. So Isaac Newton, after a lifetime of contemplation of the works of nature, and investigation of physical phenomena, said that he was like a child playing with pebbles on the shore of the ocean, while the vast expanse was still before him unexplored. And when we come to things supernatural, our knowledge is still more limited. We can know nothing of them, except they are revealed in God's word. It is idle for us to conjecture concerning the size of the throne of God, the height of the tree of life, the width of the streets of the New Jerusalem, or of the river of water of life. These things have not been revealed to us, and hence it is not necessary that we should know them.

But there are some things which are very plainly made known, and these things it is our duty to know. If we remain ignorant of them, it is a sin. Let us consider some of the things that we may and should know without any mixture of doubt.

In Deut. 4:30 Moses says: "Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else."

This may be called the first element of knowledge, because whoever says, "There is no God," is a fool. Ps. 14:1. A man may be ignorant of a great many things and yet not be a fool; but one who is ignorant of things existing around him, who is unconscious of the existence of the sun, the air, the works of creation, and who looks upon all with indifferent eye,-such an one we say is a fool. But that is virtually the condition one must be in if he denies the existence of God, for God is known by his works. Says the psalmist, "For all the gods of the nations are idols; but the Lord made the heavens." Ps. 96:5. Again, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." Ps. 19:1.

A knowledge of God is inseparably connected with a knowledge of his creative power. The psalmist says again: "Know ye that the Lord he is God; it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." Ps. 100:3. This is shown still farther by the fact that the heathen lost their knowledge of God through failure to recognize his creative power. Thus Paul says that the heathen who know nothing of God are without excuse, because ever since the creation of the world the eternal power and godhead of God may be seen from the things that are made. And then he says that darkness came upon them "because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful." What would it be to glorify him as God? Evidently to properly recognize him as Creator, for it is that which distinguishes him as the one true God. Thus the psalmist, after declaring the power of God above all gods, says, "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name." Ps. 96:8.

But if we acknowledge God as Creator, and consider it in our heart, to what will that lead? It will lead to the perfect doing of his will. Obedience is due only to superiors by inferiors. It is a principle of law that one who is dependent on another is in duty bound to obey the will of that other just to the extent that he is dependent on him. Man is dependent upon God for *everything*,-"In him we live, and move, and have our being,"-and therefore he is in duty bound to yield obedience to the will of God in every particular. And if a man recognize this supremacy of God, and his own dependence, he will do the will of God. That obedience to God is a necessary consequence of a recognition of his supremacy, or, rather, is the only way in which his supremacy can be recognized, is shown by the following verses, one of which has already been quoted:-

"Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else. Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments." Deut 4:39, 40.

The same thing is still further seen by the fact that ignorance of divine truth springs directly from disobedience. Paul says that strong delusion shall come

upon men to that they shall believe a lie, for the reason that they receive not the love of the truth. 2 Thess. 2:10-12. And again he warns the people to watch lest they be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Heb. 3:13.

It will not be denied that a knowledge of God is of the utmost importance, and that it is a primary duty; and since we can retain our knowledge of God only by doing his will, how important it is that we keep his commandments. In obeying any precept of God we recognize his authority, and increase our knowledge of him; but there is one duty the performance of which leads especially to the knowledge of God. In Ex. 31:13, 17, we read these words of the Lord:-

"Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."

Here the reason is given why the keeping of the Sabbath leads to a more perfect knowledge of God. The Sabbath commemorates the completed creation. The Sabbath is given for this very purpose. It can be properly kept only when we consider the wonderful power and goodness of God. In the ninety-second psalm, which is for the Sabbath-day, the psalmist speaks of the necessity of praise to God, and says: "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands." Verse 4.

The same thing that is stated in Exodus is repeated by the Lord through the prophet Ezekiel: "Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." "And hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God." Eze. 20:12, 20. In these words the Lord expressly declares that the Sabbath is the only means that he has given whereby men may preserve a knowledge of him. And as when we read the command, "Know ye that the Lord he is God," it is equivalent to a command to keep the Sabbath.

"The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." This is the day which commemorates creation. No other day calls attention to the power of God. Changing the day of rest is the first step toward complete loss of knowledge of God. When we read that the heathen became what they are because "when they knew God they glorified him not as God," and remember that the glory of God is his creative power, and that keeping the Sabbath is the means by which we recognize that power, we do not see how the conclusion can be avoided that the first step toward the degradation revealed in Rom. 1:23-31 was the refusal to keep the Sabbath which God had sanctified.

The "man of sin" became such by thinking to change the times and the laws of God. The attempted change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week is the boast of the Catholic Church. To this she points as the badge of her authority. And this fact marks the Papacy as essentially heathen. Thus: By the act of changing the Sabbath it claimed the place and authority of God. Paul says of the Papacy: "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God,

shewing himself that he is God." 2 Thess. 2:4. One power can usurp the place of another only by changing, or attempting to change, its laws. But if the Papacy puts itself in the place of God, showing itself to be God, it must necessarily ignore the existence of the only true God; and thus it is that by changing the Sabbath the Papacy becomes essentially heathen. It matters not that the Papacy makes great pretensions to godliness. Profession counts for nothing unless the action corresponds. Paul says of certain ones. "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him." Titus 1:16.

It is the rejection of the truth that is going to land the mass of the people of the last days in the worst kind of infidelity. See 2 Thess. 2:9-12. The Sabbath of Jehovah was, so far as we have any record, the first truth revealed to man (see Gen. 2:1-3), and it is the primary and most essential truth, since it pre-eminently teaches the existence and power of God. It is this truth which the Papacy has sought to overthrow, thus putting itself in the place of God; it is against this truth that Satan, the arch-enemy of God, exerts all his hellish arts, that he may lure men from allegiance to God; and it is the rejection of this truth which will make men an easy prey to Satan's strong delusion, and bring them under the wrath of God.

Let us then keep the Sabbath of the Lord in spirit and in truth. Let us not substitute a way of our own choosing, thus exalting ourselves to the place of God. If by the faith of Christ we earnestly strive to keep the commandments of God, we shall "follow on to know the Lord;" and in the earth made new, where all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, we shall be permitted every Sabbath (Isa. 66:23) to see God and to worship before his throne, acknowledging his goodness and power, in that he hath made all things new.

June 2, 1890

"Things We Should Know. No. 2" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 21.

E. J. Waggoner

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Eccl. 11:9.

Here is another thing we must know. The knowledge of this naturally follows from the knowledge of the existence of God. He is our Creator, and therefore has a right to claim that we shall do his will; but if this is so, it necessarily follows that judgment must be passed upon us, to see if we have done his will. The text is addressed to young men; but since God is no respecter of persons, we must conclude that all classes of people will alike be brought into judgment.

That all the world will be brought into judgment, is positively stated in the Bible. In his sermon on Mars Hill, Paul said that God "now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof

he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Acts 17:30, 31.

What shall be the standard of the final judgment? If we are to know that for certain things God will bring us into judgment, it must be that we can know what to do in order to secure a favorable decision. We have already learned that, being wholly dependent on God, we are bound to conform to his will in every particular: therefore we must conclude that God's will is to be the standard of judgment. This conclusion is supported by the words in the Lord's prayer, which indicated that when God's kingdom comes his will be done by all.

What then is the will of God, by which we are to be judged? Paul gives the answer in the following words: "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law." Rom. 2:17, 18. How was it that those whom Paul addressed knew the will of God? Because they were instructed out of the law. Then it must be that the law of God contains the will of God. This is still further shown by the words which David uttered prophetically in behalf of Christ: "Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Ps. 40:7, 8. It was Christ's delight-more than his meat or drink-to do the will of God. He ever did the will of the Father. This was because the law of God was in his heart, so that all his actions were spontaneously in harmony with it. But acting in harmony with the law of God was doing the will of God; therefore the law of God is identical with his will.

Once more: When the young man came to Jesus and asked what he should do that he might inherit eternal life, Jesus answered, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matt. 19:17. In his sermon on the mount, he said: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 7:21. Therefore keeping the commandments of God is equivalent to doing the will of God.

The law of God, then, is to be the standard by which all men shall be judged. This is incidentally shown in the passage already quoted from Romans: "Thou knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law." According to the marginal reading it is, Thou "triest the things that differ, being instructed out of the law." The law of God is that by which we try things that differ, by which we decide what things are honest and just and pure and lovely and of good report, and what are not. This, we say, is incidental proof that we are to be judged by the law of God, the ten commandments; for it is manifest that we must judge our actions by the same rule by which God will judge them.

In the text quoted at the beginning of this article, Solomon tells the young man to have his own way if he will, to walk in the ways of his heart, and in the sight of his eyes, but to know that for "all these things" God will bring him into judgment. Then we are to know not only that there will be a judgment, but that the judgment will take into account our thoughts; for the ways of a person's heart are the ways which his heart devises or thinks upon. This is plainly stated in the next chapter:

"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12:14. This agrees with the words of Paul, that when the Lord comes he will "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." 1 Cor. 4:5.

We have seen that the judgment is to be in accordance with the law of God; and since every secret thought is to be brought into judgment, it follows that the law of God takes account of even the thoughts of the heart. Read now Eccl. 12:13, 14: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Here we see that the fact that God will bring every secret thing into judgment, is given as a reason why we should keep the commandments of God. This shows again that the law is so spiritual as to detect the slightest deviation from it even in thought.

With this agree the words of Paul: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12. As showing how the law discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart, we refer to the words of Christ in Matt. 5:18-22, 27, 28, where we find that a single hateful thought or lustful look is accounted a violation of the sixth or the seventh commandment.

There is an intimate connection between Eccl. 11:9 and Eccl. 12:13, 14. The latter text is an exhortation to keep the commandments of God, based on the truth that by those commandments God will bring "every work into judgment, with every secret thing." The former text is an emphatic command to those who seem bent on having their own way, to know that "for all these things" God will bring them into judgment. And since that judgment is to be based on the commandments of God, and is to take into account every secret thought, it follows that Eccl. 11:9 is virtually a command for us to know that the ten commandments cover every possible deed or thought, and demand perfect obedience. It is a command for us to study the law, and to meditate in it day and night. If we are ever at a loss to know how perfect the law requires us to be, we have only to consider the life and character of Jesus. He "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." This was simply because the law was in his heart. Anyone who models his life in accordance with the law of God, will be just like Christ, and the law will be satisfied with nothing less.

This righteousness cannot be attained by our own individual effort. Of ourselves we can do nothing; but Christ, who knew no sin, was made to be sin for us, in order "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." And in the command to know that God will bring us into judgment for every secret thing, includes the command not only to know that the law of God is to be the standard of that judgment, but also that through Christ alone can we attain to that perfect righteousness which the law demands. If Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, then we can exhibit in our actions the righteousness of the law, for if we have Christ in the heart we must have the law there also. And having lived thus, when we are

brought before the judgment seat, and God fixes upon us his piercing grace, he will see, not us, but the image of Christ, and because he lives we shall live also.

June 9, 1890

"Christ, the Sinless One" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

In the last number but one of the last volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we published a short editorial note in reply to a question that was raised in a certain Sabbath-school, as to Christ's power to sin when he was here on earth. The statement was there made that he could not. We quote a portion of the note:-

"Our whole hope of eternal life through Christ rests upon this; for if there had been any temptation that could have induced Christ to sin, that would show that there is temptation that is stronger than divine power, which, in turn, would show that he is not "able to save to the uttermost."

The question is simply another form of asking: "Can God sin?" for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." "The word was God," just as truly when it was "made flesh and dwelt among us," as it was in the beginning, "before the world was." The object of that mysterious union of divinity with humanity was to demonstrate the power of God over sin."

We have received several letters in regard to this note, one brother claiming that it is in direct conflict with the following statement made by Mrs. E. G. White: "If it were not possible for him [Christ] to yield to temptation, he could not be our helper." We are sure that it does not conflict with that statement. The misunderstanding is an instance of the impossibility of giving all sides of a subject in one item. Perhaps we can relieve the minds of our questioners if we say that while holding to the statement previously made, we just as firmly believe the following:-

Christ was made "to be sin for us." 2 Cor. 5:21. He was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh." Rom. 8:3. He was "made of a woman, made under the law." Gal. 4:4. He took on Him the nature of Abraham, and was *in all things* "made like unto his brethren," and "he himself hath suffered being tempted." Heb. 2:17, 18. He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 4:15. These scriptures convey no other meaning to our mind than that Christ voluntarily took upon himself the feeble nature of man, to be subject to all the tendencies of the flesh, and the temptations of the devil. In short, he deliberately put himself into exactly the same position that fallen man occupies, to feel in his own being the full force of the power of Satan working upon fallen humanity. The temptations to which he was subject were real, not fanciful, and the strength of them equaled the strength of all the temptations that all the men in the world have to endure. The human nature that he took was a sinful nature, one subject to sin. If it were not, he would not be a perfect Saviour. We could not then go to him as one who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

We do not think this side of the case can be stated any more strongly; and yet we see no reason to recall the statement before made. If Joseph could say, in the face of strong temptations, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9); if the beloved disciple could write by inspiration of the Spirit, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 John 3:9); surely it may be said of the only-begotten Son of God, in whom dwelt "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," that he could not sin.

Take another point of view. Temptation comes through the working of Satan upon the frailty of human flesh, of which Christ himself was a partaker. We know that Satan in person put forth all his power on Jesus, not only in the wilderness, but through his whole earthly ministry, knowing that the fate of all men depended on him. If it had been possible for Satan to induce Christ to sin, he would have done it. The fact that Christ "did no sin"-that he "knew no sin," although subjected to the severest assaults of Satan, is sufficient to show that he could not be induced to sin.

This is the idea intended to be conveyed in the note referred to. In one sense, it was possible for Christ to sin, provided he had wished to, for the nature which he took was a nature subject to sin. Yet it was impossible for him to sin, because "God was in Christ," and that in perfect fullness. Not simply did he have the power of God with him, but he was God, for even when he lay a babe in the manger at Bethlehem, the decree went forth, "Let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. 1:6. He never ceased to be God, and therefore he did not sin. He demonstrated in his own person the power of divinity to prevail against the power of Satan working through human weakness.

But someone will say, "I cannot understand this." Neither can we. When we can understand how Christ could humble himself to the position of a servant, and become a man, and still retain his divinity; when we can understand how he could be at the same time God and man; when we can understand how the Mighty One who made the heavens and the earth could be born a helpless infant in Bethlehem; in short, when we can understand the mind of God, and can comprehend infinity, then we will explain "the mystery of the gospel."

We advise our friends not to try to explain these things. The fact that we cannot understand how a thing can be, argues nothing against it. Finite minds cannot comprehend the workings of Infinity. We can only accept as true the statements which that same divine power makes concerning itself. But we can take comfort in every revelation of divinity. We take the highest comfort in thinking that Christ voluntarily subjected himself to every condition and every weakness that it is possible for men to be subject to; and our comfort in this arises not less from the fact that there is thus a bond of sympathy established between us, than from the knowledge that "his divine power," which was such that Satan could not by any possibility overthrow it, is that by which are "given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." 2 Peter 1:3. E. J. W.

"Newspaper Reading as a Preparation for Church" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

In a recent discourse on "The New Birth," Mr. Moody spoke in the following decided manner concerning the reading of newspapers on Sunday:-

"I do not believe Gabriel himself could come down into this pulpit and preach with power to an audience that had been busy for two or three hours reading the Sunday papers. But someone says, 'Be mild, Mr. Moody, or the papers will pitch into you.' Let the papers pitch into me. I think the time has come for plain speaking. When ministers and members of the church buy newspapers on the street on Sunday morning from little boys who are kept out of the church and Sunday-school by selling these papers, I think someone should speak. I do not know what the Sunday papers contain. I never read one. I would as soon touch pitch; but I am told that the editors gather the scum from all over the world, and publish it on Sunday."

The New York *Observer*, which quotes and comments on the above says:-

"It is greatly to be regretted that so many Christian people support the Sunday newspaper by purchasing it, and by advertising in its columns. It is a well-known fact that it receives a great deal more attention at the hands of its readers than the edition of any other day of the week, and this is why advertising is so readily found for the Sunday columns. Were every kind of support rendered by Christians withdrawn, it is questionable whether the Sunday edition would hold its own."

This prompts us to make a few remarks. We think there has been a good deal of misdirected effort in connection with this Sunday newspaper business, both on the part of those who want them suppressed by law, and by many who oppose all Sunday laws.

In the first place, we will say that the Sunday newspaper is as good as that published on any other day of the week. We speak from actual knowledge. Its only difference from the editions of other days is that it is usually larger.

Secondly, we can heartily agree with all that Mr. Moody and others say in regard to the demoralizing effect that the reading of the newspapers before church service has upon the attendant at church. We are sure that he who reads the newspaper for an hour before going to church will not be likely to receive much benefit from the most powerful sermon. Therefore we have no fault to find with those ministers who severely condemn the practice.

But let it not be forgotten that the evil effect does not depend entirely upon the day upon which the reading is done, nor at all upon the day on which the paper is printed. Reading newspapers is as poor a preparation for the mid-week prayer-meeting as it is for the preaching service. To be sure, newspapers are not the best nor even good reading for the Sabbath-day, and he who esteems Sunday as the Sabbath will not read them on that day; but so far as unfitting one for worship is concerned, they are no worse before the Sabbath service

than just before the Tuesday or Wednesday evening prayer-meeting.

And, as we have already intimated, a newspaper published on Tuesday or Wednesday is just as demoralizing Sabbath reading as one published on the Sabbath or Sunday. The man who reads the Saturday evening paper on Sunday morning will be in no better frame of mind for church service than if he read one published on Sunday morning. This must be obvious to everybody.

Therefore, instead of fulminating against the Sunday paper, ministers and professional reformers should turn their attention to the delinquent church-members. Let them get up a genuine revival of religion in the church. Let them labor and pray for such a conversion of their flocks as shall make newspapers distasteful reading on the day of rest. The fault lies with the lax professors, and not with the newspapers, and the ax should be laid at the root of the tree. To lop off the Sunday newspaper would do no real good, so long as the desire for unspiritual reading remained. Those who are unfitted for church duties by reading the Sunday newspaper, would, in nine cases out of ten, read something worse if that were withheld from them. The existence of the Sunday newspaper, therefore, is no reason whatever for the enactment of Sunday laws.

In justice to Mr. Moody, it should be said that, so far as we are informed, he did not make the stereotyped plea for the suppression of the Sunday newspaper. His complaint, and it was a just one, was directed against those who pursue a practice that is inconsistent with their profession. E. J. W.

June 16, 1890

**"Unrighteous Judgment, Self-Condensation" *The Signs of the Times*
16, 23.**

E. J. Waggoner

The epistle to the Romans is like a grand epic poem, in which the author gives in a few lines at the beginning an outline of the whole subject, and then proceeds to develop it. In the salutation and introduction, comprising the first seventeen verses of the first chapter, the apostle has given the whole gospel in a nutshell. From the statement that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, he naturally proceeds to show, in the remainder of the chapter, the necessity for the plan of salvation. This he does by portraying the deep darkness of the heathen world. In this arraignment the Jews would most heartily acquiesce; and the Gentiles could not gainsay it, for it was corroborated by their own writers.

But while the professed worshiper of the true God is contemplating the awful wickedness of the heathen, feeling a sort of contemptuous pity for their blindness, and congratulating himself because of his superiority, his complaisant meditations are rudely broken by the abrupt charge of the apostle:-

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and

forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Rom. 2:1-4.

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest." What a wonderful antidote to pride this would be if it were only borne in mind! The apostle has shown (see chap. 1:19-21); that the heathen are without excuse, and now he extends the same remark to all mankind. If the heathen are without excuse, how much less excuse can there be for those who are sufficiently enlightened to sit in judgment upon the abominable practices of idolaters? Why does the mere fact of condemning the wicked practices of the heathen show a person to be without excuse?—Because he shows that he knows better than to do such things, and yet he himself does those very things. Let us see if this last charge can be sustained.

That all people in the world stand in the same condemnation before God is difficult for many to believe, because they see such a great difference in men. But it must be remembered that it is not charged that all are equally guilty, but that all are in the same condemnation. It must be remembered, also, that men can look only upon the outward appearance, while God looks upon the heart. Now the inspired word says:—

"The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works." Ps. 33:13-15.

This does not mean that God is responsible for all the wickedness that is in the earth, nor that he has made the hearts of men all alike evil; but it does mean that human nature is the same everywhere. The natural impulses of the heart are just the same in America that they are in darkest Africa. It is a truth of Scripture that "all men are created equal." The differences in men are due solely to surroundings and education.

Moreover, we have the testimony of Scripture that the same evils are common to all. Christ said: "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." Mark 7:21, 22. Compare this list with that enumerated by the apostle in Rom. 1:29-31, and it will be seen that the vices of the heathen are simply those which spring from unregenerate human nature. Compare, also, "the works of the flesh," mentioned in Gal. 5:19-21.

Let no one charge the existence of these evils upon God, because it is stated that he fashioneth all hearts alike. "God made man upright;" it is man that is responsible for the evil. God made all men with capabilities for the highest good or the greatest evil, and man has corrupted his own way. It is man that treasures up to himself wrath; and in the day of wrath the sinner will receive only the wages that he has earned. The fact that the evil comes from the man, and that goodness comes from God, will appear more fully in the next article. Notwithstanding the evil that is in the world, God's goodness and justice are unimpeachable.

The law of God is spiritual; it deals with finer things than gross acts. "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,

piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12. Therefore, as our Lord showed in the sermon on the mount, the law may be transgressed by a thought. "The thought of foolishness

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is sin. So the man who meditates murder, or who cherishes hateful, revengeful thoughts, is guilty of murder just as surely as the man who strikes down his fellow with the assassin's knife. The comparative degree of guilt can be determined by God alone.

From this standpoint there is not much chance for anybody to boast. Every man is guilty, and every time a man condemns any wrong in another, he shows the inexcusability of his own guilt. Infidels, and non-professors generally, often take delight in pointing out the follies and short-comings of professed Christians, forgetting that they are thereby passing severe condemnation on themselves; for they show that they well know what a person ought to do, and yet they do not do it.

But there is another practical thought to be considered in this connection. It is contained in the words of Christ: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Matt. 7:1, 2. That the word "judge" is here used in the sense of "condemn" is evident from the parallel record in Luke 6:37. This shows not only that those who judge others condemn themselves, as stated by Paul, but also that those who do not condemn others will not be condemned. Harsh judgment always comes from an evil heart. From the scriptures before us we are warranted in saying that when a man sits in judgment upon another, it is evidence that he himself is to some degree guilty of the same sin. The guilty soul loves to proclaim the guilt of another, that he may divert attention from his own. Let gossips and scandal-mongers make a note of this. Let not those who are ever ready to pronounce indignant sentence against evil think that they can thereby escape the righteous judgment of God.

In this connection we should also read James 4:11, 12: "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; who art thou that judgest another?" This puts in a most forcible light the evil of judging and condemning. To do this is to put one's self in the place of God. God is the only lawgiver, therefore he alone has a right to judge.

Not only do we assume the authority of God, when we pass condemnation upon others, but we judge the law, and thereby put ourselves above God. How do we condemn the law?-In this way: The law is the standard of right and wrong; it alone, or its Maker, has the right to condemn. But when we condemn, we declare ourselves the standard, thereby judging the law to be wrong; for when we do not leave condemnation to the law, we virtually proclaim that it is not to be trusted. And since we are evil, and our judgment faulty, our condemnation is according to a faulty standard. Thus we in reality speak gross evil of the law by implying that it is inferior to our poor judgment.

It should be a caution to us, also, against judging our brethren, to know that in so doing we are working in the same line with Satan. He was cast out of heaven as the accuser of the brethren, "which accused them before our God day and night." Rev. 12:10. Really, it is no small thing to pass condemnation upon others; it is nothing less than partaking of the spirit of antichrist.

This does not mean that we are not to exercise our judgment as to what is right and what is wrong. The law of God is given to us for the purpose of enlightening our minds on this very point. But we are to decide for ourselves and not for others. A lesson should be learned from the Master, who, while he hated sin as man never hated it, could say to the sinful one whom guilty man would condemn. "Neither do I condemn thee." They who do not condemn will not be condemned, because it is only the souls that are filled with the Spirit of the Master, who will not be condemned, and such ones have first been filled with so great a sense of their own unworthiness that they thought themselves the chief of sinners; and the constant sense of God's mercy-unmerited favor-to them depends on the acknowledgment of their own fallibility. E. J. W.

"The Sabbath-School. Trust in Our Heavenly Father. Luke 12:22-34"
The Signs of the Times 16, 23.

E. J. Waggoner

Notes on the International Lesson.
(June 22; Luke 12:22-34.)

"And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for your body, what ye shall put on." Verse 22. The "therefore" implies a reason based on what has gone before. Why take no thought for these things?-Because "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." It is evident that the most anxious thought should be bestowed on that which constitutes the chief part of life, and that excludes the things that are merely physical. When Jesus said, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life" (John 3:36), he showed that he who lives only in this short life does not live at all. He knows nothing of life. Only the immortal life is worthy of being called life. It alone is life indeed. When one looks at the matter in this light, it is easy to see that food and raiment are very small items in life.

"Take no *thought*." This gives no encouragement to improvidence and laziness. One part of the Bible does not cross another part, and the apostle Paul says that "if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." 1 Tim. 5:8. See also 2 Thess. 3:10. Dr. Marvin R. Vincent, in "Word Studies in the New Testament," says of the word rendered "thought," that, being derived from a word meaning *part*, it "was explained accordingly as a *dividing* care, distracting the heart from the true object of life. This has been abandoned, however, and the word is placed in a group which carries the common notion of *carnal thoughtfulness*. It may include the idea of *worry* and *anxiety*, and may emphasize these, but not necessarily." He cites as instances of the use of the word in the

sense of the laudable care, 1 Cor. 7:32; 12:25; Phil. 2:20, where the sense of worry would evidently be out of place. He then adds:-

"In other cases that idea is prominent, as, 'the *care* of this world,' which chokes the good seed. Matt. 13:22; compare Luke 8:14. Of Martha: 'Thou art *careful*.' Luke 10:41. *Take thought*, in this passage [Luke 12:22; Matt. 6:25], was a truthful rendering when the A.V. was made, since *thought* was then used as equivalent to *anxiety* or solicitude. So Shakespeare ('Hamlet'):

'The native hue of revolution

Is sickled o'er with the pale cast of *thought*.'

And Bacon (Henry VII.): 'Hawis, an old man of London, was put in trouble, and died with *thought* and anguish.' Somer's 'tracts' (in Queen Elizabeth's reign): 'Queen Catherine Parr died rather of *thought*.' The word has entirely lost this meaning. . . . It is uneasiness and worry about the future which our Lord condemns here, and therefore the Revision rightly translates, *be not anxious*."

"Consider the ravens; for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them; how much more are ye better than the fowls?" Here, again, the Lord, while chiding worry and useless anxiety, and teaching implicit trust in God, uses an illustration which precludes the idea of idly waiting for something to turn up. The birds do not sow nor reap nor gather into barns, as did the rich man who trusted in his possessions and forgot God, yet God feedeth them, while his anxiety profited him nothing. But God does not feed the birds while they sit on a limb of a tree with open mouths waiting for him to bring the food along. The psalmist, in praising God for his wonderful care for the dumb creatures, says of them: "These all wait upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them *they gather*." Ps. 104:27, 28. They gather what God provides for them, and are content with that which suffices for the present. Since men are of far greater value than the birds, there is every reason to think that God will take far greater care of them than of the birds. Therefore men have far less cause for anxious care and worry than the birds have. If God does not forget the birds, how much more will he not remember man, whom he has made in his own image? The fact that Christ commended us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," is proof that God designs for to give us each day the food that is necessary for that day.

In the same line, but stronger, is the reference to the flowers. Jesus said: "Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?" The clause, "Which is to-day in the field," is better as in the Revised Version: "The grass in the field which to-day *is*." That is, the grass in the field which to-day lives, and to-morrow is destroyed.

There is nothing more frail than the flowers of the field; and upon nothing else has God lavished a greater wealth of beauty. In the early spring the California plains are fairly dazzling with the brightness of myriads of flowers of different variety; yet in one day I have seen a plot of flowers so trodden down by men and cattle that no one would imagine that a flower had ever bloomed on the spot.

What should we learn from this?-The infinite wealth of the resources of God. He can afford to clothe nature lavishly. And since it is in creation that the power and divinity of God are made known to us (Rom. 1:20), he designs that from this we should learn to trust him. We may thank God for the birds and the flowers; not simply because they please our senses, but because they are object lessons of God's tenderness. He who does not look at them in this light, does not derive from them half the comfort that he ought.

"Beneath His watchful eye,
His saints securely dwell;
That hand which bears all nature up
Shall guard his children well."

From all this, the practical, common-sense question is asked, "And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?" This is in effect, "Do not worry about that which you cannot affect." All the worrying in the world never accomplished a single thing; how foolish, then, to indulge in it, especially since it is an implied denial of God's care for us.

"But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good-pleasure to give you the kingdom." That is the one thing of worth. "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." How foolish, then, for men to waste valuable time worrying about that which is but for a moment, and neglect that which is for eternity. Yet the worldling is far wiser than the professed Christian who plans chiefly for this world. The former has not had his eyes opened to see the world to come, and he plans as far ahead as he sees; but the latter has had opened before him an eternal inheritance, yet he plans only for the present. Truly, the children of this world are wiser in their generations than the children of light.

But although the kingdom of God is the one thing of worth, we are not to have anxious care and worry even for that. We are to seek it, yet with loving trust in the heavenly Father, who provides everything. We are commanded to "fear not," because it is his good-pleasure to give the kingdom. And right here, to strengthen this assurance, comes in God's care for us in this present life. Surely he who cares so kindly for our temporal wants, will not neglect the greatest of all. Thus even the lilies become to us a pledge of God's love, and of his faithfulness to give us eternal riches; for the lilies are a pledge that God will care for our temporal wants far more than for theirs; and if he will do that which is least, he surely will do that which is greatest. And so we can say, with the psalmist, "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands." E. J. W.

June 23, 1890

"Goodness Leading to Repentance. Romans 2:4" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

(ROMANS 2:4.)

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Rom. 2:4.

It is very common for men to lay the blame of their sinful condition upon God; to say that they are just as God made them. This kind of talk is increasing, and the logical result is the denial of any future punishment for sin. But that such a position is directly contrary to Bible teaching, it needs only this verse to disprove. God cannot deny himself, and therefore he cannot work at cross-purposes. He cannot at one time deliberately set about to undo that which he has once done. That he has deliberately set about the salvation of men, the entire Bible attests. He manifested his hatred for sin, and his desire to rescue men from it, by giving his Son to die. This was the supreme manifestation of his goodness to lead men to repentance. All this effort to save men from sin is utterly inconsistent with the theory that God is in any way responsible for sin.

The apostle tells us plainly that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Rom. 5:12. The terrible depth of sin into which man fell, and the first act of God's goodness to lead him from it, are brought to view in Gen. 3:15, where these words of the Lord to the serpent-Satan-are recorded: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." The fact that God had to put enmity between man and Satan, shows that in the fall all of man's natural enmity to Satan had been obliterated.

God made man in his own image, both physically and spiritually; but when man yielded to the tempter, he deliberately rejected God, and became, body and soul, the servant of Satan. In that condition all his desires would have been for evil, and, like Satan and his angels, he would have had not the shadow of a desire to do right. Of course a simple offer of salvation from sin could not have been any benefit to a man in such a condition. "Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?" Of what use to offer freedom from sin to a man incapable of appreciating goodness? Therefore as the first act in the great plan of salvation, God put into the heart of man an enmity against Satan. It was purely an act of divine love. And since this enmity has been a part of the inheritance of every one of Adam's race, it follows that not a man has lived in earth, no matter how wicked, who was not just to the extent that he ever had a thought of goodness, a subject of the grace of God.

It is this enmity implanted in the heart of men by God, upon which the Spirit works when it strives with men. It is this seed which the Spirit waters into fruitfulness, in those who will yield to its influence. Thus the Spirit of God, through his goodness, is leading all men toward repentance. God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2:4. But all men will not be saved. Thousands say to the Spirit: "Go thy way for this time; when I have

a convenient season, I will call for thee;" and still other thousands refuse to give it any recognition.

It is in this sense that God "is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe." 1 Tim. 4:10. His love is bestowed alike upon all; to all he comes as a Saviour; but only those will be saved who will accept salvation. It is thus, also, that Christ is "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. Every man that has come into the world has had some rays of divine light shining into his heart,-enough to have led him into the glorious liberty of the children of God, if he had followed it; and for that light he was indebted to the grace of God in Christ.

The goodness of God is thus set forth by the apostle Paul: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus." Eph. 2:1-7.

And that this goodness is manifested to men in sin, in order to deliver them from it, is shown also by these words to Titus: "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:3-7.

But where shall we stop, if we attempt to recount the goodness of God, which is manifested to lead men to repentance, since the whole Bible, like the whole earth, "is full of his goodness." Let us sum the whole matter up in one or two passages of Scripture. The first shall be Heb. 12:1-3:-

"Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

What was the joy that was set before Christ? It seems as though the question is fully answered in Phil. 2:6, 7, which says that although Christ was in the form of God, he "thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no

reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant." The idea is, as expressed in the Revised Version,

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that he counted it not a prize, or a thing to be grasped or held to, to be equal with God; but he emptied himself. The thought, then, in brief, is this:-

Christ was equal with God, the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person. He was God. Before him all the hosts of angels, whom he had created (Col. 1:16) bowed in adoration. His glory was the glory of the Father. John 17:5. Not a thing was there to mar the perfect peace of heaven, and nothing more could have been conceived to add to the perfect enjoyment of all its inhabitants. But when Christ looked upon the world of men "dead in trespasses and sins," treasuring up for themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, all this glory seemed to fade away. He did not count it as a thing at all to be desired, so long as men were perishing before his eyes without help. And so he divested himself of all his glory, and submitted to degradation and death, in glory, and submitted to degradation and death, in order that he might win a still greater joy.

Yes, even the joy of heaven could be increased, and that by removing the Joy of Heaven to earth, that earth's misery might be turned to joy. Who can estimate the depth of love that could count the immeasurable bliss of heaven as nothing compared with the joy of bringing, through reproach, ignominy and death, fallen men to share it with him? And this is the goodness of God toward men. Ought it not to lead them to repentance? Yea, verily; and such will be its effect upon everyone who will but steadfastly look at it. Oh that men would indeed look to Jesus, not once nor twice, but continually! Of such a look could it with truth be said, "There's life in a look."

And there is life. What power there is in the thought of God's love in Christ, to lift up the soul of the dependent, and to strengthen the weak. Human words cannot give any just conception of this great love, which has healing in it, for the mind cannot grasp it.

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind;
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

What, then, "shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." E. J. W.

"The Baptism of Fire" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

From Texas comes the following request: "If you can possibly do so at once, please give me an exposition of the baptism of fire spoken of in Matthew and Luke."

The words of John the Baptist to the Pharisees and Sadducees among the crowds of Jews assembled on the bank of Jordan were these: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I,

whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matt. 3:11, 12. The record in the third of Luke is the same.

We have here two classes of people brought to view,-the wheat and the chaff; and likewise we have two treatments mentioned,-the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and the baptism of fire. The two baptisms are as distinct as are the two classes of people. As the question concerns only the baptism of fire, we shall consider that alone.

It would seem as though the text itself should be sufficient to give a good idea, if not to settle the question, as to what is meant by the baptism of fire. Having stated of Christ that he will baptize with fire, it says that he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. This sets us on the right track; let us see how perfectly the figure fits the final destruction of the wicked.

In the first place, it must be borne in mind that "baptism" always and everywhere means immersion, and that only. "Baptism" of a whole congregation with a quart of water was a thing unheard of for the first two or three centuries after Christ. John baptized in Δ non near to Salim, "because there was *much water* there." John 3:23. It would not require as much water to "baptize" a thousand people according to the papal perversion of the ordinance, as would suffice to quench the thirst of half a dozen men. Without going further into detailed proof, let it be remembered that whenever a person or thing is said to be baptized in any fluid substance, the person or thing baptized is wholly enveloped in the substance.

Let the well-known fact also be borne in mind that it is the nature of fire to consume and destroy that which is cast into it. This is its nature, and it will also do so unless the thing is immediately removed after being cast in, or else the fire is quenched before it can begin its devouring work. But if the fire is so great and so fierce as to be unquenchable, then there is no hope of saving anything that it has enveloped. Especially is this so when the substance cast into it is as combustible and as light as chaff, to which the wicked are compared.

Now read Rev. 21:8: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." Rev. 20:14, 15 also speaks of the "*lake of fire*."

This lake of fire will be at the time when "the elements shall melt with fervent heat" (2 Peter 3:10), and the earth shall be "clean dissolved" by the fire of destruction. See Isa. 24:19. When the earth is melted with the intensity of the heat, there will be indeed a "lake of fire," into this the wicked, as chaff, thorns, and worthless branches, will be cast, and burned up. They will literally be immersed in a lake of liquid fire. And this is the "baptism of fire," for which some earnest but misinformed souls sing and pray.

Baptism in water is for the remission of sins, and so it is sometimes referred to as washing away sin. See Acts 22:16. Consistently with this idea, the baptisms of fire for the purpose of washing away sin; but there is this difference; the baptism by water is for the remission of sin and the salvation of the individual; but

the baptism by fire is for the destruction of the sin and of the individual upon whom it is found. It is this that is brought to view in Isa. 4:3, 4:-

"And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning."

This is the time when "whomsoever was not found written in the book of life ["written among the living in Jerusalem"] was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15); the time of the melting of the elements with fervent heat, in the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (2 Peter 3:7, 10), when "the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." Isa. 24:6.

At that time the filth of the daughters of Zion shall be washed away, and the blood of Jerusalem purged with fire. The earth will be cleansed from the curse of sin. Before that time all will be given a chance to wash themselves from sin in the blood of the Lamb; on such the second death-the lake of fire-will have no power. But those who refuse the gracious offer will have to be baptized when the time comes for this to be done, those who have fully identified themselves with sin, and who are permeated with it, will necessarily be destroyed by the same fire which removes it from the earth. E. J. W.

"The Sabbath-School. Notes on the International Lesson. Height of Mercy" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

Notes on the International Lesson. (June 29.)

This being the close of the quarter, the choice is given of reviewing or of substituting a lesson on temperance or on missions. The scripture suggested for one of the substituted lessons is Isa. 55:8-13, and on this a few comments will be made. The text reads thus:-

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

The text quoted begins with "for," indicating that it is a conclusion from something preceeding. The sixth and seventh verses contain an exhortation:

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Then naturally follows the statement, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts," etc. The unrighteous man is to forsake his thoughts, because they are not the thoughts of God. From this we learn the wonderful fact that men must think the thoughts of God, in order to please him.

What are the thoughts of God? It is evident that we must be able to determine this, to some extent, at least, or else we should not know whether or not to forsake the thoughts that we have, as not being his thoughts. Since the Bible is the word of God, it is plain that it must express his thought. In it we find what he thinks of different actions of men. But that which is most specifically the thought of God is his law, the ten commandments. This is his revealed will, comprehending in itself all that is drawn out in detail in the various books of the Bible.

The law of God is a law of love. It was given as love. Deut. 33:2, 3. The object of it is love. 1 Tim. 1:5. Love is the fulfilling of it. Rom. 13:10. The keeping of the commandments is the only complete manifestation of the love of God. 1 John 5:3. And it is in vain that anybody makes a profession of love to God, while he does not keep his commandments. See John 14:15; Luke 6:46. From these Scripture facts we may know that when the apostle Paul says that love "thinketh no evil" (1 Cor. 13:5), he means that perfect obedience to the law of God consists in being free from evil thoughts. This must necessarily follow, because the law of God is the thoughts of God.

These thoughts are as much higher than the thoughts of the natural man as the heaven is higher than the earth. Therefore when a man fully turns to the Lord, his thoughts must be elevated as much as from earth to heaven. And this one point shows the exceeding greatness of God's law, and how far short of it all men come. Men in their self-righteousness may boast, like the Pharisee, over those whom they regard as great sinners, but their boasting is vain, for, while there are indeed degrees of sin, the difference in the guilt of different men, when compared with that heavenly standard, the law of God, is only as the difference in the height of different trees on earth compared with the distance of earth from the farthest star.

The statement that as the heavens are high above the earth so are God's thoughts higher than our thoughts, may remind us that the heavens themselves may enable us to think God's thoughts after him. As the law of God is an expression of God's thoughts as to morals, so the material universe is an expression of God's thoughts in concrete form. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." In them we see what great thoughts God had to mind when he planned the universe. They show his eternal power and godhead, and thus are an aid in lifting our thoughts to the level of God's, in the realm of morals. Surely it is impossible for a person to gaze upon the heavens thoughtfully, and with reverent recognition of their Creator, and at the same time to harbor evil thoughts.

But there is comfort as well as instruction in the fact that God's thoughts are as much higher than ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. It is in connection with the statement that God will "abundantly pardon" those who turn to him. Now of his thoughts toward us we read: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." Jer. 29:11. His thoughts toward us are thoughts of peace, and they are as much higher than ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. This agrees with the statement in Ps. 36:5: "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds." Also Ps. 108:4: "For thy mercy is great above the heavens; and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds." And Ps. 103:11: "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him." It would be well sometimes if doubting souls could think of their own *good* traits in contrast with those of God. I do not mean for them to think how evil they are, but to rate at a fair value any good qualities they may possess, and then, holding to that valuation, think in how infinitely greater degree those same good qualities exist in God. For instance, take the quality of mercy; let a man think how he would receive one who, having injured him, comes to him with tears in his eyes, making an humble confession, and asking pardon. There are few who would even wait for the penitent one to finish his confession before assuring him of full pardon. His thoughts toward him would be all kindness; but God's thoughts are as much higher than ours as heaven is higher than earth. God is as much more merciful than man as he is greater. Whoever will institute such a comparison as this, will become ashamed of his own doubts.

That which should be of special encouragement in the line of missionary effort is the statement that God's word will accomplish that which he pleases, and prosper in the thing whereto he sends it. This does not mean that it will result in the conversion of the whole world. The word of God has been as powerful in every age of the world as it is now, or as it ever will be; yet in no age of the world, not even when the word was incarnate, have even a large minority of people acknowledged God. It is true, however, that even then it accomplished God's purpose. It gathered out of the multitude a people for his name, and left the remainder without excuse. Of one thing we may be sure, that the word will prosper. Therefore consecrated effort to spread abroad a knowledge of the word will not be in vain. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." Eccl. 11:6. It is certain that either this effort or that will prosper, and there is a possibility that both may yield abundant returns. And the few from every age, who have heeded the word of God, will at last form a great multitude whom no man can number, who shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God, when the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and the whole earth shall resound with the praises of God. E. J. W.

June 30, 1890

"According to His Deeds. Romans 1:5, 6" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

"And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds." Rom. 2:3-6.

The last two verses contain that to which we wish to call special attention, the others are quoted in order that the reader may get the connection. The truth that we wish to impress is very clearly expressed, yet it is very generally ignored. It is this, that they who at the last suffer the pains of the second death get no more than they have been working for, and they alone are responsible for it.

God takes no pleasure in the death of any. But sin when it is finished bringeth forth death, because sin cannot exist in the presence of the glory of God, and the time will surely come when the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waves cover the sea. For a little moment God has allowed sin to flaunt itself and develop its full measure of hideous deformity, but he will soon blot it from existence; and when sin is destroyed, those who have made sin a part of themselves, and are so permeated with it that it cannot be separated from them, must necessarily go with it.

But God calls on all men everywhere to repent. To all men comes the proclamation, "Be ye reconciled to God." To all he says, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." No man can serve God and mammon at the same time. He must choose one or the other. But the freedom and power of choice are given to man, so that he need not serve Satan unless he wishes to. The service of God leads to life; but "the wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23.

Now when a man has the choice set before him, and he despises the riches of the goodness and forbearance and long-suffering of God, and deliberately chooses the service of Satan, who can say that when that man dies for his sin he does not get just what he bargained for? He gets simply his wages. Then who can charge God with injustice in punishing the ungodly with everlasting destruction? Whom do we call the unjust man-the one who pays the wages promised? Or the one who withholds them?-The latter of course. Now from the beginning it has been plainly set forth that the wages of sin is death. Paul says that the benighted heathen know that they who commit the crimes of which they are guilty, are worthy of death. Then when a man deliberately chooses that work, the wages of which has been so plainly declared to be death, all must see that to pay the wages promised is the only thing that is consistent with justice. God could not be just and at the same time withhold the wages promised to the worker of iniquity. Many will not admit this now; but at the last day every soul that perishes will acknowledge that it receives but its just due.

This is perhaps sufficient for this; but how is it with the righteous? Do they likewise get what they earn? The apostle declares that God will render to every man according to his deeds; and Christ himself declares, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. But while this is so, it must not be forgotten that eternal life is a gift. The reward of the righteous is put in direct contrast with that of the wicked. While the wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It follows, therefore, that no man earns eternal life by his good deeds.

And yet eternal life is the reward of righteousness. Not of a certain number of righteous deeds, but of righteousness. And how does righteousness come?—Why, it is a gift, for Paul says: "For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:17. Now since righteousness itself is a gift, eternal life may be the reward of righteousness, and at the same time be a gift. And thus it is.

But how about being rewarded "according as his works shall be"? Does not that seem to indicate that individual works come into the account in rendering the reward?—No; not so that the individual works determine the person's desert. From what do good works come?—From a good heart. Christ says, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil." Luke 6:45. Good works are simply the fruit of the Spirit of God, by which righteousness is created in the man. This simply shows that righteousness dwells within.

One thought more. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not." Lam. 3:22. John the Baptist was called the prophet of the Highest, because he went before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways, "to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God." Luke 1:77, 78. Thus we learn that it is through the mercy of God that any are saved. But mercy is that quality which treats an offender better than he deserves. No one deserves eternal life; no one can deserve it. After we have done all, we are still unprofitable servants; we have not by our righteousness added anything to the sum of righteousness, so that God should reward us for it. We have only let shine out the righteousness of God which has been given us through the grace of Christ. And so while God gives the sinners the wages which they have earned, and thus displays his strict regard for justice, he gives to the righteous eternal life, according to the righteousness which his mercy has bestowed on them. E. J. W.

"Now" The Signs of the Times 16, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

A correspondent writes concerning the note on Heb. 10:38, "Now the just shall live by faith," in the Sabbath-school lesson for April 26, where it is stated that the word "now" is not an adverb, and has no reference to time. He says: "It seems to me that to take that view of it destroys the connection in which it

stands, for the context certainly refers to a time in close connection with the second coming of Christ. While it is impossible for the just to live in any other way, only by faith, it seems to me there is a special sense in which the word 'now' may be rightly used in reference to time."

There is no question but that the word "now" may rightly be used with reference to time, for that is a very frequent use of it. But it is also frequently a conjunction. In the case under consideration it is not an adverb, but only a connective particle. Our correspondent says that "to take this view of it," seems to destroy the connection. He does not seem to distinguish between a matter of interpretation and a matter of fact. To say that "now" in Heb. 10:38 is not an adverb, is not to take a certain view of the text, but simply to state a fact. We could no more take another view of it than we could take another view of the sun than to say that it shines. To say that the word "live" in the same text is a verb and not an adjective, is not a matter of interpretation, but a fact.

It must be remembered that the word "now" is not a Greek word. The word which is rendered "now" in this instance is *de*, a conjunctive particle (not participle) which has no reference whatever to time, but is used to introduce an additional thought. The use of the word "now" to introduce a sentence is very common. "Now of the things which we have spoken" (Heb. 8:1); "Now Barabbas was a robber" (John 18:40); "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly" (1 Tim. 4:1); "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for" (Heb. 11:1); "Now I say" (Gal. 4:1); "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples" (1 Cor. 10:11); "Now it was not written for his sake alone" (Rom. 4:23); "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made" (Gal. 3:16). Scores of similar instances might be given. The word is rendered "for" in Luke 23:17, and "but" in 1 Cor. 7:29, where, as in Heb. 10:38, the coming of Christ is mentioned in close connection. In this latter place it might as well be rendered "but" or "for" or "nevertheless."

It is impossible to regard "now" in this instance as an adverb of time, without concluding that there is a certain especial time when the just shall live by faith. To say, "Now [at this time] the just shall live by faith," is to imply that at some previous time they did not live by faith; but that would not be true. It requires no more faith to live a just life at the present time than it did in the days of Moses or Enoch. Abraham had the righteousness of faith; and the highest position to which any Christian can attain, is to "walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham." This of itself is sufficient to settle the question concerning the force of the word "now," even though a man knew nothing of grammar. Let us guard against the idea that we are so much better than the ancient worthies; that we have faith and works to a far greater degree than they; for in so doing we charge God with partiality, and run the risk of losing that which we have.

"The Righteousness which Is in the Law" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

A friend sends us the following question, which we are glad to have the privilege of answering:-

"What does the apostle mean by being blameless concerning the righteousness of the law, as we read in Phil. 3:6? Is not the righteousness which is in the law the righteousness of God?"

The further question implied is, "Was not Paul therefore perfect before he came to Christ?" Let us see if this is what he meant to convey. To do this we will first recall to our minds a few principles concerning the law.

1. The law of God is righteousness. Ps. 119:172. It is the expression of God's righteousness. Isa. 51:6, 7. It is the expression of his will. Rom. 2:17, 18. Being the standard of righteousness, anything that is unlike it is sin. 1 John 5:17. And since it is a transcript of God's character, the perfect expression of his most perfect righteousness, it follows that nothing more can be required of a man than perfect obedience to it. Eccl. 12:13, 14. "It shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us," said Moses. Deut. 6:25. This is self-evident. If we should do the righteousness of God, we should make that righteousness our own. And since nothing more than obedience to the law, or conformity to God's righteousness, can be required of any man, we can readily see that "the doers of the law shall be justified." Rom. 2:13.

2. But "there is none righteous, no, not one." Rom. 3:10. "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Verse 12. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Verse 23. Consequently, all are guilty before God. Verse 19. Now a good law cannot justify a wicked man. To justify means to make righteous, or to show that one is already righteous. But a righteous law cannot do this for a wicked man; for if it should say that he had done no wickedness, it would bear false witness, and thus show that it was not good itself; and it cannot take away his sin, so as to make him righteous. Therefore since "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Rom. 7:1;2), and since all men have broken the law, it is very evident, as Paul says, that "no man is justified by the law in the sight of God." Gal. 3:11; Rom. 3:20.

3. Further; not only has there been no man since the fall who has not broken the law, but there has not been a fallen being who in his natural condition, out of Christ, could by any possibility keep the law. Whoever reflects that the law is the complete expression of God's perfect righteousness,-that it is a statement of his way-, will readily admit this statement; for what fallen man is so presumptuous as to claim that he can of himself do any act that is as good as though God himself had done it? But not to multiply words, we need only quote the positive declaration of Inspiration: "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Rom. 8:7, 8.

4. Yet there will be some who will be saved, because, like Enoch, they will have the testimony that they please God. Now how will they do this? How can they stand justified before God? Here is the problem to be solved: The law of God is the standard of righteousness; it is God's righteousness. Whatever does not conform to that standard is sin, and is displeasing to God. None can be counted just except those whose lives conform to it. But there is no one whose

life has perfectly conformed to it, and there is no man who can perfectly keep it. And yet there will be some righteous, even as thousands have been. How?

5. The answer comes in the words of Paul. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." Rom. 3:21, 22. A seeming paradox, yet exceedingly simple when we consider that in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and that therefore the law, which is the righteousness of God, is the righteousness of Christ. The law came from the Son as well as from the Father, for they are one. But *grace*, as well as truth, came by Jesus Christ. John 1:17. By his divine, creative power all things are given to us that pertain to life and godliness. He can and will, in response to our faith in his sacrifice, impart his own righteousness to us. For Paul continues: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Rom. 3:24, 25.

Let us talk familiarly about this for a moment. The law came from Christ as well as from the Father. It is his righteousness. Now the law has only condemnation for us, because we have broken it; but Christ is full of grace, and came into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. Herein is the wonderful, inexplainable love of Christ, that while the righteousness that is in the law is in him, yet while the law condemns sin, he, the originator of righteousness, will justify. So when the law cannot give us righteousness, we turn to Christ and get it; and this righteousness is such that the law will witness to its genuineness. It cannot be other than the genuine article, for we get it at the same place that the law gets its righteousness. This is righteousness put upon us and created in us.

6. This is the righteousness which Paul said that he wanted to have when Christ should appear. His anxiety and labor was, "That I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. 3:8, 9. Now we have all the points necessary to an understanding of the sixth verse. Note particularly.

7. That the apostle says that the righteousness which is of the law, is his own righteousness. But Isaiah declares that "all our righteousnesses are filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6); and that which Paul calls "mine own righteousness" must be the same, for it is that which he did not dare be found having when Christ comes.

8. Now it was "touching the righteousness which is in the law," or Paul's "own righteousness," that he was blameless. In other words, Paul was blameless from a human standpoint. So far as the natural man could discern, Paul was perfect. With this agree his statements elsewhere concerning himself. He said before Agrippa: "My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee." Acts 26:4, 5. And again: "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Acts 23:1. When he, a Pharisee, though, like his brethren,

that he could establish his own righteousness by the deeds of the law, he was scrupulous in the performance of duty as far as he understood it. He did no violence to his conscience. So far as any man could see, he kept the law perfectly. As Calvin says: "He was therefore in men's judgment holy, and spotless from all legal blame. A rare praise, and almost singular; yet let us see how much he esteemed it." He counted it loss. Why?-Because God sees not as man sees; man looks upon the outward appearance, but God looks upon the heart.

9. Note further that this righteousness which is in the law, touching which Paul said that he was blameless, is one of the things concerning which he says, "Though I might also have confidence in the flesh." Phil. 3:4. Ah! The righteousness which is in the law, touching which he was blameless, was simply that righteousness to which the flesh may attain. But by Paul himself it is said that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God;" "because the carnal (fleshly) mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." So then, actually, in its spiritual depth, Paul did not, before he knew Christ, keep the law at all. He was blameless in the eyes of the natural men, by whom spiritual things are not discerned; but compared with the true righteousness of Christ, his righteousness was a dead loss-a minus quantity.

So we find that while the law is the exponent of perfect righteousness, it has none at all to impart to sinners. The only righteousness that there is in it for an unrenewed man is an empty shell of dead works. Yet when the individual loses confidence in the flesh and its feeble attempts at righteousness, and comes to Christ, who is the source of righteousness, as he is the source of the law, that law will bear witness that the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ, is the genuine righteousness of God. E. J. W.

**"Notes on the International Lesson. Lawful Work on the Sabbath.
Luke 13:10-17" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 25.**

E. J. Waggoner

(July 6; Luke 13:10-17.)

The story of the lesson may be told in few words. Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath, and saw a woman in the congregation, who through infirmity was bent so that she was forced to go in a stooping position. For eighteen years she had been thus afflicted. Jesus called her to him, and saying, "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity," he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. This miracle, instead of calling forth praise, only aroused anger in the heart of the ruler, who harshly told the people that if they wanted to be healed, to come on one of the six working-days, and no on the Sabbath. Jesus put his adversaries to shame by pointing out that this was an act of mercy, of far greater importance than the watering of stock, which they themselves would attend to on the Sabbath-day.

The title of the lesson suggests the statement that Jesus made on another occasion when he had performed a miracle of healing on the Sabbath. Said he, "It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-days." Matt. 12:12. This recognizes a law

for the Sabbath, and that law is the fourth commandment. All that Jesus had done was in the direct line of his mission. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3:8. The binding of the poor woman was one of the works of Satan, and in loosing her, Jesus was destroying Satan's work. It is lawful to undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free on the Sabbath-day.

Inasmuch as the official lesson notes "the Sunday-sabbath" is made the subject of comment. It must receive attention here, although the lesson does not hint at any question as to which day is the Sabbath. We quote the following from "Peloubet's Select Notes on the International Lessons":-

"Sunday is just as really the seventh day and the *Sabbath*-day as is the Saturday-Sabbath of the Jews. All the difference lies in beginning the count from a different point. Bush well says: 'All that the commandment expressly requires is to observe a day of sacred rest after every six days of labor. The seventh day, indeed, is to be kept holy, but not a word is here said as to the point from which the reckoning is to begin. The seventh day is not so much the seventh according to any particular method of computing the septenary cycle, as in reference to the six working-days before mentioned; every seventh day in rotation after six days of labor.'

That those who offer this excuse for not keeping the seventh day of the week do not regard it as valid is shown by the fact that they reject the Saturday-Sabbath. If their theory be true, then they must admit that Saturday is just as much the Sabbath as Sunday. This they will not do. Further, they would accuse a man of being a Sabbath-breaker if he paid no attention to either Sunday or Saturday, even though he rested regularly every Tuesday. This shows that they do not at all believe that the commandment requires simply one day in seven, and that it makes no difference where we begin to count.

If this theory were true, then it would follow that there is in reality no Sabbath-day; one day of the week would be the Sabbath just as much as any other day. But the commandment is not indefinite. It speaks of "the Sabbath-day," literally, "the day of the Sabbath," and says that "in *it* thou shalt not do any work." Now what day is it in which no secular work is to be done? It is the seventh day that God blessed and sanctified after he had rested upon it. See Gen. 2:1-3.

Did the Lord rest on one particular day, or not? Of course he did. He could not rest on no day in particular. So there must have been a definite place from which to count. And that all men have always believed that there is a definite place from which to count, is shown by the fact that everywhere, in all countries, and in all ages, they have counted from the same place. Even those who argue that the Sabbath is any seventh day after six days of labor, agree with the rest of mankind in calling the day on which they rest, the first day of the week. How can a day be both the first and the seventh?

But the folly of the idea that we can begin to count where we please, and so make the seventh day come just where we want it, and that the commandment warrants this course, may be shown by trying it on something else. Who would claim that if a man has seven sons you could make the first-born the seventh, simply by beginning with the last one and counting backwards? If a question of

property were involved, would any court listen for a moment to such nonsense?—No; for no pettifogger would have the audacity to insult the court with so puerile a plea. But men will juggle with divine precepts in a way that would do discredit to the intelligence of a child.

The indignation of the ruler is an example of hypocrisy that is very common. It was not because he was so zealous for the Sabbath, for if he had been he would have known that in healing the woman, Jesus was fulfilling the highest design of the Sabbath; but he hated Jesus, and took this means to arouse the prejudices of the people against him. Religious prejudice is easily aroused, and is a bitter thing to have to meet; but, as in this case, it is almost always aroused where the individual has done no wrong. All the religious persecution that has ever disgraced humanity, whether by pagans or professed Christians, has been directed against those who were doing right, but who did not bow to the false standards set up by the persecutors.

The significance of the miracle of healing the deformed woman should not be overlooked. Jesus was anointed "to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." His miracles were done that men might know that he was the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, they might have life through his name. John 20:30, 31. When the woman whom Satan had bound in body for eighteen years was loosed from her infirmity, it was designed as a striking object-lesson, illustrating his power to release men from the bondage of sin, in which Satan has held them for years. His compassion for the woman in her infirmity should cause us to come to him with boldness, because he is touched with the feeling of our spiritual infirmities. E. J. W.

"A Timely Reminder" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

We have made a little comment in another item, on the word "now" in Heb. 10:38, showing that the text does not mean that the just shall live by faith at one time more than another. But while this is so, we would not be understood as claiming that there is not special significance in the fact that the statement, "The just shall live by faith," occurs in close connection with the announcement of Christ's soon coming. The Scripture has foretold that just before the end the attention of the world would be called in an especial manner to the law of God, and to the necessity for observing it intelligently as a whole; and the warning against rejecting the commandment of God is the burden of the message of warning is now being given. Thousands have heeded it, and have acknowledged their obligation to keep the whole law of God. And now comes the great danger, for wherever there is great light there is also great danger. The danger in this case is that those who have seen their error in neglecting important duties, will, like the Jews of old, make their boast in the law, instead of in Christ. Filled with delight at the wondrous beauty of the law, many are led unconsciously to truth in their own works for salvation. The tendency of the human mind is to go to extremes, and in matters of religion Satan is always ready to help them along.

When there is a revival on one point, the tendency is to lose sight of everything else. So the apostle reminds us in these days that the just shall live by faith, and not by works. He would not have us forget in our zeal for the law, that the only real obedience is "the obedience of faith."

July 7, 1890

"Did Abraham Think that God Would Provide a Lamb?" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

The editor of the *Christian Union*, Dr. Lyman Abbott, is a strong advocate of the opening of museums, libraries, art galleries, etc., on Sundays.

"Did Abraham think that God would provide a lamb instead of Isaac?" is a question that comes to us for answer. We read in Heb. 11:17-19 that Abraham offered Isaac, through faith in God, "accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead." If Abraham had expected that God was going to provide a substitute, there would have been no occasion for faith in the resurrection, and the matter would have been no trial at all.

A clergyman of the Church of England, Joseph Leycester Lyne, popularly known as "Father Ignatius," is now in this country lecturing and preaching to raise funds for the Abbey of St. Anthony, in Wales, where he has organized a community of Benedictine monks. The rules of the order are the same as those followed at similar Roman Catholic institutions. Mr. Lyne has gathered a number of clergymen who are infatuated with a monastic life.

Elsewhere in this paper we have written briefly on the subject of eternal life, showing that it can be obtained only in Christ, and that to deny that life comes only through Christ is virtually to deny Christ. Now it is doubtless a fact that the most of the professed Christians who believe that all men, whether good or bad, will exist throughout eternity, imagine that they do believe in life through Christ, because they confound life with happiness. They hold that only believers in Christ will have eternal happiness, and that unbelievers will be doomed to eternal misery, and they call the first state eternal life, and the second state eternal death. But in considering this subject it should not be forgotten that life and death are distinctly opposite conditions. As long as a man has breath he is alive, no matter how miserable he may be. People who are suffering intense agony, sometimes pray for death to relieve them of their sufferings. Nobody considers them dead because they are in misery. So if the wicked were to be drowned to an eternity of conscious suffering, they would have eternal life just as surely as would the righteous in glory. Let the terms "life" and "death" be taken in their simple, obvious meaning, and the doctrine of immortality as revealed in the Bible may very easily be understood.

At the recent Convention of the New York State Sunday-school Association, Dr. John Hall delivered an address on "The Old Testament Enfolded the New," in which he said that it is simply calumny to say that God is represented in any

other light in the Old Testament from what he is described in the New; and he closed with this exhortation:-

"Put before your pupils the union, completeness, and beauty of the Old and the New, and you will be magnifying Christ. That is the only thing you need to do. If you magnify Christ, he will draw all men unto him."

We are glad to see the attention of people directed to the entire Bible instead of to fragments of it. It is all profitable.

"Seek for Immortality" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

"To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, [God will render] eternal life." Rom. 2:7.

From this verse we conclude that the sum of glory and honor and immortality is contained in eternal life, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Rom. 6:23. It also furnishes the most complete refutation of the idea made so popular by Plato and Addison, that men are by nature endowed with immortality, because there is so universal a longing for it. The apostle asks in one place, "What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" and with far greater force might it be asked, What a man hath, why doth he yet long for? and with still greater force, What a man hath, why is he exhorted to seek for?

Let us note the occurrence of the word "immortality" in the Bible. It will not take long, for it occurs only five times, yet they take us by regular steps through the whole subject. First, we read in 1 Tim. 6:15, 16 that the "blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords," is the one "who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see." He has "life in himself," and can bestow it on whomsoever he will.

The contrast between God and man is clearly brought out in Rom. 1:23, where we are told that the heathen "changed the glory of the uncorruptible [or immortal] God into an image made like to corruptible [or mortal] man." God is immortal; man is mortal, and he is therefore exhorted to seek for immortality, that he may dwell with God.

But where shall we seek for immortality? Shall we look to writings of the ancient heathen? Of what use would that be? "The world by wisdom knew not God," and how then could they know anything of immortality, which belongs to God alone? The word of God alone can direct us in our search, and it declares that the purpose and grace of God in Christ "is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1:10. The gospel, then, is the place where we are to seek for immortality. There alone is it revealed; there alone can it be found.

Having found where immortality is revealed, how are we to make it ours? The Scriptures are very definite on this point. Thus we read: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36. The beloved disciple declares of

Christ, that "in him was life." He was "full of grace [favor] and truth;" and the psalmist tells us that in the favor of God there is life (Ps. 30:5); therefore he who has Christ has the favor of God, and life from him.

That life comes from God, and that no man can have it except by the grace of Christ, is shown very clearly. Said Jesus: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10. From this, with the statement in Acts 17:28, "for in him we live, and move, and have our being," we learn that we depend upon Christ, not alone for immortal life, but for this present existence. When Adam fell he brought the race of mankind under the sentence of eternal death, and it was only through the grace of God in Christ that a second probation was granted. So while the saints will throughout eternity offer praises

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to Christ for bestowing immortality upon them, all men owe thanks to him for giving them this little span of life, in which to seek for immortality.

Jesus reproved the Jews for inconsistency, in that, while they searched the Scriptures, because in them eternal life was to be found, and those Scriptures testified of him as the way of life, yet they would not come to him that they might have life. John 5:39, 40. Now if life could have been obtained in any other way than through Christ, the Jews might have retorted, "We don't need to come to you that we may have life, for we have it without you." This is what they, in effect, did; and it is what thousands are actually saying to-day. It is the language of Spiritualism. Believing that men are by nature endowed with immortality, Spiritualists scornfully reject Christ as the way of life. The inevitable tendency of the doctrine of the natural immortality of man, is to lead men to lightly esteem Christ.

Read one more testimony. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5:10-12. It is a terrible thing to deny that life can be obtained only in Christ, for to do so is to charge God with lying, since that is the record that he has given. Let God be true, even though every man be proved a liar.

Note that while eternal life belongs to everyone who has Christ, no one is yet in full possession of it. God has given to us eternal life, but this life is in his Son. Not only is it to be found in him, but for a little space it remains in him, for safe keeping. Paul says to Christians: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3:3, 4. Eternal life is ours now, if we have Christ, just as surely as it ever will be; but Christ keeps it in his own charge. When will it be ours by actual possession? This brings us to the summing up, which we read as follows:-

"Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this

mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Cor. 15:51-54.

Now let us review briefly. All men are by nature mortal, corruptible; God only has immortality. If we would have immortality, we must seek for it. It is to be found only in the gospel of Jesus Christ. He who does not seek Christ, will know nothing of immortality. Outside of Christ there is no life. For a little season we have, by the mercy of God, existence granted to us, that we may seek life. As long as God's mercy is extended to men, good and bad alike may live; but when Christ shall say to those who reject him, "Depart from me," they will be cut off from the Source of life, and will suffer eternal death. But to those who have accepted Christ, the gift of immortality will be bestowed at his appearing.

How is it possible that men who profess to love our Lord Jesus Christ, can dishonor him by ignoring him as the giver of life? E. J. W.

"Is It Civil?" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

The latest utterance of the chief worker in behalf of Sunday legislation is the following:-

"Laws setting apart a weekly 'Independence-day' are no more inconsistent with liberty and much more essential to it than the law of the annual Independence-day."

The man who expects that people are going to accept such a feeble comparison, as that as sound argument for Sunday legislation, pays a poor compliment to their intelligence. There is no more likeness between the Sunday observance that is contemplated by the proposed laws and the observance of the Fourth of July, than there is between a Presbyterian synod and a college baseball nine. When such a plea as that is made for Sunday laws, all you have to do is to ask if under the proposed Sunday laws it is designed to give people the same freedom of action that they have on the Fourth of July. Are we to believe that all the so-called American Sabbath Union is working for is for a law granting the people full liberty to take "a day off" every Sunday, to go on a picnic, let off fire-crackers, lounge around, and do as they please generally? Some less gauzy plea will have to be invented.

"The Only Example" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

The following question and answer we clip from the *Christian Advocate*:-

"*Question*-Is it wrong for a professed Christian to read Shakespeare's plays?

"*Answer*-Wesley read them."

We do not quote this question and answer for the purpose of making any comment upon Shakespeare's plays, or upon the fact that Wesley read them, or to say whether or not any Christian should now read them. What we wish to note is the form of the answer,-"Wesley read them." We honor Wesley as a man of God, but the fact that he did a certain thing is no reason whatever why somebody else should do it. If it is right for Christians to do any given thing, it is not because

some good man has done the same thing. If the thing is right, the Christian of to-day may do it for the same reason that the old-time Christian did it, but not because he did it.

There is not a man that ever lived on this earth, save "the Man Christ Jesus," whose example in any given thing may be taken as a reason why others may do the same thing. No matter how good the man was, he who refers to him as authority for any practice, is in a dangerous condition. Christ suffered for us, "leaving us an example, that ye should follow in his steps;" but he is the only example.

This is the reason why it is so dangerous a thing to take any man, however good, as a model either of faith or practice: There is no man who is infallible; so long as his course is exactly correct, his follower *may not* go astray; but he is liable to err, and then the poor fellower, who has substituted another's judgment for his own, is sure to go wrong. To follow any man in belief or practice is to invest that man with infallibility, and to blindly copy his mistakes as well as his perfect deeds. The result will be a poor imitation of his goodness, and an exaggeration of his frailties.

It is no discredit to anybody to say that he is not authority in matters of doctrine, nor an example in the realm of duty. God's word alone is the standard of truth, for it is the truth, and it unfolds its treasures to the humblest as well as to the great. Whoever has a determination to do God's will shall know the doctrine. And he who follows a good practice *because* some good man has done the deed, really worships the man, instead of God. Even though the man never made a mistake, his imitator would fall far short of attaining to his goodness, because God is the only one whose worship can elevate. Hero-worship is simply attempted imitation; but he who worships God alone, worships one who is not simply an example, but who lifts the worshiper to his own level.

Therefore, "be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven."

"Positive Testimony" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

The *Independent* and the *Congregationalist* have had a little friendly dispute in regard to women taking part in meeting. Both assume that the apostle Paul positively condemned everything of the kind, forgetting that his statement, "Let your women keep silence," etc., is to be read in connection with his directions as to how they shall appear when praying or prophesying in meeting. But assuming that Paul absolutely forbids women to speak in meeting under any circumstances, the *Congregationalist* says that to disregard the injunction is to impair the revelation of which it is a part. But the *Independent* retorts as follows:-

"Hardly so. 'In six days the Lord made heaven and earth;' that is quite as definite as what Paul said. And when it comes to the Sabbath, there is not only the injunction for the seventh day, as definite as words can make it, but reason given also, in the ordination of the week and the Sabbath as a memorial of

creation, as definite as any reason given by Paul for the subjection of women. And yet the whole church has given it up, with no repeal and no history of the change, simply because time and conditions had altered."

But the conditions have not changed. It is still a fact that God created the heavens and the earth in six days, and rested upon and blessed and sanctified the seventh day, and the seventh day is still the only memorial of creation, and it is just as important to remember God's power now as it ever was. The commandment is unrepealed, and is as definite as it ever was. Only the people have changed.

"What Think Ye of Christ?" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 26.

E. J. Waggoner

It is reported that Edwin Arnold, author of "The Light of Asia," is now engaged on a poem to be entitled "The Light of the World," having for its subject the character and history of Christ. It is said that "the view of Christ's person is that he was not God, but a perfect man, a link between God and man." To be sure, Edwin Arnold is not a professed Christian; but his worldly wisdom ought to teach him that nothing can be a link between two objects, unless it actually touches both of those objects. So it is utterly impossible for Christ to be a link between God and man, unless he is both God and man. If he lacked but a hair's breadth of perfect divinity, then he could not have power to make men partakers of the divine nature; and if by the same amount he failed to come down to the level of man, we could not get hold of him. But he does indeed form a perfect link between God and man, because, having by nature the attributes of divinity, he took upon himself the likeness of men. And, by the way, if Christ were not God, then he could not be a perfect man; for he testified of himself that he is God, and perfect men do not bear false witness. And further if Christ were only a perfect man, and not God, how can the fact be accounted for that never before or since his life on earth has there been a perfect man? Why hasn't some other man made his way perfect? People may utter all the sentiment they please about the perfection of Christ's character as a man, but it all amounts to nothing if he is not also acknowledged to be God.

July 14, 1890

"The Indwelling Word" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

In the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of Colossians occurs this exhortation: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." This text, rightly understood, solves the problem of Christian living. Let us, therefore, spend a few moments to see how much is involved in it.

That there is a power in the word of God, far above that of any other book, cannot be doubted. The Lord through the prophet Jeremiah rebukes the false prophets, who speak their own words instead of the words of God, and says: "What is the chaff to the wheat?" "Is not my word like as a fire? Saith the Lord;

and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Jer. 23:28, 29. And the same prophet thus relates his experience when he was reproached because of the word of the Lord: "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." Jer. 20:9.

The word hidden in the heart protects against sin. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Ps. 119:11. And of the righteous we read that the reason why none of his steps slide, is that "the law of his God is in his heart." Ps. 37:31. David also says: "Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." Ps. 17:4. Jesus, also, in his memorable prayer for his disciples, said, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." John 17:17.

The word of the Lord is the seed by which the sinner is born again. We read of the "Father of lights" that "of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." James 1:18. And the Apostle Peter says: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently; being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." 1 Peter 1:22, 23. So we learn that, while those who are Christ's are born of the Spirit, the word of God is the seed from which they are developed into new creatures in Christ. The word, then, has power to give life. It is itself "quick," that is, alive, and powerful; and the psalmist prays to be quickened, made alive, according to the word, and then says: "This is my comfort in my affliction; for thy word hath quickened me." Ps. 119:25, 50.

This is stated very plainly by Jesus himself in John 6:63: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." This shows that the power of the Spirit of God dwells in the word of God.

With the knowledge that the word of God is the seed by which men are begotten unto a new life, and that the hiding of the word in the heart keeps one from sin, we may easily understand 1 John 3:9: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." How simple! There is in the word that divine energy which can transform the mind, and make a new man, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Of course the word can do this only for those who receive it in simple faith. But the word does not lose any of its power. If the soul thus born again retains that sacred, powerful word

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by which he was begotten, it will keep him still a new creature. It is as powerful to preserve as it is to create.

Jesus, our great Example, gave us an illustration of this. When tempted on every point by the devil, his sole reply was, "It is written," followed by a text of Scripture that met the case exactly. The Christian who would stand fast must do the same thing. There is no other way. This is an illustration of David's words, "By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer."

It is this of which we read in Rev. 12:11, where, in speaking of the casting down of the "accuser of our brethren," the heavenly voice says: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." This does not mean, as some have carelessly assumed, the word of their testimony in meeting, but the word of the testimony in which the psalmist found so great delight. They overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of God.

But this cannot be done except by those who have the word of God abiding in them. The Spirit is given to bring truth to remembrance, in time of trial; but that which one has not learned he cannot remember. But if he has hidden the word in his heart, the Spirit will, in the hour of temptation, bring to his remembrance just that portion which will foil the tempter.

Every Christian can testify as to the power of the word at such times. When inclined to congratulate himself on some real or fancied superior attainment, what a powerful check are the words, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" 1 Cor. 4:7. Or when harsh and bitter thoughts are struggling within him for control, what power to quell those turbulent emotions lies in the words, "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." 1 Cor. 13:4, 5. When provoked almost beyond endurance, how the gentle rebuke, "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men," helps one to be calm. Add to this the many "exceeding great and precious promises" which bring victory to every soul that grasps them by faith. Thousands of aged Christians can testify to the miraculous power resting in a few simple words of the Scriptures.

Now whence comes this power? The answer is found in the words of Christ: "The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." What spirit are they? The apostle Peter, speaking of the prophets, says that it was the Spirit of Christ that was in them. So, as we said before, the power of the Spirit dwells in the word. Yea, Christ himself dwells in the word, for he is the Word.

Who can understand the mystery of inspiration?—He who can understand the mystery of the incarnation; for both are the same. "The Word was made flesh." We cannot understand how Christ could be all the fullness of the Godhead, and at the same time be in the form of a servant, subject to all the infirmities of mortal flesh. Neither can we understand how the Bible could be written by fallible mortals, exhibiting the peculiarities of each, and yet be the pure, unadulterated word of God. But it is certainly true that the power that was in the Word that was made flesh, is the power that is in the word that the apostles and prophets have written for us.

Now we can begin to appreciate more the power residing in the word. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." Ps. 33:6. Christ, by whom the worlds were made, upholds them "by the word of his power." Heb. 1:3. The power that resides in the words of revelation, is the power that could speak the worlds into existence, and can keep them in their appointed places. Surely, then, it is worth our while to take time to study and meditate upon the word.

It is by so doing that we bring Christ himself into our hearts. In the fifteenth chapter of John, the Lord exhorts us to abide in him, and to allow him to abide in us; and then a few verses later he speaks of our abiding in him, and his word abiding in us. John 15:4, 7. It is by his word that Christ does abide in the heart; for Paul says that Christ will dwell in the heart by faith (Eph. 3:17); and "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17.

Many people earnestly long for Christ to come and dwell in their hearts, and they imagine that the reason why he does not do so is because they are not good enough, and they vainly set about trying to get so good that he can condescend to come in. They forget that Christ comes into the heart, not because it is free from sin, but in order to free it from sin; and they possibly never realized that Christ is in the word, and that he who will make it a constant companion, and will yield himself to its influence, will have Christ dwelling within. He who has hidden the word in his heart, who meditates in it day and night, and who believes it with the simple faith of childhood, - such a one has Christ dwelling in his heart by faith, and will experience his mighty, creative power.

Is there not something inspiring in this thought? When we come to God in secret prayer, and the Spirit brings to our remembrance some precious promise or needed reproof, is it not encouraging to know that as we accept them, Christ is coming into the heart with the same power that brought the worlds from nothing? Does it not clothe the word with new dignity? No wonder David could never tire of sounding its praises. May the thought that God is in the word be a fresh incentive to all to gain time and strength for their work by taking from it more time to feed upon the source of divine strength. E. J. W.

"The Advantage of the Jew" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

The great apostle to the Gentiles, in answer to the question, What advantage hath the Jew? replied, "Much in every way; chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." Rom. 3:2. It will be noted that he does not say that their advantage lay in knowing the law, but in having the law committed or intrusted to them. That the law has to do with all the world, and not with the Jews alone, is shown by Rom. 3:19, where the apostle states that the law, speaking to those within its sphere, over whom it has jurisdiction, stops every mouth and makes all the world stand guilty before God. If all are guilty, then all have the law, "for where no law is there is no transgression." Paul tells us, also, that Christ was "made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." Gal. 4:4, 5. But Christ died for all (2 Cor. 5:14, 15); therefore all men are by nature under the law, and, of course, subject to it.

The special advantage of the Jew, then, lay not in the fact that God made known his law to them, but that unto them it was *committed*. To them was given the honor of transmitting it to the other nations. They were chosen as the missionary people. They were to be "workers together with God" in enlightening the world.

God is no respecter of persons. As he sends rain on the just and on the unjust, and causes his sun to shine upon the evil and the good, so the light of his law shines for all. He makes no revelation of himself for the special benefit of any one class of people. The light which he has for one, he is anxious that all should share to an equal extent. So when he gives great light to any people, it is that they may carry it to others.

It is no small honor thus to be associated with God in laboring for the welfare of mankind. When a people has been intrusted with great light, and have selfishly shut it up to themselves, imaging that the light was given them because God thought so much of *them*, they miss the opportunity of their lives. Not only do they fail of the high position which God was willing that they should occupy, as light-bearers, but they lose the light that they have.

God designs that the people shall be the light of the world. See Matt. 5:14. Now it

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is evident that when he gives great light to any people, that they may impart it to others, he will give them every possible facility for spreading that light. Thus it was with the Jewish nation. When, according to his promise to the Fathers, he delivered Israel from Egypt, he did so in a most wonderful manner. His judgments upon the Egyptians, the dividing of the Red Sea, the miraculous preservation of Israel in the desert, the earthquake at the giving of the law, the victories which he gave them over their enemies, the miraculous passage of the Jordan, and many other things, all combined to give them the greatest prestige among the nations. Their uniform prosperity could not fail to make them feared and respected.

Moreover, the law itself, as long as they kept it, would raise them greatly in the estimation of the surrounding nations. To them Moses said: "Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." Deut. 4:5, 6.

What a wonderful opportunity they had to do missionary work. God was with them, so that the fear of them and the dread of them was on all nations. No people would dare attack them; they would be safe from molestation in any country. Added to this was the wholesome respect which the people felt for their knowledge of the law. Everything was made ready for them, so that it would not have taken them long to carry to all the nations of earth the gospel which had been preached to them. No such advantages have ever been given to any other people. Well did the psalmist say, "He hath not dealt so with any nation." Ps. 147:20.

The scope of the Sabbath-school lesson for July 26, which these reflections are designed to accompany, does not allow us to dwell on the way in which the Jews abused their glorious opportunities until their light finally went out in darkness. Let us at this time learn this one lesson, that when God gives us blessings, it is not in order that we may selfishly enjoy them, but that by means of them we may be better qualified to labor for him. Whatever advantages he gives

his people, are the means by which they are to lift their light from obscurity to the place where it may be seen by all. If they then fail to do the work for which they have been elevated, the result can readily be imagined. E. J. W.

"Taking Up the Cross. Luke 11:23-25" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

Notes on the International Lesson.

(July 20, Luke 11:23-25.)

"And he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." The Saviour had just spoken a parable which showed the gracious invitation that God extends to all, and now, in order that none who accept it may have occasion to say afterwards that they were deceived, he tells them plainly the conditions required of everyone who follows him. The Lord does not want anybody to follow him blindly. He would have them know all that is involved before they begin; in that case, they will not be as likely to give up in discouragement. He conceals

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nothing of the hardness of the way, but rather sets that forth as an inducement.

It is very natural to look upon laws that are unfavorable to the free exercise of religion, as a real hindrance to religion. Persecution is looked upon as a calamity to the church. Now while nobody should court persecution, yet it is by no means certain that it is the greatest calamity the church can suffer in this world. It is true that when these unfriendly laws are repealed, it is easier to induce people to identify themselves with the cause of God; but it is not true that more real strength is added to the church by the many who join in times of peace than by the few who unite in the face of persecution. Those who accept God's truth, knowing that it will involve persecution and loss of friends and property, will not become frightened when those things come. But those of whom it is said that they would accept the truth if they could see their way clear to do so, are the ones who, if the way were cleared so that they could join, would fall back as soon as the way should again become obstructed. It should not be forgotten that the church's brightest period was when the whole pagan world was against it.

This brings us the statement that men often make when some practical truth is presented to them, that they "could not make a living" if they obeyed it. They seem blind to the fact that thousands have obeyed it under more trying circumstances, and have not failed to make a living. But suppose they could not; that does not make any difference. Christ calls us to obtain the future immortal life, and if this has to be lost in order to gain that, it is only giving up a small thing for something infinitely greater. "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake," said Christ, "shall find it." Matt. 10:39. Thus it appears that in reality the only prospect one has of making a living is by obeying Christ. "Salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ," come to those who "loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. 12:10, 11.

Verse 26 must be read in the light of verse 33, and other texts. When it is said that a man cannot be a disciple of Christ, if he does not hate father, mother, wife, children, life, etc., it means that he must hold them all as secondary to the cause of God. That the word "hate" does not in this passage mean animosity and malice, may be learned from the fact that "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10), and that it "worketh no ill to his neighbor;" and that we are commanded to put away all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking and all malice. Also from the fact that the apostle Paul gives express injunctions to husbands to love their wives even as Christ loved the church. Eph. 5:25. The commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother," would forbid feelings of enmity against them. Therefore we are to understand that Christ means that nothing is to be so loved as to shut out love for him. He is to occupy the first place. This will often bring one into direct antagonism with his dearest friends, as stated in Matt. 10:35, 36. And sometimes he will be brought where he will have to reject even his own life. Not that he loves life and friends less, but that he loves Christ more.

This, then, is the cost of the kingdom of God. Christ does not secure any followers on false pretenses. He sets before them all the difficulties, as in Mark 10:29, 30, as well as the grand result, and then asks each one to deliberately calculate whether or not he can undertake it. He who does not count the cost is liable to be put to shame. Happy is the man who, when he sits down to reckon, has his vision so clear that he can view things in their proper relation, approving the things that are more excellent, so that he may know that one moment of heaven will outweigh all that he can suffer on earth. In comparison with the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17), the afflictions that now may be suffered are light. Indeed, the apostle Paul, who had opportunities for accurate calculation, such as no other man ever had, reckoned that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom. 8:18.

July 21, 1890

"Front Page" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

The following from the Nashville *Christian Advocate* is a very apt criticism on a very common expression: "Neither in church life nor individual experience is there any such thing as 'holding our own;' this is the law of death; grave-yards hold their own."

"Evidences of Christianity!" exclaims Coleridge; "I am weary of the word. Make a man feel the want of it, . . . and you may safely trust it to its own evidence." A truer thing was never spoken. Not all the logical treatises ever written can turn a skeptic from dead works to serve the living God; but when the soul grows weary with its burden of sin, and hears the voice of Jesus saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest," he knows that Christianity is true. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." 1 John 5:10.

An article in the *Lutheran Observer*, defending the Augsburg Confession from the charge of teaching infant damnation, closes thus:-

"The Lutheran way of stating it is easy enough. It is about as follows: Since the children, without any knowledge or choice of their own, come under all that sin has brought, so without their own will and choice may they come into all that Christ has wrought for the world. The sign and seal of all this is baptism. But we are not authorized to say that because the ordinance in any case is absent, therefore the blessings of Christ are wanting. Hence, we erect it into a doctrine for the universal church, that all children, baptized or unbaptized, pagan or Christian, are saved, or, as the revised Westminster Confession will have it, are of the number of the *elect*."

And now it rests with them to explain the significance of infant "baptism." How can it be a sign that the infants are given the benefit of all that Christ wrought for the world, when it is allowed that unbaptized infants share the same? Nothing could show more fully than the above paragraph does the fact that so-called infant baptism is an absurd practice, no foundation whatever in either reason or revelation.

"That the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved Me." This is one clause of our Saviour's prayer to the Father, just before his betrayal. What a precious truth it teaches! That God loves us just as he loves his only begotten Son. Is it difficult to believe this? We have only to remember that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." If he had loved us less than he loved the Son, he would not have given the Son for our redemption. Why did he so love us? He answers: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake." And what will his love accomplish for us? Again he says: "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ohpir."

"Sinning Without Law" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

"For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.); in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." Rom. 2:11-16.

The first part of this passage is a conclusion of what has gone before, as well as an introduction to what follows. God will render to every man according to his deeds, whether he be Jew or Gentile, because there is no respect of persons with him. The fact that a man was a Jew by birth did not commend him to the favor of God, over the Gentile who was equally good. Every soul of man that

doeth evil will receive punishment therefor, no matter what his nationality or profession.

But right here comes in the implied question, How can God do thus, and still be just? There are such varying degrees of light and knowledge that it would seem that the ignorance of some ought to shield them from punishment. The apostle has anticipated this in the beginning, by showing that the heathen are without excuse, since they have through the things that God has made, enough light to guide them aright; nevertheless, he proceeds to explain further. There will be degrees of punishment: those who have sinned without law, shall perish without law; and those who have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law. When?-"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ," in accordance with the gospel which Paul was commissioned to announce. The difference between sinning without law and sinning in the law is that which will now claim our attention.

A very slight examination suffices to show that verses 12 and 16 are to be read in connection, and that verses 13-15 are parenthetical. They are thrown in as an explanation of verse 12. A right understanding of them will cause God's justice, and the universality of the law, to stand out clearly.

In the first place, let it be remembered that only those who have sinned are to be punished. God doesn't punish men for ignorance, but for sin; and "sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. Therefore "every soul of man" who in the judgment shall be made to suffer punishment, will be one who has transgressed the law of God, and that knowingly.

How can this be? it is asked, when in this very connection the apostle speaks of those who have "sinned without law." Verse 14 and 15 answer this perfectly. Let us read them again:-

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another."

Go where you will, it is impossible to get outside the sphere of the law. Even the Gentiles, who "sin without law," are judged guilty by that same law written in their hearts. And so it appears that they are not actually without law, after all. All the law that they are without is the written law; but they have in their hearts a copy of that law, which, although not by any means so complete and perfect as the written law, is yet sufficient to either acquit or condemn them in the judgment, according as they have obeyed or violated it.

We have, in a previous article, referred to the enmity which, immediately after the fall, God implanted in the heart of men against Satan. Now since enmity against God is hatred of his law, it follows that enmity against Satan must be love for that law; for Satan is

in every respect opposed to God. The putting of this enmity into the heart of man was an act of grace on the part of God; nevertheless, it is correct to say that man

has this by nature, since God made it to be a part of his nature. It is the light wherewith Christ lights every man that comes into the world.

We see, then, that men are not born into this world totally depraved. They have some knowledge of right and wrong, and some promptings to do right. They may obliterate this knowledge and these promptings by their own evil course, if they will; or, yielding to the good impulse, they may grow in knowledge. It is this knowledge that men have, by which the Holy Spirit produces conviction of sin. It is only when the Spirit has been resisted till sin has completely darkened the soul, and the mind is wholly void of judgment, that the Spirit ceases to strive with man, because there is nothing left by which it can produce conviction. Then the conscience has become seared as with a hot iron, and the sinner is beyond hope.

Now it matters not how little a heathen may know as to what is right and what is wrong, it is evident that if he knows only one thing, that one item is sufficient to condemn him, if he disregards it. If a man who has a little knowledge of the righteousness which the law requires, ignores that little, that is proof that he would treat the whole law in the same way, if he had it. It is not necessary, therefore, to try him by the whole law, in all its exceeding breadth. He is judged by just that which he has. In the judgment, according to the text under consideration, he will not be confronted by the whole law, which he has never seen, but he will be brought face to face with himself. He will be confronted by the things which he knew that he ought to do, and did not do; and it can be said to him as well as to the sinner who lived in the full blaze of the gospel, "Ye knew your duty, but ye did it not."

Thus the heathen who has never seen the law will "perish without law;" but since there is nothing that a man ought to do, which is not commanded by the law ("Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12:13), it remains a truth that it is by the law, in reality, that every work and every secret thing are brought into judgment.

Of course there is no difficulty about those who, sinning in the law, are judged by the law. They are those who, having the whole law revealed to them, disregard it, and are judged by the whole law. The only thing in this passage that ever troubles anybody, is the matter of sinning without law; but we have seen that this gives us warrant for claiming that there is sin which is not taken account of by the law, or that any are outside the jurisdiction of the law of God.

It is worth bearing in mind, also, that the light which is sufficient to condemn man, is sufficient, also, to save him, if it is followed. If the man who has but a little knowledge of right and wrong, will but walk in the light that he has, he will be justified. To him more light will be given, for "light is sown for the righteous." "If any man willeth to do his will he shall know of the teaching." John 7:17, Revised Version. And thus is seen the justice of God's dealings with man. E. J. W.

"Pleading for Persecution" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

The *Lutheran Observer* refers to Dr. Hickok as "the highest authority in political economy and moral science," and quotes from his "Moral Science" with reference to religion in the State. Following is a portion of the citation:-

"A State has, and ever must have, some form of religious faith. It must use religion and appeals to conscience, and apply the doctrine of future retribution in some way, or it cannot attain its end in the conservation of the public freedom; and this necessity for religious forms will make it necessary that it recognize some articles of faith. It must have its own binding oaths, and holy days, and sacred books. . . . The only course for any individuals who may dissent from such religious faith, is to follow each the honest dictates of his own conscience, and subject himself to such retributions as the State in its judgment deems necessary for its own ends of freedom. All regard for honest differences of conscience should be scrupulously exhibited as far as may be; yet, with a single eye to public liberty, it may be necessary that the State should sometimes determine against individual conscience; and in all such cases, while the individual should preserve his own conscience in its integrity at any hazard, he must still quietly yield to the penalty which the State, in its honest regard for public freedom imposes.

"A theistic nation may thus incorporate into its national education the religious acknowledgment of a personal God; a Christian nation may use the Gospels as a text-book; a Protestant nation may use the Protestant Bible in the public schools."

By the same token, a Catholic nation may use the Catholic Bible in the public schools, and the Protestant minority must say nothing, or suffer for conscience' sake. There is no question but that the Catholic nation would ignore the convictions of Protestants; but it does seem inconsistent for a professed Protestant to uphold it in such a course.

The same line of reasoning that Dr. Hickok uses would uphold all the barbarities practiced by Turks upon Chinese. The government must have some form of faith; that form must of course be the will of the majority; if the majority are Mohammedans or pagans, then the Christians whose conscience will not allow them to practice the prevailing religion, must suffer. The man who advocates State religion, thereby pleads for religious persecution, and justifies the martyrdom of Stephen, James, and Paul, the burning of Huss, and every other murder that has been perpetrated in the name of religion. It is very easy to talk about other people suffering for their convictions, but few stop to think that it means simply martyrdom.

In such a discussion as this it should not be forgotten that the United States is no more a Protestant nation than it is a Catholic nation. This country is not yet a church organization, notwithstanding the efforts to make it such.

"The Eight-day Sabbath" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 28.

E. J. Waggoner

A friend has just stepped in to ask for an explanation of Eze. 43:26, 27, which has been presented to him by some zealous people as a sure proof that God ordained the Sunday as the Sabbath. After satisfying his mind on the subject, it

occurred to us that others might be troubled in a similar manner, so we call attention to the text here. It reads thus:-

"Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall consecrate themselves. And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt-offerings upon the altar, and your peace-offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord."

The taking of this text as an argument for Sunday observance is a specimen of the too common practice of adopting a theory, and then seizing upon some text and trying to fit it to the theory *by sound*, regardless of what it actually says, or of its connection. In this way many honest people deceive themselves, thinking that they are really studying the Bible; and many people who are not so honest deceive others who have little acquaintance with the word. In this case let the reader note the following points:-

1. There is not in the entire chapter, nor in the chapter before, or the chapter following, any mention of the Sabbath or of Sabbath observance. The subject of discourse is the sanctuary and the altar that was to be built for Jewish service.

2. The verses in question are a part of the directions as to how the priests should prepare the altar for service. Verses 13-17 give the dimensions of the altar; and verses 18-27 give the ordinances of the altar, to prepare it for regular use. Bullocks and goats were to be slain and offered as sin-offerings, to cleanse the altar." See verses 18-25. For seven days these ceremonies were to be performed, and then it would be ready for service; and from

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the eighth day it was to be in constant use, not every eighth day, but upon the eighth day and onward, every day. This is all there is in the text, and all that can be made from it. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," and "whoso readeth, let him understand."

3. But some, not satisfied with learning what the text clearly says, will say that it may mean something else; so we will, in a few words, show what it cannot possibly mean. We will grant, for the moment, for the sake of giving the Sunday cause every possible advantage, that the seven days were to begin with Sunday, so that the eighth day would also fall on Sunday, and that the expression, "upon the eighth day and so forward," means every eighth day, instead of every succeeding day. No what? Does that prove that the certain thing commanded was to be performed every Sunday? Not by any means, as can be seen by anybody who can count as far as eight on his fingers. The next eighth day would be Monday, the next one Tuesday, the next one Wednesday, the next one Thursday, the next Friday, and the next Saturday; and only once in seven weeks would it be possible for it to fall upon Sunday. Every day of the week would receive the same treatment. It requires no great mathematical skill to figure that out.

4. Again; supposing still that the text means that the eighth day was to fall on Sunday, and that the expression, "and forward," means only every eighth day, let us see how it will work in an exactly parallel expression. Turn to Lev. 22:27, and read:-

"When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under the dam; and from the eighth day and thenceforth it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the Lord."

Now, according to the argument which makes Eze. 43:27 teach Sunday observance, we learn that a young bullock or sheep or goat was to be exempt from use as a sacrifice for the first seven days of its life, but that every eighth day after that it was to be offered as a burnt-offering! Impossible? Oh, no; it must be so, or else the argument that makes Sunday the Sabbath will fall to the ground!

5. But we haven't yet exhausted the possibilities of Lev. 22:27. From the Sunday theory of Eze. 43:27 we have learned that "the eighth day and so forward" means not only every eighth day, but that every eighth day falls on a Sunday, and that thus the text is an evidence that Sunday was to be observed. So by the same token we learn that when a young bullock or sheep or goat had lived with its mother seven days, it was to be offered as a sacrifice on the eighth day, which, of course, was always a Sunday, and that every Sunday thereafter (every eighth day) it was likewise to be offered as a burnt-offering, in order to show the Jews that in the new dispensation Sunday would be the Sabbath.

This is nonsense? Of course it is; and so is the argument which makes Eze. 43:27 refer to Sunday. You say that anybody can see that what Lev. 22:27 means is that from the eighth day of an animal's life it may be taken at any time, no matter what the day, as a burnt-offering. Certainly; we agree with you; but what seems so strange to us is that anybody should not be able to see just as easily that what is meant in Eze. 43:27 is that after the altar had been purified for seven days, it could be used any day thereafter, no matter what day of the week, and every day, if necessary, for burnt-offerings and peace-offerings.

6. And now, finally, doesn't it seem as though the Sunday cause must be extremely destitute of argument, when its friends are forced to use such palpably absurd methods to support it? Could there be any stronger argument brought against the claim that Sunday is the Sabbath than the effort to get Sunday argument out of Eze. 43:27? Contrast this with the simple language of the fourth commandment, in connection with Gen. 2:1-3. "What is the chaff to the wheat?" E. J. W.

"Notes on the International Lesson. Lost and Found. Luke 15:1-10"
***The Signs of the Times* 16, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

NOTES ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSON.
(Luke 15:1-10. July 27, 1890.)

"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him." The publicans were those who gathered the *publienum*, or government revenue. The publicans of the New Testament were, according to Trench, "men of an inferior sort, who did the lower work of the collection. They were everywhere hateful for their rudeness, their frauds, their vexations, and oppressions; we possess long lists of opprobrious epithets with which, among the Greeks, they were assailed.

But there was that which made keener yet the scorn, and more intense the hatred, with which the Jewish publicans were regarded by their own countrymen. They were nothing less than renegades and traitors, who for filthy lucre's sake had sided with the enemy, and now collected for a profane heathen treasury that tribute which was the evident sign of the subjection of God's people to a Gentile yoke. This scorn and hate found utterance in a thousand ways; no alms might be received from their money chest; their testimony was not received in courts of justice; they were as the heathen, and in some sort worse than the heathen."

Their calling was a lawful one, yet full of temptation. The natural tendency of most men would be to take advantage of the opportunity which it so abundantly offered to make money dishonestly, since nothing but an eager desire for money would tempt one to put himself under the ban of public sentiment; and the fact that the publicans were everywhere despised, would naturally tend to give them a despicable character. That as a class they were very bad is shown by the connection in which they are frequently referred to—"publicans and sinners;" also by Christ's statement that an incorrigible church-member was to be regarded "as an heathen man and a publican." Matt. 18:17. Yet they were not wholly depraved, nor insusceptible to good influences, as is shown by many instances. They were sinners, it is true, but still in a more hopeful condition than were the self-righteous Pharisees. See Matt. 21:31. We find this verified in Luke 7:29, 30, where we are told that the publicans justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized of him. They also flocked to hear Christ's teaching, as noted in this lesson, because he had a message of hope for them.

"And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." The pride and bigotry of the scribes and Pharisees are shown by this murmur. But we may leave them, to consider the charge that they brought against Jesus. "This man receiveth sinners." It is a cause for joy to know that the Pharisees told the truth on this occasion. Christ receives sinners. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," said he. John 6:37. He sends out the gracious invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8. He calls sinners to him, and receives them, because they are sinners, and he alone has the power to cleanse from sin. Would that every despondent sinner might believe the words spoken of Christ, "This man receiveth sinners." Poor, blind Pharisees! They trusted to themselves that they were righteous, and did not know that they were sinners, even worse than the despised publicans. Had they known that, they might have proved to their everlasting joy the truth of that which they supposed was a bitter reproach; for Christ would have received them likewise.

Verses 4-9 contain two vivid illustrations of God's interest in sinners. The first one is this:-

"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And

when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

In this the reasonableness of Christ's receiving sinners is shown. Anybody would go to search for a lost sheep, even though it was only one out of a hundred. God's creatures are his flock. How natural that he should seek after the lost ones. "The Son of man is come to save that which was lost." And since he came at an infinite personal sacrifice, to save the lost ones, who can for a moment doubt that he will gladly receive those who come to him? How is it possible for a sinner to doubt the willingness of Christ to receive him? He gave his life for no other purpose than that they might come to him. He "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." Titus 2:14.

"Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." But where are they that need no repentance? Not on this earth, certainly; "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23. It will not do to say that Christ meant that there is more joy over one sinner that repents, than there would be over ninety-nine that needed not to repent, if there were any such. It is evident that those who need no repentance must be the unfallen angels and the inhabitants of other worlds. But this is a minor matter. The great point is that not only is Christ willing to receive sinners, but he calls for them, and rejoices when they *come*.

"Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." It does not say that there is joy among the angels over one sinner that repenteth, although we may be sure that they who are sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation, are deeply interested in everything that concerns them. But there is joy "in the presence of the angels." The Father and the Son do not conceal their joy "over one sinner that repenteth." Who, then, may despise the day of small things, or esteem it a small thing to convert one sinner? What if the labor be hard, and the expenditure great, and only one soul is saved as the result, is it

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a small thing to add to the joy of Heaven? And does not this give us a clue to the meaning of the words which the Lord will say to the faithful servants, namely, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"? The joy of the Lord is to see sinners repent and be saved. This joy is great because the salvation, has been achieved at an immense sacrifice. If we are permitted to share the joy of the Lord, it will be to rejoice over the salvation, not of ourselves, merely, but of others, and especially of those whom our influence has helped to bring to the knowledge of the gospel.
E. J. W.

July 28, 1890

"Church Union" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

We have received a very interesting pamphlet entitled, "Which? One Church or Many?" written by W. K. Marshall, D.D., of the Methodist Episcopal Church, introduced by Dr. James Burrell, of the Presbyterian Church, the object of which is to advance the idea of a union of the various Protestant churches. The author quotes the numerous passages of Scripture which speak of the unity that should exist among the followers of Christ, declaring the church of Christ to be *one body* and which rebuke the tendency to schisms in the church, and then briefly reviews church history. Coming to our own country, he finds many powerful reasons for church union, chief of which are the growing disregard of Sunday; the gigantic proportions of the liquor traffic; the boldness and impudence of infidelity; the encroachments of Romanism, and secularism upon our public-school system; the corruption of party politics; and the rapid growth of cities, and the diminishing proportion of church-membership. These things, he says, "cry loudly for some kind of organic and practical union among the churches of Protestantism, which has not yet been realized, that they may stand solid, compact, aggressive, triumphant in the face of these mighty forces of evil which confront us upon every hand."

After noticing the hopeful signs on such a union manifested in the different churches, he mentions as the five points upon which there must be agreement: The recognition of the right of every Christian to the Lord's table, no matter by whom spread; the recognition of the right of all Christians to their private judgment; the validity of the ordination of the ministry in all orthodox bodies; the willingness of each sect to surrender and totally abandon everything that stands in the way of recovering the lost unity of the church, although each body is to retain its own distinctive organization; and then he summarizes the methods and results as follows:-

"Such a union as would cover these five points, it is believed, might be brought about by a federation of all Protestant bodies, and as exists among the different States of our republic, each single body preserving its denominational integrity and independence as to ecclesiastical polity. Its peculiarities as the methods and all doctrinal faith, and in all practical methods of a general missionary work, the evangelization of the masses in the great cities, the building of hospitals, orphan asylums, training-schools, deaconesses' homes, Bible-schools, the support of Sabbath observance, temperance, and other reforms, the enforcement of just and righteous laws for the promotion of public morality, and all other enterprises and agencies that tend to herald the day when our Lord and Saviour will indeed claim the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession."

We have outlined the little book thus at length because we think that it is a very significant sign of the times. While we recognize the Christian spirit and honest purpose of the author, we cannot fail to recognize in his plan the erroneous idea that is becoming so prevalent, that the church is, by some sort of combination, to purify politics, and by means of purified politics to bring in the millennium. Our criticism, in brief, is as follows:-

1. We know that as Christ is not divided,

his church is not divided. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." Eph. 4:4. The true members of Christ's body are all baptized by one Spirit into that body (1 Cor. 12:13); and this shows that any union that is mechanical, and not the result of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, will be no real union. It will be the same as a "marriage of convenience." All who have the one Spirit are by that Spirit made members of one body. They form a real union, and not a confederation.

2. While unity is a very desirable thing, it is not desirable if truth has to be sacrificed to attain it. It is deplorable that there are so many sects in Christendom; but those divisions are inevitable, so long as people do not hold to the same things; and only the Holy Spirit can cause men to see alike. The truth of God is the only true basis of church union, and those who do not agree upon this cannot be really united, no matter what combination is formed. If it is claimed that men "cannot see alike," we have only to reply that they can if they are led by the one Spirit; for the Holy Spirit is given for the purpose of leading believers into all truth; and since there is only one Spirit, one truth, and one hope, people must see alike just to the extent that they are led by that Spirit.

3. If a union were effected by any other than purely spiritual means, the inevitable result would be the using of the combined power in an unspiritual manner, to influence politics, and then would be demonstrated the truth of the statement that "combinations of religious bodies for political purposes are always dangerous," and this notwithstanding the good intentions of the people so combining. Such a federation of churches into one general church, working for the ends proposed, some of which directly involve legislation, would be nothing less than a State church; and the evils that would result would be vastly greater than those which now exist.

Therefore while we most heartily believe in Christian union, we have no confidence in any scheme of a union of churches. The latter may be brought about by negotiations between the representatives of leading denominations; the former only by a faithful preaching of the truth as it is in Jesus, depending upon no power but the power of the Spirit. E. J. W.

"Communion Wine" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

The pastor of St. Paul's M. E. Church, in Lowell, Mass., has decided upon an innovation. In a conversation following a recent class-meeting, one of the members stated that before his conversion he was addicted to the use of liquor, and that he strongly disapproved the use of wine at the sacrament, as he had twice fallen, by the temptation thus placed in his way. The pastor stated that he could never pass the wine to this brother after learning this fact, and he had long been debating in his mind the advisability of discontinuing its use. He was followed by others, who strongly urged him to use pure water instead of wine at the communion service, commencing next Sunday. This he promised to do, and his promise was unanimously indorsed. Consequently, nothing but pure water will

be used at the communion service at St. Paul's hereafter, and it is believed to be the first Methodist Church to adopt the practice."

The *Lowell Mail*, from which the above is taken, adds:-

"This question was agitated in this city at a union meeting of the Methodist Churches some years ago, but its adoption was defeated by a single vote."

Thus one unscriptural practice leads to another. To use water instead of wine at communion is the same as having no communion at all. Such a ceremony is most certainly not the one which the Saviour instituted. The Catholic Church is more consistent in withholding the cup entirely from the laity, although it uses it in the mass.

But all this perversion of the ordinance would be avoided if the communion were celebrated, as it should be, with the "fruit of the vine," the pure, unfermented grape juice. This, and this only, is fit to be used as an emblem of "the precious blood of Christ,"-the incorruptible thing by which we are redeemed,- and there is no more danger in it than there is in the fruit which is served daily upon the table. The Lord knew what he was doing when he instituted the Lord's Supper; and he never sets temptation in any man's ways. When men try to improve on his ordinances, they always get into trouble.

"The True Circumcision. Romans 2:17-29" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

"Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest they boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonorest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written. For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore, if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfill the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Before dwelling upon the one central thought of these verses, we will call attention to a few of the incidental points. From verses 17 and 18 we learn that the law of God, in which the Jews made their boast, is the will of God. They knew the will of God, because they were instructed out of the law. This fact settles the

matter of the breadth, the holiness, and the unchanging nature of the law of God. Someone may object that the law could not be the perfect expression of God's will, since the Jews, who rested in it, were so far from perfect. But Paul provides the answer to that by showing that although they rested in the law, it was only the pride of possession which they felt, while they disregarded its claims.

"Which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law." In Coneybeare and Howsen's free translation, this is rendered, "Possessing in the law the perfect pattern of knowledge and of truth." This is exactly what the law is, and this is why those who are instructed out of it are able to "approve the things that are more excellent" (see verse 18), or, as the margin says, "try the things that differ," or, as Coneybeare and Howsen put it, still more plainly, "give judgment upon good and evil." The law of God-the ten commandments-is that by which every work, with every secret thing, is to be brought into judgment." See Eccl. 12:13, 14.

Verses 21-23 contain a series of pointed questions, which are in reality a strong arraignment of those "who trusted in themselves, because they do the same things; and he clinches the point so plainly implied in his questions, by saying, "For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written." Reference is here unmistakably made to 2 Sam. 12:14, where we find that the prophet Nathan, speaking of David's adultery, said to him, "Because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die." Therefore, when the apostle said to the Jews, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you," he directly charged them with living in open violation of the law which they professed to honor. Professors of religion may cause the name of God to be blasphemed, by living lives contrary to their profession; and thus, although they may appear very reverent in their speech, they may be guilty of violating the third commandment. So true is it that the breaking of one commandment involves violation of another.

Having now convicted the Jews of transgression of the law of God, and shown that they are therefore even worse than the heathen, who had not the written law, the apostle proceeds to show (in verses 23-25) that they are not in reality Jews at all. This is a very important passage of Scripture. It proves not only that God is not now a respecter of persons, but that he never was, and that the condition of his favor are the same to all people in all ages.

"For circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law." As will be seen more directly from chap. 3:1, 2 when we reach it, the term "circumcision" has not so much reference to the physical act as to the people who were specially represented by it. "The circumcision" and "the uncircumcision" were common terms to indicate the Jews and the Gentiles. See Gal. 2:7-9. So when Paul said that circumcision profits if they keep the law, he meant that it was a good thing to be a Jew if one kept the law. Wherein the profit lay, we shall learn in the next chapter.

"But if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." That is, those who were circumcised as the literal descendants of Abraham, were in reality not circumcised, and were consequently not

children of Abraham, if they did not keep the law. This was what John the Baptist told the Pharisees who flocked to his baptism. Calling them a viper's brood, he said, "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Matt. 3:9. Sooner than acknowledge such hypocrites as children of Abraham, God would make children out of stones. Jesus, also, when the wicked Jews said, "Abraham is our father," replied: "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God; this did not Abraham." John 8:39, 40. And then he directly charged them with being children of the devil.

"Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?" Let it be remembered that only Abraham's children are the children of God (Gal. 3:29), and that all of Abraham's children were to be circumcised. Gen. 17:10. But in the verse just quoted, Paul says that keeping the law is counted to an uncircumcised man as circumcision. Therefore, although according to the Scriptures only the circumcised are the children of God, it follows that the man who obeyed God is and was owned as a child of God, even though the rite of circumcision had never been performed upon him. And this is in harmony with Peter's statement that "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Acts 10:34, 35.

The whole matter is summed up and emphasized in the last two verses, which we requite:-

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

A few parallel texts will indicate the harmony of the Scriptures on this point. In Eph. 2:11 the apostle Paul speaks to the converts from among the heathen as those who were "called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh." He does not speak of either party absolutely, as being uncircumcised or circumcised, but as being "called uncircumcision" and called "circumcision." This is in keeping with his statement that "circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandment of God." 1 Cor. 7:19.

In Phil. 3:3 Paul says, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh;" and in Acts 7:51-53 we learn from Stephen that the Jews were "uncircumcised in heart and ears," because they resisted the Holy Ghost, and had not kept the law, which they had received by the disposition of angels. This, taken in connection with Rom. 2:28, 29, proves that true circumcision was of the heart. In harmony with this idea were the words of Jesus to Nathanael, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." John 1:47.

Let not the reader get the idea that this view of circumcision, and of the true Israel, is peculiar to what is known as "the Christian dispensation." Nothing less

than yielding the heart to the influences of the Holy Spirit, and keeping the commandments of God, has ever been recognized as true circumcision. In Rom. 4:10, 11 Paul speaks of the time when circumcision was first given to Abraham, and says that "he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." Circumcision, therefore, was a sign of righteousness, and a sign does not of itself amount to anything if the thing signified is wanting. And so even in the days of Abraham, Moses, and the later prophets, the outward form counted for nothing with the Lord; only obedience was counted as circumcision.

This is shown by Deut. 30:6-8: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecute thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day." See also chap. 10:16, and Jer. 4:4.

A right idea of what really constituted a Jew, according to the Scripture, constituted a Jew, according to the Scripture, will settle many a disputed point. It shows the unity of God's plan of salvation; that he was not partial in choosing the Jews; and that his requirements are the same in all generations. It helps us to understand also the full extent of the promises to the Jews, and lifts the Old Testament history out of the narrow boundaries which so many regard it as occupying. It settles the question as to the return of their own land, and enables us to see wisdom and justice in the statement that "all Israel shall be saved." E. J. W.

"Notes on the International Lesson. The Prodigal Son. Luke 15:22-21"
The Signs of the Times 16, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

(Luke 15:22-21, August 3, 1890.)

There are few more comforting passages of Scripture than the parable of the prodigal son. Coming in the connection that it does, it carries its explanation with it: It is a most graphic representation of the love of God for the rebellious sons of men, and of his longing to receive them to himself again. It is true that it was spoken for the special benefit of the scribes and Pharisees, who murmured because Jesus received publicans and sinners, being designed to show how more than willing God is to receive the most degraded and despised sinners; but this very fact makes it the more valuable, for if he will receive such, we may know that he will receive all. It is a vivid illustration of the saying, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

The younger son in the parable may stand for all sinners. Everything that they have they have received from God; yet, forgetful of their obligation to him, they have despised his ways, and have "gone away backward." We may not press too closely the main points in the narrative, which are necessary to give it form; yet it

seems allowable to compare the young man's joining himself to a citizen of the country, when he began to be in want, to the sinner's plunging deeper into sin in order to shake off the first convictions of sin. How often when the want of God first makes itself felt, a man thinks to satisfy the want by joining himself more closely to the world.

"And he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him." He was now deserted by the false friends that flocked around him in his prosperous days, and was denied even the poor privilege of trying to satisfy his craving with the coarsest kind of fare. The husks, it is hardly necessary to say, were not the husks of corn, but were the pods of the carob tree, which somewhat resembled the locust.

"And when he came to himself, he said. . . . I will arise and go to my father." Although his position as a feeder of swine, forsaken by his companions, and starving, seems a most pitiable one, he was far better off now than when he was spending his substance in riotous living. Then he was intoxicated, and unable to distinguish the proper relation of things. Now the dizzy whirl had ceased, and he came to himself. He was in just as bad condition before as now, but he didn't know it. The worst thing about backslidden professors is not that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," but that, being in this condition, they know it not.

The office of the Holy Spirit is to convince of sin and of righteousness. Often the conviction is produced in a way that seems very humiliating. Too often, when the conviction has been brought about by plain reproof, the sinner becomes angry at the reproof, thinking that it was administered for the purpose of humiliating him. He does not realize that the humiliation which he feels is due entirely to the position in which he has placed himself, and which the reproof has revealed to him. The reproof which brings conviction shows the kindness of God in seeking to rescue him from his fallen condition. The witness of the Spirit that we are the children of God is no surer evidence that God cares for us than is the reproof of his Spirit, which brings the shame of conviction,

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"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourageth every son whom he receiveth."

Note how quickly the father cuts short the confession. He does not wait for him to go into a detailed account of all the evil deeds that he has committed. It is enough that the son has returned repentant to his father's house. He is alive, and coming back to put himself under the father's care and guidance. The son had no claim on the father; he had spent all the portion of the estate that would have fallen to him, yet the father receives him on the same footing as though he had never gone astray.

And so the great point to be learned from this parable is that God receives sinners just as they are. If the poor prodigal had thought, when he came to a sense of his need, that he must fix himself up with a decent suit of clothes before he could go to his father, he would never have gone. The sinner is justified only by faith; and faith comes only when self-trust ceases. Whoever is overwhelmed

with the sense of his sin, and despised, perhaps, by men, may know that for him there is hope, for "this Man receiveth sinners." E. J. W.

August 4, 1890

"The Penalty of the Law" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 30.

E. J. Waggoner

"Will you be so kind as to explain your statement, 'When Adam fell he brought the race of mankind under the sentence of eternal death.' (SIGNS OF THE TIMES, July 7, 1890), with the fact that he did not die an eternal death? Did he suffer less than the penalty of the law? W.T.D."

In answer to the second question we answer, Yes; and that really answers the whole. If Adam had suffered the penalty of the law, he would have died an eternal death; for "the wages of sin is death." This means death simple and absolute, with no hope of a resurrection. The penalty of the law has fallen upon only one being, and that was Christ. "But he did not die an eternal death." No; he died for us, that we might be partakers of his life. His death is a part of the great mystery of the gospel, for it is impossible for us to understand how the divine Son of God, the Creator, who had life in himself, could die. But as he, who knew no sin, took our sin upon himself, -was made to be sin for us, -so he voluntarily became obedient unto that death which sin brings. He died for us, however, and not for himself; and since there was no stain of sin upon him, it was not possible that death should hold him (Acts 2:24), for it is sin alone that gives power to death. He had life enough for himself and for all the world besides; therefore when he laid down his life as a forfeit to the violated law, he could take it again. To all who accept him he imparts his own life, which has triumphed over death, and they receive the penalty of the law in him; but when the law demands the life of an unrepentant sinner, as a penalty for its violation, it takes all that he has, and there is no possibility of his living again.

Death, then, is to the Christian in reality only an incident in his life, -a short sleep. "The sting of sin is death;" and when sin has been removed through Christ, of course death has no power to harm. The Christian only sleeps in Jesus. His life has not been taken, for, says Paul to all Christians, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Col. 3:3. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." 1 John 5:11. That which Christ has in his keeping is beyond the reach of Satan or of his agent. Therefore it is certain that the death which those die who believe in Christ (among whom we, as well as our correspondent, place Adam), is not the penalty of the law of God.

This is made very plain by the words of Christ: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." John 5:24.

But death is common to all mankind. The righteous and the wicked both die alike, the only difference being that "the righteous hath hope in his death." But it is certain that the death which even wicked men now die is not the death which is

the wages of sin, for the wicked as well as the righteous are to have a resurrection, when they will receive according to that which they have done. Judgment is not executed upon the ungodly until the Lord comes. Jude 14, 15.

The words of Christ, recorded in John 3:16-18, throw great light upon this whole question: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." This of itself proves that all men who are without Christ are under the sentence of death.

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This makes it evident that when Paul says that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12), he refers to that death which is the wages of sin. It was because Christ saw all the world in this condemnation, that he gave himself for the world, so that all who would believe in him could be freed from condemnation. That they were condemned to perish is shown by the fact that God gave his Son to save them from perishing; and those who believe not are condemned already.

This sentence of death was made known to Adam as soon as he was placed in the garden of Eden, as a warning against sin. When he sinned, he at once came under condemnation, doomed to suffer the threatened penalty. But right here came in the gospel. The sacrifice of Christ was just as efficacious the day that Adam sinned as it is to-day; he is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. For all practical purposes Christ was crucified as soon as Adam fell, for God "callesth those things which be not as though they were." Christ was given at that time. The sacrifice on the part of God, to give his only begotten Son, was already made; God loved the world then just as much as he did four thousand years later.

If it had not been that Christ was given for man's redemption, death would have ended all for Adam, and for all the human race. But the promise of a Redeemer carried with it another probation, and so the execution of the sentence was suspended until it should be seen what use men would make of that probation. God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ (Acts 17:31); and until that time the sentence will be held in abeyance. Christ has suffered it, and all who receive him, receive the penalty in him, and his life answers for theirs. But those who reject the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God will abide on them. They will receive the penalty in themselves, and thus the course of sin will be brought to a close, and the law will be vindicated. E. J. W.

"Sunday in California" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 30.

E. J. Waggoner

Here is a specimen of the *misinformation* that is dealt out to Eastern people, concerning the status of Sunday in California. It is from a church report from Southern California to the New York *Christian Advocate*:-

"California is in an anomalous position in reference to Sunday legislation. In the early days, when this country was little more than a vast mining camp, and Sabbath desecration was well-nigh universal among the inhabitants, it had enacted a good, wholesome statute, protecting Christian people in their religious services. But a few years ago an overwise governor suggested that this law was largely a "dead letter," and so, for consistency's sake, it was repealed. So now Sunday is simply a public holiday, being classed with the Fourth of July, New Year's day, etc. The State laws give no protection to religious assemblages on the Lord's day, any more than a base-ball game. Those legislators of the early days had not outgrown the influences of their Eastern Christian homes and the sacred associations of the Lord's day; so while many of them doubtless were careless and more or less wicked, they embodied in the laws of their new State laws protecting and fostering the interests of the Christian church and the Christian home. But the sad results of bad training have caused a later race of legislators to tear down the barriers set up against vice and crime; so that, so far as the State law is concerned, all over California business may be carried on as on other days, the only disability being that notes and other documents signed and dated on that day are not legal."

1. The Sunday law that California formerly had, and which was repealed a little less than eight years ago, had nothing whatever to do with the protection of Christian people in their religious services. It was a Sunday law forbidding certain kinds of labor and amusement on Sunday. That is all there was to it.

2. "An overwise governor" had nothing to do with its repeal. It was repealed because a majority of the people of California testified at the ballot-box that they wanted to rid California of a legacy handed down from the Dark Ages, when there was no other way known of making men religious but the rack and the thumb-screw. The sole issue in the campaign that year was over the Sunday law. The Republicans pledged themselves to maintain and enforce it; the Democrats in their platform declared against it. On this issue the Democrats won, and when the Legislature repealed the law, it was simply carrying out the pledge made by the Democratic party, and the instruction of the people at the polls.

3. It is not true that "the State laws give no protection to religious assemblages on the Lord's day, any more than to a base-ball game." Section 302 of the Penal Code is as follows:-

"Every person who willfully disturbs or disquiets any assemblage of people met for religious worship, by noise, profane discourse, rude or indecent behavior, or by any unnecessary noise either within the place where such meeting is held, or so near as to disturb the order and solemnity of the meeting, is guilty of a misdemeanor."

Here is protection enough for anybody. In fact, it affords too much protection to suit many people, who would have it specify religious assemblages of those who observe Sunday, leaving others unprotected. There is not a State in the Union where a disturber of any religious gathering would meet with quicker

punishment than in California. But there is no special law protecting base-ball games.

4. It is true that Sunday is now simply a public holiday, being classed with the Fourth of July, New Year's Day, etc. But surely our Sunday-law friends should be the last to complain, since they cite the Fourth of July and other holidays as precedents for making Sunday a holiday.

5. But it is not true that sad results are seen because of the repeal of the Sunday law. The day is observed as strictly as it ever was, and public morals are as good as in any State which has a rigid Sunday law. California has nothing of which to boast in the way of morals; but what it needs is more gospel instead of more law. E. J. W.

"The Golden Rule Ignored" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 30.

E. J. Waggoner

In the following from an article in the *New Englander and Yale Review*, on "Legal Protection for Sunday Rest," by W. W. Atterbury, D.D., we have a very fair sample of an error into which those who argue for Sunday laws are continually running; namely, that of imagining that what is done solely out of regard for the day is done for the benefit of the people:-

"We may advance a step farther, to another ground upon which the Sunday laws rest. The chief and highest use to which the weekly rest is put, by the American people generally, is its religious use. And so the law recognizes and protects the right of undisturbed worship, to which the day is devoted. There is a right of worship as well as of non-worship. When the great majority of a people set apart one day for that purpose, it is just and right that their laws should recognize that fact, and, so far as may be needful to this end, protect them, both from being robbed of its opportunity of worship, and being disturbed in its enjoyment. Though it be granted that the law transcends its sphere in a free government when it compels the religious observance of the day, it by no means follows that it transcends its proper sphere when, not enforcing the religious observance of the day, it protects those who may choose so to use it. A Christian people have a right to the undisturbed enjoyment of their day of worship. In a Mohammedan country, the law might justly protect from wanton disturbance the day then set apart for religious use; or in a Jewish State, the law would protect the Jewish Sabbath. In a Christian country, the law rightfully protects from disturbance the Lord's day; and this not because Christianity is the true religion, but because it is the religion of the people."

Now according to this, all that is desired is that the people shall be protected in their right to worship on Sunday; yet what is asked for is not a law to protect *the people*, but a law to protect *the day*-to keep people from doing any labor on it. But, as a matter of fact, there are in every State laws that are amply sufficient to protect all people in their right to assemble for religious worship. Anybody ought to be able to see that it is not necessary to compel everybody to rest on Sunday, in order to secure to a portion of the people the right to rest and worship on that day. The fact that five hundred people go to the woods for a picnic or to the sea-

shore on Sunday, does not prevent one hundred other people from going to church and quietly worshipping on that day.

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Another fault with the paragraph above quoted, and a very serious fault it is too, is the utter failure to comprehend the principles of true liberty, on which the American government was founded. The Declaration of Independence holds that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed; not of a majority simply, but of all. It holds that all men are created equal, that is, in regard to the rights with which the Creator has endowed them, and which government should preserve for them. Governments are for the purpose of protecting the rights of all, and not simply of the majority. Any law which does not equally respect the rights of all is an unjust law.

When evil things are done by wholesale, they somehow seem to command respect; the human mind seems to be overawed by anything that is large. Thus, a million-dollar defaulter can find ready access to the "best society," while the petty larcenist is looked upon with contempt. It is well to keep in mind that that which is evil in detail is proportionately evil in mass. If a dozen persons were together in a social party, and ten of them should combine to have everything *their* way, ignoring the rights and wishes of the other two, it would be called gross selfishness. And that is just what it is when the government is asked to make laws that not only ignore but trample upon the rights of the minority.

Dr. Atterbury says, "In a Mohammedan country, the law might justly protect from wanton disturbance the day there set apart for religious use." In the first place, a day cannot be disturbed, and therefore has no need of being protected from disturbance. But the people who wish to observe the day may be disturbed, and they not only may be, but ought to be, protected from wanton disturbance. But would the doctor think it right and just for the Mohammedan government to give its Mohammedan subjects full liberty to disturb its comparatively few Christian subjects in their worship on the day which they hold sacred?—Of course not. And he and everybody else knows full well that to protect Christians in their right to worship undisturbed on the day which they religiously observe, would not in the least interfere with the protection guaranteed to Mohammedans in their worship on the day which they devote to religious purposes.

"Or in a Jewish State, the law would protect the Jewish Sabbath." In a Jewish State or in a "Christian State" the law has no business to know anything except the welfare of all of its citizens. If the majority of the citizens of any country were Jews, the laws, if they were just, would afford as much protection to the Christian as to the Jew. So the laws of this country should afford as much protection to Jews as to Christians. Has not almost the whole civilized world made indignant protest against "Jew-baiting" in some parts of Europe? But what right have the advocates of Sunday laws to protest against outrages committed upon Jews? The people of those countries are Catholic, and the governments are professedly Christian, and the laws are made for "Christians," and not for Jews. If Jews are not to be protected by law, because they are in the minority, then of course they may be insulted with impunity; and it is for just this state of things that Sunday-

law advocates are pleading, although we have the charity to believe that most of them do not realize what they are doing.

The Christian rule is, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Therefore while there cannot be in this world such a thing as a Christian government, that government in which the majority grant to the minority the same protection which they claim for themselves, approaches the nearest to the standard which Christ gave. In such a government the rights of the majority are respected, not because they are the majority, but because they are men; and the rights of the minority are equally respected for the same reason.

This is a live subject, and cannot receive too much attention. When men in high position can advocate the passing of laws for the gratification (not the benefit) of a certain class, it is evident that they have strayed far from the principles held by the founders of this government, as well as from the principles of the gospel, and that they are unsafe leaders. E. J. W.

"The Rich Man and Lazarus. Luke 16:19-31" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 30.

E. J. Waggoner

INTERNATIONAL LESSON NOTES.

(Luke 16:19-21; August 10, 1890.)

There is probably no portion of Scripture that has been the subject of more controversy than this one, and none which has been more the subject of that grossest of all exegetical view-private interpretation; that is, interpretation according to sound, and not according to sense; interpretation according to one's previously-conceived opinions, without any regard to the context or to the testimony of other portions of Scripture, on the same point. Accordingly, the first and chief work of the commentator on this passage is to disabuse the minds of his hearers of erroneous notions, by showing what it does not mean.

That this scripture is of the nature of a parable is evident, because to give all its terms a literal application would make nonsense of it. The characters are spoken of as individuals in the flesh, having all the organs and all the desires of men in the flesh. They have eyes, tongues, bosom, power of speech, thirst, love of brethren, etc. But how could Lazarus be in Abraham's bosom? If Lazarus was taken there, then all the saved must be there, likewise, and that is an impossibility. This, of itself, shows that this is not a literal narrative.

More than this, the general testimony of Scriptures as to the condition of men in death, shows that it is impossible that this should be the story of an actual transaction. In Eccl. 9:5, 6 we read: "For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." And this agrees with the words of Job. 14:21. David also says: "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his

thoughts perish." Hezekiah also said: "For the grave cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth." Isa. 38:18.

These are strong, positive statements. They cannot be ignored or explained away, without denying the inspiration of the Scriptures of which they form a part. We must believe that they mean just what they say; and therefore we know that the portion of Scripture that we are studying cannot mean that two persons actually carried on a conversation after death. Since a man knows nothing in the grave; he is unconscious of the prosperity of the adversity of his sons; and his thoughts have ceased, it is evident that a man could not after death feel any solicitude for the welfare of his brethren.

But someone will cry, "Who have we not as good right to affirm consciousness after death from this passage in Luke, as you have to affirm unconsciousness after death from the texts that you have just quoted?" For this reason: If we should affirm from one text that the dead are conscious, and from another that they are unconscious, then we make the Scripture contradict itself, and thus deny its inspiration. But the statements quoted from Solomon and David and Job and Hezekiah are positive statements of fact, and the verses in Luke are not literal statements, as we have shown. Therefore we must interpret the figurative or inferential in harmony with the positive and literal; or at least we must so interpret them as not to contradict the positive.

Take another thought. David was a good man; beloved of the Lord, as well as Abraham was. But of David, Peter said when he was full of the Holy Spirit, "For David is not ascended into the heavens." Acts 2:34. And Paul said, "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption." Acts 13:36. If David has not ascended into the heavens, then neither Abraham nor any other saint has ascended into the heavens.

Let us now note a few points to the parable itself. "And it came to pass, that the beggar died; and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died; and was buried." What was carried into Abraham's bosom? Was it the same Lazarus that laid at the rich man's gate? Was he carried there in person? It has already been seen that this could not be. Those who interpret

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the parable as teaching the condition of men in death, uniformly say that only the soul or spirit of Lazarus was taken to Abraham's bosom. But mark, there is no change in the subject. The same one who died was carried. "The beggar died, and was carried." Shall we say that this means, "The beggar died, and his spirit was carried"? Let us see how it would work in another instance. I am telling about a tornado, and I say, "I ran out of the house and was thrown down." Someone asks, "Did it hurt you?" I reply, "How could I be hurt by the falling down of the house, when I was not in it?" And then you say, "Why, you didn't say anything about the house being thrown down; you said that you were thrown down." And this is the fact. My statement was that I fell down; if I meant to say that the house fell down, I should have said so. Likewise, what the text says is that Lazarus died, and that he, the same that died, was carried into Abraham's bosom. If it be

claimed that it was simply his body that died, then it was his body that was carried. If we say that it was the soul that was carried, then it was the soul that died.

In like manner we say of the rich man that the same thing that died was buried. But if it be claimed that the statement that "the beggar died and was carried," etc., means that he died and that his soul was carried, then it must also be claimed that the statement that "the rich man also died, and was buried," means that the rich man died and his soul was buried. All this serves simply to show that the passage is not a literal narrative of an actual occurrence, and that therefore it has no bearing whatever on the condition of man in death. The fact that dead men are represented as talking, no more proves that it is natural for dead men to talk, than the fact that in Judges 9:8-15 the trees, the vine, and the bramble-bush are represented as talking, proves that it is natural for trees and vines to use spoken language.

It should also be remembered that the angels do not carry the saints to their reward at death. Jesus said that they who served him by doing deeds of kindness to those too poor to recompense them, should be recompensed "at the resurrection of the just." Luke 14:14. The resurrection of the just is when the Lord himself descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. 1 Thess. 4:16. The voice of the archangel calls them from their graves. John 5:28, 29. It is at this time that "he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. 24:31. It is then that they see the cutting off of the wicked, and not till then. Although probation ceases at death, the judgment does not decide the destiny of men till after that (Heb. 9:28), even till the coming of Christ. 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10. Therefore we know that the parable of the rich man and Lazarus was not given for the purpose of showing the condition of men in death. The things which it relates could take place only after the coming of Christ, and the resurrection.

What, then, is taught by this portion of Scripture? That is a more difficult thing to tell. Nobody is justified in telling positively what a parable means, when that parable is not explained in the Scripture. "No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation;" which means that no scripture is an explanation of its own text. If commentators and Bible students had spent as much time studying this scripture as they have in trying to fit it to their own opinions, no doubt there would have been more knowledge of its meaning. We may be sure, however, that incidentally it proves that death ends probation. It also proves that earthly prosperity is not a sign of the favor of God. This was a very necessary lesson for the Jews to learn. They despised the poor, and thought that to be rich was an evidence that God was pleased with them. Of course those who held that idea would very easily get into the habit of employing questionable means to increase their wealth, persuading themselves that the end would justify the means.

Another thing that should not be overlooked is the proof that the Bible is the highest authority. No phenomena can take the place of plain Scripture statements. "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one

rose from the dead." This is true in a general sense. If one will not be convinced by the Bible, nothing will convince him; and when one comes to believe a thing because of certain phenomena that he has witnessed, as, for instance, of a future life because of the supposed appearance of departed friends, his form of belief is always that which the Bible does not sanction. This was especially applicable to the Jews, however, for since they refused to be convinced of the genuineness of Christ's claims by Moses and the prophets, who testified of him, his wonderful resurrection only hardened them. E. J. W.

August 11, 1890

"The Sure Foundation" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

"He saith unto them, that whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matt. 16:15-19.

Two expressions in this passage, namely, "on this rock I will build my church," and, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," have been the object of a great deal of controversy, and they often seriously trouble those who take no stock in the arguments for papal authority, which the Catholics try to draw from them. It is the object of this little study to focus the light of inspiration upon them, that they may be explained, "not in the words which man's wisdom, teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

First, as to the rock upon which the church of Christ is built. Is that rock the apostle Peter? Or is it something else? That it is not Peter, may be proved both by the text itself, and by the concurrent testimony of Scripture. It is doubtless well known that the proper name Peter signifies a stone. When Jesus first saw Simon, he said to him, "Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone," or Peter. John 1:42. But perhaps it is not so generally known that the Greek word for Peter is entirely different from that which in Matt. 16:18 is translated rock. Of the former, *petra*, Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon says: "A *piece of rock, a stone*, and thus distinguished from *petra*." This latter word, *petra*, where loose stones (*petros*) are not meant, but "masses of living rock torn up."

Now with these facts before us, who can say that Peter is the rock on which the church is built? He is a stone; but the church is not built on so unstable a foundation. Peter was a man of power, and was a mighty instrument in the hands of God to help build up the church; but it would never do to build that church upon a foundation which could waver in the least; and Peter at one time, long

after this, wavered so greatly that Paul was obliged to rebuke him to the face. Gal. 2:11-14. A fearless man of God was Peter, yet only a fallible mortal. The church is built on a rock, a crag, on something that is fixed. The difference in the terms is alone sufficient to show that the apostle Peter is not the foundation of the church.

Let us now see upon what, according to the inspired word, the church of Christ is actually built. In 1 Cor. 10:4, we are told that the Israelites in the wilderness all drank the same spiritual drink; "for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed went with them; and that Rock [*petra*] was Christ." See also Ps. 18:2; 92:15.

In Eph. 2:20 we are taken a step farther. There the converted Gentiles are told that being now fellow-citizens with the saints, they are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." This shows that Christ is the Rock upon which the church is built, as 1 Cor. 10:4 shows that he is the Rock from

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which it derives its nourishment. If it be imagined from the wording of Eph. 2:20, that the apostles are a part of the foundation, even then Peter is deprived of the position which the Catholic Church would give him as the sole foundation, the "apostles and prophets" being all included. But we shall see that the apostle does not mean that the apostles and prophets are a part of the foundation, but that the church is built upon the foundations upon which the apostles and prophets built, and which they, in a sense, laid. Thus, we read in 1 Cor. 3:10-13:-

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest."

Christ, then, and not Peter, is the foundation upon which the church is built. This will be seen more plainly still when it is remembered that the church existed in the wilderness of Sinai hundreds of years before the day of Peter. See Acts 7:38. When Moses identified himself with this church, he incurred the reproach of Christ. Heb. 11:25, 26. The Rock from which they drank was the Rock upon which they were built.

In this connection it is interesting and profitable to note the words of Christ in closing the sermon on the mount. Having given his instruction, he said:-

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it." Matt. 7:24-27.

Here we learn how it is that we may build upon Christ, the Rock. It is by obeying his words. "The words that I speak unto you," said Jesus, "they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. His words are divine, like himself, whether uttered with his own voice, or by the mouth of a prophet. In fact, Christ dwells in the word; for we read that he dwells in our heart by faith (Eph. 3:17), and "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17. By receiving the words of Christ, therefore, we receive Christ himself; and so by building upon those words, we build upon Christ. The members of Christ's true church, therefore, are those in whom the word of Christ dwells richly.

To build upon the words of Christ is to believe them so thoroughly that they are made a part of the life, and the mainspring of every action. When it is said that Abraham "believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6), the full meaning conveyed by the Hebrew is that Abraham *built upon God*. The same idea is found in 2 Chron. 29:20, where we have the words of Joshua, "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." In reality he exhorted them to build upon the Lord, if they would be established; and contrariwise we have the words of Isaiah to Ahaz, that because he would not build upon the words of God, he should not be established. Isa. 7:9. Compare these two texts with Matt. 7:24-27. Abraham built upon God, by doing just as God commanded him; for James tells us that Abraham's obedience to the command to offer up Isaac was the fulfillment of the scripture which said, "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." James 2:23.

Applying all this to the text under consideration, we see the force of Christ's words. Peter, speaking for the twelve, said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Christ in saying, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," puts himself, as the Rock of Ages, in direct contrast with Peter. As he said that whosoever should do his words would be building on the rock, so the church is built upon the acknowledgment of Christ as the Son of the living God. Not simple lip acknowledgment, but the acknowledgment of obedience.

The remainder of the text will be considered next week under the heading, "The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven."

"Romans 3:9-12" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

Before beginning the third chapter of Romans, we must make a very brief summary of the first two chapters, in order to get our bearings. The first chapter, after the comprehensive salutation, tells of Paul's earnest desire to preach the gospel in Rome, because he is debtor to all men, and is not ashamed of the gospel; and this leads to the real opening of the epistle, in the statement that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, because in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. Then we are shown the justice of God in visiting wrath upon those whose ungodliness stands in the way of God's truth, because from the things that are made they have full opportunity to know all that may be known of God. We are then told how those who once

knew God lost their knowledge of him; and the depth of wickedness to which they fell is made known in few words. This closes the chapter. The second chapter opens with a scathing arraignment of all who know enough to condemn the wicked practices of the heathen, charging them with being in the same condemnation. The apostle goes on to show that none can escape the righteous judgment of God, who is no respecter of persons, but that Jew and Gentile alike must be judged according to the light that they have had; and the last half of the chapter brings the general charge contained in the beginning, directly home to the Jews, and shows that not only are they equally guilty with the Gentiles, but that they are in reality not Jews at all; by their violation of the law, their circumcision is made uncircumcision. Only those are Jews in whom there is no guile; and that only is circumcision which is of the heart.

The third chapter opens with a series of questions and answers, the questions being those which the apostle puts into the mouth of a supposed Jew, who objects to some of the positions taken in the preceding chapters. Paul's writings. Having stated a case and proved it by positive argument, he anticipates all possible objections, and thus presents the matter in the most vivid light. Many people misinterpret his argument, by assuming that the objections which he raises are his own, instead of regarding the questions as those raised by a supposed objector, which he quotes merely for the purpose of answering them. In this case we will examine the questions and answers in detail, and then view the conversation as a whole.

The first question that arises after the apostle has stated that disobedience makes circumcision uncircumcision, that circumcision is of the heart, and that the Gentiles who keep the law are counted as Jews and circumcised, is, "What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision?" This is a very natural question. The apostle's answer is ready,—"Much every way; chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."

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It will be understood that the word "circumcision" stands for the Jewish nation, as in Gal. 2:7-9 and Eph. 2:11, so that the two parts of verse 1 are really one question, and that when Paul says that unto *them* were committed the oracles of God, he means the Jews, who were "called circumcision." The "oracles of God" evidently mean the ten commandments. An oracle is a revelation or response made by the mouth of any divinity, whether heathen or not. The oracles of God are those revelations made by the mouth of God. This pre-eminently applies to the ten commandments, and then to the whole Bible as an expansion of that law. Stephen spoke of Moses as having "received the lively oracles to give unto us." Acts 7:38. The holy of holies in the temple was called the oracle (1 Kings 6:19, 20), because it was solely for the purpose of containing the ark which held the ten commandments. They are the "lively" or "living" oracles, because "the word of God is quick [living], and powerful." Heb. 4:12. The law was ordained to life (Rom. 7:10), and obedience to it secures life (Matt. 19:17). It is the moral representation of the living God, and is the foundation of that throne which is itself alive (Ezekiel 1), and out of which proceeds the river of life. Rev. 22:1.

To the Jews was granted the inestimable honor of being the depositaries of this law. See article entitled, "The Advantage of the Jew," pages 410, 411 of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of July 14. It was a great thing to be the people chosen by the Lord to make known his truth among the nations of earth. The law was not committed to them because they were so much better than other people; but because of Abraham's faithfulness, and God's promise to him, God honored his children in a special manner. They were "beloved for the fathers' sakes." Rom. 11:28. It was not that God had more interest in the salvation of other people, that he committed his law to them, for he is no respecter of persons, and he loved the world; but he committed the law to them in the line of the fulfillment of his covenant with Abraham; and he showed his great desire for the salvation of other nations, by giving his chosen missionary people the prestige of all his mighty acts.

But the Jews did not appreciate the honor thus bestowed upon them. Not only did they refuse to do the work assigned them, but they neglected to keep the law themselves. For their disobedience they were delivered into the hands of their enemies, and in captivity were compelled to do that which they might have done as the honored and feared of all nations. By the godly life of some of the Jews, who in captivity were advanced to high positions, the heathen learned of the true God and his laws; and the kings Nebuchadnezzar and Darius proved themselves more worthy to be depositaries of God's law than the kings of Israel had. See Daniel 4, and 6:25-28.

Nevertheless God did not entirely degrade the Jews from the high position to which he had advanced them. To his servant Daniel he gave a vision in which he confirmed the promised restoration of the Jews to their own land, and assured them that from the time of the going forth of the decree of restoration, four hundred and ninety years should be allotted to the Jewish nation, in which they could prove themselves loyal to the high trust committed to them. See Dan. 9:24-27. This four hundred and ninety years was to cover the period of Christ's earthly ministry. But in spite of God's long-suffering kindness, the Jews proved themselves unfaithful. It is true that they never again relapsed into open idolatry; but they shut themselves up to themselves, and built a partition between themselves and those whom they should have mingled with to instruct. While making their boast in the law, through breaking it they dishonored God; and finally they filled up the measure of their iniquity by rejecting the Son of God himself. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." John 1:11. Still, as God had given his word, it was needful that the gospel should first be preached to them; but when they not only refused to help on the work, but judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, they were left with nothing but the memory of a wasted opportunity.

So much for the advantage of the Jew. It was necessary to devote this much space to it, for there is a widespread misunderstanding in regard to it. Comparatively few realize that it consisted chiefly in an opportunity to do good, and not in simply having good things showered upon them. If the Jews had been faithful to their trust, they would have proved that the greatest blessing that God

can bestow on any people in this life is to give them an opportunity of working with and for him. E. J. W.
(Concluded next week.)

"The Ten Lepers. Luke 17:11-19" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

INTERNATIONAL LESSON NOTES.

(Luke 17:11-19, August 17, 1890.)

In the record of the healing of the ten lepers we have, as in the record of all miracles, proof of the divinity of Christ, and an aid to that faith which will give us eternal life. These miracles are recorded that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we might have life through his name. John 20:31. In this miracle we see in an especial manner the depth of the love of God, for we see it bestowed on those who had no appreciation of it. From a study of this miracle we shall receive additional proof in the Scripture that God "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

Leprosy is one of the most loathsome of diseases. It is constitutional, involving the whole system. It may be said to be a living, progressive death, in that, one after another, the different members of the body lose all sensibility, and finally drop off, the disease inevitably ending in death. It is a disease incurable by any means known to man. So loathsome is it that it forever shuts away its victim from the society of the uninfected.

In all these things it is a fitting type of sin. Sin is a constitutional disease—a disease affecting the whole system. The Lord says to those who have departed from him, and loaded themselves with sin: "Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." Isa. 1:5, 6. It is incurable by any means known to man. "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" Prov. 20:9. "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse." Job 9:20. "For though thou wash thee with niter, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God." Jer. 2:22. If a person is diseased in only one member, that member may be cut off, and the spread of the disease be checked in that way, if it is incurable; but when the vital organs are diseased, and the whole body is affected, there is no hope. As the leprosy separates its victims from the society of the pure, so with sin. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you." Isa. 59:2. It is possible, says one who has seen much of leprosy, for lepers who have means to secure such medical treatment as removes most of the external signs of the disease. So sinners may by their works outwardly appear unto men to be righteous, but within they are full of hypocrisy and iniquity, and all uncleanness.

But although the leprosy is so loathsome and so dangerous, Jesus did not fear it, not did he shrink from contact with it. "And, behold, there came a leper and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." Matt. 8:2, 3. It was not because leprosy was pleasant to Jesus that he touched the leper; we cannot suppose that it was any more attractive to him than to other people. But his love for men was so great that he would touch the leper, in spite of his loathsomeness, that he might cleanse him from it. So sin is not pleasant to the eyes of God; it is most loathsome. Even to our eyes it often appears hideous; how much more so must it seem to the pure and holy God. Nevertheless he so loved men that "he was made in all things like unto his brethren," that he might purify them. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21. In this we may behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

"He saw me ruined in the fall,
Yet loved me, not withstanding all;
He saved me from my lost estate;
His loving-kindness, oh, how great!"

The readiness of Jesus to touch the poor leper, and the speedy cure which followed, are designed to show to us his willingness to receive sinners, and his power to cleanse from all unrighteousness.

It was not necessary, however, that Jesus should actually put forth his hand and touch the diseased person, in order to heal him. The centurion whose servant was sick of the palsy, and who begged Jesus to heal him, understood this. See Matt. 8:5-13. So in the case under consideration, Jesus did not touch the lepers, but healed them with a word. From the case already cited, we know that this was not because he shrank from the contact. It must be to teach us the lesson that the centurion had already learned, that Jesus can speak the word, and heal at any distance. We cannot see him; we cannot feel his physical presence; yet all power is given unto him in heaven and earth, and from the height of his sanctuary, from heaven, his dwelling-place, he can heal as well as when he was present in person.

"And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed." The command to go show themselves unto the priests was in accordance with the Mosaic law. See Lev. 14:1-20. They were full of leprosy, yet they were commanded to go show themselves to the priests, as though they were cleansed. "And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed." Their faith was shown in their acting as though they were cleansed before they had any outward evidence of it. Thus they demonstrated the two scriptures, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for" (Heb. 11:1), and, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). Faith makes its own way.

"The steps of faith
Fall on the seeming void, and find
The rock beneath."

One of the ten turned back to glorify God and gave thanks. "Whoso offereth praise," says the Lord, "glorifieth me." Ps. 50:23. Ten lepers were cleansed, but only one returned to give thanks. Very many blessings are lost to men through unthankfulness. The men who once knew God, yet glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, lost their knowledge of God, and their foolish heart was darkened. Rom. 1:21. The nine lepers who returned not to give glory to God were cleansed, and God did not withdraw the healing because they did not appreciate it. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." 2 Tim. 2:13. "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt. 5:45. Yet they could not have failed to lose much that the thankful one received. Jesus said to him, "Arise, to thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." This seems to imply wholeness in a special sense. It can mean nothing less than healing both of body and soul. It is easy to see why there was this difference between him and the others. By their failure to give thanks, they showed that they were prompted only by a selfish desire for health. Having received health, they cared nothing for the beautiful Giver. Of course those who thought no more of the Lord than that, could not have received the fullness of divine blessing. And so we see right here what they lost by their failure to glorify God; they shut themselves away from his choicest blessing.

Another practical lesson may be learned from this affair. It is this, that Christ did not confine his good offices to those who had living, saving faith in him, or who would be his disciples. He "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38) because that was his nature. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Cor. 5:12. It is the goodness of God that leads men to repentance (Rom. 2:4); and so Christ, in the fullness of his love and goodness, went about a blessing to all. How often we read that "he was moved with compassion." He could not see suffering without wishing to alleviate it; and so he healed all who would allow him to do anything for them. Some were drawn by his goodness to believe in him to the saving of their souls, while others forgot him. Thus it is now; but if we consider Jesus in this light, as doing good to all, and not simply to those who were or would be his disciples, and then remember that this was but a manifestation of the love of God, we shall have a higher appreciation of that love, and will the more readily incline to yield to such unselfish goodness. E. J. W.

August 18, 1890

"The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

Last week we studied the first part of Matt. 16:18, finding out what the rock is upon which the church is built, and how we may build upon it, namely, by obeying from the heart the words of Christ, the true foundation. We have now, according to promise, to study verse 19; but first we must notice the statement, "and the

gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The word "hell," *hades*, means the grave, as it is correctly rendered in the Revised Version. How is it that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church? The idea is not that of warfare, for gates do not fight and overcome; but gates can shut people in, and close so tightly as to prevent any that are inside from escaping, and thus prevail against them. The meaning of the text is that the gates of the grave shall not prevail against the church of Christ.

Why not?-Because it is built upon him. It is firmly fastened to him, so that the foundation and the superstructure are one. Therefore whatever befalls the foundation, must likewise come to the building. The foundation in this instance occupies the same relation to the building that the head does to the body; and whatever the head shares, the body shares with it. Where the head goes, the body goes. The members of the church are joint heirs with Christ. Now Christ announces himself as the one that liveth and was dead, but is alive forevermore, and has the keys of the grave and of death. Rev. 1:18. Death and the grave were not able to hold Christ. Acts 2:24. Therefore they cannot hold those who are built upon and united to him. Because he lives, they shall live also. This is consistent with the idea that Christ is the resurrection and the life. The grave is only an incident in the lives of those who are his; it has no power over them. But this confident language could not be used if Peter were the foundation of the church. He could not save even himself, but, like all other mortals, is dependent upon Christ for life.

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

The first thing to consider is what constitutes the keys of the kingdom of heaven. A key is that which unlocks or locks; it is anything by which we gain access to any place, or which enables us to understand any given thing. Now what is it that opens heaven to mankind, and enables us to understand God?-Evidently the gospel, and nothing else. Paul says that Christ has "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1:10. Immortality stands for all heavenly blessings, as it comprises all. It is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Christ declares himself to be "he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." Rev. 3:7. In Isaiah 55:3, 4, we read: "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people." The sure mercies of David are the blessings which are assured to us through Christ, the Son of David.

While the gospel opens the kingdom of heaven to men, it also shuts out those who reject it. The apostle Paul says: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the savor of death unto

death; and to the other the savor of life unto life." 2 Cor. 3:14-16. Thus the gospel opens and shuts.

It seems plain, therefore, that when Christ

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said, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," he referred to the gospel, which he was about to commit to Peter and his associates. But how about their binding and loosing on earth, and it being bound or loosed in heaven? A text in Jeremiah will help us to understand this. In the record of the calling of the prophet, we read: "Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." Jer. 1:9, 10.

Jeremiah was only a man, yet he was clothed with wonderful power. As strong language was used concerning him as was spoken to Peter. Now how was he to root out kingdoms, and to pull down and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant them? Simply by the word of the Lord which he should speak. A prophet is simply the mouth-piece of God. He utters nothing of himself, but only as God speaks through him, and yet he maintains his individuality, so that the words are his own. It is all of man and all of God. The words of the man are also the words of God, and so whatever the man utters on earth, are the decrees of heaven. Whatever he binds or looses on earth, is bound or loosed in heaven.

It was the same with the apostles. On the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came on them, they began to speak, with tongues, "as the Spirit gave them utterance." We have before quoted the statement of Paul, that in making known the gospel he spoke, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." 1 Cor. 2:13. The same word of God, which was given to Jeremiah and Isaiah, was committed to the apostles. Peter, after quoting from Isaiah the statement that "all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever," adds: "And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." 1 Peter 1:24, 25. Therefore just as Jeremiah, as the spokesman for God, could tear down and build up nations, so the apostles, with the words of Christ in their mouths, could bind and loose, according to the will of heaven. The acts of men in such cases were not the acts of men, but of God. Men were simply the mouth-pieces of his righteous decrees.

But how about the words of Christ being addressed directly to Peter? There is no question but that Peter occupied a prominent place among the apostles. He was a natural leader, and often spoke for the others. Moreover, he was a pioneer in gospel work. In the council at Jerusalem he said: "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." Acts 15:7. But although he was the first one to preach to the Gentiles, his special work was among the Jews, as we read from Paul, concerning this same council:-

"When they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter (for he that wrought

effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles): . . . they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision." Gal. 2:7-9.

Here we find that a special dispensation of the gospel was committed to Peter, even as unto Paul. But this did not constitute him the sole guardian of the doors of heaven. As one to whom the gospel was specially intrusted, he did most certainly have the keys of the kingdom of heaven in his possession; but this special commission he shared with Paul, and to Paul was given the greater work. So the keys of the kingdom of heaven were committed to Paul as well as to Peter, and in a greater measure, since he "labored more abundantly than they all." 1 Cor. 15:10. And not only were the keys given to Peter and Paul, as pioneers in the great work of the gospel, but to all their associates, who received the same divine commission (Matt. 28:19, 20); and not only to the apostles, but to the prophets, who declared the word of the Lord. And so the church, which is the house of the living God, stands not upon any one man, nor upon any company of men, but "on the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone," and the entire foundation. E. J. W.

"The Day which the Lord Hath Made" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." Ps. 118:24. Does this refer to the first day of the week? There are many who assume that it does. On what grounds?—Simply these: It has become quite a common thing to call the first day of the week the Lord's day. This custom arose long after the New Testament was written. But having given the day that title, men now claim that every reference to the Lord's day, or to the day which the Lord made, must refer to Sunday. Thus the Bible is made to support an institution of men. There is not the slightest intimation in the psalm that any day of the week is referred to. The Lord did not make one day of the week any more than another. He made them all. Therefore it is absurd to single out any one day of the week, and say that it alone is referred to by the statement, "*This* is the day which the Lord hath made."

The day referred to in this verse is the "day of salvation," in which Christ, the head stone of the corner, opens to all men "the gates of righteousness." This day of salvation, which the Lord has made, in which he opens the gates of righteousness, is a day in which to be glad and rejoice, as the prophet says: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." Isa. 61:10. Abraham saw this day, and was glad (John 8:56), because he received the righteousness of God, through faith in Christ.

It is true that the Lord has a day of the week that he claims as specially his own, not because he made it any more than any other day, but because he reserved it to be devoted specially to him. The Lord's day is holy (Isa. 58:13), and it is the Sabbath-day. It is the seventh day that is the Sabbath. It was for an

alleged violation of that day that the Jews upbraided the disciples of Jesus, when he cleared them from the charge of Sabbath-breaking, and showed his authority to decide in the matter, by declaring that he was Lord of the day. Mark 2:23-28. This of itself is sufficient to show that the seventh day and that alone is the Lord's day.

But while this is true, it is not true that on this day any more than any other day can people enter into the gates of righteousness. The Sabbath-day is to be kept holy unto the Lord; but the Lord is just as willing to forgive sins and to grant blessings on any other day as on this day. His ear is ever open to the cry of his creatures. The Sabbath is not to be kept as a bribe to induce the lord to bestow blessings, but because of love to him for his love to us in this accepted time, the day of salvation.

"Getting Even" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

An expression that is very frequently heard among certain people is, "I'll get even with him." Everybody knows the circumstance which calls the expression forth. The speaker has received some slight or personal injury, at the hands of another, or has been slandered, and he determines to retaliate. He is going to give the other one "as good as he sent," which was all bad. In other words, one person has done a mean act, and another person is going to lower himself to the same level, in order to "get even." Isn't it strange that people never talk about getting even except when they have to lower themselves in order to do it? Would it not be more reasonable to talk about getting even with someone who has done a good act? It is true that nothing is to be done through strife and vainglory, yet we are exhorted to "provoke one another unto love and good works," and if that is done, it follows that it is proper to be "provoked" in that way. If we are anxious to have things even, let us do it by helping some fallen one up to the place where God's grace may have placed us, instead of ourselves going down to a lower plane.

"Christ Will Come" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

What is an Adventist? An Adventist is one who believes in the advent or coming of the Lord to this earth the second time. The term is specially applied to one who believes that that coming is near. Isn't it a piece of fanaticism to think that the Lord is coming to this earth again?-Not if the Bible is the word of God. That Christ will come again is just as sure as that he once came and went away. Hear his own words: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

Now it is certain that Christ did go away. Forty days after his resurrection he talked with his disciples, and renewed to them the promise of the Holy Spirit;

"and when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Acts 1:9. Now listen to the words that were immediately spoken by two heavenly messengers:-

"And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:10, 11.

He was taken up, and a cloud received him out of sight; and he is coming in like manner. With this agree the words written by John: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." Rev. 1:7.

This coming has not yet taken place. No one has seen him descending with clouds. Salvation is yet freely offered to the inhabitants of earth; but when he comes salvation will be complete. He is to come only once more, and that will end the day of salvation. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:27, 28.

It will be utterly impossible for this coming to take place and everybody not know it, for "every eye shall see him," when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise." 1 Thess. 4:16.

We have not time and space to note the signs which Christ said should precede his coming, but will only note that he expects his people to know when that coming is near. He said: "Learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it he is near, even at the doors." Matt. 24:32, 33. And the apostle Paul says, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." 1 Thess. 5:4.

In view of these plain texts of Scriptures, is not Adventism a reasonable doctrine, and worthy of earnest, candid attention? E. J. W.

"Resolutions Not Sufficient" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

The Washington correspondent of one of the New York religious weeklies writes:-

"It is rather remarkable that while the Universal Peace Congress is holding its session in London, there is more talk of war among the nations than for some time past. Here is the outbreak of a war between Nicaragua and Guatemala, and dispatches have been received in this city stating that three more of the South American republics have united with Guatemala in an offensive alliance against Salvador. Considering that the Pan-American Congress, which adjourned but a few weeks since, passed resolutions to substitute arbitration for war, people are wondering what has become of the practical carrying out of that resolution."

There is nothing so very remarkable about it. Resolutions will not change men's natures. Men may resolve to substitute arbitration for war, but that will not diminish the perilous times which the Scripture has said shall abound because men will be lovers of their own hearts. 2 Tim. 3:1, 2. It is a significant fact that none of these arbitration resolutions are passed by the heads of governments, or by those who have any voice in the management of affairs. There will never be any end of strife in this earth until He comes whose right it is, and, gathering out of his kingdom everything that offends, casts it into a furnace of fire. Matt. 13:40-42. But even when this time of destruction is most imminent, men will be tickling the ears of the world by assurances of peace and safety. 1 Thess. 5:2, 3.

"Prevailing Prayer. Luke 18:1-14" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

INTERNATIONAL LESSON NOTES.

(Luke 18:1-14; August 24, 1890.)

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought alway to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man; and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others; two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Luke 18:1-14.

It is highly probable that a majority of those who read this simple parable fail to learn the lesson from it that they should. They look at it as though it designed to teach that the unjust judge is a type of God, which cannot by any possibility be the case. If it were, then it would poorly serve the object of encouraging men always to pray, and not to grow weary. Few persons would have the heart to hold out against oft-repeated rebuffs.

The parable was spoken in order that men might, according to the Syriac, pray at every opportunity, and not grow weary. Surely this parable would not help men to that end, if it taught that God is like the unjust judge-hard to move. There

would be no encouragement in that. Such an idea does violence to the whole tenor of Scripture. Hear what the character of God is:-

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Ps. 103:13.

"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers." 1 Peter 3:12.

"And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Ex. 34:6, 7.

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy." Micah 7:18.

"I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face." Isa. 65:1-3.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8.

Add to all these the following: "Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Matt. 7:9-11. Here Christ is both compared and contrasted with earthly parents. He has the same kind of love for his children who are in need that an earthly parent has for his children, but he is infinitely greater and better, and his love for his children is as much greater than that of an earthly parent for his children, as God is greater than man. If a person, then, wishes to know how willing God is to answer prayer, let him think of his own willingness, yes, eagerness, to give his children needed things, and then multiply that degree of willingness by infinity.

Besides this, we read: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5. He does not upbraid us because we have not asked before, nor because we have squandered that which he has previously given us; when we ask in faith, he gives freely, without taunting us with our short-comings.

Now we can readily understand the parable of the unjust judge. He was utterly hardened. He "feared not God neither regarded man." It made no difference to him what people said about him. He was sure of his position for this life, and he had no thought of God and the future life. All he lived for was his own selfish pleasure. This poor widow had a just cause; but he knew nothing of justice, and paid no attention to her. But she persisted; she could not rest without having her cause decided. Her life depended on it. So she kept coming again and again, until finally the judge's comfort was interfered with. So, at last, in order

to get rid of her, so that he might enjoy his own pleasures undisturbed, he granted the widow's request.

"And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." He who concludes from this that in order to get judgment from God it is necessary to plead and urge as long as the widow did the judge, in order to overcome his indifference, or to gain his attention, maligns the character of God. The parable contrasts God with the unjust judge, instead of comparing them. If the unjust judge, with his callous heart, could be moved to do justice by the importunity of the poor widow, shall not God, who delights in mercy, avenge his own loved ones? Who can doubt it.

"Though he bear long with them." The Revised Version renders this passage literally: "And he is long-suffering over them." That deepens the contrast. The unjust judge was cruel, and had no care for man; God loves his people, and is tender and compassionate with them. What a world of encouragement there is in this, to pray at every opportunity, at every time of need, and not to grow weary, thinking that God is weary of granting our request.

"But," says one, "I thought that we had to strive, to agonize, to enter in; that the kingdom of heaven must be taken by force." Very true; we must "pray without ceasing;" but that does not necessarily mean that we must importune forever in order to get one thing. We are not heard for our much speaking; God does not wish us to be like the heathen, who imagine that the more frantic they become in their appeals, the more likely they are to be heard. Note the difference between the prayers of the prophets of Baal, and that of Elijah. 1 Kings 18:26-29, 36, 37. Consider the reverent calmness of the prayer of Christ at the tomb of Lazarus. John 11:41, 42. When we pray, we are to believe that our request is granted, and it is granted. Mark 11:22-24. The instant Daniel began to pray to God, an angel was dispatched to give him the knowledge he desired. Dan. 9:23; 10:12. Circumstances, and the interests of others, of whom we may know nothing, may delay the messenger, and our faith may thus be tested; but God is not unfaithful. By the cases and the assurances put on record, we may know of a surety that if the answer is delayed, it is coming.

But having received one petition, we are just as needy. And so we must continue "instant in prayer." We must not lose heart and become weary. Men ought to pray at every opportunity, at every time of need. This is what the Scriptures mean.

The parable of the Pharisees and the publican, which follows, emphasizes this, and shows how readily God answers prayer. It also shows what really constitutes prayer. Since the parable was spoken to those who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, it is evident that such ones do not offer prayer acceptable to God. The one who would receive anything from God must pray "in faith, nothing wavering." James 1:6. But faith does not and cannot exist in that soul that is "lifted up." Faith is dependence on another. Faith comes to a man when self goes out. The man who trusts in himself that he is righteous cannot expect to receive anything from the Lord, because he doesn't

ask for anything. Why should he? If he has righteousness by his own works, why should he ask the Lord for it?

This was the case with the Pharisee. He "stood"-struck an attitude-"and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are." He prayed "with himself," and not to God. Apparently he began by thanking God, but actually he was congratulating himself.

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." He had no confidence in himself. He did not, like the Pharisee, compare himself with others, to their disadvantage; he had no thought of others, but only of himself as the chief sinner. He used the definite article: "God be merciful to me, *the* sinner." He acknowledged his own sin, but didn't confess for anybody else. Thus he put himself directly in the class of those upon whom God delights to have mercy.

The prayer was short, but it was long enough to get all that he wanted. "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than [instead of] the other." What had he done to secure this? He had simply trusted in the Lord. He went up to the temple a sinner; he went down to his house a righteous man; not having his own righteousness, but "that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." E. J. W.

August 25, 1890

"Front Page" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

Among the seven abominations which the Bible says that the Lord hates, is "he that soweth discord among brethren." Prov. 6:19. It is worthy of note that the one who does this is classed with "hands that shed innocent blood," and "a false witness that speaketh lies." When it is remembered that a "whisperer separateth very friends," it will be seen that what is often considered as harmless gossip is not so harmless after all. It would seem as though the Lord regards a "tale-bearer," a "whisperer," or a "busybody in other men's matters," as one of the most despicable of creatures.

The *Congregationalist* remarks that there is a decrease of the use of ear-rings by women, and thinks that it is due to something more than the caprice of fashion. It says that this "indicates a distinct advance toward greater intelligence in matters of dress and personal adornment. The long pendants hanging from the delicate lobes of the ear have entirely disappeared from view, except among the barbarous people with whom the custom originated; and one rarely finds a woman nowadays who is willing to pierce her flesh for the sake of wearing the less conspicuous studs, even if they be diamonds." Whoever doubts this should observe closely, and he will find it a rare thing for thoughtful, intelligent, refined women to disfigure themselves by making their ears carriers of burdens.

"Romans 3:9-12. (Concluded .)" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

The apostle continues, "For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid." Rom. 3:3, 4. It may be noted in passing, that the expression "God forbid" is not a correct rendering of the Greek text. "Be it not so" is a literal translation, and "not by any means" would express the meaning in ordinary language. What the apostle claims in this question and answer, both of which are his own, is that God's promises to the Jews were not vitiated by the unbelief of some of them. The advantage of the Jew was great, because of the promises of God; and so sure are those promises that, notwithstanding the unbelief of the vast majority of the people, "all Israel" will yet be saved; for the place of the branches that were broken off because of unbelief will be filled by the alien branches which God will graft in. See Rom. 11:17-20; Eph. 2:12, 19.

But Paul is not content with a simple negative to the question whether the unbelief of man can nullify the promises of God. He proceeds thus to vindicate God's integrity: "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." Rom. 3:4. God's word is true, no matter how false man may prove. Not only so, but God alone is true, and every man is a liar, in the sense that he has gone contrary to the truth of God. Truth proceeds from God alone; there is not a truth in the world, not a thing of value, nothing that is worth knowing, that does not come from God. Every conception of truth that even to the faintest degree illuminates the darkness of any man's mind, is a spark kindled by the Almighty.

"As it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." This is a quotation from the Septuagint Version of Ps. 51:4. The fact that Paul, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, quoted from the Greek Version instead of the Hebrew original, is evidence that the former expresses the sense of the latter, but in another form. "That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings" is an exact rendering of the Hebrew of Ps. 51:4, and not, "that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest." But what gives the casual reader trouble with Rom. 3:4 is the clause, "and mightest overcome when thou art judged." We shall see that this is perfectly in harmony with Ps. 51:4 as rendered in the common version, "be clear when thou judgest."

Let us begin with the latter rendering. The idea evidently is that in the judgment God's righteousness will be made manifest. No matter how much men may oppose themselves to God, and cast reflections on his justice, in the judgment it will appear that he is indeed true, and that everything opposed to him is a lie. Thus God will be clear when he judges.

But the very statement that he will be clear when he judges, carries with it the idea that his decisions have been called into question, and from this it is an easy transition to the idea that he himself has been brought into judgment; that his doings are on trial. And this is just what the Scriptures elsewhere represent. The forty-first chapter of Isaiah opens with a view of a court scene, and a call for silence in the court, wherein, although God himself is Judge, he and the heathen

and their gods are on trial; and in Isa. 43:9-12 we have the idea carried out, when the nations are challenged to bring forward their proofs, and those who have seen the mighty works of God are declared to be his witnesses, testifying that he alone is Lord. In a similar sense God was on trial before the people of Israel, in the contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, when the verdict of the jury was unanimous in favor of God. See 1 Kings 18:19-39. And so God's dealings with men, especially as they appear in the judgment, are in Rom. 15:4 set forth for vividness in the light of a contest between God and men, in which God gains the victory, it being seen that he alone has justice on his side.

In Isa. 5:3, 4 the Lord asks for the judgment of the people, saying, "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?"

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And thus God condescends in all his ways to submit them to the judgment of the people, and thus he educates their sense of right and wrong. Men's judgments vary now, but in the end will be fulfilled the words of God. "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Isa. 45:23. True, the wicked will thus acknowledge God's justice, to their shame; but the righteous will for very joy of heart sing, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." Rev. 15:3, 4.

But the objector proceeds: "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?" Rom. 3:5. The parenthetical expression, "I speak as a man," is thrown in to show, what we have before stated, that this is merely a human objection. The idea of the question is this: If, as is claimed, God will come out victorious in the contest, and his righteousness will stand out in bolder relief for the contrast with the unrighteousness of men, is not God unrighteous in taking vengeance on those whose unrighteousness has thus contributed to that end? This insinuation is met with another swift negative, and the counter question, "For then how shall God judge the world?" This is an answer from fact. God will judge the world; but he would not do this if there were any unrighteousness in him.

Again the objector returns to the attack, with the same objection in another and even worse form: "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?" Rom. 3:7. The reader will readily see the similarity between verses 5 and 7. It is the same idea which Paul repudiates in Rom. 6:1, 2, that we should continue in sin that grace may abound. Taking advantage of the implied statement (Rom. 1:21) that God simply requires men to glorify him, the objector, with the most subtle sophistry, claims that since even the wickedness of man is overruled to the praise of God, therefore it is in reality not wickedness, and the doers of it ought not to be judged as sinners. This is the modern Spiritualist ground, that evil is itself good, and that God cannot punish anybody.

Disgusted, and filled with righteous indignation at such a Jesuitical argument, the apostle breaks in, "And not rather (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), Let us do evil, that good may come? Whose damnation is just." Rom. 3:8. This cannot be understood unless we read it as in the Revised Version, "And why not," etc. The idea is plainly this: Why do you not say at once, as some slanderously affirm that we say, "Let us do evil that good may come"? The statement, "whose damnation is just," refers not to the slanderers, but to those who think to escape judgment for sin by counting evil for good, or doing evil that good may come. The damnation of such is evidently just, for when they say, "Let us do evil that good may come," as the objector has in effect been saying, they convict themselves of sin.

This retort by the apostle stops the objector on that line, and he helplessly asks, "What then? Are we better than they?" This is in reality the main question at issue (see Rom. 2:17-29), and the asking of it shows that the objector has exhausted himself, and now throws the whole matter into Paul's hands for him to settle, which he does as follows:-

"No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin [see chapters 1 and 2]; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Rom. 3:9-12.

The remainder of this summing up of the charge against all men, will be taken up in the next article; enough has been quoted to answer the objector's question, and to close the controversy. And now, having noted these various points in detail, we will close by giving, in a somewhat free rendering, a general view of the dialogue, so that the reader may see the argument at a glance.

Jew-What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision? Rom. 3:1.

Paul-Much every way; chiefly that unto them was given the privilege of being the depositaries of God's law, and thus to be the light of the world; for even if some did not believe, their unbelief cannot by any means shake God's promises, for God is true though every man is a liar (compare 2 Tim. 2:13), and the judgment will vindicate him in all his ways. Verses 2-4.

J.-But if our unrighteousness enables men to see more plainly by contrast the righteousness of God, as they will in the judgment, is not God unrighteous if he condemns? Verse 5.

P.-Not by any means; for if God were unrighteous, he could not judge the world, as he certainly will do. Verse 6.

J.-Well, if the truth of God has been caused to stand out in bolder relief through my untruth; if my lie against the truth redounds to the praise of God, as it is said that the wrath of man shall praise him, why then should I be judged as a sinner? Verse 7.

P.-Why don't you say at once just what you mean, and what some slanderously report that we say, "Let us do evil that good may come"? This is just what all your talk amounts to; but all who talk that way thereby show the justness of their own condemnation.

J.-What then, are we any better than the Gentiles? Verse 9, first part.

P.-"No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one." Verses 9-12. E. J. W.

"Sunday-law Argument" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

Here is one of the anomalies of the Sunday-law argument. Mrs. Bateham told us in her lecture that the leading railroads, in deference to public sentiment, have reduced their Sunday freight traffic fully one-third. The universal verdict, said she, is favorable to the change. The managers say that it is a financial gain to them, their employÈs are delighted, their patrons make no complaint about delay in freight, and the people in the towns and villages along the lines are pleased. The managers say that the reform ought to go farther, and that not a wheel should move on Sunday. Well, then, why in the name of reason and business common sense, don't they stop Sunday traffic? If they want to do it, and the people who are concerned want them to do it, what is there to hinder them? They own their roads, and in other matters they usually do as they please; what need is there of a Sunday law in this case? Oh, says Mrs. Bateham, forgetting her admission made a minute before, they would stop if there was a law compelling all to stop, but they are afraid that somebody else will get their business. But this doesn't tally with their statement that the one-third reduction of their traffic has been a financial gain. It is a marvelous thing to us that business men should need a law to compel them to do that which they have power to do, which they want to do, which all their patrons want them to do, and which they have already demonstrated would be to their pecuniary interest.

Mrs. Bateham told us in her lecture on Monday night that the reason why France has not in the past been able to maintain a republican form of government is that she had no Sunday laws. She said that France is now seeing her mistake; the people have seen that the stability of the United States was due to its Sunday laws, and they are now vigorously agitating the question. She told us that "the maintenance of the Sabbath [Sunday] as a civil institution is an absolute necessity to the stability of any government." Such general assertions, unsupported by argument, may satisfy those who already think that a Sunday law is the panacea for all the ills that flesh is heir to; but before we accept them, we should like to have a simple historical fact explained to us. Rome existed as a republic for about five hundred years. It tolerated all religions. During this time it conquered the world, and became the strongest government that ever existed on earth. It retained its prestige under the empire for about three hundred years more. "The iron monarchy of Rome" is an apt expression of the strength of the government. All this time it had no Sunday law. Constantine came to the throne. Under his reign Rome was at the height of her glory. He enacted a Sunday law for the empire, and within a good deal less than two hundred years the Roman

Empire had crumbled to pieces. Can Mrs. Bateham or any of our Sunday-law friends explain this by their theory?

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One of the richest things in Mrs. Bateham's talk the other night was her attempt to astonish the audience by the announcement that the District of Columbia has no Sunday law. This, she said, is a late discovery. Until quite recently the people had all supposed that the District had good Sunday laws, but when a little incident called for an investigation, they found to their great surprise that there was on the statue-books nothing but an old, obsolete, colonial law. Consequently they went to work immediately to remedy this grave defect, and the Breckinridge bill was the result. Of its ignominious failure she said nothing, but expressed confidence that the next Congress would give the District a Sunday law. But what impressed us the most forcibly in her remarks was the fact that the people had got along so well for a hundred years without any Sunday law, and were perfectly happy until they found that they didn't have one. Then they couldn't rest. Isn't it terrible? Just think what a loss the District of Columbia has sustained all these years in not having a Sunday law, and no one was conscious of it! It has been in the condition of the man upon whom the Irish coroner rendered the verdict, "Dead, but not conscious of the fact."

One would naturally suppose that those whose whole life is devoted to the securing of Sunday laws, both State and national, would know all about the working of such laws in the past. Yet Mrs. Bateham, in her second lecture in Oakland, said that no trouble had ever yet resulted from Sunday laws, except in one or two cases in Missouri, where a mistake was made; although it is a matter of national report that, in Arkansas, there have been scores of cases of persecution, as also in Tennessee, and that in the latter State one man has been convicted and fined twice for the same act, and his case is now in the courts. One old man was imprisoned for months, to the lasting injury of his health, and in Georgia a man lost his life from exposure in prison. Shall we charitably conclude that the ignoring of such facts as these is due to pure ignorance?

Last Friday evening Mrs. Bateham delivered a second lecture in Oakland, to an audience of forty-two. She told us, immediately after the reading of Gen. 2:1-3, that the original Sabbath was the first day and not the seventh; that Adam's first Sabbath was the first day of the week, because "we always count time from the beginning of man's life;" that God gave the Jews the seventh day as their especial day, going back to the first day at the cross; that the fourth commandment is indefinite, requiring no special day, but only a seventh day after any six days of labor; that whether we believe that Saturday or Sunday is the Sabbath, we can all come together on this common ground, and so can work together for a Sunday law; that "a seventh day" will not satisfy the demands of a Sunday law, but it must enforce a definite day; and finally, that time has been lost, especially by the dropping out of ten days at the changing of the calendar, so that we can't tell anything about the days of the week, and that it is impossible for everybody to keep the same day anyhow. All of which was respectfully submitted to a presumably intelligent audience.

"N. R. J.' and the 'Civil Sabbath'" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

Editor SIGNS OF THE TIMES: As copied into the *American Sentinel* of July 21, I have this day read your criticism of my letter to the *Christian Statesman* of May 15. Will you admit a few lines in my own defense? For I think you misunderstand me. I am sure your readers will if they did not read my letter in the *Statesman*.

1. I do not believe in a "civil Sabbath" in the sense in which you use the words. I never have said that a "civil Sabbath," is all that I favor. I differ entirely from the majority of the California people, who ask a Sunday law merely as a police or sanitary regulation. From the first of Rev. Mr. Crafts' coming here, and all the time, I have most decidedly objected to his theory of a "civil Sunday." In the *Christian Statesman* I wrote against it; and it was because of my objection to the "civil Sunday" that I wrote what I did about the action of the State Prohibition Convention. I finally reject the secular theory of government and of education alike. Others wish only a "civil Sunday;" I wish the Sabbath of the Lord our God, the Institutor of it.

2. The only authority we have for the observance of a sabbath-the only power that has any right to require a seventh portion of time to be observed as sacred to rest and to worship, whether it be a seventh-day or a first-day Sabbath-is the divine Lawgiver, whose will is declared in the law of the fourth commandment. Neither Church nor State has any right to make law about a Sabbath. "The Sabbath was made [*i.e.*, appointed] for man." God appointed it. Governments or Legislatures have no power except to recognize it as God's law, binding upon the people, and to see that the law which forbids work be not trampled underfoot by open transgressors.

3. God is the author of all moral law. He is the source of all authority. "There is no power but of God." Governments may only find out law, the divine law, and accept and codify it as the law by which the people must be governed. Especially do governments have nothing to do in legislation in the department of religion. Governments only sphere is in civil matters.

4. The law of the fourth commandment is partly religious and partly civil. It commands religious duties: It also commands civil duties. "In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man servant, nor thy maid servant. . . . nor thy stranger that is within thy gate; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as them." That is *civil* law. Government should protect men in the enjoyment of their right. The right to rest as God requires, belongs to a servant. If the master does not grant the right to an employe, he is a transgressor of law. Government must protest the wronged. God requires it. Government is his agent. Thus government may legislate as to the enforcement of God's civil law for the protection of men in the enjoyment of God-given rights. Thus far I am in favor of a "civil Sabbath." Am I understood?

5. "Thou shalt not steal" is a moral, civil law. Governments have no power to either reject it or to modify it. The same is true of the fourth commandment. Except by moral restraints or motives the church has no power to prevent work

on the Sabbath. But a law without a penalty is no law at all. Therefore, civil government is the only and the proper power to punish the open transgression of God's civil law. Thus far I am in favor of a civil Sabbath law. But remember that the permission or obligation to legislate about Sabbath observance is derived wholly from God. Men or governments have no such authority. The religious obligation is the only one existing: *i.e.*, we should have Sabbath laws only because God requires them and for man's good. And the principle I advocate is applicable whether the first or the seventh day should be kept holy. Which is the true Sabbath is not the question here and now. I honor the convictions of those who conscientiously believe in the seventh-day Sabbath; for I beg leave to say that I do not believe in "only a civil Sabbath." I am not in favor of "only a civil Sunday law." I prefer the fourth commandment; and the people, the church, and the State that permit it to be trampled underfoot by lawless desecrators are false to God and to humanity. Yours for the truth and the right.

N. R. JOHNSTON.

We give place to the above letter of explanation, not alone as an act of courtesy to a very estimable gentleman, with whom we enjoy a pleasant acquaintance, but also for the special benefit of the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Mr. Johnston is an honored member of the National Reform Association. He was secretary of one of the early national conventions of that organization, and is a regular contributor to the *Christian Statesman*. Therefore when we read a statement from him, we feel that we read the thoughts of the National Reform Association. We shall doubtless have occasion to make frequent reference to that body in the future, and those of our readers who treasure up this letter will know, as well as anyone can know, what its principles are on the Sunday question. We will now offer a few words of comment on the letter, section by section.

1. We wish that all Sunday-law people stood where Mr. Johnston does, and would as frankly avow their belief in, and desire for, a law from a religious standpoint. We are sure that this is where they all stand, in heart; but repeated defeats on that line have taught many to conceal their real sentiments by pleading for a merely "civil Sunday." With the exception of the statement, "I totally reject the secular theory of government and of education alike," there is nothing in section No. 1 that we could not heartily second. We also "wish the Sabbath of the Lord our God," not, however, enforced by civil authority.

But by the above phrase Mr. Johnston means Sunday, which is not the Sabbath of the Lord our God. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Ex. 20:10. It was such as late as the time when Christ was on earth, and when the New Testament was written. See Mark 2:23-28. If the Lord has changed the day of his Sabbath, it has been done since his revelation was given to man, and we should like to know where the record of the change is, and to whom he committed it.

2. With the exception of the last sentence, we most emphatically say, "Good!" to section 2. But to the statement that it is the province of Legislatures to recognize God's law as binding on the people, and to see that it is not trampled underfoot, we offer a most emphatic protest. That would be a union of Church

and State, for it is simply a partnership between God and the State, by the terms of which the Lord is to enact the laws, and the State is to enforce them. This is just the same as a partnership in which one party furnishes the capital and the other does the work. God has not relegated to any inferior power the right or authority to enforce his laws. To think that he "that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers," before whom all nations "are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity" (Isa. 40:22, 17), should intrust the execution of his laws to those same comparatively insignificant creatures, is an insult to common sense, to say nothing of revelation.

It is a misapprehension of the fourth commandment, to assume that it simply forbids work on the Sabbath-day. Paul says that "the law is spiritual." If it is not spiritual, it is nothing. Just what the fourth commandment does forbid is shown by its Author in Isa. 58:13: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words," etc. Now if civil government takes it upon itself to see that men do not "trample underfoot" the fourth commandment, it must see that they do not speak their own words on the Sabbath-day. A difficult task it would be, yet as difficult a task was undertaken by the Inquisition. Only the Inquisition could determine to any degree whatever whom to punish for violation of the fourth commandment. God never established the Inquisition, but a National Reform government could not be carried on without it; therefore God has nothing to do with National Reform.

3. A queer mixture is in this paragraph. Governments have nothing to do with religion, yet they must codify and enforce divine law! Since God is the moral Governor, and human governments are to enforce his decrees, yet are to have nothing to do with religion, we may ask, Whence, then, comes religion? But why should the law of God need to be codified by human legislators? Is it not sufficiently clear and concise? The idea that poor, weak, fallible mortals can codify the laws of the Omnipotent Ruler of the universe, which were spoken by his own voice, and engraved in the flinty rock with his own finger, is too monstrous an assumption to be amusing. To codify is to epitomize; to arrange or systematize; to make an orderly collection or compendium of. It is a long step in advance of having the same thing loosely arranged. Therefore since the National Reform government would codify the laws of God, it must be a legitimate successor of that power that "opposeth and exalteth itself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped."

4. Yes, you are understood quite well. "The law of the fourth commandment is partly religious and partly civil!" We have often heard the claim made, and now propose to place it by the side of one text of Scripture. "For we know that the law is spiritual." Rom. 7:14. Can you say that, Brother Johnston? or have you information of a later date than Paul's? That cannot be, for he spoke by inspiration that which he had learned from God himself; and God does not change. Facts cannot change. If the law was spiritual in Paul's day, it is spiritual still, not partly spiritual and partly something else. The idea that the moral law is partly civil is a modern invention, conjured up by presumptuous, self-seeking

men, as an excuse for their attempt to divide honors with the Almighty. In saying this, we mean no disrespect to Mr. Johnston. Even the apostle Barnabas was once unsuspectingly carried away by dissimulation.

But, Brother Johnston, you say in paragraph one that you don't want a civil Sunday law; you are frank in your avowal of a desire for a Sunday law from a religious standpoint; then why the reference to the supposed civil

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features of the fourth commandment as an aid to your plea? Why detract from its complete and perfect morality, and make it partly secular, when you don't want a secular Sunday law? We can answer. It is because nobody can argue for Sunday laws without involving himself in hopeless inconsistencies.

If the reference to "gates" in the fourth commandment be construed as referring to city gates, then the whole commandment must be considered as addressed to the government, and not to the individual. But it is actually addressed individually to every man. Each man is to keep the Sabbath; his son and his daughter must likewise keep it; his man-servant and his maid-servant must also keep it; and also the stranger within his gates. That is, all who are upon the man's premises must keep the Sabbath, because if they worked, it would be the same as if he worked.

It is true that government must protect a man in the enjoyment of God-given rights; but that does not signify that it must force a man to accept that which he does not regard as a right, but which he thinks is positively wrong. Protection and compulsion are widely different. Government must protect the wronged. If a servant wishes to keep Sunday, and his employer by force and power compels him to work, then he may appeal to the law for protection, and so may any man who is forcibly deprived of his liberty. But we must confess that we have never heard of such a case since the abolition of slavery. In these days when employÈs strike for the most trivial causes, and almost every laborer belongs to some organization which assumes the right to dictate to the employer just how far he may go in any case, it is sheer nonsense to talk of men being compelled to work on Sunday against their will.

5. In this section we have the climax. "'Thou shalt not steal' is a moral civil law." The Bible knows nothing of any such mongrel. "The law is spiritual." It is wholly spiritual. He who keeps it only outwardly does not keep it at all. Read the Saviour's dissertation on the law, in Matt. 5:19-28, and his denunciation of hypocrites, in Matt. 23:25-28. Thousands of men who have never been guilty of any act of which the State could take notice, have lived in daily violation of the eighth commandment, as well as the seventh, and others.

But what shall we say to this: "But a law without a penalty is no law at all. Therefore, civil government is the only and the proper power to punish the open transgression of God's civil law," which is the *moral* law of ten commandments. God says, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay;" but National Reform says that God hasn't the power, and that if human governments do not administer the penalty, sin must go unpunished. Christ says that God has given the Son authority to execute judgment, and that he will do this when he comes from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire (see John 5:27; 2 Thess. 1:7-9); but National Reform

says that human governments must execute judgment now, or else the sinner will go free. Could any worse insult to the majesty of Jehovah be invented? Mr. Johnston is a minister of the gospel, and we know that he is personally devout and reverent; therefore we feel the more astonished that he should champion a cause which puts man above God; yea, which sets man on the throne of judgment, and relegates God to obscurity.

We have studied brevity in noticing these points, for our space is limited; but we trust that all the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES can see that opposition to Sunday laws, and to the theory which underlies them, is not simply a matter of protesting against a possible injustice to a few men. It is a religious duty incumbent on everyone who has any regard for the honor of God. Human government is secular, and only secular; that is, it pertains wholly to this world and to worldly affairs. God is the only moral governor; his government is the only moral government; his law is the only moral law; and it is wholly moral. With it man has nothing to do but to obey it. The duty of the king is identical with that of the humblest subject. Both are alike answerable to God, and to him alone, for violation of it. So broad are its requirements, that no one can keep them except through the grace of Christ; no one can boast over another; and no one can get beyond simple, personal obedience to it, so that he can act as an overseer to his fellows.

To those who assume to exercise the prerogatives of God, he will say at the last day, "Who hath required this at your hands?" and like the man in the parable, they will be speechless; for "the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." E. J. W.

"Entering the Kingdom. Luke 18:15-30" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

INTERNATIONAL LESSON NOTES.

(Luke 18:15-30; August 31, 1890.)

Verses 15-17 relate the bringing of children to Jesus, the rebuke of the disciples, and his call for children to come to him. There is not in this, as is sometimes assumed, the slightest hint of infant baptism. Infants that have not come to an age where they can understand right and wrong for themselves, are special subjects of God's favor. By virtue of Christ's sacrifice they share in the universal redemption from the death which results from their being descendants of Adam. They do not have to be baptized in order to be made alive from this death, for that is promised to the wicked as well as to the good. But being made alive from this death, they cannot suffer the death which is the penalty of sin, for they have never had personal guilt. Consequently they are saved by God's grace, the same as all who are saved, but without baptism, for it is impossible for them to comply with the conditions of baptism; they can neither believe nor disbelieve.

Since God is so merciful toward the infants, it naturally follows that he will gladly receive the children who come to him voluntarily, no matter how young they may be. When we say there is no authority for infant baptism, we do not say that sometimes very young children may not properly be baptized. As soon as a child is old enough to believe in Christ, it is old enough to be baptized. And that children are capable of understanding and accepting the gospel, yea, that they can understand and receive more readily than adults, is shown by verse 17: "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein." He does not say that children are to receive the kingdom as old people, but that all are to receive it as children. This does not mean that people must become childish, but that they must have the simple, trusting faith of children. The belief of children is made the model. It is strange that, in the face of such a scripture as this, any should ever question the propriety of receiving into the church children who give evidence of a knowledge of Christ.

"And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, that is, God." This was not a modest disclaimer on the part of Christ of the epithet "good." He did not mean to imply that he was not good, for that would have been to deny himself. Says the psalmist, "He is my Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him." Ps. 92:15. Peter says that he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." 1 Peter 2:22. Paul says that he "knew no sin." 2 Cor. 6:21. John says, "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin." 1 John 3:5. He was absolute goodness personified, for it is in him that we are to be made the righteousness of God. 2 Cor. 5:21. Then what must he have meant when he said to the young ruler, "Why callest thou me good?" Simply this, that he himself was God. "The Word was God," and "the Word was made flesh." John 1:1, 14. At the very outset Jesus took advantage of the young man's form of expression to let him know that he was standing in the presence, not of a pious Jewish rabbi, but of divinity in the form of humanity. He took this striking way of intimating to the ruler that the one whom he was asking what he should do to inherit life, was the author of life, the one who had it to bestow, and who could therefore answer his question with authority.

The narrative in Matthew is a little more complete than in Luke. We quote from the former. Jesus, having incidentally shown his high position and authority, as we have seen, answered the young man's question thus: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matt. 19:17. Passing by for the moment the answer of Jesus, we note the young man's reply. "He saith unto him. Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?" Verse 18-20.

In view of the last statement made by the young man, the question, "Which?" was a most natural one. When Christ said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," there was no doubt in the young man's mind as to what was meant. Every Jew was instructed in the law, and this young man was a ruler. But he was struck with astonishment that Christ should use such language to him,

who prided himself on his obedience to the law. His question, "Which?" was almost equivalent to a challenge to Christ to tell him what he ought to do that he had not done. He in reality thought that he lacked nothing.

"If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." They are the rule of life, and will be the standard in the judgment. "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12:13, 14. And since the commandments are to be the standard of character in the judgment, it follows that everyone whose character is in harmony with them will have eternal life. So we read, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22:14. This was the condition of eternal life from the beginning. See Deut. 11:26, 27; 30:15-19.

But if this is the condition of eternal life, and the young man had kept all the commandments from his youth up, how could it be that he lacked anything to enable him to inherit eternal life? This is just the point; he hadn't kept them. Christ tested him on the last, which really underlies the whole. Said he, "Sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." This test the ruler could not endure. He loved wealth more than he loved God; he loved this world more than the next. He did not love his neighbor as himself, and he had other gods beside the one God. While rendering outward obedience to all the commandments, he had unconsciously been breaking them all in spirit.

The one thing lacking in his case was to follow Christ. Jesus did not mean that he should add following him to obedience to the commandments, for, as we have seen, he had not kept the commandments. The one thing lacking to a perfect obedience to the commandments was to follow Christ, without whom nothing can be done. Eternal life can be had only on condition of keeping the commandments; but no one can keep the commandments without Christ. So Christ is the one thing needful. Having him, we have everything.

The young man was one of the Jews who had followed after the law of righteousness, but who had not attained unto righteousness, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. Rom. 9:31, 32. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Heb. 11:6. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." Rom. 10:4. This does not mean that he puts an end to the law, for he himself declares that the law is the test of fitness to enter heaven. But in him the end of the law, which is righteousness and peace (see Isa. 48:18), is found; for "he is our peace," and we are "made the righteousness of God in him." And so we have "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" inseparably joined together. Neither can exist without the other. There can be no keeping of the commandments outside of Christ (John 15:5; Heb. 11:6), and whoever is united to Christ will keep the law, for Christ is the personification of the righteousness of God.

September 1, 1890

"The Original Sabbath" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

In view of the agitation of the Sunday question, and the attempt to base Sunday laws upon the Bible, it is well for all to be thoroughly informed as to what the Bible does say about the Sabbath. Nor is this so difficult a matter as many suppose. They listen to some Sunday-law lecturer, who glibly repeats over a series of statements about the Sabbath, which he has culled from some book, and which he has no idea of proving, and they become bewildered, and say, "It is no use for us to try to settle this matter; if teachers of theology are so disagreed, how can we hope to understand it?" Now we do not blame them for becoming discouraged from trying to understand what men say about the Sabbath; but what the Bible says is so simple that a child could not become confused by it. It is true that there are some things in the Bible that are hard to be understood. The doctrines of election, and foreordination, and predestination, may require much hard study in order to be understood; but it is a fact that all those difficult subjects do not involve practical duty. A man may be a good Christian, and still be unable to make any statement in regard to them. But everything which involves a practical duty is very plain. It does not require that a person shall be highly educated to know what murder is, and that it is wrong. A man need not take a college course to understand how to be honest; and a man who does not know the multiplication table may know what would be a violation of the ninth commandment as well as a man who can measure the distances of the stars. So it is with the fourth commandment. It enjoins upon all the observance of the Sabbath, and therefore it is so plain that the most ignorant can understand it. Let us see what the Bible says about it.

Going back to the very beginning, we read the account in Gen. 2:1-3: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God had ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." That is the record of the making of the Sabbath.

How was it made? God rested, blessed, and sanctified, or set apart, the day. What day did he rest upon, bless, and set apart?—The seventh day. Which seventh day?—The seventh day of the week, for that is the only period of time consisting of seven days. It is the Sabbath which marks the week. According to the inspired narrative, the first six days of time were spent in the work of creating the heavens and earth and all that they contain; and the creation week was completed by a day of rest.

For whom was the Sabbath made? Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man." Mark 2:27. Of what day of the week was he speaking?—Of the seventh day, the day which the Jews then kept, and which they have always observed. The Pharisees had charged his disciples with violating the Sabbath. Jesus cleared them from that charge, and claimed for himself the high honor of being Lord of

the Sabbath,-the very Sabbath which the Jews held as sacred. That showed his ability to decide what was and what was not Sabbath-breaking.

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But now the claim comes in that the Sabbath which the Jews kept was another day from the original Sabbath. This is the sum of a book which Dr. Briggs, of California, wrote on the Sabbath. His statement is that in the beginning God sanctified the day which we now call Sunday, but that the people so perverted it and devoted it to the worship of the sun, that he had to give the Jews a fresh day, uncontaminated by heathen worship, when he took them from Egypt. Accordingly he gave them the day before, which was their Sabbath until the crucifixion, when the calendar was slipped forward another notch, and the original Sunday was given to the people. This theory the doctor says he has arrived at by "much study, *self-searching*, and close thinking." We don't doubt it; but if he had searched the Bible instead of himself, he would not have broached so baseless a theory.

Now note how quickly such fog vanishes before the sunlight of truth. We will allow that the Sabbath was given to the Jews at the exodus. This does not indicate that they did not have it before, any more than the fact that God made himself known to them at that time indicates that he was previously unknown. How did he make the Sabbath known to them? Listen to Nehemiah's inspired prayer: "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments; and madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath." Neh. 9:13, 14. He made known the Sabbath upon Sinai. Now the only thing spoken on Sinai in regard to the Sabbath was the fourth commandment, which reads thus:

"Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20:8-11.

What day was declared from Sinai to be the Sabbath?-"The seventh day," the very day that in the beginning was made the Sabbath. God simply declared anew an old truth. He did not say that from that time the seventh day should be the Sabbath, but that "the seventh day *is* the Sabbath." How did it become such? For answer he repeats just what we have recorded in Gen. 2:1-3, that in six days the Lord made all things, and then rested upon the seventh day, which thus became the Sabbath; and then it was blessed and set apart as the Sabbath for man.

The original Sabbath, therefore, from creation, was the same day that it was from the exodus to the cross. And the same day that was the Sabbath during Christ's earthly ministry continued to be the Sabbath for all time afterwards. The Bible knows no other Sabbath. Did the reader ever stop to think that the very day that the Jews kept is throughout the New Testament called the Sabbath? "Oh," says someone, "the writers of the New Testament were Jews, and would naturally use language that they were accustomed to." No such thing. The writers

of the New Testament were Christians; they wrote for Christians. Not only so, but they did not write their own words. The apostle Paul throws light upon the source of their words and teaching, when he says:-

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." 1 Cor. 2:12, 13.

The Holy Spirit, then, is the source of the words of the Bible. The names which it gives to things are the names which God designs that they shall bear. Now everywhere in the New Testament the seventh day is by the Holy Spirit called the Sabbath; and this was all written years after the crucifixion. The Holy Spirit called it so because it was so. Therefore the conclusion is self-evident, that the same day which was the Sabbath ever since. This is plainly revealed; and "those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." E. J. W.

"No Justification by the Law" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

"What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:9-20.

As we said in our last article, the first part of this passage, down to verse 18, is an answer to the last question raised by the Jewish objector: "What then? Are we better than they?" These verses bring us to the point where the apostle completes the foundation of his argument, and is ready for the climax. We have seen that the first chapter relates to the degradation of the heathen; the second chapter shows the Jews to be in the same condemnation; and in the verses just quoted, the apostle quotes scripture after scripture to corroborate his statements concerning both classes. We need not go into the niceties of the signification of the different terms employed; the charge is plain enough for all to understand. Only two clauses claim special attention.

"And the way of peace have they not known." This is in harmony with the previous statement, "They are all gone out of the way." It is evident that the way from which they have departed is the way of peace. Now what is the way of

peace? Let the Bible answer. The Lord says, "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Isa. 48:18. Says the psalmist, "Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them." Ps. 119:165. Disobedience to the law which governs the universe, is rebellion against God, as he said to Isaiah: "Now go, write it before them in a table, and not it in a book, that it may be for the time to come forever and ever; that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord." Isa. 30:8, 9. When men cease their rebellion, and lay down their arms, there is peace; so there can be nothing but peace when men yield to the commandments of God.

The way of peace, from which men have departed, is God's way, and he says to sinful men: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isa. 55:8, 9. That is, the ordinary plane of men's thoughts and actions is as much lower than the plane of God's thoughts and actions, as expressed in his law, as the earth is lower than the highest heaven. This is important to bear in mind while reading verses 19 and 20.

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law," or within the sphere of the law. We will not take time at this point to explain the phrase "under the law," because the term is really not found in this place. There is a vast difference between the Greek here translated "under the law" and that which is properly so rendered in Rom. 6:14, and Here the meaning is strictly "in the law" the Greek being the same as in Rom. 2:12-15. "As many as have sinned *in the law*." The meaning of the phrase "in the law," in Rom. 2:12-15 was seen to be, *having the law*, that is, the written law, in distinction from those who have the written revelation. The statement that the law speaks to those who have it, is very plain, but as in Rom. 2:12-15 it was shown that none are really without law, but that those who are spoken of as without law are in the law only to a less degree than those that have written revelation, so it is here. For mark:-

"What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under in the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

Now it is evident that the law cannot condemn any who are not within its jurisdiction. A law peculiar to England cannot declare a citizen of the United States guilty, even though he does the things which it forbids. But the consequence of what the law of God says, is the world stand guilty before him; therefore the law of God speaks to every man in the world.

This nineteenth verse of the third chapter of Romans stands as a perpetual bar to the limiting of God's law to the Jewish nation. It proves that that law is world-wide in its requirements. By it both Jew and Gentile are proved to be under sin. It was spoken to the Jews, it is true, but only that they might in turn speak it to the Gentiles; and if they failed in their duty in this respect, then the Gentiles would perish in their iniquity, and their blood would be required at the hands of those to whom the message of truth was given. See Eze. 33:2-8; Rom. 2:12.

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

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This is the grand conclusion of the apostle's argument, so far as the law alone is concerned in its relation to sinful men. It is so reasonable that anybody can see it, and so just that no one ought to lay anything to the charge of the law, on account of it. It is a fact that every soul, both of Jews and Gentiles, is guilty before God. Now what can the law do? Can it justify them? To justify means to make righteous, or to declare righteous. But they are not righteous, therefore the law cannot say that they are. If it did, it would not be a good law. The fact that it will not justify sinners-will not declare them righteous-is a standing proof that it is good. So, instead of burying the law because it will not justify sin for us, we should applaud it.

Neither can the law make a sinner righteous. No law can do that, any more than a guideboard can carry a person in the direction which it points. The law says, Do, and thou shalt live. The law speaks; it is the province of the man to do. If he does what the law says, it will witness to his righteousness; if he does not do what the law say, it will declare him guilty. It can do no more nor less. But no man has done the law, therefore none can be justified by it. Thus we see that there is no conflict between Rom. 2:13 and Rom. 3:20.

A doer of the law is one who has always done it. If a man has failed in only one particular, he cannot be called a doer of the law, for the simple reason that he hasn't done it all. Therefore on this account he can never be justified by the law. But what is more, the law of God is so holy, so broad and high in its requirements, that no fallen man can ever attain to its full measure. Remember that we are now speaking of fallen man alone, in his relation to the law. Therefore, while the law is the expression of the righteousness of God, which men are commanded to seek, it is a fact that no man can get any righteousness out of it. His best efforts come short of the high standard which the law sets, and just to the extent that they fall short are they sinful. We may not say that the law condemns a man for his best deeds, but it is true that it condemns him for that which he fails to do even with his best efforts. And so it is a fact that the best efforts that any unaided human being can put forth to attain to the righteousness of the law, will really result in adding to his condemnation, as they add to the sum of his failures.

Who, then, can be saved? A vast multitude which no man can number. But how will they attain the necessary righteousness, since the law, which is the expression of God's righteousness, will not impart any to them? The problem is solved in the next few verses of the third chapter of Romans, a consideration of which must be deferred till the next article.

"Throughout Their Generations" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

We are told that God never intended that Gentiles should have anything to do with the Sabbath; that it was made only for the Jews. This text is quoted: "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath

throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed." Ex. 31:16, 17.

Well, one thing is certainly proved by this text, and that is that it is right for Israelites to keep the seventh-day Sabbath. The words "throughout their generations," "perptual," and "forever" show that so long as there are generations of Israelites, they must observe the Sabbath. We pass by for the present the statement that "Gentile Christians" are not under obligation to keep the seventh day. Be that as it may, it is certain that Jews are in duty bound by the unalterable command of God to keep the seventh day.

But here we are reminded that the promises of God are all to Israel. See Rom. 9:4. Those who are "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel," have no hope, and are "without God in the world." Eph. 2:12. It is Israel that is to be "saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." Isa. 45:17. And not only a part, but "all Israel shall be saved." Rom. 11:26. True, many who are Gentiles will be saved, but it will not be as Gentiles; they must be grafted into the stock of Israel. To be a Jew indeed is to be one who has praise of God. Rom. 2:29. So desirable is the position, that even many who are of this "synagogue of Satan" will falsely claim to be Jews. Rev. 3:9. It is with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that the redeemed from all nations are to sit down in the kingdom of God, and they will do so as children of Abraham. See Matt. 8:11; Gal. 3:20.

Now since Christians are those who are Christ's, and all who are Christ's are Abraham's seed, it follows that all Christians are Israelites, for the promise to Abraham was through Isaac and Jacob. And since the children of Israel are commanded to keep the Sabbath "throughout their generations," it follows that the keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath is especially enjoined on Christians. And since Israel is to be saved with an everlasting salvation, it follows that their generations are to continue throughout eternity; and so "it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." Isa. 66:23.

September 8, 1890

"Front Page" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

How many Christians think when they engage in the celebration of the Lord's Supper that it touches both advents of Christ? Paul says: "For as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death *till he come*." 1 Cor. 11:26. To the man who does not believe in the second coming of Christ, the celebration of the Lord's Supper cannot mean anything. Do you say that it is even to such a one an emblem of Christ's death? Of what use is it to celebrate his death, if he be not coming the second time to complete the work of redemption? He was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification, and to those who look for him he will appear again, for their salvation. The death and resurrection of Christ are really a pledge that he will come again; for Christ's

resurrection is the pledge of the resurrection of all who are his, and the resurrection of the dead cannot take place till he comes. See 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:15-17.

"How Righteousness Is Obtained" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justified of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay; but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also; seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." Rom. 3:21-31.

After reading the above, read thoughtfully the preceding verses of the chapter, in order that the connection may be kept. Remember that the main point already made in the chapter is that all men-both Jews and Gentiles-have sinned in the sight of God; all are amenable to the law of God, and all are condemned by it; and therefore it is impossible for any to be justified by it. It cannot declare those righteous who have broken it, and its requirements are so pure and lofty that no fallen man has strength to fulfill them. Therefore no man can obtain any righteousness by the law; and yet without holiness-perfect conformity to the law-no man can see the Lord. Heb. 12:14. But some will see the Lord (see Rev. 22:3, 4), therefore they must get holiness in some other way than by the law. How this can be is the problem, since the law is the complete and perfect expression of the righteousness of God. The scripture at the head of this article solves the problem. Let us note it carefully.

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested." Ah! That gives hope. But, hold! Are we not in danger of being led astray? Dare we trust in a righteousness that is obtained apart from the law? Well, since we can't get anything from the law itself, we shall have to get it apart from the law if we have any at all. But don't be alarmed, for remember that this righteousness which we are to get without or apart from the law, is "the righteousness of God." Why, that's just what the law is! Exactly; there can be no real righteousness that is not the righteousness of God, and all that righteousness is set forth in his law. Where and how we are to get it we shall see presently; but note first that it is "witnessed by the law and the prophets." It is such righteousness as the law will give its sanction to. Now where is it to be obtained?

"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." And so we have the strongest evidence that we shall not be put to shame before the law, if we can only obtain this righteousness. For we know that Christ, as part of the Godhead, is equal with the Father. He is the Word, and is God. As the Word, the manifestation of Him whom no man hath seen, he spoke the law with his own voice. He spoke it "as one having authority," "for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Therefore if we get the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ, it is evident that we shall have the righteousness which the law requires, because we get it from the Fountain-head. Our righteousness comes from the same source that the righteousness of the law does.

How do we get it?-By faith. How else could we get it? Since it is impossible for any to get righteousness by the deeds of the

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law, it is evident that it must come by faith, as a gift. And this is in keeping with the statement that "the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Someone says that it doesn't seem possible that we could get righteousness in this way. But think a moment; "sin" and "righteousness" simply denote our relation to God. Now if there is a way by which he can, consistently with his justice, count us righteous, he has a right to. Who shall say that he may not do what he will with his own?

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Cor. 5:19. In giving his only begotten Son for the world, it was the same as though he gave himself; he did give himself. And since the Just died for the unjust (1 Peter 3:18), God can be just and count as righteous the one who will have faith in Jesus.

"Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay; but by the law of faith." The term "law" as used in this verse has no reference to a code, or to any set rules laid down. It must be considered rather as having the sense of "principle." We are justified, not on the principle of works, but on the principle of faith. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." No other conclusion can be arrived at from what has gone before. By the deeds of the law there can no flesh be justified, for all have sinned, and those who obtain righteousness obtain it freely as a gift, through the graciousness of God. This excludes boasting. No one can boast of what he has done, for he has done nothing of which a good man would boast. Only good deeds are worthy to be boasted of; but the goodness that we have is given us by the Lord, and so we cannot boast of that. As Paul says elsewhere: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? 2 Cor. 4:7. There is no chance for boasting except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are a few expressions in the portion already passed over that must have more attention. One is, "To declare his righteousness for the remission of sin that are past." This must not be taken as indicating that the grace of God exhausts itself in pardoning sin, and that for our future life we must stand alone. No; if that were true, boasting would not be excluded. We are as dependent on Christ for the continued manifestation of his righteousness in us as for the first

exhibition of it. He says: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me, . . . for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:4, 5. But God's grace does not remit any sins except those that are past. Sins that are not past have no existence. To remit or pardon them before they are committed would simply be to grant indulgence or license to sin; only the Pope has presumed to do that, and in so doing he has set himself above God.

Note also that the righteousness by faith of Jesus Christ is "unto all and upon all them that believe." On the word rendered "unto," Prof. James R. Boise has this excellent note: "Not simply *unto*, in the sense to, towards, up to, as the word is commonly understood; but *into* (in the strict and usual sense of *eis*), entering into the heart, into the inner being of *all those who have faith*." This is exactly in accordance with God's promise in the covenant: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." Jer. 31:33. The righteousness that comes by faith is not superficial; it is actual; it is made a part of the individual.

And let no one lose sight of the grand fact that not for a moment can anybody escape from the law. The law is ever present. The gospel does not absolve from obligation to it; on the contrary, the gospel emphasizes our obligation, in that it exists for the sole purpose of bringing us into a state of perfect obedience to the law. The man who imagines that faith leads away from the law, does not know what faith is, nor what it is for. Faith can be exercised only toward Christ, who is its author and finisher. He alone has been set forth as the object of faith. But he has been set forth only "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21. Says Paul again: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10. The antinomian is not the man who has genuine faith in Christ. He cannot be, for if he has Christ, he must have the law; for Christ is the embodiment of the law.

And now for a very brief summary of the verses that we have commented upon. First, all are guilty, condemned by the law, so that they cannot get from it the righteousness which it requires. They try again and again, but in vain; they cannot turn aside its just condemnation. But now Christ appears on the scene. He is the one whence the law derives all its righteousness, and he promises to give it freely to all who will *accept* it. This he can do, because grace, as well as truth, comes by him. The sinner accepts Christ, tremblingly, yet knowing that it is his only hope. Christ covers him with the robe of righteousness (Isa. 61:10) and puts his righteousness into his heart. He takes away the filthy garment, and clothes him with change of raiment, saying, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee." Zech. 3:3-5. And now the law, which before condemned him, witnesses to his righteousness. It engages to go into court and defend anyone upon whom is found that righteousness, for it is its own righteousness. And so the man who was almost in despair because he could not get righteousness of the law, and who turned from it, finds it in its perfection in Christ.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear

what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John 3:1-3. This hope and purification work reciprocally. The hope that when Christ comes we shall see him as he is, and be like him, must necessarily tend to purity of life. A man cannot possess that hope without becoming purer. And purity of life makes more certain the hope; for the promise is that the pure in heart shall see God. What makes this hope the more real is that the possessor has a partial fulfillment of it even in this life. Only those will see God as he is who have made his acquaintance here. By faith they see him now, as Moses, who "endured as seeing him who is invisible." Acquaintance and association with God and the angels must be begun in this life if it is to be continued in eternity.

"Hope" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John 3:1-3. This hope and purification work reciprocally. The hope that when Christ comes we shall see him as he is, and be like him, must necessarily tend to purity of life. A man cannot possess that hope without becoming purer. And purity of life makes more certain the hope; for the promise is that the pure in heart shall see God. What makes this hope the more real is that the possessor has a partial fulfillment of it even in this life. Only those will see God as he is who have made his acquaintance here. By faith they see him now, as Moses, who "endured as seeing him who is invisible." Acquaintance and association with God and the angels must be begun in this life if it is to be continued in eternity.

"A Good Utterance" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

On the evening of August 26, a banquet was given in the First Congregational Church, Oakland, Cal., by the Congregational Club, in honor of Rev. Dr. R. R. Meredith, of Brooklyn, N.Y., who was its guest. Many pastors of Congregational Churches in San Francisco and the surrounding towns, were present.

In response to several addresses, in which warm fraternal sentiments were expressed toward himself, Dr. Meredith said that two thoughts had been uppermost in his mind during his journey across the continent, and his thirty days' visit on the coast. These thoughts were Christianity and the country. Of the former, he said: Strictly defined, its essential spirit is a missionary spirit. From its institution down to this day, its true work has been missionary work. The church, which is the embodiment of Christianity, is necessarily a missionary society; that and nothing else. Jesus Christ, the author of Christianity, and the founder of the

church, was himself strictly a missionary; for he came to *seek* and to save them that were lost.

As to the country, he firmly believed that God had, for centuries before it was settled, kept his hand upon this land for a peculiar purpose, keeping out the old nations until an appointed time. And this peculiar purpose, he believed, was to establish on this continent a nation in which the political and religious institutions should be kept utterly separate; in short, a nation in which there should be not the shadow of a union of Church and State, and no State support for church schools. And he thanked God for that purpose; for Christianity needs no aid, no support, from the State. Christianity has power within itself to stand alone; to accomplish its own mission; and should the day ever come in this country, when the church, as in an hour of great temptation in the third century join hands with the State to accomplish her aims, that will be her day of peril, and will seal the fate of the country.

So far as Dr. Meredith's utterance is concerned, it is all right, but the trouble is, he does not realize what may constitute a union of Church and State. The fact that he says, "Should the day ever come in this country when the Church. . . joins hands with the State to accomplish her aims," etc., shows that he does not realize that the church is quite generally doing that very thing now, in asking the State to teach religion in the public schools, and to maintain Sunday observance. And so, in spite of his opposition to Church and State union, he may be expected to lend a hand to help it on. Yet we are glad of such utterances, for they call people's attention to the

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danger attending a union of Church and State, and so prepare them to oppose it when we show them that the principle of such union is embodied in Sunday legislation.

"An Unanswerable Argument" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

Here is positively the very latest thing in the line of arguments against the Sabbath of the Lord. It is from an article in the *World's Crisis* of August 20. We are thus particular in giving the credit, lest it should be doubted that anybody is capable of evolving such an argument:-

"Why do people want to keep the seventh day? No one will ever get any credit from God for so doing. Let me hear call your attention to a point that I have never read in print, and maybe somewhat new. When Paul was telling Timothy what should transpire in the last days, making them perilous, he mentions a score or more features, but says nothing about Sabbath-breaking. To my mind this is an unanswerable argument against the seventh day been binding."

We think that this is not only "somewhat new," but altogether new. We freely allow to the writer all honors of its discovery. Paul didn't mention Sabbath-breaking in his list of last-day horrors, therefore the seventh day cannot be binding! Very well, let us go on. Paul said not a word in that list about stealing, therefore the eighth commandment cannot be binding, and must be right to steal. He didn't mention drunkenness, therefore the temperance societies are all anti-

scriptural. He said nothing about the worship of graven images, therefore, to the mind of the discoverer of the new anti-Sabbath argument, this is doubtless an unanswerable argument against there being anything wrong in idol-worship.

We confess that we are disgusted with such folly. We were going to call it childish reasoning, but we have too high an opinion of children's logic. No child would argue in such a way. We have this apology to make for taking the space to notice it: We know that it is not worth answering, but it is an excellent specimen of the extremities to which men are driven in their fight against the Sabbath. The fact that men with presumably fair sense can call such an assemblage of words an unanswerable argument against the seventh day being binding, is a strong argument in its favor.

As to the idea of keeping the Sabbath in order to get credit, we have only to say that we don't expect any. After we have done all, we shall be obliged to confess that we are "unprofitable servants;" we shall have done only our duty. Eternal life will come as a gift. But if we get no credit for doing what we are plainly commanded to do, what will be the case if we fall short of that? Here is something that our friend will do well to consider.

"Millennial Conversion" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

The *Evangelist* (Presbyterian) says:-

"Is it a pleasing fact to look in the face, that our church through the past seven years has added to its ranks from the world not quite *four* each year for every hundred of its members? At this rate, it will need centuries to complete its conquests, for its numbers would be doubled only after eighteen and a half years."

It certainly is not a pleasing fact, from whatever standpoint it is looked at. And it would seem to be quite a discouraging factor for those to look at who think that the world is to be converted before the coming of the Lord. The number of heathen born every year is greater than the number of converts to Christianity in the whole world. Will the result be to open men's eyes to the truth that the coming of the Lord to judgment will alone put an end to wickedness?-No; finding that the millennium will not come through preaching, but, on the contrary, wickedness increases, they will foolishly think to make people Christian by legal enactment. When they induce all nations to pass "Christian laws," then, in the midst of still existing wickedness, they will cry, "Peace and safety," when sudden destruction will come. 1 Thess. 5:2, 3. The doctrine of the temporal millennium will be responsible for the lack of preparation on the part of thousands.

"Protestantism and Persecution" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

In his speech before the National Convention of Teachers, at St. Paul, Archbishop Ireland said:-

"I would permeate the regular State school with the religion of the majority of the children of the land, be it as Protestant as Protestantism can be, and I would,

as they do in England, pay for the secular instruction given in denominational schools according to results."

We have argued many times that such a course would be a complete union of Church and State, although it is just what thousands of professed "reformers" in United States are clamoring for. But the views which we have often stated are put so well by the *Independent* that we gladly give place to them. Speaking of the archbishop's plan, it says:-

"We Protestants cannot accept it. We do not want the State to make our public schools 'as Protestant as Protestantism can be.' We do not trust the State enough for that. We do not want the State to interfere with our religious matters. We cannot depend on the State to provide the sort of teachers always to whose religious instruction we are willing to commit our children. We know too well what that means. If the State can see to it that in its schools the children are taught its own Protestant religion, then it can say that this is a Protestant country, and that we do not want any but Protestants to come here; that other religions

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are foreign and un-American, unpatriotic and seditious; that Catholic parochial schools are a menace to our Protestant institutions, and if Catholic schools, then Catholic Churches; and the step is not a long one, and is a most logical one, to persecution. A State Church means persecution. There is always a quarrel until you have either an absolute, persecuting State Church, or an absolutely free church. The Protestant State Churches of Europe are rapidly becoming free churches. So far as they are not free, the religion of the minority is practiced under a disadvantage. Catholics and Dissenters even in England now suffer under serious disadvantages, which are not persecution simply because England is moving perceptibly toward complete establishment."

Perhaps such words as these, coming from so influential a journal as the New York *Independent*, will be given some attention. If any advocate of State religion is able to show that the position is not a just one, we should be glad to know it.

"Back Page" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

It is expected that the missionary ship, *Pitcairn*, will be dedicated on Thursday, September 25, during the camp-meeting at Oakland.

Isn't it strange that the laboring men, who are represented by the Sunday-law lecturers as consumed with desire for a Sunday law, are in mortal dread of saying anything about it, lest they should lose their places, and yet they will strike for an advance of twenty-five cents a day in wages, or even when they have no personal grievance, if a fellow-workman is discharged?

Through the courtesy of Hon. George Hearst we have received two interesting volumes of Reports from the Department of Agriculture for 1888 and 1889. From a hasty examination of the volumes, we are convinced that our National Department of Agriculture is doing better and more thorough work than in times past. Thanks, Senator, for these and all other documents.

The Maryland State Prohibition Platform has the following as one of its planks:-

"We approve our Sabbath laws and their enforcement, which secures to the people one day's rest in seven."

This, the *New York Voice* calls an almost model platform. But that political platform which approves of Maryland Sabbath laws is as far from model as the darkest laws of the Dark Ages is from the Constitution of the United States.

Dr. W. W. Atterbury, of New York, is quoted by the *Alta California* of August 18 as saying in a recent sermon, on this coast: "The great principle of our Sunday law is not coercion, but protection." Dr. Atterbury may believe this, but there is no statement farther from the truth. Every believer in Sunday sacredness in this broad land, can observe the day as religiously as he desires, without a Sunday law. Seventh-day people have no difficulty in observing the Sabbath, with the busy world against them. Cannot Sunday-keepers do equally well with so many on their side? Those who do not believe in Sunday are not asking for protection, unless it be some who do it on the principle of reducing time and maintaining or increasing wages. Sunday laws are asked for by those who believe in the day, in order to *coerce*, or *compel*, those who do *not* believe in it to keep it as though they did. The principle underlying Sunday laws is *coercion*, and *only coercion*.

The only true union among Christians is union with Christ. Men may try to patch up union between themselves, but it lasts only so long as will subserve their selfish purposes. Man cannot be grafted upon man for the reason that no man has life in himself to impart to others. Such a union is like the union of two separate branches; there is no vitality to it. But if the Christian is united as a branch to the Living Vine, Christ Jesus, the One who has life in himself, that branch becomes transfused with the life of the Vine, a part of the very stock itself. Two Christians thus united are united to each other by a bond which no power on earth can break. That bond is the Lord Jesus Christ. In this way is our Lord's prayer answered: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." John 17:21. This is the union which God desires; this is the only true union possible!

The additions to the Northern Presbyterian Church last year amounted to about 49,000. This was an increase of one member to every fifteen church-members. The *New York Observer* finds in these figures no cause for congratulations, as the net gain in the church is less than three per cent. There were six thousand accessions less than in 1889. It says truly that these things ought to bestir the people and pastors. If our Presbyterian brethren (and the lesson is as good for all) had placed as much thought on the word of God and its teaching as upon the revision of the Westminster Confession, it would doubtless have gained spiritually as well as numerically.

September 15, 1890

"Front Page" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

In an article in the *Independent*, concerning the railroads and the labor troubles, the Hon. Cassius M. Clay says:-

"There is anarchy and civil war lowering along the whole horizon. There comes anarchy, and then, like as in the French Revolution in 1787, despotism."

The Universal Congress of Catholics is to be held at Liege, Belgium, this month. Delegates are expected to be present from every Catholic country in the world. Among the subjects to be discussed are: The Temporal Power of the Pope, and Papal Arbitration. The Congress is said to be the outcome of a circular letter which was sent to all Catholic bishops two years ago, asking if they thought it advisable for the Pope to leave Rome.

Here is an example of the illogical manner in which men too often handle Bible doctrines:-

"On the morning of his resurrection, Jesus said, 'I have not yet ascended to my Father.' We have his word, therefore, that he did not enter Paradise on the day of his death."-Rev. C. C. Foote, *Detroit*.

"We must remember Christ ubiquity. As he could enter that 'upper room' to the disciples without opening the door, so he was in paradise without 'ascending' there."-*Christian Cynosure*.

Which is the plainest kind of a *non sequitur*. Jesus didn't enter that upper room without going to it. He was actually in the room; but he plainly declared to Mary that he had not ascended to the Father. "Ubiquity" doesn't cause one to be in a place to which he hasn't gone.

The New York *Observer*, in an editorial on "Pilling the Treasury," takes a position against grab-bag, fairs, festivals, and other ungodly means of raising money for the church, and says:-

"Such means more money-raising for the purposes of God's kingdom can scarcely be too strongly and sially denounced. It is a question whether the church will ever be the successful opponent of evils in the world that she could be, if she leans for her financial support upon worldly men or worldly measures. What concord has Christ with Belial? Did all the faithful, godly pastors of our land speak their minds on this subject they would present an awful array of testimony concerning the ill effects of worldly-wise methods for filling church coffers."

But what are faithful and godly pastors for if it is not to speak their minds on such subjects as this? And if pastors do not speak their minds when such a canker is eating the heart out of the church, can they be called faithful and godly? The command is, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isa. 58:1. And there is no question at all whether the church can ever be the successful opponent of evils in the world, when she cherishes the evils of the world in her own bosom.

"Is the Seventh-day Sabbath Binding Upon Christians?" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

Under the above heading the *Leader* of August 14 contained twelve propositions answering the question in the negative. We have heard the article spoken of several times as being something that Sabbatarians couldn't answer;

and as the *Leader* is the principal organ of the Baptist denomination on the Pacific Coast, it has doubtless had much influence with those who are not conversant with the Sabbath question. For this reason we take space to show the weakness of the answers. In the various paragraphs below will be found the entire article:-

"Recently I was asked to answer this question publicly, My reply was No! and for the following reasons:-

*"First-*For 2,000 years, no command was given for anyone to keep the Sabbath.

The same thing may be said of the prohibition against idol-worship and blasphemy. Shall we therefore conclude that Christians are at liberty to do those things? If not, how does silence about the Sabbath indicate that we are not to keep it? For a period of six hundred years after the law was given upon Mount Sinai nothing was said, so far as we have any record, about the Sabbath. Shall we conclude that God did not care to have even the Jews keep it-No; we are glad to know that the God whom we worship does not have to repeat his commandments every year or every century, in order to have them valid. But, as a matter of fact, we have the most explicit reference to the seventh-day Sabbath twenty-five hundred years before the exodus. After creation was completed, God rested on the seventh day, and the record says: "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Gen. 2:3. To sanctify means to set apart, to appoint, to command. See Josh. 20:7, margin; Joel 2:15. Therefore the inspired record is that as soon as the first week of time was ended, God commanded the observance of the seventh day. Even if it were true that twenty-five hundred years passed before the command was given to keep the Sabbath, that would determine nothing as to our duty now. Men do not argue so in regard to human laws. The fact that a law was enacted only last year is not considered as a reason why it should not be obeyed.

*"Second-*When the command was first given, it was given to the Israelites. Ex. 16:23.

*"Third-*It seems plain from Ex. 16:27-30, that they did not keep the Sabbath previous to this time."

This is not true, as has been shown in the preceding paragraph. The command to observe the seventh day as the Sabbath was given in Eden at the close of the creation. It was given to Adam, the father, not of the Jews, but of the whole human family, thus indicating that it is for the race, in harmony with the declaration of Jesus, "The Sabbath was made for man." Mark 2:27. The only day that was known as the Sabbath when Jesus said this, and the day which was the special subject of remark on that occasion, was the seventh day of the week. The reading of Ex. 16:23 is sufficient to prove that it is not the first command to keep the Sabbath, nor indeed is it a command at all. It is simply a reference to a commandment already given. The entire transaction recorded in the sixteenth of Exodus shows that the Sabbath was well known. As to the statement in "reason" *third*, that "it seems plain from Exo. 16:27-30 that they did not keep the Sabbath previous to this time," we have only to say, Read it, and see for yourselves.

Some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather manna, and the Lord said, "*How long* refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" Ex. 16:28. This is sufficient proof that the Sabbath was not a new thing.

"*Fourth*-This is further corroborated by the fact that on the three preceding seventh days, the whole camp to Israel was on the march."

It is of no use to take time on this, for it is an assertion unbacked by any proof, and which is incapable of proof. It is a lamentable

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fact that many opposers of the Sabbath of the Lord do not hesitate to resort to fiction, in the absence of argument. This should open the eyes of the candid.

"*Fifth*-The Sabbath, and the laws pertaining thereto, was given to the Israelites alone, and was to be a memorial of their deliverance from Egypt, and a sign of the covenant between them and the Lord. Ex. 31:13-17; Deut. 5:12, 15."

This is true of all the commandments to the same extent that it is true of the fourth. Paul says that the chief advantage of the Jews lay in the fact that to them were committed the oracles of God. Rom. 3:1, 2. It was committed to them to make known to others. They were to be the light of the world, as Jesus himself declared to a congregation of Jews. Matt. 5:14. The Sabbath was given them as a sign, that they might know God; but God never designed to shut himself up to the Jewish nation. He wants all men to know him; he is known by his works; and the Sabbath is the memorial of creation. This also is additional proof that the Sabbath was made for all men. Moreover, God has no covenant except with Israel (see Heb. 8:8-10; Rom. 9:3, 4; Eph. 2:11, 12), and only the seed of Abraham are Christ's and heirs of the kingdom (Gal. 3:29). If any Gentiles are saved, they must be grafted into the stock of Israel. See Rom. 11:13-26. So the fact that a thing was given to Israel is nothing against it, but rather in its favor; "for salvation is of the Jews." John 4:22. And the fact that Israel is to be the nation that will endure throughout eternity and that the Sabbath was given them to be observed throughout their generations, shows that it is binding on Christians both now and forever.

"*Sixth*-If the law of the Seventh-day Sabbath is binding upon all, then the penalties are also binding. No work was to be done, no fire was to be kindled by anyone, under penalty of death. Ex. 31:14, 15; 35:2, 3; Num 15:32-36; Eze. 20:10; Deut. 5:14."

Very true, the penalty is as sure as the law. The penalty for Sabbath-breaking was death, and is still the same. The same is true of any of the commandments. The penalty for idolatry, blasphemy, and persistent disobedience to parents, was death, and is still; for "the wages of sin is death." But God has not committed to men in this age the execution of the penalty. The Jewish government was a theocracy; God himself was their ruler. It is not so now, for his people, the true Israel, are in all nations; but when they are gathered out at the coming of the Lord, then it will be seen that the penalty for violation of God's law is death; and unto his people will it be given to share with him in executing the judgment which is written. See. Ps. 119:9.

"*Seventh*-Nowhere in the Old nor New Testaments are the Gentiles commanded to keep the Seventh-day Sabbath, but Christians, both Jews and

Gentiles, are in Col. 2:13-17 forbidden to insist on keeping the Jewish Sabbath-days."

The first part of this has been answered in number 5, above. The latter part is sufficiently answered by saying that the seventh day is not, and never was, a Jewish Sabbath. The Lord says, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Ex. 20:10. He also styles it, "my holy day." Isa. 58:13. This day the true Israel-Christians-are commanded to keep throughout their generations, and they will do so as long as the new heavens and the new earth endure. Isa. 66:22, 23.

"*Eighth*-Christ, in his teaching, calls attention to, and enforces, all of the commandments, except the fourth. Why this exception, if that was still in force?" This is simply not true. Nowhere in the teaching of Christ is there the slightest reference to the second commandment. This does not prove that the second commandment is not binding on Christians, and that they are free to worship idols. As we said before, we worship a God who does not have to repeat his commandments often, in order to give them force. When he speaks once, that is sufficient. Is not this a more loyal way of looking at the matter? Christ has nowhere in his teachings repealed the fourth commandment, therefore it must still be binding. But the fact is the Lord made no exception in the commandments, but declared them all to be binding. Said he, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke 16:17. This should stop the mouth of every man who professes to love the Lord. By the way, isn't it strange that Christ's utter silence in regard to the first day of the week is not considered by first-day advocates as anything against the claim that it is a sacred rest day?

"*Ninth*-After Christ's resurrection, the disciples met for worship on the first day of the week. Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2-9; John 20:1, 19-26; Acts 20:27; 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10."

This proves nothing. They also met on the Sabbath. See Acts 13:14, 42, 44; 17:21; 18:4. They also met every day. Acts 2:46. It is amazing that men will offer to prove that the seventh-day Sabbath of the fourth commandment is not binding, and then will gravely say, "The disciples met on the first day of the week," as though that simple fact was sufficient to overthrow the commandment, or had any relation whatever to it. But let us look a moment at the texts referred to prove that the disciples met for worship on the first day. Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; John 20:1 all refer to a single first day, the day of the resurrection; and not one of them says anything about any meeting. They simply state the fact of Christ's resurrection. Mark 16:9 says not a word about any meeting of the disciples, but simply says that Christ "appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils." Nothing about Sunday worship in that. John 20:19 does speak of a meeting of Christ and his disciples on that same first day of the week, and Mark 16:14 informs us that this meeting of the disciples was at their own home, for the purpose of eating supper. Acts 20:27 makes no reference to any day of the week; but Acts 20:7-11, which the writer evidently meant, does speak of a meeting on the dark part of the first day of the week, namely, Saturday night, and of a long journey which Paul and his companions took the next day, Sunday. 1 Cor. 16:2 makes no reference to any meeting on the first day of the week, but on the

contrary, directs each one to "lay *by him in store*," as God had prospered him. And, lastly, Rev. 1:10 says nothing of the first day of the week in anywise, but mentions "the Lord's day," which the Lord himself declares to be the seventh day. See Ex. 20:10; Isa. 58:13; Mark 2:28.

"*Tenth*-The spirit of the fourth commandment is: Work six days and rest one. This can be done by resting on the first day, and working the other six."

The spirit of the fourth commandment cannot be kept by breaking it. It commands the observance of "the seventh day." The commandment not only says that we are to work six days and rest one, but it tells us particularly upon which one we are to rest. Who but one whose heart was fully set in him to disobey, could argue that a direct command to rest on "the seventh day" can be complied with by resting on the first day?

"*Eleventh*-In regard to rest, morality, piety, or true religion, the keeping of the seventh day has not a whit the advantage over the first."

We submit that God is the best judge of what constitutes "rest, morality, piety, or true religion." The keeping of the seventh day has just this advantage over the first, that God has commanded it, and he has said nothing about the first except to include it in the six days in which work may be done.

"*Twelfth*-Ninety-nine per cent of those who keep any Sabbath keep the first day of the week. If God does not require it, why should one percent insist that the other ninety-nine should change their Sabbath?"

Where in the Bible is it stated that truth and duty are to be determined by the practice of ninety-nine per cent, of the people? He says, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." Ninety-nine per cent of the people in the days of Noah thought he was a fool, but the result showed that he was right and that they were wrong. Ninety-nine percent of the Jews, and more, rejected Christ when he was on earth; yet this did not prove that he was not the Messiah. The majority of the people on earth to-day do not worship the one God, Jehovah. The great majority of those who profess to believe in baptism, call sprinkling baptism, and sneer at the Baptists for insisting on immersion; yet this does not prove that the Baptists are wrong in obeying literally. The majority say that the spirit of the commandment is met by pronouncing the formula and applying a little water; the Baptists insist on actual baptism, immersion in water, according to the command. If the practice of the majority is to determine what is right, why do not the Baptists give up immersion? A Baptist should be the last one in the world to argue against obedience to the letter of any precept, or to urge numbers as proof that a practice is right.

We have denoted this space to the consideration of these "reasons" against Sabbath-keeping, because they are the *reasons* that are kept in stock, and are used all over the country. Wherever the Sabbath truth is taught, these objections are urged. Let the friends of the Sabbath lose no opportunity to enlighten those who have not examined both sides, by showing to them the utter absence of reason in the "reasons" against the Sabbath. E. J. W.

"No California Sunday-law" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

Here is something for our ardent Sunday-law friends to explain. A prominent citizen of Melbourne, Australia, who is visiting in San Francisco, said: "In Australia, Sunday is a holy day, observed by all; in San Francisco

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it is a gala days; yet I saw fewer people drunk here on Sunday than on the same day in Sydney or Melbourne." Our Eastern friends are apt to imagine that California is a terribly lawless place because it has no Sunday law; but as a matter of fact, there is not a State in the Union where life and property are more safe than here, and Sunday is as quiet a day in San Francisco as in Chicago, New York, or even Philadelphia, the home of Sunday legislation. Religious legislation is far from being synonymous with moral development.

"Destroying the Foundations" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

It is doubtless well known to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that there is quite a body of people professing to look for the coming of the Lord, who do not keep the seventh day, and who are probably the most bitter of all people in their opposition to the Sabbath of the Lord. The name which they take to themselves is "Advent Christians," the idea being that Adventists who keep the Sabbath are not Christians. This explanation is made simply that the readers may understand who the people are that made the following remarkable resolution, which we find in the *World's Crisis* of August 6:-

"WHEREAS, There are many people among the Advent Christians who believe that the decalogue of ten commandments is in full force in the Christian dispensation; and,

"WHEREAS, By the Advent Christian Conference of Oregon and Washington, that the ministers of our denomination, especially our evangelists, have not done their whole duty if they terminate a series of meetings in a new field without teaching that the five books of Moses, including the decalogue, are one law, and as each are abrogated."

We pass by the fact that this resolution carries by the board all the commandments, and obliges the ministers to teach that the commands not to steal, kill, commit adultery, or bear false witness owed their existence to the prejudices of an unenlightened age, and are obsolete. That they might be able to do; but we should think that they would often get into difficulty in carrying out the resolution.

For instance: The book of Genesis tells about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It relates the wonderful history of Joseph. In Exodus we are told of Moses and the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. Now some of those preachers will almost involuntarily begin to talk about Abraham and his faith, or the integrity and purity of Joseph, before he remembers that it has been officially declared by his denomination that those records are abrogated, and of no account. A thing is placed upon record because it is supposed to be true, therefore the abrogation of

it is evidence that it has been discovered that it is not true. Now let us see how much of the Bible those preachers are permitted to teach.

They cannot teach that if we are Christ's we are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise, for, according to the resolution, there never was any such man as Abraham. They cannot draw any lessons from the first half of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, for that is all based upon an abrogated record. They must teach that there was never any such man as Moses, and that the Israelites were never delivered from Egypt. The story of the flood must be classed with fables, and the story of creation likewise.

Possibly they may begin to tell their people that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," before they remember that this is founded upon an outgrown tradition. The story of the fall of Adam has been abrogated. Then forgetting that the abrogation of the story of the fall makes unnecessary the story of redemption, they may begin to tell about the glory of our Advocate, who is "made an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek," when their better-instructed audience would interrupt them with the query, which would now be pertinent, "Who was Melchizedek?" Sure enough; that story about Melchizedek has been abrogated, together with the statement which the Lord made to Moses: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." Deut. 18:18, 19.

And so the evidence of the Lord as "the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Ex. 34:6, 7) is abrogated. But if it is abrogated there, it must be everywhere, and so the whole gospel of Christ must be overturned in order to get rid of the Sabbath. This is even so, for Christ said, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" John 5:46, 47. Belief on Christ depends on belief of Moses; therefore if the five books of Moses be abrogated, Christ himself is taken from us. Well did the psalmist ask, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Ps. 11:3.

Dear Christian reader, do you think it is worth while to overturn the whole plan of redemption, in order to get rid of the duty to keep the Sabbath? You say it is not necessary to do that in order to show that we need not keep the seventh day. But think a minute. Here are people who have been forty years fighting the seventh-day Sabbath, and is it not to be presumed that in that time they have found the best argument that can be devised? They have tried everything, and find this the most effective. They have found that the only consistent way to oppose the Sabbath is to abolish the entire revelation of God to man, for it all goes with the five books of Moses. Doesn't it seem to you that a cause that requires such desperate measures must be dangerous? Is not the fact that opposers of the Sabbath can take such a position sufficient evidence that they

are wrong in their opposition? Think of this carefully, and decide to "remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy." E. J. W.

September 22, 1890

"Front Page" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

"The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth along the wise," but "he that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul."

When the fearful storms, tempests, and cyclones have been pointed to as fulfilling prophecy, thereby indicating that we are in the last days, people have been wont to say, "Cyclones are peculiar to America and its prairies, and have always been prevalent through the centuries past." But will these same wise heads tell us the same of the European cyclones? Two severe ones of late have made havoc in Switzerland and Styria. These electric storms are certainly a latter-day innovation there. The fact is, as the Bible declare, the earth is waxed old as doth a garment.

The Lord said to Israel, "When ye make many prayers, I will not hear," and the same may be said of the present day. Max O'Rell, the French humorist, says: "The other day I was introduced to an audience with prayer, and in that prayer the Lord was asked to allow my audience to see through my jokes." Such is not prayer; it is flat blasphemy. Well does the *Lutheran Witness* say: "Such flippant abuse of prayer-so many sectarian reverends being ready to open any sort of meeting with prayer, and another 'brother' closing it with the benediction-and oh, what flippant praying!-is only too common."

It is cheering whenever we find a voice raised against the tendency which so many churches manifest, to attempt to do gospel work according to worldly methods. The *New York Witness* having been appealed to to decide as to the propriety of using a church edifice for popular amusements and games, and thus perhaps get them into the habit of attending religious services, decides that it is proper. From this decision the *Christian Advocate* strongly dissents, and says, among other things:

"The hope of the young men that a gymnasium in the church will attract other young men to the place of worship is vain. The belief which they express, that the church cannot reach the masses without these accessories, is not sustained by past experience. These things have been tried and have failed. There is nothing so attractive to young men as young men. There is no instrument with which the church can work so effectively as the gospel. Amusements have no place in the church."

If we are in doubt as regards the right or wrong of a certain course, it is always safe not to pursue it. Give right and God the benefit of every doubt. To do this may seem at the time to be loss in some way, but it only *seems* so. The better way is always the right. Fools look only to the present. The butterfly lives only for the present; but the child of God ought to measure circumstances and decisions by their eternal results, not by their present appearance.

"Not a Debt, But a Gift. Romans 4:1-8" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

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Let us take a very brief review of the first three chapters of Romans, that we may the better understand the force of the fourth, as we begin it. The first chapter, after the introduction, treats of the terrible depravity and blindness of the heathen, and how they lost the knowledge of God which they once had. It closes with the statement that they themselves know that for their deeds they deserve this condemnation to death, which God has pronounced upon them.

In the second chapter we have all men brought into the same condemnation with the heathen. There is no room in the writings of Paul for any of the modern speculation about future probation for the heathen. They are all shown to be justly condemned to death. To this sentence the Jews would give a cordial assent; but now he declares that all who know enough to judge the heathen, thereby condemn themselves, for they show that they know better, yet they do the same things.

Passing on through the second chapter, we find the truth stated that to every man God will render according to his deeds, whether good or evil, because he is no respecter of persons. Thus we learn that it is *doing*, and nothing less, that finds favor with God, and that the Gentiles, who are without the written law, really have the law, and will be judged by it at the last day. Next, the matter is brought home directly to the Jews, and they are shown to be guilty of transgressing the law, while making their boast in it; and thus he shows that in reality they are not Jews at all, for only those are Jews who keep the law. The man who has not received the outward sign of circumcision, but who keeps the righteousness of the law, is an Israelite indeed; while the man who has been circumcised, and who may be able to trace his genealogy to Abraham, is not a Jew at all, if he does not keep the law.

In the first nineteen verses of the third chapter the fact is emphasized that both Jews and Gentiles are in the same condemnation; all are within the sphere of the law; it speaks to all; and as a consequence, all are declared guilty before God. The conclusion from all this is that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God. The law is the perfect pattern of truth, therefore it must declare all men guilty and not righteous; and no one can hope to atone for his guilt by deeds of righteousness, because his best efforts come far short of the required standard, and so really add to the measure of his guilt.

In this extremity the righteousness of God without the law, in the person of Jesus Christ, is manifested. This righteousness is just that which the law demands, and it is put upon all who believe in Christ. Without money and without

price, this righteousness is freely given to all who exercise faith in his blood. This righteousness put upon the sinner, takes the place of his sins, which are removed as far as the east is from the west, and he who before was a sinner now stands justified before God, his righteousness attested to by the law, although he has not done the law. He has been justified by faith, without the deeds of the law. This removes all ground for boasting, for no man has anything by his own merits. There is one God, both of Jews and Gentiles, and he justifies both Jew and Gentile in the same way, namely, by faith, for his own sake, through the merits of Christ. Thus it is by faith, and not by works, that the law is established in the hearts and lives of men.

And now the Jewish objector returns to the attack with a question very similar to that with which the fourth chapter opens: "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?" Rom. 4:1. He has nothing to say to the charge that the Jews as a class are guilty, and cannot be saved without the aid of a power outside of and greater than themselves; but certainly Abraham, the good old father of the nation, must have gained something by his good

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works. Well, says the apostle, if Abraham was justified by works, he has something whereof to glory. He can boast that his own hand has wrought righteousness and salvation. But we read, "but not before God." That is equivalent to saying, "But Abraham was not justified by works, and has nothing whereof to glory before God;" and the proof is given in verse three: "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

The scripture to which the apostle refers is Gen. 15:6. God took Abraham out and told him to look at the stars and see if he could number them, and said that his seed should be as numerous. And the record is, "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." Paul quotes this in the passive form, but without changing the sense. This scripture proves conclusively that Abraham was not justified by works, and therefore has nothing to boast of, as to the flesh, any more than any other man. His righteousness was not something of his own working out, but was freely given him by the Lord, because he simply believed what the Lord said.

"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Rom. 4:4. Righteousness is the thing under consideration, and so the expression, "to him that worketh," means, to him that works to secure righteousness. It is very evident that if a man works out his own righteousness, the reward which he gets is not a gift, but the payment of a debt. If he does it all himself, he puts God under obligation to him, to give him the reward of righteousness. He can then come to the Lord and demand his dues. But no man can put God under any obligation to him. The apostle writes: "Who hath first given to him again?" Rom. 11:35. The Lord himself said to Job: "Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him? Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine." Job 41:11. Whatever the Lord does for man, he does for his own sake. See Ps. 23:3; Isa. 43:25. Therefore the statement in Rom. 3:24-27 stands

unshaken. Even Abraham is no exception to the truth that righteousness-conformity to the law-comes alone through faith in Christ.

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Rom. 4:5. "There," says the antinomian, "I knew there was nothing at all required of us." Not quite so fast. Remember that we have already learned from the same epistle that God "will render to every man according to his deeds." Rom. 2:6. When the Lord Jesus comes, bringing his reward with him, it will be "to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. Works can by no means be left out of the account.

But works are of no account in securing righteousness for the remission of sins, and that is what is under consideration in this chapter, as we learn very clearly from the next three verses:-

"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

Here we learn that when the apostle speaks of one that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, having his faith counted to him for righteousness, he means the forgiveness of sins, which is accomplished, not through any good works of the sinner, but by the imparting of Christ's righteousness to take the place of the sin. The simple process of bestowing righteousness for the remission of sins is set forth in Zech. 3:1-5; Isa. 61:10; Rom. 3:22-25; Titus 3:3-7. E. J. W.

"Is It Personal Rights or Selfishness?" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

The *Young Men's Era*, of Chicago, in an article relative to the opening of the World's Fair on Sunday, says:-

"Much of the outcry against the enforcement of laws pertaining to Sabbath observance, the Bible in the public schools, etc., is based on the claim of interference with personal rights and religious convictions. Is it not about time the rights and religious convictions of the other side shall be taken into consideration? Shall there not be some assertion that the rights of the Christian people in this country, rights and privileges which we have inherited from our forefathers, and that are vouchsafed to us by the laws of the land, shall be respected?"

This is another instance of the prevailing ignorance of what constitutes personal rights. The idea seems to obtain quite generally that the rights of different people almost always clash, and that for one class of people to have their rights, another class must yield theirs. This is a great mistake. Human rights are equal. If no man grasps more than he has a right to, every man will have all that he has a right to. Take the case of Sunday rest. It is stated that every man has a right to it. That is true, if he wants it; and it is just as true that every man has a right not to rest if he doesn't want to. The right of choice implies the right of refusal. If a man has not the right to refuse to do a certain thing, then he has no

right to choose to do it; it is then no longer a matter of right, but of compulsion, and in that case the rights of some are certain to be trampled upon.

Moreover, the right of one man to refuse to do a certain thing does not interfere with the right of another to do it. The fact that one man doesn't observe Sunday doesn't interfere in the least with the right of another man to keep it. The fact that one man objects to hearing the Bible read, or to having his children hear it read, does not in the least interfere with the right of another man to read it for himself, and to his children. So the opening of the fair on Sunday will not in the least degree interfere with the personal rights and religious convictions of those who regard Sunday as the Sabbath, since none will be compelled to visit it on that day. On the other hand, to refuse to have it opened on that day would seriously interfere with the right of thousands who have no conscientious scruples in regard to the day, and who cannot see the exhibition on any other day, yet who have as much right to see it as others have; and while these are being deprived of a right, those who regard Sunday religiously will not be having anything added to their rights and privileges, since the closing of the fair will not enable them to rest or go to church any better than if it were open.

In these days professed Christians have need to beware lest they confuse personal rights and selfishness, and while they deprive others of what is their right, add nothing to themselves.

"Reading the Bible" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

It is related of Thomas Carlyle that a gentleman at whose house he was stopping asked him to read for morning worship, when he began at the first chapter of Job and continued reading until he had completed the book, saying as he finished, "That is a wonderful poem, and to be understood needs to be read through at one sitting." The host, as might naturally be expected, never again asked Carlyle to read the Scriptures at morning worship.

But Carlyle had the correct idea of Scripture reading—the idea that should be applied not only to the book of Job but to many other books of the Bible, although we would by no means recommend such lengthy reading at family prayers. There, a few verses are often better than even an entire chapter. But it is a great mistake, especially in reading the minor prophets and the epistles, to take them in fragments. One who, in his rigid adherence to the rule of just so many chapters a day, reads the first chapter of the epistle to the Galatians, for instance, as the last of his chapters for one day, the second, third, and fourth the next day, and the fifth and sixth the third day, loses more of the force and beauty of the epistle than can be expressed.

We do not say that one should never read in one of the epistles without reading all, but we do say that everybody ought to make it a frequent practice to read an entire book at one sitting. Never mind if it does break into your course; better break that than lose the benefit of the connection. It won't hurt to read a little more. It is not a great thing to do. People will sit down and read in a

newspaper more matter than is contained in any one of the epistles, and not think they have performed a great feat.

Read the Bible through by course as much as you please, but do not neglect reading by books, and studying by books, and you will find that you are beginning to know the Bible as never before.

"Righteousness Is Life" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," Paul declares in Rom. 6:23. But God does not give this irrespective of character. In fact, he can give eternal life only in one way, and that is the way of righteousness. He gives life by giving righteousness. They that "receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:17. Man is a sinner. Being a sinner, he is subject to death, is condemned to death. If he had never sinned, he never would have died, for death is only the result, or wages, of sin. James 1:15. Therefore when man becomes clothed, through faith in Christ, with the perfect righteousness of God, life comes with it as a consequence. "In the way of righteousness is life." Prov. 12:28. Christ could not be holden of death because he was righteous (Acts 2:24), and therefore those upon whom he has placed that righteousness are in possession of that life. Death cannot hold them. The gift of righteousness through grace is also the gift of life.

"Progress of Arbitration" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

The London *Daily News*, commenting on the "Universal Peace Congress" that was recently held in London, says:-

"The agreement [for arbitration] between the States of the two Americas marks a stage in the history of civilization, from which there will be no retrogression. The inhabitants of barrack-ridden Europe may well derive some inspiration from the lesson of the New World. Arbitration has won the day among the States of the two Americas, because sixty millions of people in the great republic have been educated up to the idea."

This is news to us on this side of the water. The bloody revolutions now going on in the Central American States do not have much of the flavor of peace; and the men-of-war and the big guns which the United States is building do not look as though this country intended to put its trust in soft words. Never before in the history of the United States, except in time of actual war, has there been so much activity in the way of preparing ships and implements of war. The idea of arbitration has taken hold of but a very few of the sixty-four million people of this country, and with them it is only a dream that shows no signs of materializing. But the *News* continues:-

"The substitution of arbitration for the stupid crime (as it ordinarily is) of war will take place in Europe with the idea of it takes hold of the European mind."

A very just and wise remark,-one which shows more wisdom than is generally exhibited in connection with peace congresses, where the idea seems to obtain

that good resolutions will bring about the result. Nations are composed of individuals, and before peace can reign when great provocation is given, the hearts of the people must be changed, and that is a work that is not done in mass. When men are "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," they will be peace-makers; but the word of God gives no warrant for hoping that any such universal change will be wrought. On the contrary, it says that in the last days perilous times will come, because men will be lovers of their own selves, without natural affection, truce-breakers, fierce, despisers of those that are good, and traitors. See 2 Tim. 3:1-4. Surely there is no hope for arbitration among people of that description.

There will come a time, however, when peace will reign over all the earth, and there will be no need of arbitration, because there will be nothing to arbitrate. And that time is not far distant. But it will be brought about by such a war as the earth has never yet seen, even the battle of the great day of the Lord (see Rev. 16:14; 19:11-21; Jer. 25:31-33); and when evil-doers shall have been cut off, and sin and sinners destroyed from the face of the earth, then "the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Ps. 57:11.

September 29, 1890

"The Blessing of Abraham" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

Last week we considered a particular case of justification-that of Abraham-illustrative of the general truth set forth in the third chapter of Romans. In verses 1-8 we found that Abraham was not made righteous by works, but by faith. Righteousness was a gift by the grace of God to Abraham, the same as to all others, so that even he had nothing whereof to boast. We found also what the imputation of righteousness is, namely, the forgiveness of sins. The righteousness which is counted to a man in response to his faith-the righteousness which is put into and upon all them that believe-is the remission of sins. See Rom. 4:5-8.

It ought to be apparent from what we have already learned in the book of Romans, that forgiveness of sins is not a mere book transaction,-the simple entry of the word "pardoned" on the books of record,-but that it is an actual fact; something that personally affects the individual. It is righteousness put *into* and *upon* the man; it is *blessedness* that comes to him. It is a change. It does not consist simply in the Lord's saying to the sinner, "I will not hold the past against you," but it consists in taking his sin away from him,-removing it as far as the east is from the west,-so that he now stands in the sight of God as though he had never sinned. This is blessedness indeed. Surely, this is more than a change in theory. It is taking a man who is morally bankrupt, and setting him on his feet, so that he can now do good works; for it is only the good man that can do good works. See Luke 6:45. And that the righteousness which is imputed for the remission of sin does effect a change in the man is evident from Rom. 3:22. It is

righteousness put *into* and *upon* the sinner. That is, he is made righteous both inside and outside.

The question that the apostle now asks is if this blessed gift comes upon the circumcision only or upon the uncircumcision also; that is, if it is only to Jews or to Gentiles as well. Rom. 4:9. This is answered by finding out Abraham's condition when it came to him. "How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also." Rom. 4:10, 11.

It will be seen at a glance that this settles the matter as to who are children of Abraham. A man cannot claim to be a child of Abraham simply because he has been circumcised. And this means not now only, but at any time in the past. Righteousness was imputed to Abraham before he was circumcised. Therefore since he is the father of all them that believe, it follows that it makes no difference whether they are circumcised or not. Circumcision was only a sign of the righteousness which he already had by faith. Therefore those who had not righteousness had no right to the sign; and if they had the sign and were not righteous, they were children of Abraham only in appearance, and not in fact. See John the Baptist's burning words to the Pharisees. Matt. 3:7-9.

Moreover, it is evident that the sign of circumcision was not given to Abraham and his seed for the purpose of keeping them separate

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from other nations. God never builds up a wall of partition to keep his people from those who do not believe. Christ said, "Ye are the light of the world," and reproved the Jews for hiding the light which God had intrusted to them. This they did by clannishly separating themselves from others, considering themselves too good to associate with them. Christ himself set the example, mingling freely with all classes, and bringing from the self-righteous Pharisees the intended reproach, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Luke 15:2. He prayed for his disciples, not that they should be taken out of the world, but that they should be kept from the evil. John 17:15. The man who is righteous, and who maintains his integrity at all times, and in all places and society, is as separate from the world as God ever designed any man to be.

Compare for a moment Rom. 4:11 and Gen. 17:11. In the latter text we learn that circumcision was a token or seal of the covenant which God made with Abraham. In the former we learn that it was a sign or seal of righteousness. Therefore we are forced to conclude that the covenant with Abraham was a covenant of righteousness. This is confirmed by Rom. 4:13: "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Now note: (1) The possession which was promised to Abraham was not confined to the small territory of Canaan, which the Jews afterwards occupied. Canaan was designed only as the beginning of that possession. The promise can never be considered as completely fulfilled until the seed of Abraham, together with Abraham himself,

occupy the whole earth. This is in harmony with the words of the apostle, that Joshua did not give the Jews the promised rest or inheritance, and that therefore there remains a rest to the people of God. Heb. 4:8, 9.

2. The covenant with Abraham involved this possession. The covenant assured to Abraham the inheritance of this earth for an everlasting possession. Compare Gen. 17:7-11 and Rom. 4:11-13. But the covenant was a covenant of righteousness. Therefore the promise made to Abraham comprehended nothing less than the new heavens and the new earth, for which we also, in accordance with that promise, look. 2 Peter 3:13. So the covenant with Abraham included righteousness and eternal redemption, and the everlasting possession of the earth. This is for all who have the same faith that Abraham had.

"For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise of no effect." Rom. 4:14. This does not mean that faith is made void and the promise of no effect if those who keep the law are heirs; for none others are heirs. The inheritance is to those who are righteous, who have the righteousness of faith. Faith establishes the law and its righteousness. But it means that the mere possession of the law and the trusting in it for justification cannot constitute one an heir. If it could, then there would be no such things as heirship by faith. And it is easy to see how in that case the promise would be of no effect. Thus: If God has promised an inheritance on the sole ground of faith (a working faith, of course), and then requires us to work and earn that inheritance, the promise amounts to nothing. But all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus yea and amen; therefore the inheritance comes through the righteousness of faith.

"Because the law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom. 4:15. This is positive proof that the inheritance cannot come through the law, but must be by faith. The law gives the knowledge of sin; we have already learned that all have sinned; but the law works wrath to the transgressor; therefore all are condemned. Now here is the broad earth, which is the promised inheritance. Here is a man who ignores the promise of God, and proceeds to work out his title to a portion of the land. The time of judgment comes, and he thinks that he has worked enough to enable him to "prove up" on his claim, and he goes to the court to have the inheritance forever confirmed to him. But now he finds his mistake, for the law in which he had trusted declares that his life is forfeited as a rebel, and, instead of getting an inheritance, he loses his life.

"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all (as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations), before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." Rom. 4:16, 17.

This is the great ground of confidence. The inheritance is of faith, that it might be by grace; therefore anybody can have a share in it. What if the law has declared our lives forfeited? "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us (for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree); that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus

Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal. 3:13, 14.

What a blessing! And what assurance we may have that we shall share in it! The blessing is an inheritance in the new earth, which will never be defiled with unrighteousness. God's holy will-his law-will be done in it even as it is now done in heaven. But we have all sinned, and are under the curse of the law-doomed to eternal death. How then can we hope for a share in the everlasting inheritance?- Through the unbounded mercy of God in Christ. Christ has taken upon himself the curse of the law for those who believe,-he bore our sins in his own body on the tree,-and so the promise to Abraham may be as sure to us as though we had never violated the law. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!"

A law is in force until it is repealed. The repeal, in justice, should be given as wide a publicity as the enactment of the law. These are simple principles recognized in all the governmental affairs of man. Apply the same principles to the decalogue, the law of God. It existed from the beginning. It was solemnly spoken by the Majesty of Heaven in a voice which shook the earth; it was written by his own finger on tables of enduring stone; it was complete in itself. It is repeatedly declared to be perfect, sure, good, true, righteous, everlasting, throughout the Old Testament. Jesus, in the New Testament, declares that he came not to destroy it, and that it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail. Matt. 5:17-20; Luke 16:17. The psalmist declares (Ps. 119:172) that it is God's righteousness, and the Lord says through his prophet that his "righteousness shall not be abolished." Isa. 51:6, 7. In the light of these simple principles and plain declarations of Scripture, how can man say that the Sabbath has been changed or abolished? Why is it not better to believe God?

"Law in Force" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

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**"The Parable of the Vineyard. International Lesson Notes. Luke
20:9-19" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 38.**

E. J. Waggoner

INTERNATIONAL LESSON NOTES.

(Luke 20:9-19; October 5, 1890.)

THE CONNECTION.-The speaking of this parable (see also Matt. 21:3-46; Mark 12:1-12) came the next day after the events recorded in the last regular lesson. It was the last great day of our Saviour's teaching in the temple. On Sunday he had ridden into Jerusalem as a conqueror. On Monday he had driven out of the temple the extortionate and covetous who were defiling with their unholy traffic the temple of God. Other events, such as the cursing of the fig-tree, the lesson of the prayer of faith, the crafty scheme of the scribes and Pharisees to entrap Jesus with artful questions, and the parable of the two sons, preceded the parable of the vineyard, and can be studied with profit.

This one fact is nearly always prominent in the Lord's parables, he uses as his illustrations things with which the people were familiar. In this parable, our Lord simply uses that which his Spirit had inspired some hundred years before. See Isa. 5:1-7. The vineyard represents Israel; the tower, the temple at Jerusalem; the place of resort, the strength and center of their worship, the place from which the whole vineyard could be overseen. The wine-press evidently includes all those means which God gave Israel by which the riches of their vineyard could be developed and used to God's glory. This vineyard was "hedged about," separated from other fields. Israel was a separated people. That which separated them was God's truth-his law, his statutes, his promises to the fathers: "Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them; that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spew you not out. And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nations, which I cast out before you; for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them. But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey; I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people." Lev. 20:22-24.

The one who planted the vineyard is the Lord; the husbandmen were those in responsible places in the Jewish nation. And truly what great things God had done for his people! From the time of his first call to them in Egypt till they were cast off forever, the way was strewn with the mercies of God. Truly the Lord could say: "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" Isa. 5:4.

The householder sent his servants to the husbandmen; the Lord sent his prophets to Israel. It was Samuel, and Elijah, and Isaiah, and Ezekiel, and Jeremiah, and many others. But as the husbandmen beat the servants of the owner of the vineyard, so Israel abused the prophets of God. The record is very explicit on this point: "And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place; but they mocked the messengers of God, and

despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy." 2 Chron. 36:15, 16.

God left them without excuse. He sent "betimes" to them, or, as the margin reads, "rising up continually and carefully and sending." He could not let them go. The language of God's heart was: "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." Hos. 11:8. These are the pleadings of Infinite Love to rebellious and fallen man. He will not yet reject Israel. He has one more evidence of his love; he will bestow that; surely they will yield him his due then.

Then the Lord of the vineyard sends his only begotten Son for the love which he bore to the world. John 3:16. Christ "gave himself." Titus 2:14. Heaven or the universe could bestow no more; it bestowed its Maker. He who with the Father created all things, laid aside his glory and came to earth, and endured what man must endure, was tempted, tried, and suffered for man's sake. "He came unto his own," but, sad to say, "his own received him not." The Jewish nation had closed their hearts against him. They continually read the prophecies which foretold his coming; they continually offered those sacrifices which typified his death, but the antitype they knew not. Their heart was not in harmony with the message of meekness and humility and heart righteousness; therefore they could not receive him.

But they said, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours." And this is just what the Jews did. Strange madness, that such should be the case, and yet it was, after three and one-half years of teaching such as the world never heard. No charge could be brought against it, neither could they bring aught against his life. He could say without boasting, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" He met in himself all the specifications of the prophecy. He went beyond this. The mighty power of God was manifested by him wherever he went. The crowning miracle of raising to life him who had been dead four days had but recently been wrought. Lazarus was known to the priests and many about Jerusalem. This miracle, in connection with all the evidences of Christ's divinity which preceded, had led a multitude to believe in him. In fact, no evidences were wanting. The priests had confessed that the "world" had "gone after him."

But notwithstanding all this, the Jews cast him out and crucified him, after a heathen governor had repeatedly declared, "I find no fault in him." In rejecting Christ, the Jews filled up the cup of their iniquity.

This is the lesson of the parable, from which, according to the account by Matthew, the Jews themselves drew the lesson: "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons." Then our Lord forced home the lesson of the parable by a reference to a well-known scripture: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner."

When the temple of Solomon was built, the stones were all prepared in the quarry, so that no sound of tool was heard in the building. It is said that one stone was for a long time rejected by the builders as of no use; but it was finally

ascertained that it was the chief corner-stone. This stone typified Christ. Rejected of men, but chosen of God and precious, he was the tried upon whom if anyone believed he would not be ashamed or confounded.

"Whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken." Whosoever comes before God with a "broken and contrite spirit" (Ps. 51:17), falling unreservedly upon his mercy, will be received. The brokenness is the brokenness of heart so pleasing to God. He dwells with the humble (Isa. 57:15); God looks with favor upon the contrite of heart (Isa. 66:2). But whosoever rejects the mercies of God, will, like the Jews, be rejected of God.

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If they will not receive Christ as a Redeemer, they must meet him as Judge, when he dispenses judgment without mercy. The lesson for the Jews is a lesson for us all. Let us heed the lesson.

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E. J. Waggoner

It is often said that the ten divisions into which Rome was divided in the third and fourth centuries is denoted by the toes on the great metallic image of the second chapter of Daniel. But this is not the case. The prophecy expressly shows that the division of the Roman Empire is not denoted by the toes, but by the intermingling of the iron and the clay. "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided." Dan. 2:41. Iron and clay will not mix and become homogeneous. They will not unite. There is division wherever the two materials exist. Even so the divisions of the Roman Empire will "not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Verse 43.

It is a precious thought that God not only helps a man after he becomes a Christian, but he helps him to begin the work. No man can lift up himself. The hymn is true; Jesus must take us just as we are.

"Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind,-
Sight, healing, riches of the mind.-
Yea, *all I love in thee to find,*
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

Christ says, "Without me, ye can do nothing." We are literally "without strength." Furthermore, Jesus says, "No man can come unto me except my Father draw him." But, praise God, he draws all men. He desires all men to be saved. He calls to all the ends of the earth, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." God invites by his Spirit, by his word, by his servants. He draws us by the manifest exhibitions of his love; he gives us strength to accept the invitation and come; he freely accepts us when we come. The strength, the power, the glory, are all God's. Man has naught of which to boast.

In Europe we hear of the "English Sabbath," and the "Continental Sabbath;" in America, the "Puritan Sabbath" and the "American Sabbath;" and now the *Australian Christian World* is calling for an "Australian Sabbath." If all these dear people would believe God and accept of his word, they would get along with one Sabbath-the Sabbath of the Lord our God. God is a God of Gentiles as well as

Jews. Rom. 3:29. His Sabbath is not local; it "was made for man," for the race. Mark 2:27. But it belongs not to man or country, it is God's "holy day." Isa. 58:13.

The *Presbyterian* mourns the growing disposition in the country to exclude the Bible from the public schools, and says: "The conscience must be trained as well as the intellect." "In Australia, men of observation, influence, and position. . . are calling for suitable religious instruction in their public schools." This is strange talk for a religious journal. What are churches and Sunday-schools for? For what are fathers and mothers? But if the church and home cannot give sufficient moral instruction, how will the public schools, which are furnished and fed from the home, be able to do this? They will never be higher morally than the elements they may be made. The public schools are not founded for moral and religious training. It is utterly impossible for them to fulfill the requirement. It is one of the follies of National Reform that such a thing could be thought feasible.

The *Union Signal* of August 28 has the following item: "Mrs. J. C. Bateham has returned to San Francisco from her very successful work for Sabbath observance in the Sandwich Islands." Of which we have to say: (1) Mrs. Bateham not only does not "work for Sabbath observance," but she is doing all she can against all true Sabbath observance; and (2) unless her work in the Sandwich Islands was vastly different from her work in the city of Oakland, she counts her success wholly by faith. But perhaps the islanders were more profoundly impressed by her profound ignorance of the question with which she presumes to deal.

October 6, 1890

"Front Page" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

God is not confined to one land or territory or country. Jesus died for the world; and he who has the Spirit of Christ will be one upon whose heart lies the burden of evangelizing the world. Oh, for larger hearts! Oh, for more of the Spirit of Christ to enlarge our hearts!

There are ten million pupils in the Sunday-schools of the country. A better showing ought to be made in orals, but the fact is thousands leave the Sunday-school for the saloon, and the downward path in other directions. There is certainly a failure somewhere.

The Minneapolis ministers look upon the intention of the coming International Exposition management to open the ground on Sunday "as most unwise for the enterprise, contrary to the wishes of millions entitled to respect, and in direct opposition to the word of God. We sincerely appeal to the commissioners in charge to protect this day of rest." It might be well to ask these commissioners how an open fair on Sunday would be worse than an open fair on Monday, according to the word of God. The true Sabbath of the Lord needs no such "protection."

The giving of the gospel of Christ to the world, the conversion of souls, will never be accomplished by elaborate system or increased machinery, or the

multiplication of societies. We have Christian associations of young men and young women. We have societies of Christian Endeavor; we have W. C. T. U.'s, and Y. W. C. T. U.'s, and King's Daughters, and no one knows how many other societies. Every additional society is confession on the part of that church within whose pale it is organized that the work of that church fails to meet the divine requirement. Organization according to God's plan, thorough and complete, is good; but it cannot convert souls. "Power comes from God." It is not by might or by strength or by power or by wisdom of man that souls will be saved, but by the power of the Spirit of God. That Spirit will be given to him who seeks faithfully, earnestly, and in God's way.

The following from the *Lutheran Witness* of September 7 shows the trend of the English High Church:-

"A priest of the Anglican Church proposed the question, whether the bishop of Lincoln, who is arraigned before the court of the primate of England for ritualistic practices, has not the right of appealing to the pope, the 'patriarch' of the whole church? The priest, who is the spokesman for many others, maintains that the thirty-nine articles refuse to acknowledge the temporal, but not the spiritual, jurisdiction of the pope in England. This certainly proves that the ritualistic high-church men of the established Episcopal Church of England are only Jesuits in disguise."

The Pope is becoming the great pacifier of the nations, and it looks as though he might soon be of the churches.

"That Blessed Hope" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

"But I would not that ye should be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." There are several points that may be noted on this text: 1. Those who are dead are represented as asleep. The term is very common in the Bible. Read Job 7:21; Dan. 12:2; John 11:11-14, etc. The righteous are asleep in Jesus. 2. This being the case, it follows that the dead are unconscious, for a sleeping man knows nothing of what is going on around him. The general tenor of the inspired writings is in harmony with this idea. For examples see Job 14:14-21; Ps. 6:5; 88:1-12; 115:17; 146:3, 4; Eccl. 9:5, 6, 10. 3. It is folly to say that we cannot know anything of the future. Paul said that he would not have his brethren ignorant; if we believe his words, we must admit that something can be known of man's future. 4. It is not wrong for Christians to sorrow; the only sin is in giving away to uncontrollable grief, as did the heathen. They, having no hope, indulged in the most extravagant expressions of sorrow-tearing out the hair, rending their garments, uttering loud shrieks, cutting their flesh, etc. A Christian's grief may be even more acute than that of the heathen, for Christianity tends to elevate, and to quicken the sensibilities, but it will always be tempered by hope.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." From what place will God bring them? "From heaven," many persons say. But the apostle says that those whom he

brings have been *asleep*, and if the view of our friends be true, it must be that the saints in heaven do nothing but sleep, and that is absurd. The psalmist says, "In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore." We think it will need no argument to convince any rational person that David's conception of "fullness of joy" and "pleasures forevermore" would not be met by a long period of unconscious sleep. Those who are asleep are in the grave, and from thence God will bring them, even as he did our Lord. Just as surely as Jesus died and rose again, so surely will God raise from the dead all the sleeping saints.

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep." Paul says, "we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord." From this some have supposed that Paul expected that the Lord would come in a very few years, and that he would live until that event; but this was not his expectation. We must believe him when he says, "For this we say unto you *by the word of the Lord*." Paul received his instruction directly from heaven. Now to say that Paul was mistaken in regard to the time of Christ's second advent, is equivalent to saying either that he was not inspired, or that the Holy Spirit was mistaken. Neither of these positions can be taken by those who believe the Bible. That Paul had a correct idea of the time of the second advent, is clear from 2 Thess. 2:1-8. In his vivid narrative, Paul speaks of things to come as though they were present.

The word "prevent" is from the Latin words *pre*, before, and *venio*, to go, meaning "to go before," and was formerly used in this sense. It is so used in King James' version. See Ps. 88:13; 119:147, 148. But as one who went before another was able to "head him off," as it is commonly expressed, the word finally became restricted to the present signification, to hinder. The Revised Version has the passage in harmony with modern usage. The word "conversation" is another word whose signification has been thus

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changed. It now means simply familiar talk; but in the Bible it has an entirely different meaning, being applied to one's manner of life.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." We cannot regard this text in any other way than as a description of an actual occurrence to take place in the future. If the expression "the Lord himself" does not mean Jesus Christ in person, but is a figure of something else, what words could the apostle have used to express the reality? If this be figurative language, then there is no literal language in the Bible. It agrees, however, with the words which the angel spoke to the disciples at the ascension of Christ. Acts 1:9-11. This last clause of the verses quoted settles an important point: "And so shall we ever be with the Lord." How shall we be with the Lord?-By the descent of Christ to raise the dead and change the living. Can we not be with him before that time?-No; for so he told his disciples when on earth. The ardent Peter said,

"Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake" (John 13:27); but still Jesus did not reverse his former sentence: "As I said unto the Jews, Whither I go ye cannot come; so now I say to you." Then he comforted them with these words: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." This is the "blessed hope;" with these words the apostle Paul commanded Christians to comfort one another. Men should be careful how they attempt to improve on the methods laid down by inspiration.

Some time ago a religious journal of note made an admission on this text, that was fatal to the popular view (the one which it also holds), that all men have inherited immortality. It said: "It is hard for us to understand how those converts could have imagined that it was peculiarly unfortunate to die before Christ's second coming. It was because they imagined, and Paul too, perhaps, that Christ was to come soon, in the life-time of some of them [we have already shown that he did not imagine any such thing], and that his coming was physical; and they did not understand the doctrine of the immortality of the soul." That is, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is so opposed to the doctrine of Christ's second coming that those who hold to the former necessarily ignore the latter. We believe that this is the case. But the doctrine of Christ's second coming is one of the most prominent in the whole Bible, and it must therefore follow that the Bible is opposed to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. It was well said that "they did not understand the doctrine of the immortality of the soul;" but if Paul and his co-laborers did not understand nor teach it, whence is it that our modern teachers have learned so much about it? Have they a later revelation in which inspiration has corrected its former mistakes? Away with a doctrine which leads men thus to treat God's word. Such teachers would do well to ponder upon Paul's words to the Galatians brethren. Gal. 1:8.

"But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." No argument can be drawn from this to prove that Christians cannot know anything about the Lord's coming, for the next verse shows that he comes as a thief only to those who cry, "Peace and safety,"-those who are not watching. The brethren, Paul states, are not watching. The brethren, Paul states, are not in darkness that that day should overtake them as a thief. Christ gave his disciples very full instructions in regard to the times and the seasons (see Matthew 24), and as the whole gospel was revealed to Paul by the Lord himself, he had imparted the same information to the Thessalonian brethren. The prophecies of the Old Testament, especially the book of Daniel, give much light on the times and the seasons.

On 2 Thess. 5:10, Dr. Barnes makes the following comment:-

"'Whether we wake or sleep.' Whether we are found among the living or the dead when he comes. The object here is to show that the one class would have no advantage over the other. This was designed to calm their minds in their trials, and to correct an error which seems to have prevailed in the belief that those who were found alive when he should return, would have some priority over

those who were dead. 'Should live together with him.' The word rendered 'together' is not to be regarded as connected with the phrase 'with him,' as meaning he and they would be together, but it refers to those who wake and those who sleep, those who are alive and those who are dead,-meaning that they would be *together*, or would be with the Lord *at the same time*; there would be no priority or precedence."

That is exactly the truth on this important subject. Happy would it be for Christianity if the churches had never departed from it. E. J. W.

"Back Page" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

Some time ago, under the heading "Destroying the Foundations," we made a few comments on the course adopted by some, of rejecting the five books of Moses, and with them necessarily the whole Bible, in order to get rid of the seventh-day Sabbath. To some it may seem strange that any should pull down a house, foundation and all, in order to get rid of one piece of timber; but such a course is very significant. The Sabbath is so interwoven with the whole of divine revelation that it cannot be removed without undermining the whole structure. The Sabbath is based on the facts of creation; and it cannot be abolished until it can be proved that God did not create the heavens and earth in six days and rest the seventh.

There is but one mention of Jesus sleeping in all the record of his life. This was not in the quiet of mountain retreat, or in the homes of friends, but, strangest place of all, it was in a storm at sea, when those who had followed the sea all their lives were in mortal terror, the storm having continued till the ship was full of water. Jesus was asleep. The waves might roll, the storm rage, but the Master of the universe could not be destroyed. "No water can swallow the ship where lies the Master of ocean and earth and skies." Is not this a lesson of comfort and trust to the child of God? If Jesus is with us, though he seems to be sleeping, we are safe, whatever may take place. If we continue to trust, in God's time he will allay the storm.

A Christian cannot grow unless he partakes of spiritual food. He may be indeed a child of God, his sins all forgiven, his heart changed; but to maintain this relation, to make progress in divine life, in other words, to grow to the stature of a full-grown man in Christ Jesus, he must partake of the required food. That food is the word of God. The "sincere milk of the word" will cause the young Christian to thrive even as the healthful child thrives on its natural food. 1 Peter 2:2. Jeremiah says: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Jer. 15:16. And as we must partake of daily physical food in order to maintain strength, so daily the child of God should seek God's word, listen to his voice, appropriate it to himself and his condition, and make it a part of his very being.

October 13, 1890

"Front Page" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

Nowhere in God's word are the people of God promised a reward at death. Death is ever treated as an enemy. Those who die are in the enemy's land (Jer. 31:16); death is the last enemy to be destroyed (1 Cor. 15:26); it will be destroyed at last in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14). The promise of God is that those who believe in him will be raised up in "the last day." John 6:40. Again, Jesus says: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and *then* he shall reward every man according to his works." Matt. 16:27. The coming of Christ is that great event around which cluster the brightest and best hopes of Christians,—life, joy, peace, a kingdom incorruptible, forevermore; and all these come through the presence of Christ. Glad day! why should not the child of God love it and long for it?

"For Our Sake Also. Romans 4:17-25" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

The fourth chapter of Romans is one of the richest in the Bible, in the hope and courage which it contains for the Christian. In Abraham we have an example of righteousness by faith, and we have set before us the wonderful inheritance promised to those who have the faith of Abraham. And this promise is not limited. The blessing of Abraham comes on the Gentiles as well as on the Jews; there is none so poor that he may not share it, for "it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."

The last clause of the seventeenth verse is worthy of special attention. It contains the secret of the possibility of our success in the Christian life. It says that Abraham believed "God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." This marks God's power; it involves creative power. God can call a thing which is not as though it existed. If a man should do that, what would you call it?—A lie. If a man should say that a thing is, when it is not, it would be a lie. But God cannot lie. Therefore when God calls these things that be not, as though they were, it is evident that that makes them be. That is, they spring into existence at his word. We have all heard, as an illustration of confidence, the little girl's statement that "if ma says so, it's so if it isn't so." That is exactly the case with God. Before that time spoken of as "in the beginning," there was a dreary waste of absolute nothingness; God spoke, and instantly worlds sprang into being. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . For he spake, and it was; he commanded, and it stood fast." Ps. 33:6-9. This is the power which is brought to view in Rom. 4:17. Now let us read on, that we may see the force of this language in this connection. Still speaking of Abraham, the apostle says:—

"Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to

God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness." Rom. 4:18-22.

Here we learn that Abraham's faith, in God, as one who could bring things into existence by his word, was exercised with respect to his being able to create righteousness in a person destitute of it. Those who look at the trial of Abraham's faith as relating simply to the birth of Isaac, and ending there, lose all the point and beauty of the sacred record. Isaac was only the one in whom his seed was to be called, and that seed was Christ. See Gal. 3:16. When God told Abraham that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed, he was preaching the gospel to him (Gal. 3:8), therefore Abraham's faith in the promise of God was direct faith in Christ as the Saviour of sinners. This was the faith which was counted to him for righteousness.

Now note the strength of that faith. His own body was already virtually dead from age, and Sarah was in a like condition. The

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birth of Isaac from such a pair was nothing less than the bringing of life from the dead. It was a symbol of God's power to quicken to spiritual life those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Abraham hoped against hope. There was no human possibility of the fulfillment of the promise; everything was against it, but his faith grasped and rested upon the unchanging word of God, and his power to create and to make alive. "And therefore it was imputed unto him for righteousness." Now for the point of it all:-

"Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." Rom. 4:23-25.

So Abraham's faith was the same that ours must be, and in the same object. The fact that it is by faith in the death and resurrection of Christ that we have the same righteousness imputed to us that was imputed to Abraham, shows that Abraham's faith was likewise in the death and resurrection of Christ. All the promises of God to Abraham were for us as well as for him. Indeed, we are told in one place that they were specially for our benefit. "When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself." "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Heb. 6:13, 17, 18. Our hope, therefore, rests upon God's promise and oath to Abraham, for that promise to Abraham, confirmed by that oath, contains all the blessings which God can possibly give to man.

But let us make this matter a little more personal before leaving it. Trembling soul, say not that your sins are so many and that you are so weak that there is no hope for you. Christ came to save the lost, and he is able to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him. You are weak, but he says, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." 2 Cor. 12:9. And the inspired record tells us of those who "out of weakness were made strong." Heb. 11:34. That means that God took their

very weakness and turned it into strength. In so doing he demonstrates his power. It is his way of working. For "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." 1 Cor. 1:27-29.

Have the simple faith of Abraham. How did he attain to righteousness?-By not considering the deadness and powerlessness of his own body, but by being willing to grant all the glory to God, strong in faith that he could bring all things out of that which was not. You, therefore, in like manner, consider not the weakness of your own body, but the power and grace of our Lord, being assured that the same word which can create a universe, and raise the dead, can also create in you a clean heart, and make you alive unto God. And so you shall be a child of Abraham, even a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. E. J. W.

"A Superficial Age" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

The *Christian at Work* of September 18 has some severe strictures on the public schools which we are inclined to think are generally true, not because the schools are public schools, but because they are conducted according to the spirit of the age. The above journal says:

"In the opinion of thoughtful persons are public schools are by no means what they ought to be. The subjects of study are too multiplied, the time given to each too meager and inadequate. The system of 'cramming,' by which a pupils memory for mere words is developed abnormally and at the expense of his faculties of discrimination and sound judgment, now so popular and almost universal, is an utter perversion of the true conception of education. It transforms a bright boy or girl into a temporary parrot, ready to astonish every hearer with a seemingly brilliant performance, which, however, upon further attention, it turns out to be little more than a species of clipped and empty-headed gabbie. There is in all this no grasp of the underlying principles, no comprehension of the nature of things, no real intellectual and symmetrical training. It is exactly in the mental constitution what a course of gymnastics would be in the physical which should take infinite pains to exercise the muscles of one arm and should leave those of the other arm, chest, back, and legs, entirely inactive and undeveloped. In both cases a monstrosity is the result."

Superficiality is the fault of the age-superficial education, superficial politics, superficial philosophy, superficial theology, and, worse than all, superficial religion. Our fathers, who had but few books and newspapers, who knew scarcely anything of the light literature of to-day, studied more, thought more, meditated more, and laid a better foundation for character in abiding principles which but few of the youth of this generation know. But, as the *Christian at Work* points out, character is more necessary than all else. Parents, see to it that your boys and girls are laying the foundation of character beneath the surface, on the

principles of truth, justice, and integrity, and love of God. Days now will count years by and by.

"Unprofitable" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

From the *Interior* of October 2 we clip the following question and answer:-

"*Dear Interior*: Please give me some points and scriptural quotations and arguments by which I may answer the seventh-day Adventists, and thus defend our Sabbath as the first day of the week. A. S.

"If these people will not accept the apostolic example of setting apart the Lord's day for worship-if they set themselves against the church from the beginning, and refuse to give the supreme honor to Christ, 'neither would they believe though one should rise from the dead.' We do not think it profitable to argue with such."

There are thousands of people who are seeking for the same light and knowledge, who are getting nothing in return. Notice that the *Interior* does not quote the words of Christ: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." No; for "Moses and the prophets" give no sanction to Sunday-keeping. So the *Interior* parodies the words of Christ, putting tradition and custom in the place of the Scriptures. But if it ignores Moses and the prophets, surely it ought to allow some weight to the words of Jehovah: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work." To be sure, the *Interior* assumes that the apostles, putting themselves above their Lord, set apart the first day of the week for rest and worship; but it wisely refrains from attempting to give the scriptural quotations which would establish the fact.

It talks about refusing to give supreme honor to Christ. Let us see wherein Christ is honored. Is by observing a day that commemorates nothing, and concerning which he has made no command? or by obey his commandment, and observing the day which commemorates creation completed, and thus honors Christ as the divine Creator? No one can acknowledge Christ's divinity without acknowledging him as Creator; and everyone who acknowledges him as Creator, must, to be consistent, acknowledge that He who created also rested upon the seventh day, and blessed and sanctified it, so that the seventh day is the only Lord's day. Therefore to accuse Christ of changing the day of the Sabbath (a thing impossible to do), is to array Christ against himself.

At first our thought was, What a pity that religious papers, which set themselves as guides, should put off an earnest inquirer with such an evasion, as the *Interior* has done; but on second thought it seemed as though good might come of it. A virtual acknowledgment that there are no "scriptural quotations and arguments" by which Seventh-day Adventists may be answered and the first-day sabbath defended, is far better than to jumble a lot of irrelevant texts together, and claim that they make out a case. The *Interior* is right; it is indeed not profitable to argue against the Bible declaration that the seventh day is the Sabbath.

"Back Page" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 40.

E. J. Waggoner

Brother Grant Adkins and wife, who have labored in tent work in California this last season, left this city the 6th inst. To labor with Elder J. W. Scoles in Tennessee. Tennessee has, in the last four years, made herself notorious by her oppressive Sunday laws, but she has many honest souls who are longing for truth and light.

The time to trust God is not by and by, but *now*. How often do we hear Christians say: "I will trust the Lord," "I will give myself to him," "I am going to do better by God's grace," all of which look forward to the future. The time to trust God is *now*, the time to give ourselves to God is *now*; the time to do by his grace is *now*. "God is a very *present* help" to all who believe him. We only live in the Now; the Future is ours only as it becomes the Now. The name of our God is not I WAS, or I WILL BE, but "I AM."

At this writing (October 6), a party of twelve or more design to start the 13th instant for the East. Among these are Elder J. N. Loughborough and wife, Brother Delmer N. Loughborough and wife, Elder Isaac Morrison, Brother D. E. Scoles, Sister Lena Hudson, the senior editor of this journal, Elder E. J. Waggoner, and family, and others. Elder Loughborough will take charge of the Nebraska conference, of which he has been elected president. The many burdens he has borne in California render change and less burdens absolutely necessary to the maintenance of health and life. May God bless him abundantly in his new field. Brother Morrison and Scoles go East to attend the ministers school at Battle Creek, Mich.

Dr. E. J. Waggoner will take a prominent part in teaching in the ministers' school at Battle Creek, Mich., this winter. We regret exceedingly to lose his help from this office; in fact, we know not how we could get along without him if it were not for the assurance that our work was God's work, and that he will supply "all our needs." Brother Waggoner will still write for the SIGNS. May God bless him in his many and hard labors there. May we not ask the prayers of our readers that God may bless us here also, and make our publications the means of saving many souls? We are glad to welcome to this coast our old co-laborer in the British field, Elder J. H. Durland, who will assist us much in our work.

October 20, 1890

"Principles and Precepts" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

The word "law" is derived from the same root as the words "lie" and "lay," and primarily has the same meaning. "A law is that which is laid, set, or fixed, like statute, constitution, from Lat. *statuere*."-*Webster*. And in harmony with this, the same authority gives us the first definition of the word "law," "A rule of order or conduct established by authority." It is a favorite saying with those who would make void the law of God while professing allegiance to his word, that the ten

commandments are good, but that they are adapted only to fallen beings, and hence cannot bind angels nor redeemed saints, nor even people in this world who have been converted. Let us see how such a theory agrees with the definition of law.

We will suppose that the angels are free from law, and that redeemed saints are to have a like freedom. In that case there would be nothing "laid down" for their guidance—no rule or order of conduct established by authority. In fact, there would be no authority, and each one would act independently of all the others. There would then exist in heaven the same thing that would exist on earth if there were no law, namely, anarchy; for that means "without rule." But "God is not the author of confusion," and therefore such a state of things cannot exist in heaven, and if not in heaven, then of course not among the saints still on earth. The case may be stated thus: 1. When there is no law there is anarchy and confusion; there can be nothing else. 2. Confusion cannot exist among God's people, whether in heaven or on earth. 3. Therefore the people of God are always and everywhere subject to his law.

Seeing that it will not do to claim that any beings are absolutely free from law, the enemies of the truth have invented a specious theory, with which, unfortunately, many firm believers in the law of God have been captivated. It is this: The law, they say, as it exists in the ten commandments hang on the two great principles of love to God and love to man, and it was these principles alone that existed before the fall, and these alone will be the law for the redeemed. Some there are who claim that these *principles* are all the law is abolished; for it is the same thing in reality, while it has the *appearance* of great deference to the truth of God. Let us examine it.

It is utterly impossible for anyone to be guided by an abstract principle. Certain principles may have a controlling influence on our lives, but they must be embodied in definite precepts. As an illustration, we will relate a portion of a conversation which we once had with a gentleman who claimed that Christians have nothing to do with the ten commandments. The question was asked him, Is there, then, nothing for Christians to do? Answer: "Yes, they must love the Lord." Very good, but how are they to show that they love the Lord? Answer: "By doing what he tells them to do." Well, what is it that contains specific statements of what the Lord requires us to do to show our love for him? Answer: "Young man, I am older than you are." The reader will wonder, as we did, what bearing this had on the subject. It showed that the man saw that the only possible *answer* was, "The law of God," an answer which would not agree with his theory, hence he chose to give none. But the illustration serves to show that principles, to be obeyed, must be embodied in precepts.

Says the beloved disciple, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." 1 John 5:3. So when we read that the first great commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37), we know that it means nothing more nor

less than that it is our first and highest duty to keep, both in letter and in spirit, all those commandments which define our duty to God. In no other way can we show that we love him. In fact, nothing else but that is love for him.

Suppose for a moment that a man were placed here on earth with nothing to serve as a rule of life except the statement that he must love God supremely and his neighbor as himself. He sets out with a firm determination to do his whole duty. But ere long he is found doing something which God abhors. We will suppose that he is adoring the sun and moon. When reproved for this, he might well reply: "I did not know that I was doing anything wrong; nothing was said to me about this matter. I had a feeling of love and gratitude to God, and did not know how to manifest it in any better way than by paying homage to the most glorious of his created works." By what law could the man be condemned? He could not justly be condemned, because the will of the Creator on that point had not been made known to him, and he could not reasonably be expected to know the will of God if it had not been revealed.

It will be seen by a very little consideration, that to put a man on the earth with nothing but a general command to love God, and at the same time to expect him to do nothing displeasing to God, would be to assume that the man had infinite wisdom. For God is infinite; and if a man, without being told, finds out what God requires, it can only be because he can comprehend infinity. But this is an impossibility. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?—No, indeed; the creature that could know the mind of God any further than it was directly revealed by him, has never existed.

Then since, as we have conclusively proved, there must be a law for all creatures, and since this law must be definitely expressed, and since, moreover, the whole duty of man is to love God above all things, and his neighbor as himself, we are shut up to the conclusion that the ten commandments always have been and always will be the rule of life for all created intelligences. In direct support of this, Solomon says: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12:13. This settles the matter, at least for the present time. John also says that the love of God is to keep his commandments; but it will be our duty to love God to all eternity; therefore it will always be our duty to keep the commandments of God. And it makes it no less a duty because it becomes our highest pleasure. To the natural man, duty is irksome; the object of making him a new creature in Christ is that it may be a pleasure for him to do his duty. Paul says that God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, thus condemning sin in the flesh, in order that the "righteousness [requirements] of the law might be fulfilled in us." Rom. 8:3, 4. The object of the gospel is to make us like Christ, who said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." Ps. 40:8.

In addition to the above, we offer the words of the prayer which Christ has commanded us to pray to God: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Matt. 6:10. Now the will of God is his law. See Rom. 2:17, 18; Ps. 40:8. We are taught by this prayer, then, that when the kingdom of God is established on this earth, God's law will be kept here even as it is now kept in heaven. And David says, by inspiration, that the angels that excel in strength "do

his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word." Ps. 103:20. That is, they are anxious and delight to keep God's commandments. Duty is with them a pleasure. And when God's kingdom comes, we also, if permitted to become subjects of it, will delight to do God's will, and will keep all his commandments, of which "every one" "endureth forever." We shall then do perfectly what we now are (or should be) striving to do in spite of the weakness of the flesh.

This subject will be continued in another article, in which we shall consider the objection that there are certain commandments of the decalogue which angels or glorified saints could not violate if they wished to, and that therefore it is absurd to suppose that obedience to those commandments is required of them. E. J. W.

"A Serious 'Drawback'" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

The New York *Observer* of October 2 has a letter from its Pacific Coast correspondent, entitled "A Sabbath in San Francisco." After speaking of the flourishing growth and the commercial importance of the city, and of the numerous charities that are liberally sustained, he adds:-

"True, there are some drawbacks here as there are in all the cities of our land. Attractive as the city is, and in its main features very desirable as a place of residence, yet the good people who have come from the East regret the absence of some things with which they have always been familiar. There are no Sabbath law in California, and no recognition of it on the statute-books of the State. Labor of all kinds can be carried on without hindrance, stores may remain open for the transaction of business as on any other day of the week, places of amusement may be open without interference from the authorities, while noisy demonstrations can go on as usual. But while there is the absence of all Sunday laws, we must not draw the conclusion that there is no respect paid to the Lord's day. Truth compels us to state the fact that San Francisco is a Sabbath-keeping city. The drift is plainly in that direction. The moral sentiment of the people is largely in its favor, and with very rare exceptions you will find as much order and quiet in the streets as in some of our most favored Eastern cities. Those who knew California twenty years ago now witness a far different order of things. The mass of the people respect and keep the Lord's day."

We can faintly imagine the pain that must have wrung the heart of the correspondent as truth compelled him to pen the above paragraph. We now understand something of the anxiety with which the hearts of all Sunday-law advocates turn towards California. What zealot for Sunday laws could contemplate such a condition of things as just described, without undergoing anguish of soul? Think of it; in San Francisco, where they have no Sunday law, the Sunday is actually as well observed as in the more favored cities in the East! How dreadful! And what is worse, the Sunday is much better observed than it was twenty years ago, when California had a Sunday law! This is heart-rending! Such a state of things must be changed at all hazards. San Francisco must not be allowed to struggle along, hampered by such "drawbacks."

Perhaps some innocent person may ask, "Where is the 'drawback' in not having a Sunday law, and why should its absence be regretted if Sunday is observed in San Francisco as well as in our 'most favored Eastern cities,' and better than it was when California had a Sunday law?" Do you not see? It is not a 'drawback' to the city of San Francisco, but to the cause of religious legislation. Is it not evident that if this state of things is allowed to continue, people will conclude that Sunday laws are not necessary in order to have Sunday observed? More than this, when truth compels the zealous Sunday-law advocate to admit that Sunday is better observed in San Francisco now than when it had a Sunday law, some impertinent fellows, who have more logic than reverence for bigotry, will soon be claiming that Sunday laws are a detriment to proper Sunday observance. And then the advocates of religious legislation will have no argument except the one which a gentleman who is active in the movement recently used with us, "We are determined to have a Sunday law anyway." What! let people continue to observe Sunday without a Sunday law? Never. That would be worse than to allow sick people to get well without a physician. E. J. W.

"Back Page: Sun-god" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

Israel's making of the sun-god, or golden calf, is an emphatic lesson of man's natural depravity. They had promised, but in their own strength, that they would obey God's voice (Ex. 19:5), and they were no doubt honest in this; but their hearts were unregenerate, and deceived themselves. A deceived heart turned them aside. Isa. 44:20. The only way by which we can do God's will is to be regenerated-born again-the heart of enmity to God's law taken away, and the new heart given. The only means by which we can keep God's commandments is by his strength, put on through faith in Christ. Every other way, every covenant in our own strength, will, like that of Israel at Horeb, gender to bondage. Gal. 4:24.

Sabbath, October 11, was a good day for the church in Oakland. Elder E. J. Waggoner, who closes his pastorate over this church, covering a period of some years, spoke in the morning, basing his remarks on 2 Corinthians 4. The prominent thoughts presented were that not alone in the life to come did God reveal to us the blessings and joys of the eternal world, but even now he revealed them to us by his Spirit; that while the glorified people of God will sometime walk in immortality, in the presence of God, in the joys of the world to come, it was the privilege of the Christian to walk there even now by faith; and that God designed the sufferings even of this present life to work out in us even here an eternal weight of glory through the exceeding riches of his grace. The very things over which the natural man would become discouraged would prove stepping-stones to the Christian, who would come off more than conqueror in the conflict. After the sermon a social meeting was held, in which eighty testimonies were borne in a little over forty minutes, with no dry or prosy ones among them. There were present a part of the crew and some of the missionaries of the ship *Pitcairn*, who hope to sail westward within a week, and Elder J. N. Loughborough

and others soon to go eastward to other fields of labor. It was a good day. God grant that all these his people may meet in the glad "harvest home."

All departure from God's word means idolatry, and the farther one strays from the letter of his warning or his command, the more flagrant becomes his idolatry. In the very beginning God provided means to guard men against idolatry, but that means has been grossly neglected, with the result that is so fully demonstrated in the history of man. He established at creation a memorial of the creative power of the true God. The one grand distinction between the true God and all false gods is that the true One created the heavens and the earth. No false god has ever claimed, nor was it ever claimed for him, that he created anything.

We read in Ex. 20:11 that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; *wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it." Is it reasonable to suppose that if men had faithfully celebrated this weekly memorial day, they would have come to believe in any other god? See Eze. 20:12: "Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." We see, then, that the one object of the Sabbath, was a memorial of the true God. Is there any less necessity for such a safeguard to-day than there was in ancient times?

October 27, 1890

"Front Page: Golden Rule" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

The golden rule as stated by Christ is, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," and then he adds that "this is the law and the prophets." There is certainly no room for religious legislation in the above. Legislation for the support of any religious institution or dogma is anti-christian. Would that this might be learned by all Christians.

Earnestness in seeking God depends upon our sense of need. If we feel self-sufficient, strong in our own strength, wise in our own wisdom, our seeking will to a great extent be in vain. There will come a time in our experience when we will fall, not because God wishes it, but because we trusted in our own strength, and he would teach us that our strength is weakness, and that in him alone is safety found. Blessed is that man who can learn his own weakness and lay hold on God's strength without falling.

The giving of God's law was designed not only to impress Israel with a sense of its holiness, but the world itself which should afterward read the record. The manner in which God spoke the law, the terrible majesty attending the events, the way in which it was given, separate and distinct from all others, on tables of enduring stone, -all were designed to show how holy and sacred were the ten words of God, the sum of all morality, the compendium of all righteousness. Here it is said God made known his holy Sabbath. Neh. 9:14. What is meant by this, seeing that the Sabbath was understood before (Gen. 2:2, 3; Ex. 16)?-This, evidently: God knew that men would say that the Sabbath was ceremonial in

character, and therefore not binding, as were other moral precepts; therefore he made known its true character by placing it in the very bosom of the decalogue, guarded before and behind by immutable moral precepts, so that men could never with any reason say that the Sabbath was not as binding as the first, or sixth, or any other commandment. The law of God's rest-day, as of all the other parts of that law, is immutable and eternal.

"SalvationóPresent and Future" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

There are some scriptural expressions that have been so misused by ignorant and fanatical persons that they have almost fallen into disrepute among sober-minded people. One of these terms is the word "saved," as applied to an individual in this present life. In a certain class of revivals it is very common to hear persons who have been wrought up to the proper pitch of excitement, testify that they are saved. The more that can be induced to rise and say with greeater or less vehemence, "I am saved," or who in response to the question, will hold up their hands to that effect, the greater the list of "converts" the revivalist has to report. Now we earnestly deprecate any such methods as this; yet simply because the term "saved" is abused, we ought not to reject it, any more than we would refuse to believe in presence conversion, because the term is used by many people who have not the slightest idea of its meaning.

The word "saved" is frequently used in the Bible in a sense similar to that of "conversion." Paul says: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." 1 Cor. 1:18. Here it is used in the present tense, and has no reference to future salvation. Again he says: "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Tim. 1:8, 9.

To the same intent the word is used in Titus 3:4-6:-

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."

Other texts might be quoted, but these are sufficient. They show that when one has been forgiven for all his past transgressions,-when the burden of sin that clung to him as a body of death, has been removed,-and a new heart has been given him,-a heart loving righteousness and hating iniquity,-it is proper to say that he is saved. The trouble arises from confounding that salvation with eternal salvation. There is a salvation which is wholly future, as is evident from the following texts:-

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Matt. 24:12, 13. Here we learn that those who are converted-saved-must endure to the end if they would be saved.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:3-5. Here again we learn that at "the last time" a salvation is to be brought to those who, having a hope in God through the resurrection of Jesus, endure, through the grace of God, to the

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end. There is a possibility that this present salvation may not be lasting, that those who have "tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come" (Heb. 6:5, 6), may fall away; but the salvation "to be revealed at the last time" cannot be lost, as is seen by the following text:-

"But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with *an everlasting* salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." Isa. 45:17. From this we learn of a salvation that is to be everlasting, that will be shared by Israel-all who overcome. This is the salvation that is to be revealed at the last time.

Now, what connection have the two? Simply this, the first is a preparation for the second. One is salvation in the kingdom of grace, and the other is salvation in the kingdom of glory. Paul, in writing to the Colossians, prays that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing,-

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Col. 1:12-14.

Here is present salvation, and translation into a kingdom; yet it is not until Christ comes "the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28), sitting upon the throne of his glory, accompanied by all his holy angels, that he says to the righteous: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:34. Now, of those who have been delivered from the powers of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's grace, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," only those will have an entrance ministered unto them "abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," who heed the exhortation, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (2 Peter 1:10, 11), so that they do not fall.

The kingdom of grace receives subjects to be fitted for the kingdom of glory. It saves men from the guilt and the love of sin, clothing them with the divine nature, so that when the Lord shall come in his glory, they may be clothed upon with immortality, which will then be the only thing lacking. But none will share this glory who indulge in vain boasting, or who imagine that a work just begun for them is already done. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." E. J. W.

November 3, 1890

"Life and Death Opposite Terms" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

In the last words which Moses at the command of the Lord spoke to the children of Israel, he said:-

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." Deut. 30:15-19.

In this text we have the most positive evidence that life and death are exactly opposite states. It should be unnecessary to quote anything to prove such a self-evident proposition, yet it is well known that in the face of the statement that "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," many claim that the wicked, as well as the righteous, will have eternal life. If it be true that both righteous and wicked are to have everlasting life, then life and death must mean the same thing, for the Bible says that life is for the righteous and death is for the wicked.

We do not say that it is claimed that the wicked will have life under the same conditions as the righteous. But this we say is contradictory of Scripture. The Scripture promises life to the righteous, and death to the wicked. These terms are unqualified except as to duration, -both are eternal. Therefore, if it be claimed that the wicked will live eternally, it must be claimed that life and death are identical in meaning.

But the scripture just quoted shows that they are not identical. They are as widely separated as the antipodes. They are no more alike than are blessing and cursing. "See," says the Lord, "I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil." Who will claim that good and evil have anything in common? o one certainly who has any regard for God's word. Well, death and life are just as far apart as are good and evil. Life follows good, and death follows evil. Again the Lord says, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing." Who will say that blessing and cursing are identical terms? There is no question but that they are as far apart as the east is from the west. But life is the blessing wherewith God blesses

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those who love him, and the curse pronounced upon the disobedient is death. Notice a clause in the last verse of Deuteronomy 30. After admonishing the people to cleave unto the Lord, Moses says, "For he is thy life, and the length of thy days." Question-If God is the life of his people, and the length of their days, what will become of those who do not cleave to the Lord? It must be that they will not have life nor length of days. This is what the Bible teaches. Paul says that

those who "know not God, and that obey me, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, "shall" be punished with everlasting destruction." 2 Thess. 1:8, 9. He says again that Christ "hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:19), which leads to the conclusion that all who do not accept the gospel will know nothing of life and immortality.

Again, the apostle John says: "He that believeth on the Son hath life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." So far will the unbeliever be from having life, that he shall not see life. And this is literally true. This life amounts to nothing, unless it is used as a preparation for eternal life. It is hard enough at the best. In childhood even, when the world seems brightest and when the spirit is buoyant, there are troubles as great as the child can endure. As age comes on, cares increase, and the words of the patriarch, that "man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward," are proved to be true. The life which we live in this earth is not real life. There is not a man who knows, even at his best, anything of the freshness and vigor of that life which will be felt by those who drink of the river of the water of life, and eat of the fruit of the tree of life. Our moment of that life will contain more of vigor and joyous energy than threescore and ten years of this present life. And so the man who rejects God and the gospel, and who consequently is punished with destruction, may truly be said to have never seen life.

Christ is the life-giver. He came to earth and died for no other purpose than that men who were doomed to death might have life. "I am come," said he, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10. To say that we can have eternal life without Christ, is to rob him of his highest honor. Who that loves Christ can refuse to worship him as the giver of our life, as well as of all good things. E. J. W.

December 1, 1890

"The Love of God" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 47.

E. J. Waggoner

God is love. It is not simply that he has love in large measure for his creatures, but he *is* love. He is the embodiment of love. To love is a part of his nature, and this love manifests itself in devising plans for the perfect happiness of all created beings, both in heaven and on earth. It was shown in the garden of delights, Paradise, which he planted upon the earth that was already exceedingly good, for the pleasure of the man whom he had made. And in infinite measure was his love manifested when he gave all that heaven had to bestow for the reclaiming of fallen man.

But while God is love, it is a fact that between man and God there is not perfect harmony. Indeed, in man's natural state there is not the least harmony between him and God. The apostle Paul puts this very emphatically when he says: "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Rom. 8:7. It will be noticed from this that the enmity is all on the side of man; the carnal mind is enmity against God. And the cause of

this enmity lies in the fact that the law of God, which is the law of love, is regarded by man as a yoke of bondage. God's law is the verbal picture of his pure and holy character; it is an expression of the love that springs naturally from his heart. But "out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, theft, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." Mark 7:21, 22. Hence the enmity against God.

The prophet Isaiah says, in language that will apply to all men as well as to ancient Israel: "Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come forever and ever; that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord." Isa. 30:8, 9. This is man's position. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Rom. 5:8-10.

Throughout the Bible it will be found that the testimony is the same: the enmity is all on the side of man. This is shown by these words of the apostle:-

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2 Cor. 5:19, 20.

This is very emphatic. Man is the enemy of God; God is the friend of mankind, entreating them to become reconciled to him. And the depths of God's love for the sinful, rebellious world is shown in the next verse: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Although the offense was all on the part of man, God has made all the effort possible even to infinite power to have him become reconciled. On the part of man there is enmity; on the part of God there is an infinite tenderness, and a longing to have

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the rebellious children become reconciled to him.

The same truth concerning the enmity of man and the love of God is brought out in Col. 1:19-22. Speaking of Christ, the apostle says:-

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight."

After Christ had suffered for our sins which alienated us from God, he ascended into the heavens, "there to appear in the presence of God for us," and is now sitting upon his Father's throne. Rev. 3:21. Of his work there the prophet Zechariah thus speaks:-

"Thus speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his

place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Zech. 6:12, 13.

This presents a wonderful scene,-the Father and the Son counseling together for the peace of mankind, the great mass of whom choose rebellion rather than peace. Instead of loving peace and happiness, they, after their hardness and impenitent hearts, not knowing that the goodness of God leads them to repentance, treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

For a day of wrath will surely come. God is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, but he will not force men to repent and become reconciled. His love draws men to him; but there are many who resist the movings of the Spirit, and will not be drawn. As the same sun that melts the wax also hardens the clay, so the same love that destroys the enmity in some hearts only increases it in others. The simile is of course not perfect, for while it is natural for the clay to become hardened by the sun, it is unnatural for human hearts to be hardened by God's grace. Hearts could not fail to be melted into tenderness by the tender, unfathomable love of God, if they did not steel themselves against it. And so when even infinite love fails to reconcile the rebellious subjects, there is nothing left but to cut them off as useless cumberers of the ground.

In two passages of Scripture the long-suffering of God is represented by the figure of a husbandman trying to develop good fruit from his garden. Says Isaiah:-

"Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill; and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes." Isa. 5:1, 2.

See also Luke 13:7-9.

Thus is shown God's unwillingness to cut off even the most unfruitful plant, so that he can say: "Judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it." Isa. 5:3, 4. The gnarled, crooked natures of some will resist all the efforts of the faithful husbandman to induce them to bear good fruit, or any fruit at all, and since they bear only thorns and briers, there is nothing to do with them but to burn them. So the Lord says of his unfruitful vineyard:-

"And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down; and I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it." Isa. 5:5, 6.

And of the unfruitful plants he says:-

"Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust;

because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel." Verse 24.

At that time the counsel of peace between the Father and the Son will have ceased. The word of reconciliation will no longer be preached, because all will have become reconciled to God who could by any possibility be reconciled. Reconciliation will then give place to controversy, for that time of burning will be "the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion."

The controversy is now between the Lord and Satan for the possession of the souls of men. In proportion as men resist the strivings of God's Spirit, they place themselves on the side of Satan, and become actuated by his spirit. And when by continued sin, and repeated resistance of the Spirit of God, they have finally driven it from them, have blotted out every thought of good, upon which the Holy Spirit could work, then they are wholly Satan's, actuated solely by his wicked spirit.

Then when men shall have fully identified themselves with Satan, the Lord will have a controversy with them also. Says the prophet, speaking of that time:-

"A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations: he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth." Jer. 25:31-33.

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Mal. 4:1.

Thus will the great controversy end. In that day those who have allied themselves fully with Satan, will find out what a hopeless thing it is to fight against God. They will realize that while God is love, his is not the love that is imbecile, but the love that protects. In love to his loyal subjects, who have placed confidence in the integrity of his government, he must blot out the incorrigibly rebellious ones.

Says God: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing." "A blessing, if ye obey the commandment of the Lord your God. . . . and a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God." "Therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." Deut. 30:19; 11:27, 28. Who will make the wise choice, and, through Christ, become reconciled to God and his law? "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." E. J. W.

December 29, 1890

"How Readest Thou?" *The Signs of the Times* 16, 51.

E. J. Waggoner

This is as pertinent a question at the present time as it was when the Saviour uttered it. Indeed, there probably was never before a time when there was so much need as now of professed Christians looking to their ground, to see where they stand. It is well understood that there is a great deal of rampant infidelity in the land, but how many realize that that infidelity is only the central portion of the stream, which indicates a strong current in that direction? It is a sad fact that infidelity is creeping-no, not creeping, but stalking boldly, into the church. That this is true, a few extracts picked up at random will suffice to show.

It is doubtless well known that the great question which is agitating the Methodist Church at the present time is the admission of women as delegates to the General Conference, and their ordination as ministers, which would soon follow. With this controversy we have nothing to do, and do not care at present to express our opinion as to its merits. We simply wish to show how the Bible is regarded by many persons high in church authority and influence. The extracts given will show a general casting off of the authority of the Scriptures.

Prof. L. T. Townsend, of New York (Presbyterian), contributes a chapter to Miss Frances E. Willard's book, "Woman in the Pulpit," and on page 153, after quoting 1 Tim. 2:11 and 1 Cor. 14:34, 35, he says: "It must be perfectly apparent that if the prohibition in these passages is infallible, . . . then Miss Willard and her friends may as well first as last retire from the controversy." But Professor Townsend does not think that these texts affect Miss Willard's case, therefore he does not regard them as infallible.

Take another passage from the same pen, and the disregard, not to say contempt, of the Scriptures will be still more apparent:-

The pastoral epistles were addressed, not to Presbyterians in America, but to two young Jews. The writer of these epistles did not have in mind a thought of American Presbyterians. Why, therefore, do Presbyterians-we include not a few Methodists-speak and act as though they must heed the admonitions of these epistles, going so far as to enforce against women the supposed injunctions of these epistles? Why are they meddling in these affairs?-*Woman in the Pulpit*, pp. 146, 147.

Right glad are we that many Presbyterians and Methodists can be accused of regarding the epistles of Paul as authoritative even in these days. It shows that the spirit of the Reformation has not entirely died out.

The following two statements are from Methodists, published without signature in the New York *Christian Advocate*. It should be stated that the *Advocate* strongly condemns such utterances:-

Paul, who definitely believed when he wrote those scriptures that the world would not even see the second century, much less the nineteenth, was ordering the churches for his own age.

So it must be remembered that Paul was a bachelor, and he was writing in the first century, in the midst of heathen surroundings, and endeavoring to be all things to all men, and not infringing upon local laws and customs more than he had to at a time when, as a rule, women had no rights that men were bound to respect.

Anyone can see that the same line of argument would rule out all the epistles, as well as the words of Christ, and then what have people to guide them?-Simply their own perverse wills. But let us read another statement from the pen of Miss Willard, whose every utterance is taken as gospel by several hundred thousand professed Christian men and women. She says:-

Whoever quotes to the intelligent and devout women of the American church to-day, the specific instructions given by Paul to the illiterate and immoral women of Corinth, does so at the expense of sound judgment, not to say scholarship.- *Women in the Pulpit*, p. 50.

So it seems that the test of the value of any portion of Scripture is to be the intelligence of men and women, and their idea as to the necessity for it. If it suite them, it is all right; if it does not, they reject it. Of what value is the Bible to such people? Their own wills are their standard of right and wrong.

One more quotation must complete the view of the picture for the present. It is from a correspondent of the *Christian Union*, of July 24, and passes in that paper unchallenged. It is as follows:-

I have been interested in reading a criticism of Lyman Abbott, by his brother Edward, and I am impelled to jot down a few thoughts as they have occurred to an outsider. I could not but be surprised that, of the nineteen texts quoted by Edward Abbott, to establish an important, and one generally regarded as an essential, doctrine of Christianity, *only one is from the sayings of its Founder*, and in that one, the language is unquestionably figurative. Will not a higher and truer criticism, before long, come to regard the writings of the apostles to be just what they are, namely, the expression of their *personal* opinions? May they not have been sometimes mistakes? What warrant have we for assuming that Paul, Peter, James, or John were able to draw any truer conclusions from the contents of the four gospels than Lyman Abbott, H. W. Beecher, Dr. Channing, and a thousand others-especially if we accept the claim of Edward Abbott, that the spirit of truth is *now*, as well as has been, in the church?

There you have the result to which all the others are tending if they have not already arrived. It is open infidelity of a large part of the Bible, and virtual rejection of the remainder, since it all stands on the same foundation. It is terrible to contemplate the gross deceptions into which the church will plunge when such ideas become prevalent; and they are rapidly spreading, for they are intrenched in high places. The book from which the most of these quotations are made, is indorsed in the highest terms by Dr. Joseph Parker, of London, Dr. Talmage, and Joseph Cook. Is this not evidence that the church is on the "down grade"?

But we have not written this simply to expose the infidelity of these men and women. We have written in order that every reader may stop and answer carefully the question at the head of this article. Do you believe the Bible implicitly, or do doubts steal across

your mind as you read? The foundation for all this infidelity exists in the mind of everyone who holds the words of Peter, Paul, James, John, Moses, David, Isaiah, or Solomon, recorded in the Scriptures, as of any less authority or truth than those uttered by Jesus in the sermon on the mount. Note the surprise of the

writer last quoted, that out of nineteen texts in support of a Christian doctrine, "*only one is from the sayings of its Founder.*" Is a scripture any less the word of God if written by one of the apostles or prophets than if spoken with an audible voice by the Lord himself? Are you, dear reader, in the habit of attributing "degrees" to inspiration, and of considering one passage as more valuable than another, according as it meets *your* approbation? If so, you are in great danger. You say you believe that it is *all true*, although of varying authority and importance. Very well, we accept your statement that you believe the Scriptures, and ask you to accept the following as true: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

And please remember that in this Bible, all of which you profess to believe, the apostle Paul's epistles are classed with "the other scriptures." 2 Peter 3:16. They were given by inspiration too.

We ask you to believe the statement contained in this verse: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." 1 Thess. 2:13.

Here is another: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." 1 Cor. 14:37.

That is, the man who does not acknowledge Paul's writings as the commandments of the Lord, is unspiritual. He cannot discern spiritual things. How many are putting their own unspiritual doubts in the place of the holy word of God.

No one can receive from the Scriptures that living power which they are designed to give, unless when he reads them he drops from his mind all thought of the men who penned them, and of their human frailties, and hears only the voice of God. Thus did the apostles regard the Old Testament. For instance, Paul quoted Isa. 6: 9, 10 to the unbelieving Jews at Rome, introducing the text thus: "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Aesaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying," etc. Acts 28:25. Again, in Heb. 10:15-17 we have a quotation from Jer. 31:33, in which Jeremiah is not mentioned, but the words are credited to the Holy Spirit. And again, in Heb. 1:8, 9 we have Ps. 45:6, 7 quoted, and David is not mentioned, but the words are quoted as addressed by God the Father directly to the Son, without any human agency. They are indeed just as much the word of God as those which were spoken on Mount Sinai, or the Mount of Olives, and the New Testament is not a whit behind the Old.

Let us, then, avoid the beginnings of infidelity. Let us leave no room for doubt to creep into our minds, and this we can do by accepting the whole Bible, not as the word of man, but as the word of God. Then, remembering that "every word of God is pure," let us receive it with humble reverence, and hide it within our hearts. E. J. W.

The Signs of the Times, Vol. 17 (1891)

January 5, 1891

"Exposition of 2 Cor. 3:7-11" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 1.

E. J. Waggoner

Several questions have of late been asked us upon 2 Cor. 3:7-11. As that is a passage which those who are striving to teach the law often find difficult to explain, and which enemies of truth use with great confidence as being opposed to the law, we will try to give a simple scriptural exposition of it. The fifth and sixth verses of the chapter read as follows:-

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

It will be noticed that the last clause of verse 5 is an answer to the question, "Who is sufficient for these things?" asked in verse 16 of the preceding chapter. The subject which is under consideration is the Christian ministry, as is seen by verse 6 and the first verse of chapter 4. The apostle is showing its excellence, and in so doing contrasts it with the ministry of the old covenant. The word "testament" in verse 6 means "covenant," and the statement is that we are made ministers of the new covenant; "not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Many people seem to have the idea that in this verse Paul is contrasting the two testaments or covenants. The old covenant they call the letter, and the new covenant the spirit. But one who reads the verse carefully cannot fail to see that this is an error. The old covenant is not referred to till we reach the seventh verse. Paul's statement is simply to the effect that he and his associates were ministers of the spirit of the new covenant, and not of its letter, for the new covenant has its letter as well as the old. On this point Dr. Clarke makes the following pertinent comment:-

Every institution has its letter as well as its spirit; as every word must refer to something of which it is the sign or signifier. The gospel has both its letter and its spirit, and multitudes of professing Christians, by resting in the letter, receive not the life which it is calculated to impart. Water, in baptism, is the letter that points out the purification of the soul; they who rest in this letter are without this purification; and dying in that state, they die eternally. Bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper are the letter; the atoning efficacy of the death of Jesus, and the grace communicated by this to the soul of the believer, are the spirit. Multitudes rest in this letter, simply receiving these symbols without reference to the atonement or to their guilt; and thus lose the benefit of the atonement and the salvation of their souls. . . . It may be safely asserted that the Jews in no period of their history ever rested more in the letter of their law than the vast majority of Christians are doing in the letter of their gospel. Unto

multitudes of Christians Christ may truly say, Ye are not come unto me that ye may have life.

In the above quotation it is shown that the letter of the new covenant kills; but the reason why it kills will be made more plain after we have made a brief comparison of the two covenants. These two covenants with their ministrations are brought to view in contrast in verses 7 and 8, which read thus:-

"But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?"

In this verse the old covenant is called the "ministration of death." Why it was so called is very apparent to one who understands what the old covenant was. We will state it briefly. Before the Lord gave the ten commandments from Mount Sinai, he said to the Jews:-

"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel." Ex. 19:4-6.

On the third day after this, the Lord spoke the ten commandments in the hearing of all the people; "and he added no more; and he wrote them on two tables of stone." Deut. 5:22. Then Moses went up to the Lord in the mount, and the Lord gave to him precepts growing out of the ten commandments. See Ex. 21, 22, and 23. The confirmation of the covenant, the preliminaries of which are given in Ex. 19:5-8, is related in Ex. 24:3-8. There we learn that-

"Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do."

After this "Moses wrote all the words of the Lord;" and after he had built an altar and offered sacrifices unto the Lord, "he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." Then "Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you *concerning all these words*." Thus was the covenant confirmed. We learn from this that the old covenant was simply an agreement between God and the children of Israel, *concerning the commandments of God*. The people on their part promised faithfully to keep the commandments, and the Lord promised to make of them a great nation.

In connection with this covenant there were "ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary." Heb. 9:1. This sanctuary is described in Ex. 25:26, 27, and 30, and the principal "ordinances of divine service" are described in Ex. 29:38-42, and Leviticus, chapters 4 and 16. With these facts before us, we may understand why the ministration of the first covenant was called a "ministration of death."

(1) In this covenant the people had made an explicit agreement to keep the law of God. (2) By this law is the knowledge of sin

(Rom. 3:20), "for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). (3) The "ordinances of divine service" connected with the first covenant were for sin; but Paul tells us (Heb. 10:4) that "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." Those "ordinances of divine service" were only "a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things," and therefore the sacrifices which the people offered had no power to make them perfect. Therefore (4) all who had to do with the old covenant alone were condemned to death; "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23); "and the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). There was in the old covenant no provision for the forgiveness of sins; therefore the ministration of that old covenant, which was performed by earthly priests, was, so far as their work extended, the ministration of death. Only the perfect can have life, and their ministration made nothing perfect.

It is true that during the time of the ministration of the old covenant, sins were forgiven (Lev. 4:26, 31, 35), and this forgiveness was real, but it was obtained solely by virtue of faith in the promised sacrifice of Christ, and not because of anything in the old covenant. Paul says of Christ, in Heb. 9:15, that he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, *for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament*, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Thus we see that when sins committed under the first covenants were forgiven, they were forgiven by virtue of the second covenant. E. J. W.

(Concluded next week.)

January 12, 1891

**"Exposition of 2 Cor. 3:7-11. (Concluded .)" *The Signs of the Times*
17, 2.**

E. J. Waggoner

Some stumble over the first clause of 2 Cor. 3:7. "The ministration of death, written and engraven in stones," but the Scriptures furnish means for the complete exposition of this. Paul cannot mean that the *ministration* was written and engraven in stones, for that would be impossible, because the *ministration* was the service of the priests. Then it must be that he means that *death* was written and engraven in stones. But some will say, "This makes nonsense of the text." Let us see. It is very easy to ascertain what was written and engraven in stone. Ex. 31:18 says that the Lord "gave to Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." "And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand. The tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables." Ex. 32:15, 16. These two tables were broken, and after Moses had, by the command of the Lord, made two other tables, he said, "And

he [the Lord] wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly." Deut. 10:4. These texts show that it was the ten commandments, and the ten commandments alone, that were written and engraven in stones; and therefore by the word "death," in 2 Cor. 3:7, Paul must refer to the ten commandments.

But is it allowable to speak of the ten commandments as "death"? Are they death to anybody? It certainly is allowable, for they are death to all men, because all have sinned, and the wages of sin is death." The law is the cause of death to every sinner that shall perish, and so by metonymy it is called death. In like manner the sons of the prophets said of the poisonous gourds, "There is death [*i.e.*, a cause of death] in the pot." 2 Kings 4:40; and the Lord said that "the tree of the field is man's life" (sustainer of life). Deut. 20:19. So when Paul describes his conviction as a sinner, he says of the law, "And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." Rom. 7:10.

Thus we find that in every sense of the word the ministration of the old covenant was "the ministration of death." We have found, then (1) that the law, which was the basis of the covenant, was death to all, and (2) that the ministration concerning that violated law offered no relief, but in itself tended to death.

Notwithstanding all this, there was a wonderful glory connected with the old covenant and its service. The giving of the law was attended with glory the like of which has never been seen on earth before or since, and will not be until the Lord shall come in the glory of his Father with all his angels. When Moses returned from the mount, his face was so glorified that the people could not look at it; and the glory of the Lord was present in the sanctuary to so great a degree that the priests were forced to obscure it with a cloud of incense, lest they should lie.

Now let us briefly outline the new covenant. Paul says that this was established upon "better promises." Its terms are found in Heb. 8:8-12, which reads thus:-

"For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

We find here the same condition as in the old covenant, the people are to obey the law of God. But this covenant is established on "better promises" than the first, in that the Lord promises to forgive their sins, to write the law in their hearts, and to remember their iniquities no more. These things are all

accomplished by virtue of Christ, who is the mediator of the new covenant. Heb. 8:9; 9:15. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7), by securing the remission of past sins (Rom. 3:24, 25), and enabling us to walk in harmony with the law (Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:10; Heb. 13:20, 21).

The law, then, is the basis of both covenants; hence it could not be done away with the old covenant, else there could be no new covenant. The terms of the new covenant leave no doubt on this point, and Christ's connection with it brings the fact out still more clearly. Thus Christ is the minister of this new covenant (Heb. 8:1, 2), and is now performing the ministration in the true sanctuary in heaven (Heb. 9:24). His ministration has reference to the law, for he came to save sinners (1 Tim. 1:15), and he is offering his blood to save men from sin (Rom. 3:24; 1 John 1:7; Matt. 1:21). This redemption we get through faith (Rom. 3:24) and faith establishes the law (Rom. 3:31). The law itself, having been violated, brings death; Christ redeems us from its curse (Gal. 3:13), and thus becomes our life (Col. 3:4).

Now note the contrast between the two covenants. The first had the ministration of death, because everything connected with it tended to death; the violated law was death to the sinner, and the earthly ministration freed no one from that condemnation. The second covenant has the ministration of the Spirit, because "the Lord is that Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:17), and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty and life (Gal. 6:8). But although there is no death in the second covenant,

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there is in the rejection of it, for the law is still death to sinners, and all who are opposed to Christ are sinners, and condemned to death; so Paul says that the letter of the new covenant kills. The reason is that holding the mere letter of the new covenant,-the performance of the gospel ordinances while not receiving Christ in the heart,-is really a rejection of Christ. Of the Lord's Supper, Paul says that he who does not discern the Lord's body, eats and drinks damnation to himself. 1 Cor. 11:29. He is in the same condition as though he had never heard of the new covenant. But in every case, whether of the sinner under the old covenant, or of one who rejects the new, it is the law that causes his death.

In the text under consideration, Paul contrasts the two ministrations as to glory. If the ministration which could not cleanse from sin was glorious, the ministration of the Spirit, which gives freedom from sin, must be more glorious. "If the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." And so much more glorious is the ministration of the second covenant than that of the first that in comparison the first covenant seems to have had no glory. Why the ministration of the second covenant should be so much more glorious than that of the first, is because it is established upon "better promises," and Christ is its minister.

"For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." 2 Cor. 3:11. Now what was done away? The answer must be that it is that which was glorious. Verse 9 states that it was the *ministration* of condemnation that was glorious. Then it must be the *ministration* of condemnation that was done away; that which remains is the ministration of the

Spirit. By no possibility can verse 11 be made to refer to the law, because it contrasts something done away with something that remains. And we have found that the law is the basis of both covenants, and therefore it cannot have been done away, but the ministration of the old covenant, as well as the covenant itself, was done away, as was indicated by the fading glory upon the countenance of Moses. But it needs no abstract reasoning to show that it is the tabernacle service, and that alone, to which the apostle refers in verse 11 as being "done away," for he says. "If that which is done away was glorious," showing by the "if" that he had before called attention to something glorious; and the only thing which he has so designated in this connection, is the *ministration* of death. Verse 7.

We think that any reader who carefully follows this brief exposition will be able to see for himself, on reading 2 Cor. 3:7-11, that the apostle is simply contrasting the glory of the *service* of the two covenants, and that the law of God is not under consideration at all, except by an incidental allusion, which goes to show its permanent character. E. J. W.

January 19, 1891

"Candid but Humiliating Admissions" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

Possibly it is not generally understood that the Sunday-law movement, and the movement to force the Bible into the public schools, are identical in spirit, and that the success of either one logically carries with it the whole National Reform scheme. This fact is so well shown, together with the utter selfishness that prompts the so-called religious reformation, in an article by J. H. Ecob, D.D., of Albany, in the New York *Independent* of December 11, that we reprint a large portion of the article. As will be seen from the article, the *Independent* itself does not favor the scheme. Here it is:-

Within a few weeks, the *Independent* has again spoken its mind on this subject, quoting with approbation certain Chicago preachers who asked that the Bible be forbidden in our public schools as a matter of justice to the tax-paying Jews and infidels. If I remember correctly, this is the only argument, it certainly is the chief argument, advanced by the aforesaid preachers and by the *Independent*. This position has an air of breadth and fairness which is captivating. It certainly does seem not quite "on the square" to take the money of Jews and infidels to support an institution, compel them to send their children to that institution, then to read to those children a book abhorrent to the parents. Not a few of our religious papers and teachers are demanding on this ground that the Bible be excluded from our public schools.

This is a demand that our public schools shall be entirely godless. We have no right to mention with reverence there the name of Christ, on account of the children of the tax-paying Jews. We have no right to pray, even silently, there, because the tax-paying infidel would not have his child's mind perverted by deism. There must be no recognition of deity whatever in the public school, this

great nursery of the nation's citizens. On the same ground the moralities should be excluded, because tax-payers differ as to the basis of morals, and the extent of the moral code. On the same ground Christian teachers should be excluded; for it is undoubtedly a grievous wrong to the Jew and the infidel to compel him to place his children under a teacher who can no more restrain his Christian influence, if he be a true child of God, than he can restrain his breathing. I suppose the State should seek teachers as the court seeks jurors. If possible, select men and women who have heard next to nothing about God and Christ, and have no yet made up their minds whether or not there be a God and a Saviour of men.

But we must consider the full scope of this argument. If our public schools must be godless in justice to unbelieving tax-payers, so must all other public institutions supported by the taxes of the people. Our entire system of chaplains in prisons and reformatories, in military schools, in the army and navy, in State Legislatures, and in the National Congress, involves the same injustice. What right have we to take the Catholic, the Jew, the infidel, to support our military schools, then compel his boy to come under the influence of a Christian Protestant chaplain, who not only reads the Bible to him, but prays before him and for him, and, if possible, with him: who; reaches to him in public and labors with him in private,

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striving by all means to make a Christian man of him? What right have we to tax the Catholic, the Jew, the infidel, to support the State Legislature, elect him to that body, then compel him every morning to submit to the praying of a Christian Protestant? I have spent the eighteen years of my ministry in two capital cities, and have never yet known either a Catholic, or Jew, or infidel to be invited to officiate as chaplain. What right have we to open our great presidential conventions with prayer, our world's fairs, in short, every great and serious undertaking? What right have our executive officers to issue Thanksgiving and fast-day proclamations? What right have they to take the oath of office? What right has our government to stamp upon our very dollars with which we pay our taxes, the words, "*In God we trust*"? What right have we to compel the infidel to handle such money, when we know it is supposed to burn his pockets, and harrow up his soul to be in possession of such poisonous stuff? He has a right to the clean, cold silver.

This argument in behalf of the unbelieving tax-payer would also demand a revision of our Christian statute-books. What place is there for Sunday legislation? Consider what a burden we put upon the Jew. We practically compel him to observe two days in the week as rest-days. His religious scruples hold him to the seventh day, our Christian statutes hold him to the first. Even if some slight concessions are made for his conscience' sake, the result is practically the same, for no man can work when all the world is resting, neither can he rest much when all the world is at work, as every minister in the land, with his miserable, half-and-half Mondays, can testify. Such a burden has this become that the Jews are agitating the question of adopting the Christian Sunday.

Then, too, what right have we to tax the infidel to sustain our vast and complicated police machinery throughout the State, and then on Sunday convert the whole system to our Christian use, to obtain a quiet, orderly day in which the Christians may read a book and worship a God in whom the infidel tax-payer does not believe? He and his infidel brethren tax-payers

"Cannot work and cannot play

On this, the Christian's holy day."

Our Christian churches and institutions are exempt from taxation, the Jew and infidel are compelled to shoulder their proportion of this burden. In fact, this little proposition to render the public school godless for the sake of the unbelieving Jew and infidel, is like the genius escaping from the bottle-it rises and rises till it fills the heavens like a cloud. It is a proposition to render the entire State and national government godless to accommodate that same Jew and infidel.

It would seem that a few articles like that ought to be sufficient, if well circulated, to show how little of the gospel and how much of the spirit of despotism there is in the demand for the Bible in the schools. The claim that the exclusion of the Bible from the public schools will make them entirely godless has been exploded many times, and need not be noticed here. But we hope that every reader will give careful and candid consideration to the questions which Mr. Ecob asks.

"What right have we to tax the Catholic, the Jew, the infidel, to support our military schools, then compel his boy to come under the influence of a Christian Protestant chaplain, who not only reads the Bible to him, but prays before him, and for him, and, if possible, with him?" What right, to be sure? We don't believe that the military chaplain does or attempts to do very much praying with the young men, for he is there as a military officer, whose dignity would be compromised by associating on equal terms with a common soldier; but is there any just reason why the State should assume this role of the tithing-man, to *compel* people to go to church? If the churches wish to do missionary labor in the State institutions, let them do so at their own expense, and let the people be as free to attend or to stay away as they would be if not Government employ^{Es}.

Mr. Ecob says that if the Bible is to be excluded from the schools on the ground that men must not be taxed to support a religion in which they do not believe, then we should not tax them to support chaplains in our Legislatures. A very just conclusion. That farce should be ended, not simply in the interest of justice, but for the honor of religion.

"What right," he asks, "has our government to stamp upon our very dollars with which we pay our taxes the words, *"In God we trust"*? We confess that we cannot answer the question. We are sure that the government does not trust in God, and that the falsehood which it stamps upon its coins is a taking in vain of the name of God. Still, as everybody knows that it means nothing, and few ever stop to read it, but receive and pay out their money without considering what is on it, there is not so much in it that tends to degrade religion to a mere form as there is in the enforced mechanical reading of the Scriptures.

Mr. Ecob has a wonderfully clear perception of the unity and fitness of things. He sees that if it is not just to enforce one religious act, then it is not right to

enforce another. If men should not be compelled to pay taxes to support some other people's form of worship, then they should not be compelled to support men to enforce Sunday laws.

But the admission in the last paragraph but one shows conclusively that Sunday laws are, and are considered by their upholders to be, the bond of union between Church and State. "Then, too, what right have we to tax the infidel to sustain our vast and complicated police machinery throughout the State, and then on Sunday convert the whole system to our Christian use, to obtain a quiet, orderly day?" This is well worth considering, not merely by the infidel, but by the true Christian. Is the disciple above his Lord? Shall Christ's followers do in his service that which he condemned? Is it not misdirected and unholy ambition, which would seek to advance religion by means that the Master would not use? Do men in this century know how the cause of Christ should be carried on, better than Christ himself did? Do those who love the Lord Jesus as the head of the body, the church, and who believe that the true body of Christ will have within it all the power of its divine Head, wish to acknowledge the absence of that power by turning the State into a "Christian" machine to supply that lack? Is the work that was begun by Christ and his apostles to be perfected by ungodly policemen? Should not a people seek unto their God? Would that all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, by whatever name they are called, might see in these admissions the insult that is offered to Christ in his own house, and the necessity for a true reformation. E. J. W.

January 26, 1891

"Peace with God" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:1.

The preceding chapters set before us man's lost condition, in rebellion against God, the standard of righteousness, and the only way by which it can be obtained. The necessity and the fact of justification by faith are very clearly set forth in chapter three, and in chapter four Abraham is cited as an example. Those who have light upon God's law, as did the Jews, are in danger of trusting to their own works for salvation; therefore the apostle shows that Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, was not righteous by his own works, but by faith. This is the only way that men can become righteous.

"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." To be justified is to be accounted righteous. Peace is the inevitable result of such a condition. Sin is rebellion; it is warfare against God. When a rebel lays down his arms, peace must result. Peace is the absence of war. The warfare has been all on our side, God does not fight against man, but man is fighting against God. "Not that we loved God, but that he loved us." In such a case it is clear that when we cease to fight against God, when we surrender, peace must be the result.

The trouble with too many is that they look for peace without surrendering. They expect God to give them peace while they are still in arms against him. This would be an impossibility. If he were fighting against us, then he could give us peace, by ceasing to fight us. But since the fighting is all on our part, the matter of peace rests with us. God has opened the way for us to surrender; our part is to lay hold of the peace which he offers us. Peace is ours whenever we will cease our rebellion.

This peace which comes to the justified soul is no common peace. Says the Saviour: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." John 14:27. And the apostle Paul declares that the peace of God "passeth all understanding." Phil. 4:7. It has power, too, for he declares that it will keep us, and he exhorts us to let the peace of God rule in our hearts. Col. 3:15.

Since man's rebellion against God consists in violating his law (Isa. 30:9) it is evident that peace is found only in obedience. "Great peace have they which love thy law," says the psalmist, "and nothing shall offend them," or cause them to stumble. Ps. 119:165. The Lord says, "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." Isa. 48:18. "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." Verse 22. It is dangerous for a person to seek for peace while living in the commission of known sin; for Satan may give him a fictitious peace, a satisfied feeling that passes for peace. What the sinner should seek for is forgiveness and reconciliation with God; he should make a complete surrender, because his rebellion is displeasing to God, and then he will have true peace.

Peace is rest. It is the same that the Saviour offers, when he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28. A restless spirit, unholy ambition, and unsatisfied longings, are not compatible with the peace that God bestows. The peace of God keeps the mind and heart. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." Isa. 26:3. The mind that is fixed on Christ is not wavering, not easily distracted, even though cares and troubles press. It is not diverted by frivolity. "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." Prov.

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16:3. How many students complain of inability to concentrate their minds on one subject. If they would but commit their ways to the Lord, they would find that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. 4:8.

A man cannot have peace with God, and be at enmity with his neighbor. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" 1 John 4:20. The peace of God is the result of obedience to his commandments, and one of the great commandments is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Love is the fulfilling of the law; and love "suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." 1 Cor. 13:4, 5. A

disposition to find fault, to criticise harshly, to envy, to complain, to speak bitter, cutting words, is a sure evidence that one has not the peace of God ruling in his heart; and if he has not the peace of God in his heart, then he is a sinner, and condemned.

Christ is our peace. Eph. 2:14. He has made peace through the blood of his cross. Col. 1:20. He is our peace because in him we are made the righteousness of God. Christ and the Father work together for peace among men. The angels announced at the birth of Christ, "On earth peace, good-will toward men." Luke 2:14. And since Christ himself is peace, it follows that all who are Christ's will be at peace. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated." James 3:17. Purity, righteousness, comes alone through faith in Christ, and peace naturally follows, as stated in our text. All who are really Christ's will heed the inspired injunction:-

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Eph. 4:31, 32. E. J. W.

February 2, 1891

"Baptismólt's Significance" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. 28:19.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:15, 16.

In these two texts we have the importance of baptism sufficiently set forth. Let us learn from the Scriptures what it signifies, and in so doing we shall show its nature and the necessity for it.

That baptism does not consist merely in an outward form is indicated in 1 Cor. 12:13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." It is true here as elsewhere that "the body is of Christ;" and that this is the body into which we are baptized, is positively stated in Gal. 3:27, where we read, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Thus we are taught that baptism is that by which we become Christ's, and heirs according to the promise. It is that by which we get into Christ, who is the Door of salvation. Being baptized into his body is being joined to his church, for the church is the body of Christ. See Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18. And since it is by his Spirit that this union is effected, it is evident that baptism is something more than a mere form, and that only those are members of the true church of Christ who have the Spirit of Christ. See Rom. 8:9. This must not by any means be understood as depreciating literal baptism or union with the visible church. We only wish to emphasize the fact that the simple *form* is not all.

Since it is by baptism that we become united to Christ, -"put on Christ,"-a very important question is, At what point do we come into contact with Christ? That is, At what stage in the ministry of Christ do we become united to him? The answer to this gives the key to the entire subject of baptism. This question is answered in Rom. 6:3, 4, as follows:-

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

The death of Christ, then, is that by which we become united to him. Baptism signifies the death and resurrection of Christ. But it signifies more than a simple recognition of that fact. It signifies our acceptance of that sacrifice, and that we actually share his death and resurrection. If we ever are glorified with Christ, we must suffer with him. Rom. 8:17. We must share the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death, and must also know the power of his resurrection. Phil. 3:10. Let us trace the course of this great transaction.

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:23. Because all have sinned, judgment has come upon all men to condemnation. This condemnation is to death, for the wages of sin is death. See Rom. 5:12, 18; 6:23. Every man that does not believe in Christ is condemned already. John 3:18. Sentence of death has already gone forth upon us, and our life is forfeited. In yielding to Satan, we have sold ourselves to him, and have received nothing in exchange. The Scripture says, "Ye have sold yourselves for naught." Isa. 52:3. Therefore we really

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have no life. This life that men live does not belong to them; they have given it, with themselves, into the power of Satan. And because sinners are condemned to death, -have forfeited their life, -the Scripture says that "he that believeth not the Son shall not see life." John 3:36. He never has any life of his own.

But the same scripture that says, "Ye have sold yourselves for naught," says also, "Ye shall be redeemed without money." Christ is the Redeemer. And because "the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage." Heb. 2:14, 15. Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came to give life to those who had forfeited their life to Satan. He, the stronger than the strong, came and entered into the prison-house of Satan, that he might redeem his captives.

"Ye shall be redeemed without money." "Knowing that ye were redeemed not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ." 1 Peter 1:18, 19, Revised Version. Money could not purchase a single life. Life must be given for life; and the only life that could redeem a forfeited life is the life of Christ. He could buy us back only by giving his life for ours. That means that he gave his life to us, if we accept him. He has life in himself. He could lay down his life and take it again. When he

lay in the grave, "it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Acts 2:24. Herein he differed from man. If man should give up his life in payment of the forfeit, he would have nothing left. But Christ, whose life is of greater worth than that of all created beings, can give up his life and still have as much life left. Having paid the forfeit, he can give life to us in place of ours. If we accept his life, we are sure of life, no matter what becomes of this life.

But in order to get his life, which is proof against the power of Satan, we must acknowledge that our life is lost, and that there is no righteousness in us, with which to give anything toward its redemption. Knowing that this life is not ours anyway, we must be willing to surrender it into the hands of Christ, in order that we may receive his life in exchange. This is most reasonable. It is a question of whether we will give our life to Satan, and get nothing in exchange, or to Christ, and get his life instead. It would seem as though everybody ought to decide without a moment's hesitation; yet it is a struggle for everyone to give up this forfeited life for Christ's. It is not pleasant to die, and they would fain put it off as long as possible, or even persuade themselves that they will not have to give up life at all. The reason for this is that giving up this life means giving up all that pertains to it. All that is of self must go with the life. Says the apostle Paul: "They that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof." Gal. 5:24, Revised Version.

But at last the surrender is made. We give ourselves to the Lord, and take him instead. How do we get him? We cannot tell anything about the process; we only know that it is by faith. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:26. Christ dwells in the heart by faith. See Eph. 3:17. All that there is to do on our part is to give up, to yield ourselves fully to the Lord, desiring that his ways shall take the place of our ways, and believing that he will give himself to us, according to his promise. Then we are buried with him by baptism into his death, thus signifying the putting off of the old life, the crucifying of the old man, and the taking of Christ's life, in whom we rise to walk in newness of life.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Col. 3:1-3.

"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." 1 Cor. 15:10.

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. 6:6.

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. 4:22-24.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God." 2 Cor. 5:17, 18.

Do not these scriptures state as plainly as can be that in becoming Christ's we take his life in exchange for ours? It is not simply that Christ gave his life to purchase us, but that he gives his life *to us*; our life has been forfeited, and we are virtually dead,-dead in trespasses and sins, and he gives his life to us that we may actually have life. Henceforth, then, it is to be the life of Christ that meets the temptations of Satan, and labors to do the Father's will. But Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; therefore the life which is given to us will present the same characteristics that the life of Christ presented when he was on the earth in person; his life in us must be as strong to do and to resist as it was when he lived in Judea.

How can we live this life?-Just as we received it-by faith. Read carefully and remember the following texts:-

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Col. 3:1.

"Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:8-11.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. 2:20.

"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Col. 2:9-12.

This is the order of the new life: Having accepted Christ's life, we remember that the future life is to be his, not ours. Then the same spirit of self-renunciation that led us to accept Christ must be ever present with us to lead us to hold him. We must pray not only for a clean heart to be created in us, but also for a steadfast spirit to be renewed within us. And how do we hold him?-Just the same as we accepted him and were raised with him; through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. That is, with an intense longing that his life shall be manifest in ours, we lay hold of it through our faith in the power that raised Christ from the dead. We know that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead can quicken us, for that is why Christ was raised from the dead. He "was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.

This is that which Paul means when he expresses the desire, "that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection." Phil. 3:10. It is what he wishes for us when he prays, "that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." Eph. 1:18-20.

There can be no greater exhibition of power than that which is required to raise the dead. It is creative power. And this is the power which is given to us in Christ, the acceptance of which we acknowledge when we are buried with him by baptism into his death, and are raised in him. How true it is that "his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." 2 Peter 1:3. And it is the manifestation of the power of Christ's life in our lives that gives us a sure hope of eternal life with him. For says the apostle:-

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:3-5.

We have not devoted any space to the discussion of "the mode of baptism." We see no need for any such discussion. Baptism is a burial. It is an expressive symbol of the complete hiding of self in Christ. There is certainly no need of discussing the "mode" of baptism with one who is not a fit subject for the ordinance; what he wants is to be shown his need of Christ; and when one has come to the point where he is wholly submissive to the will of Christ, when he fully surrenders to him, then there is no necessity for any such discussion. He will gladly accept Christ in the divinely-appointed way. May God grant that all who read may know, not simply the fact, but the power of Christ's resurrection.

"Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." E. J. W.

February 9, 1891

"The 'Independent' and the Sabbath" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

The New York *Independent* of January 8 contains several pages of letters from prominent men, in response to its request for their views as to whether the Columbian Exposition should be open on Sunday. It has also several columns of editorial comment on the same subject. From all this matter we extract a few suggestive items.

Of the one hundred and nineteen Senators and Representatives whose letters are published, only twenty-four are unqualifiedly in favor of Sunday opening; nineteen think that the gates may be open under certain restrictions; two think that the exposition should be open for religious exercises on a grand scale-a sort of religious show; and six are either undecided or do not care to express an opinion. This shows that the great majority oppose Sunday opening.

Very few of the one hundred and nineteen public men gave any reason for their opinion in favor of Sunday closing. The principal reason given is that opening the exhibition would diminish the respect of the people for Sunday.

The Hon. C. H. Grosvenor, of Ohio, gives a reason which clashes strangely with the *Independent's* general heading to the collection of replies. The heading is printed in large black letters: "Shall We Obey God's Commandment?" Mr. Grosvenor's reply is:-

I do not think that the Columbian Exposition should be opened for public exhibition on Sunday. The Sabbath is as much an American institution as is the recognition that religion, morality, and intelligence are essential to the welfare of the State.

Can anyone tell what connection there is

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between obeying God's commandment and recognizing an American institution? Is he the God of the Americans only? Is he not also of the English, the Germans, the Scandinavians, the French, and the Italians? If Sunday observance is enjoined by one of God's commandments, by what right is the day claimed as "an American institution"? And if it is an American institution, then it is certain that it is not of God. Indeed, this is certain anyway.

On the editorial page the *Independent* prints over a column of Scripture relating to the Sabbath. Each text is printed in a separate paragraph, and in *Italic* type, to make it specially prominent. The first is the fourth commandment, and the others are strong expressions concerning the Sabbath, as Isa. 58:13, 14. Of course not one of them has the slightest reference to the first day of the week. Following these texts, the *Independent* has this just comment:-

What God commands is highest law. "Thus saith the Lord" is conclusive, both as to the authority of the law and our obligation to obey it.

Speaking through Moses and the prophets, God says, "Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy" [not spoken through Moses but by Jehovah's own voice], and pronounces penalty for disobedience against those who violate it. The command is repeated and emphasized in different places and in different forms.

When or by whom has this command been repealed? Not by Christ, as is sometimes erroneously inferred. He did break the intricate network of regulation which the Jews had woven about it, and which had made it a burden and not a relief. He taught that it was right to heal, to relieve distress, to care for life, to do works of necessity on the Sabbath, but he did not abolish it.

Yet in the face all this, the *Independent* pleads for Sunday observance *in obedience to God's commandment!* We cannot understand such inconsistency. It truly says that Christ did not abolish the Sabbath; now what is that Sabbath? Notice: God commanded the observance of "the Sabbath-day," literally, "the day of the Sabbath." That Sabbath-day is declared to be "*the seventh day.*" Ex. 20:8-10. We are told that it was "the seventh day" that God rested upon, blessed, and sanctified at the close of creation. It was a definite *day* that the Lord, through Jeremiah, warned the Jews not to violate. It was for disregarding the seventh-day Sabbath that they were carried into captivity. It was the seventh-day Sabbath that Christ was falsely accused of breaking; and it was of the seventh day that he spoke when he declared himself to be the Lord of the Sabbath-day. Mark 2:28. And he didn't abolish it. Therefore it is the Sabbath, the Lord's day still; and

opening the Columbian Exposition on Sunday will be no more a violation of God's commandment than will opening it on Monday or Friday.

The *Independent* says that if Christ did abolish the Sabbath, "his own disciples did not so understand him; for they continued to observe the institution, transferring it, after the resurrection, to the first day of the week, though both days were observed for a time by some of them." This suggests a train of queries, a few of which must be noted.

1. If Christ's disciples transferred the Sabbath from the seventh day of the first (as impossible a thing as it would be to transfer the third day of the week to the fourth), and if they had authority so to do, why did they not do it all at once?

2. Which class was right-the one that observed the first day, or the one that continued to observe the seventh?

3. If the action of men, professed disciples, is to settle the matter of Sabbath observance, then was it not, for a time at least, as correct to observe the seventh day as the first day?

4. If the disciples had a right to change the day, and the change was made so gradually that for a time both days were observed, when did Sunday keeping get the *full* sanction of the fourth commandment?

5. Was there a time in the evolution of the Sunday sabbath when it was just half right to keep Sunday and half right to keep Sabbath?

6. If it is right now to keep any day that people may choose, in obedience to the fourth commandment, without any instruction from the Lord, was it not equally right in the days of Nehemiah and Jeremiah? and where then was the justice in the punishment of the Jews for not resting on the seventh day?

7. If it was right to keep the Sabbath at all after the resurrection, is it not equally right now?

Other questions might be asked, but we wish to note just one other point. The *Independent* says:-

When the Almighty established the Sabbath, he established it on a principle as lasting as the race-the physical need of rest, as verified in all history and among all peoples; that need is just as real now as when the commandment was given.

To this we reply flatly that the Almighty never established the Sabbath on any such principle, and that there is not an iota of proof in the Scriptures that he did. Our contradiction is based on the following plain declarations of the Lord himself:-

"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Ex. 20:9-11.

"Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." Ex. 31:13.

"Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Eze. 20:12.

This is the reason, and the only reason, for the Sabbath. It is established upon the principle of God's creative power-that power which makes him alone worthy of all worship, and by which he sanctifies those who yield themselves to him. It was given that men might remember him as the Creator and Sanctifier, and we are sure that this need is as real now as when the commandment was given. It is "the foundation of many generations," and "if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

So far as the Columbian Exposition is concerned, it makes no difference to us whether it is opened on Sunday or not; but we do hope that the false arguments and the perversion of Scripture that is resorted to support Sunday closing may serve to show many people where the truth is in regard to the Sabbath. E. J. W.

February 16, 1891

"Patience, Its Development and Its Fruit" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. 5:1-5.

Here we have set forth the practical side of justification by faith. Not that justification by faith is not practical in every aspect, for nothing can be more practical than the forgiveness of sins. But this sets forth the practical every-day results of justification by faith. First there is peace that cannot be ruffled by any outside disturbance. It was such peace that, in Stephen and Paul, was superior to the howling mob that demanded their lives. Next there is joy, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. Faith gives access to the grace of God. The grace of God is according to the riches of his glory. The glory of God will be according to the riches of his grace. The possession of grace makes sure the glory to be revealed; therefore whoever through faith tastes the riches of God's grace, may rejoice in full assurance of glory to be revealed in him. The faith that appropriates the grace of God reaches forward and grasps the eternal glory. As the apostle Peter says:-

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." 1 Pet. 1:7-9.

But our rejoicing in hope of the glory of God is not because we have so easy a time, with no trials. Notice in the text just quoted that the "joy unspeakable and full of glory" is coupled with such trials as can be likened only to the fierce flame that heats the crucible in which the gold is placed. So in the passage before us. "We glory in tribulations also." Why?-Because "tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." Let us note these points. We know something of what tribulation means; shall we study how it works patience, what the experience is which results, and what the hope?

Most people think that tribulation works impatience. That is a great mistake. It is true that even petty trials that are not worthy to be listed in the same catalogue with tribulations are often followed by impatience; but they never beget impatience. They simply reveal the impatience that already exists. Many people think to excuse their irritability by pleading strong provocation. If other people were not so exasperating, they would not become impatient. Wrong. If other people did not cross them, they doubtless would not manifest impatience. A dog or a bear may say the same; they will not show their teeth, and growl, unless provoked. But their nature is none the less fierce. Circumstances and associations do not make us impatient and wicked. They may tend to draw it out; but they cannot make us manifest that which we do not have.

Tribulation works patience only in those who, being justified by faith, have peace with God. Nothing but tribulation can work patience

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there is no other way that patience can be developed, except by trials; the fiercer the trials, the more the patience, the greater the experience, and the brighter the hope.

What is patience? It is simply endurance. The ox is a symbol of patience, because it quietly bears the yoke, and endures heavy loads and even blows. Now how can a man bear and suffer, and show a disposition of quiet perseverance, unless he has trials. There is no call for patience when there is no burden to bear. As the muscle that is never exerted in carrying burdens can never develop strength, so the soul that never has trials can never develop patience. Patience is necessary, for only he in whom patience has its perfect work, is perfect and entire, lacking nothing. James 1:4. Therefore tribulations are necessary. Surely we may rejoice in that which works perfection, and brings to us every possible good.

How does tribulation work patience? The fact that it does so only in those who are justified by faith in Christ, suggests the answer. It is only when the relation between us and Christ is very close. Let us put it in the form of a paradox, that it may be the more strongly impressed on the mind. Tribulation works endurance only when we learn how not to endure it. We endure the burden which tribulation imposes upon us only by throwing it off. Let the following texts serve as proof:-

"Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. . . . For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Matt. 6:25-32, Revised Version.

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." 1 Peter 5:6, 7.

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Ps. 55:22.

The apostle Paul was called upon to bear heavy burdens, and to endure great suffering, and he says this of the amount of his burdens, and how he bore them:-

"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." 1 Cor. 15:10.

He who has been justified by faith has laid upon Christ the greatest burden that can be borne-the burden of sin. Christ died for the purpose of assuming this burden, which men could not bear. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." 1 Peter 2:24. Now the justified person finds trials pressing upon him; but he has already learned of Christ's power, and has proved the truth of his gracious promise, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28. He knows that he himself has not the strength to endure these trials without being irritated; the load will prove too galling for him. So he bears it by casting it upon Christ, which he has the fullest warrant to do. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:32.

Thus not the mere doctrine, but the actual fact of justification by faith, becomes the soother of all pains, the supporter in every trial, the strength in every duty. We do not know how we are going to be fed and clothed, if we follow some clearly indicated line of duty. What of that? "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" The greater includes the less, and if God has given his Son, that carries every needful thing with it. What shall we say of the faith of one who professes to know Christ, and yet is continually worrying and fretting for fear of some calamity, or murmuring at little ills that befall him? Surely if his faith does not enable him to trust under these smaller trials, how can he know anything about God? If faith in Christ is good for anything, it is good for everything. And that is just what it is good for. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. 4:8.

And patience works experience. Of course. Experience in what?-Why, experience, or proving of the power of God to keep us even in the little vexations and trials of life, as well as in the tribulation that comes in time of great persecution. Only trials can give us this experience, for only trials and afflictions drive us to test the power of God. And remember that this "experience" is simply experience in the willingness of God to bear all our burdens, so that the peace of God, and not impatience, may rule in our hearts. And yet men and women who never in their lives cast a single burden on the Lord, who never took the every-day trials of life to the Lord for him to bear for them, and who consequently were developing impatience and fretfulness, often talk about their "Christian experience." Such should learn that experience is something more than a mere profession.

The limits of this article forbid a consideration of the hope that maketh not ashamed, which this practical experience begets. Another article must be devoted to that. But if the reader will only make the experiment of laying hold by faith upon the power and love of God, he will know by experience what the hope is. E. J. W.

February 23, 1891

"How to Forget" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

In the epistle to the Philippians the apostle Paul said: "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3:13, 14.

So much is said in the Bible about remembering that many are in danger of losing sight of the fact that it is a duty sometimes to forget. It is a great thing to learn how to remember, but it is an equally great thing to learn the art of forgetfulness. One reason why so many fail to make advancement in the Christian life is because they have never learned how to forget. They think that one can forget only as the thing gradually fades from the mind, not realizing that they have to put forth positive effort in order to forget, as well as to remember.

It will scarcely be questioned by anyone that scenes and acts of wickedness are to be forgotten. When the sin has been confessed and forgiven, then the mind should turn from it. True, the individual should never forget that he has been taken from a horrible pit, nor that he stands only by faith, having no strength in himself; but if he allows his mind to dwell upon the specific acts of sin, one of two things, and possibly both, will result,-either he will be led to doubt that he has been forgiven, or else he will be impelled, by the force of habit and association, to the commission of the same things again. An impure thought cannot find lodgment in the mind without leaving a stain. We have known many persons to cheat themselves out of a great blessing that God had for them, simply by keeping their minds fixed on the sin, and letting that eclipse the love of God. It is a great thing to forget, even while retaining sufficient remembrance to appreciate at its true value the wonderful love of God in pardoning sin.

Another things that it is most necessary to forget is that which may have been said against us. If uncharitable remarks have been made, to remember them is like taking to one's self a deadly poison. Nothing is more deadening to spiritual life; for the fact that such things are not forgotten proves that they are not forgiven, and if they are not forgiven that is an evidence that the soul is not rejoicing in the love of God. When God forgives us, he puts upon us his own righteousness in place of the sin, and then treats us as though we had never sinned; and if we obey the injunction to forgive one another even as God hath for Christ's sake forgiven us, we shall treat the one who has offended as though he had always done us kindness instead of injury. Without this, the peace of God cannot rule in the heart.

Another cause of stumbling is the failure to forget the good deeds that have been done. This is scarcely less fatal than to remember the specific acts of sin. Sometimes, through the grace of God, we are enabled to accomplish a really good work, which gives us great joy. But then, instead of thanking God that he has done something with us, we insensibly take to ourselves some of the glory, and congratulate ourselves over our success. Instead of going on in the same strength to gain other victories, we sit down and look at what has been done, or else, going on, we keep looking back, and so stumble and fall. Nobody can expect to make any headway in a race if he keeps looking back over his shoulder. If he does so, he cannot fail to stumble over some object lying in his path, or else his course will be very crooked. He who is running the Christian race should heed these words of the wise man:-

"Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and all thy ways shall be ordered aright. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left; remove thy foot from evil." Prov. 4:25-27, margin.

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But how shall we forget? Many would forget, but they do not know how. They take hold of the thing and resolutely attempt to force it out of their mind, but that only fixes it the more firmly. Well, the secret of forgetting is very simple. Forget one thing by thinking of something else. It is impossible for the mind to contemplate two things at the same time. Now, if you wish to forget something bad, think of something good. Forget the things that are behind by looking toward the things that are before. If you have been able to do a good work, thank God for his help, and in the strength of that help go on to do another good work, giving your whole mind to it. There is a prize before us, even the prize of "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." This high calling is holiness of life, godliness; it is above us, and we cannot climb toward it by looking down at the path we have already trod.

"No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Of course not, and he never can be until he looks straight forward instead of back. If a man at the plow should keep looking back, his plow would keep continually running out, and he could not plow at all. He would make no more headway than a man would who should try to run a race and at the same time look over his shoulder. Therefore, as he who has called us is holy, let us resolutely press toward the mark, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." E. J. W.

March 2, 1891

"The Spirit as Guide" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

When Christ told his disciples that he was about to go away, and that they could not follow him, their hearts were filled with sorrow and anxiety. They dreaded to face an unfriendly world alone. He had been their guide and instructor, and they had learned much from his teachings. They knew of no one

who could fill his place. Peter had echoed the sentiments of all the disciples when, in answer to Christ's inquiry if they also would go away, he said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." They knew that no one else could do for them what Jesus had done; and the thought of being separated from him was a sad one.

To comfort them, Christ gave them the assurance that he would come again and receive them unto himself, and that by this means they could again be with him. But even this promise was not sufficient, for there would still intervene a long period during which they would be left alone. How could they do without the presence and counsel of their Lord?

Again Jesus meets the difficulty by promising that whatsoever they should ask in his name should be done for them; and he added, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth." John 14:16, 17. This Spirit was to be sent in his name, and was to take his place until his return. Said Christ, "I will not leave you comfortless [orphans]; I will come to you." This coming does not refer to his personal, visible coming, when he will receive his people to himself, but to the Spirit who should come in his name. The Spirit was to be their guide, to prepare them for his coming at the last day.

The offices of the Spirit are many; but there is a special one pointed out in this discourse of our Lord. Said he: "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:25, 26. It is as a teacher that the Spirit is here brought to view.

Many persons entertain very erroneous views as to the manner in which the Spirit operates. They imagine that it will teach them something which the Bible does not contain. When certain Bible truths are presented to them for their observance, they excuse themselves from all responsibility in the matter by saying that they are led by the Spirit of God, and do not feel it their duty to do that particular thing. They say the Spirit was given to guide into all truth; and, consequently, if it was necessary to obey that portion of the Scripture, it would have been brought to their notice. The fact that they do not feel impressed to obey is proof to their minds that there is no necessity for obedience. To such persons the Bible is of no account; they make its truth depend entirely upon their own feelings. And they actually charge God with the inconsistency of authorizing his Spirit to speak in contradiction of his revealed word. The fact that God cannot lie should convince anyone that his Spirit and his word must always be in harmony.

Christ prayed for his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." The psalmist David said, "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth." From these passages we learn that when Christ said, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth," he meant that the Spirit would lead them into a proper understanding of that which had already been revealed. He plainly stated this when he said, "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have

said unto you." Many things that Christ said were not understood at the time; but they were made plain by the Spirit, after Christ had ascended to heaven. And it is thus that the Spirit

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teaches us now; it leads those who are humble and teachable into a proper understanding of the written word of God.

Paul gives testimony on this point which is not uncertain. In Eph. 6:13-17, he describes the Christian's armor. The following is the concluding portion: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, *which is the word of God*." Christ said that when the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, should come, he would "reprove [convince] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Paul says that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Both these passages are harmonized by the one quoted from Paul to the Ephesians. The Spirit does indeed convince of sin, but it is by impressing on the minds and hearts of men the claims of God's word. The Bible is the sword, the instrument by which the Spirit pierces the heart and lays bare its wickedness. The Spirit is the active agent, but the word of God is that through which it works. In Isaiah we are told by what we are to try them: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8:20. It is the spirit of darkness that leads men to act contrary to the word of God. E. J. W.

March 9, 1891

"Under the Law" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

"But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." Gal. 5:18. Antinomians very rarely quote this verse, doubtless because it is so very evident from the connection that the law is recognized as being in active existence. Let us give it our attention for a little while, that we may see what beautiful harmony there is in the Bible on the subject of the law.

Since those who are led by the Spirit are *not* under the law, it follows that those who *are not* led by the Spirit *are* under the law. Again, the preceding verses read as follows: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other." Gal. 5:16, 17. These verses state in the plainest terms that the flesh and the Spirit are contrary to each other; but walking in the flesh and walking in the Spirit are directly opposite conditions. Then since those who are led by the Spirit are *not* under the law, and those who are not led by the Spirit *are* under the law, it follows that those who are under the law are those who are fulfilling the lusts of the flesh.

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness,

revelings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. 5:19-21.

The fruit of the Spirit is, of course, the very opposite, being "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Verses 22, 23. Referring to these fruits of the Spirit, the apostle says: "Against such there is no law." Verse 23. That is, those who are led by the Spirit, and who yield its fruits, are in harmony with the law; while the law is against the works of the flesh; and those who do the works of the flesh are condemned by the law, or are under it. Here we arrive at the same conclusion as in regard to Rom. 6:14, that "under the law" simply represents a state of antagonism to, and violation of, the law; and of course no one could be in such a state if the law were not in full force. Now since all sinners are by the law condemned to death (Rom. 3:19, 6:23), it follows again that "under the law" means condemned by the law-under the sentence of death.

Turning backward, we find the expression "under the law" used twice in Gal. 4:4, 5: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made by a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

In the third verse the apostle says that when we were children we were "in bondage under the elements of the world." *But* (that marks a change) God sent forth his Son to redeem "them that were under the law." We would naturally expect the redemption to be from that under which we were in bondage, which was "the elements of the world." In the fifth verse the redemption is said to be from "under the law," thus showing that "in bondage under the elements of the world" and "under the law" are equivalent terms.

Let us trace further this matter of bondage.

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In verse 9 Paul says to the Galatians: "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" Here it is implied that they were in danger of returning to a condition in which they had previously been. And what condition was that? Read verse 8: "Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods." That is, they were heathen. So being in bondage to the elements of the world,-the "weak and beggarly elements,"-is equivalent to being in a state of heathenism. Those who do not know God are termed heathen. But no man can know God without being a follower of Christ, as the Saviour said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14:6. In the strict Bible sense, therefore, all who are not in Christ are heathen. And therefore although Paul addressed his epistle to those who had been idolaters in the commonly-accepted sense, the argument is of universal application.

We conclude, then, that the "elements of the world" are simply the various forms of sin. This is still further shown by Eph. 2:1-3: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked *according to the course of this world*, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among

whom also we all had our conversation [manner of life] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Nothing but sin is meant by "the course of this world," the "weak and beggarly elements," and "the elements of the world." And to be "in bondage under the elements of the world" is to be "under the law," in a state of condemnation.

Christ came in the fullness of time (see Mark 1:14, 15; Dan. 9:25) "to redeem them that are under the law." But in order to do this, he himself had to be "made under the law." This is in harmony with Heb. 2:17, which says: "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." The people whom Christ came to redeem were "under the law," therefore he was made like them, "under the law." "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." 2 Cor. 5:21. E. J. W.

March 16, 1891

"My Lord Delayeth His Coming" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

"True, our Lord delayeth his coming, but as a thief suddenly he is coming to many every day, and to all he will finally come at such an hour as we think not." This quotation isn't from the Bible, but from a denominational newspaper. As we read it, we could not help thinking how blind so many professed Christians are upon the simple subject of the coming of the Lord. It will be noticed that the writer of the above takes it for granted that the Lord is coming. How did he learn that truth? Evidently from the Bible. But how could he learn from the Bible that the Lord is coming, without learning some of the particulars concerning his coming? That is a mystery.

Is the Lord "coming to many every day"? The Scriptures are silent about the many comings. Christ said, "I will come *again*," which means only once more; and Paul plainly declares that he will come the "*second time*." Since Christ is to come only the second time, it is evident that he is not coming to many every day.

Another evidence that the Lord is not coming to many every day, is that when he comes, everybody will know it. Said Jesus, "For us the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:27. "A fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." Ps. 50:3. When he comes, he will possess the throne of his glory, and will come in all the glory of the Father." Matt. 25:31; 16:27. So great will be the glory that it cannot be hid from the eyes of any; so the apostle John says: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." Rev. 1:7.

The extract which we quoted to begin with, implies that Christ comes at the death of individuals. This idea is overthrown by the scriptures which we have quoted, but we have direct testimony as to how Jesus will come for his saints. Paul said to the Thessalonians that he would not have them in ignorance

concerning their dead friends, and gave them some words of comfort. Did he say, "Christ has come and taken your friends to be with him"? No; he said: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which *sleep in Jesus* will God bring with him [that is, from the dead]. . . . For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:14-17. Thus we find that when the Lord comes, he will take all his saints at once, and not simply one at a time, and there will be a sound that will not only be heard by all who are upon the earth, but which will penetrate the graves and awake the dead.

It has been eighteen hundred years since our Saviour's first advent, but that is no evidence that his second coming is delayed. If a man tells us that he will come to see us at a certain time some distance in the future, we cannot accuse him of delaying his coming until the set time has passed. Christ did not set any time for his coming, but he gave certain signs, as the darkening of the sun and moon, and the falling of the stars, which should show it to be near. After rehearsing these signs, he said of his coming, "When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." Matt. 24:33. And then he added: "Verily I say unto you, This generation [

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i.e., the generation which should witness these signs] shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." So long as any are alive who witnessed these things, there is no reason to say that the Lord delayeth his coming; and Christ's promise that he will come before the generation passes away, cannot fail.

It is true that the signs which the Saviour gave to mark the nearness of his coming, are long in the past. But we are not therefore justified in saying, "My Lord delayeth his coming." None but the evil servant says that, even in his heart. Matt. 24:48-51. True it is that to that servant the Lord will come "in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder." Surely this should serve as a warning against any servant saying that our Lord does delay his coming.

The fact that the signs of Christ's coming have been fulfilled should lead us to say, not that our Lord delays his coming, but that it must be very near. If we take this position, and watch, we need not be taken unawares. Said Christ: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." Luke 21:34. Paul said: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." 1 Thess. 5:4. "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." E. J. W.

"Intellect Not Sufficient" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

As to the truthfulness of Paul's description of the heathen in the first chapter of Romans, there can be no question. The testimony of ancient heathen writers themselves confirms it. Licentiousness of every description was not only

permitted by the law, but was practiced alike by the common people and philosophers, and was even enjoined upon the people as a religious duty. The temples of the heathen were houses of debauchery. The gods which they manufactured for their worship, as Jupiter and Venus, were simply the reflection of their own evil natures; and since they thus deified the lusts of their own hearts, it was inevitable that they should sink into deeper sin.

We often hear it said that the scenes of cruelty and vice that were enacted by the heathen in their worship and in their social life are not possible in this enlightened age; but such persons forget that the civilization of Greece and Rome was fully equal to that of Europe and America, if not superior; yet the people were heathen, and most abominable was their idolatry. But like causes produce like effects. If their unthankful, vain imaginations, because of their great inventions, lifted them up so that they entirely separated themselves from God, and were left to work out the evils that were in their own natures, the same thing will occur now under the same circumstances. The possession of intellectual activity is no safeguard against immorality, when the Giver of that intellect is forgotten. The only guard against the grossest immorality is a humble acknowledgment of God. E. J. W.

March 23, 1891

"Evergreen Christians" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Ps. 1:1-3.

The secret of this prosperity is meditation in the law of God. To meditate in the law of God day and night is not simply to have certain fixed hours for devotion, nor is it simply to desire greatly to get away from business, in order to think. Meditation, at least in the sense that it is here used, does not necessarily imply solitude. It is certain that it does not here, for the meditation is to be continued day and night; and God does not want men to be hermits. The life of a monk does not furnish the best opportunities for holiness, as many have testified from experience. One great reason why is that those who shun the society of their fellow-men are shirking duty that God has laid upon them. If a man has light, he is to let it shine to the glory of God. It is the very essence of selfishness for a man to go off and live by himself in some solitary place, in order that *he* may perfect holiness, and not be contaminated by evil companionship; and such a one always reaps the reward of his selfishness, in that he has the worst possible constant companion. No man can get away from himself by going into the woods to live.

Meditation is not communion with self. The person who thinks about himself very much will not make advancement in the Christian life. There is only one to whom the Christian should look, and that is Jesus. When a person shuts himself up to himself, he is apt to exclude everything else. While secret devotion and meditation are necessary, if one's meditation is confined to his hours of privacy, he will not grow as a tree. David furnishes a good commentary upon his own words in this psalm when he says: "Princes also did sit and speak against me; but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes." Ps. 119:23. Ridicule and abuse could not affect such a man, for he would be deaf to it. His mind is absorbed in something else.

Meditation in the law does not mean simply thinking about the words of the ten commandments. There is more to the law of God than what appears on the surface. The law is spiritual. That person alone properly meditates in it whose eyes have been opened to behold wondrous things in it, and who has hid it in his heart. His sole thought is, How can I live to the glory of God? He binds the law upon his hand and his head, as well as in his heart, so that his thoughts and his acts will naturally grow out of it. The one question that he will ask is, Is this right? Will it be pleasing to God? And the law of God in all its breadth, as exhibited in the life of Christ, will be that to which he will look for an answer.

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water." The word here rendered "rivers" is not the ordinary word for river. It is a word that signifies division, and seems to refer, not to a river itself, but to the different streams into which a river is divided for irrigating purposes. "Canals of water" would more properly express the idea. It is not simply a tree on the bank of a river, but a

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fruit-tree in a thoroughly watered soil. Those who have seen the luxuriance of vegetation in a country where irrigation is carried on, can better understand the figure.

"He shall be like a tree." Constant growth is one of the characteristics of a tree. If it lives a thousand years, it grows every year. Each year of its life will see a circle added to it. It does not lose this year all that it gained last year, but it keeps all that it gains, and adds more. Only such growth as that is Christian growth. The true Christian life is continual advancement. Says the psalmist, of those who at last will appear in Zion before God, "They go from strength to strength." Nothing else can be represented by the word "growth."

A tree draws its nourishment from hidden sources. Its roots strike down deep into the earth, to take nourishment; all out of sight are the processes of growth, but the foliage and the fruit are open to all beholders. So the Christian whose abundant fruit glorifies God is the one whose life is hid with Christ in God. The promise is that if we pray to God in secret, our Father, who seeth in secret, will reward us openly men may not know the petitions that are put up to God in secret, will reward us openly. Men may not know the petitions that are put up to God in secret, they may not know the agonizing cry of the heart and the flesh for the living God, even while the individual is mingling with others in the discharge of his duty, that strong temptation may be resisted; they can see only the fruit that is borne; we cannot see the tree grow-we see only the result of its growing.

"His leaf also shall not wither." Many professors are like the grain that fell where there was not much earth; it sprang up quickly, but as soon as the heat came it withered. They are full of zeal for a time, but when actual conflicts come, they become discouraged. But the true Christian doesn't wither. No matter how fiercely the sun beats down on the tree that stands in irrigated soil, its leaves are always green. Its roots take up moisture continually. So the one in whose heart is the law of God, who delights in it, and meditates in it, has a source of continual freshness. He feeds upon the living word, and grows thereby. This is the only source of growth. The one who depends on feeling and impulse may make a fair show for a time, but only the one who feeds upon Christ and his words, which are spirit and life, can continue to grow.

"Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper," because he will do nothing that the law of the Lord does not prompt. The beauty of the Lord will be upon him, to establish the work of his hands upon him. How much energy is wasted in this life! How many efforts fail, simply because they are misdirected! But he whose strength is in God will not labor in vain. Such shall be called "trees of righteousness;" that is, their righteousness will be increasing with steady growth, as does a tree; and being the planting of the Lord, they will bring forth fruit, and God will be glorified in their lives. E. J. W.

March 30, 1891

"The Christian a Debtor. Romans 1:14, 15" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 13.

E. J. Waggoner

"I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also."

The apostle Paul had no sympathy with those who would say, "The world owes me a living." For such person he had only the sharpest rebuke. His command was "that if any would not work, neither should he eat." 2 Thess. 3:10. In the language quoted above, we have the sentiment of the true missionary-one who has given his life to the service of others.

But Paul did not take any credit to himself for his labor for others. He considered that he was simply working out a debt. To the Corinthians he wrote: "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel!" 1 Cor. 9:16.

The question is, How did Paul become a debtor to all men? And, Did any obligation rest upon him that does not rest upon every follower of Christ? The answer to both questions may be found in the Scriptures.

In the very beginning of his epistle to the Romans, Paul declared himself a servant of Jesus Christ. As we have already learned, this means that he was the life-long bond slave of Christ, yet his service was a willing service of love. He had given himself wholly to Christ, and was so closely identified with him that he was counted as a son and a brother. This is the position of every Christian. "Ye are

not your own; for ye are bought with a price." 1 Cor. 6:19, 20. First of all, then, the Christian owes himself and all that he has to Christ, because Christ has bought him with his own blood.

But the fact that we owe ourselves to Christ, and that if we acknowledge that obligation we are to identify ourselves so completely with him that the service will not be ours but his (1 Cor. 15:10), makes us debtors to all men. For Christ "died for all;" and in carrying out his work for men, he assume an obligation to all men, although no man had of right any claim upon him. Paul says that although he was in the form of God, he "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant." Phil. 2:6, 7. And we are expressly exhorted to have this mind in us. Jesus himself said: "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:26-28.

Christ gave his life "for the life of the world" (John 6:51); therefore everyone who yields himself to Christ, to become identified with him and his work, becomes, like him, a servant, not alone of the Lord Jesus, but of all for whom he became a servant. In other words, the Christian is Christ's servant; but as Christ's work is for the world, he who becomes a sharer of that work must become the servant of the world. Paul felt this to the utmost. He felt that he owed service to everybody that was in need; and so he did. The servant owes his service to the one who pays for it. Christ had bought the service of Paul by the sacrifice of himself; and when Paul recognized that debt to Christ and gave himself to the discharge of it, the Lord turned his service in the direction in which he himself labored. The only way to be a servant of Christ is to serve those for whom he died. Wesley had some of the same spirit that Paul had, when he said, "The world is my parish."

The second great commandment in the law is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Our neighbor is everyone with whom we come in contact who is in need. Says Paul: "As we therefore have opportunity, let us do good

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unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Gal. 6:10. "As we have opportunity." That indicates that we are to seek occasion of serving men, and so Paul did.

To the Romans Paul said in another place: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself." Rom. 15:1-3. Thus again we learn that the work of Christ is to be the example for us; and he "went about doing good." Acts 10:38. Again Paul says: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Gal. 6:2.

The trouble with too many who profess to be followers of Christ is that they do not feel any great sense of obligation. Sometimes they talk about "getting a burden" for the work, but what is that burden? It is nothing else but a sense of the debt which we owe to Christ, and consequently to the world. If a man owes a great deal of money, and has no means with which to pay it, he will necessarily feel as though he had quite a load upon his shoulders—a burden. So all that is

necessary to enable a man to have a burden for souls is for him to realize how much Christ has done for him.

The one to whom much is forgiven will love much. Paul felt himself to be the chief of sinners, and so when he felt the pardoning love of God, he felt that he owed much service. And he never forgot how much had been forgiven him, nor how great was his dependence upon God, and so he always felt the burden of debt resting upon him. Those who have felt the burden of their sins, and who know that they are removed, will not have to strive to get a burden for souls. They will feel, like Paul, that necessity is laid upon them, and it will be the joy of their lives to discharge that obligation. E. J. W.

April 6, 1891

"We Have Abraham to Our Father" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

"And think not to say within yourselves. We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Matt. 3:9. These are the words which John the Baptist spoke to the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism. These men were corrupt at heart. Their character is described by our Saviour himself in Matt. 23:13-33, where they are said to have outwardly appeared righteous, while within they were full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Both John the Baptist and our Saviour called them vipers.

These men were lineal descendants of Abraham, and were of the stock of Israel, but they had lost the spirit of Israel. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth. Heb. 11:13. They did not expect their portion in this life, nor an earthly inheritance; but they looked for a city from heaven, and an inheritance in the new earth, wherein righteousness alone should dwell. 2 Peter 3:13. And they knew that the possession of righteousness would be the only passport to that heavenly inheritance.

The Pharisees, on the other hand, had ceased to look for a Messiah who should finally reign over a righteous nation, and who should prepare subjects for that kingdom by cleansing them from sin. They did not look at their hearts, which were corrupt, but only on the outward appearance, which was fair. Consequently, seeing no sin in themselves, they felt no need of a Saviour. And so they came to John's baptism, not because they felt any need of flying from the wrath to come, but because they thought that by enrolling themselves in the ranks of the new leader, whose coming John announced, they would be sure of places of honor in the coming kingdom. They expected that that kingdom would bring simply emancipation from the Roman yoke, and would place the Jewish nation in the seat of dominion over the whole world; and they had not the slightest doubt but that they would have a place in the kingdom, because they were children of Abraham. Their sole anxiety was to have as high a place as possible.

John saw through their mask of hypocrisy, and told them that they need not flatter themselves that they were children of Abraham. The promise to Abraham

and to his seed would be fulfilled, but sooner than count them as the seed of Abraham, God would raise up children unto Abraham out of the stones of the ground. The inheritance was promised to Abraham, not because God regarded his person or his descent as superior to that of other men, but because he had the righteousness of faith. Consequently, those who are counted as heirs with him must be men of like character. It certainly would not be just to accept Abraham solely because of his faith in God, and to accept others solely on account of their parentage.

Afterward, when Christ was talking to the wicked Jews, he said, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." John 8:39. The apostle Paul also says, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:29. The Pharisees who came to John to be baptized thought that the fact that they could prove their descent from Abraham would insure them a place in the kingdom of Christ; but Paul shows that they had turned the matter around. They could only prove themselves children by bringing forth such works of repentance as would show them to be Christ's.

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There are many to-day who have as erroneous ideas of the kingdom of Christ as the Pharisees and the Sadducees had. There is a large party called the National Reform Association, whose members think that Christ's kingdom is going to be established at the polls, by the votes of men. And they imagine that they are sure of a place in that kingdom, because they can trace their ancestry back to the Covenanters, or some of the Reformers. They forget that the Reformers did not follow the multitude, but took the Bible for their guide, as far as its truths were revealed to them, and that in following its teachings they suffered untold hardships. The Reformers became such solely because their love for God and his truth was so great as to lead them to endure privation and to be considered as outcasts. And yet these men imagine that they can ride into the kingdom of God on the top wave of popularity. How terribly mistaken they will some day be.

The kingdom of Christ is promised only to the true Israel, but the true Israel are only those "whose praise is not of men, but of God." Rom. 2:29. Those who will be great in that kingdom must be content to be small here; and whosoever will be chief, must be a servant; "even as the Son of man [the King himself] came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:28. He was in the form of God, and had all glory and honor, yet when he saw the lost world, he did not think his glory was a thing to be desired, so he laid it all aside, and "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." Phil. 2:7-10.

"The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him." Let none therefore imagine that he is going to get into the kingdom on the strength of a profession, nor because he is a descendant of the

Reformers, nor a member of a large and influential church organization. Let none think that he can be more favored than the King, and can obtain the kingdom by any other means than humble self-denial and a godly life. Neither let any think that Christ's reception of the kingdom depends on them. He receives his kingdom from the Father (Ps. 2:7-9; Dan. 7:13, 14), and will admit into it only those who upon the foundation of faith have built a superstructure of virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity (2 Peter 1:5-11). E. J. W.

"In Christ We Have All Things" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

[Extract from a discourse, at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Battle Creek, Mich., March 22, 1891, by Elder E. J. Waggoner.]

"What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Take this verse and read it, and commit it to memory, and then remember to say, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." Rev. 12:11. And remember that Christ gave the example of defeating Satan by the word of the testimony; every time the temptation came, he said, "It is written." So when the clouds of darkness come, and the thick darkness gathers around, just say, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" And God *is* for us, as is shown in that he gave Christ to die for us, and raised him again for our justification.

There is peace in the thought that God works out all things after the counsel of his own will, and that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Then it does not matter what comes against us, for in that it comes against us, it comes against the purpose of God, and that is as sure and firm as the existence of the Almighty can make it.

Now who is against us? Satan is against us. That does not make any difference if he is. Satan has tried his power with Christ, and it has proved itself to be nothing. "All power in heaven and earth is given to me," says Christ. Then if all power has been given to Christ in heaven and in earth, and it has been given, where is there any left for Satan?—There is none. In a contest with Christ, Satan has no power; so if we have Christ for us, nothing can be against us.

Some of us have been talking about the power of Satan in the past; but he has none, there is none left for him. Technically speaking, Satan is against us. Who is he?—"The prince of the power of the air." He brings pestilence, he brings disease, he puts things in our way, and arrays them against us. But the very things which he arrays against us to work our ruin, God takes and makes for us. They are all good. We often sing:—

"Let good or ill befall,
It must be good for me.
Secure of having Thee in all.
Of having all in Thee."

But we often sing things that we do not believe at all. Now I would not have anyone sing these things any less, but I would have you believe them more. It is often the case that if you believe them more. It is often the case that if you took the words from the music, and put them into plain prose, there would not be anyone in a whole congregation who would believe or dare to say them. Let us believe them, not because they are in the hymn, but because they are Bible truth.

We are like the people who are represented by the prophet Ezekiel: "Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against [about] thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, everyone to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord." That is it, -they say, Come, let us go to meeting, and hear the sermon. "And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not." Eze. 33:30-32.

I say that a great many of these truths are just a song to many people. They hear them and are interested in them, and then pass on, but they do not believe or do them. But the Lord has given them for us, to both believe and to do, and they will be our strength. So everything works for good to them that love God. We cannot always see how, or tell how, but God has said it, and we know it is so. There are many things that we cannot tell why we believe, and to our very senses they do not appear to be so; but the very fact that God has promised that if we do believe them they will be so makes them so, when we take hold and believe them. We can never know this till we do believe; but when we do believe, then we will know. So if God be for us, who can be against us?

Think of that lone prophet of God, Elisha. He was down in Samaria; the mountains were all around him. A whole host of armed men had come to take him. He stood alone with his servant, and that servant was afraid. He did not think in that moment, nor did he say, that the king of Israel ought to send a troop of horse, or some infantry, to defend him. The young man came to him, and said, "Alas, my master! How shall we do?" Elisha prayed, "Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes." And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold the mountains were full of horses and chariots of fire round about.

The whole mountain and plain were filled with chariots and horses, and any one of them was stronger than the whole host of the enemy. It is as true in our case as in that of Elisha that "they that be for us are more than they that be against us," and the only thing for us to do is to get our eyes open so that we may see that this is so. What opens our eyes? -The word; it is a lamp unto our feet and a light to our path, and if we believe it, we will know that they that are for us are more than they that are against us.

He who is with us is the living God of Israel, who has power to turn darkness into light, and weakness into strength; and every evil thing that comes against us, he turns into a blessing to help us on our way.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?" Why will he with Christ also give us all things?-Because all things are in him. Note Eph. 1:23, "Which is his body, the fullness of *him that filleth all in all*."

He that hath put on Christ is "strengthened with all might." Why?-Because God has placed Christ "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Therefore everything is in Christ. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He has all power given him in heaven and in earth. Do you not see that, this being the case, it is a foregone conclusion that when God gave Christ for us, and freely delivered him up for us all, in him he does give us all things?

April 13, 1891

"Safety in the Time of Trouble" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 15.

E. J. Waggoner

"The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isa. 33:14.

This text is to some a stumbling-block in the way of their believing that the wicked are to be utterly and eternally destroyed. The difficulty arises from the supposition that the prophet means, Who of us shall suffer from the devouring fire, or, in other words, Who of us shall in the last day be found sinners? But that is not the idea of the text. The true meaning is found when we read the answer to these questions, which is found in verse 15: "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." From this we learn that the prophet does not mean to ask who among us shall be sinners, but who among us shall be righteous. And therefore, when he says, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" he does not mean to ask who shall be punished with this fire, but who shall escape it. Thus the text has no reference whatever to eternal torment.

But the question will be asked, How can it be said that the righteous shall dwell with devouring fire and with everlasting burnings? This will be understood after we have quoted a few texts. The Psalmist, speaking of the coming of the Lord, says, "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." Ps. 50:3. And again, "A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies around about." Ps. 97:3. In Hab. 3:3-6, we find the following: "God came from Teman, and the Holy

One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand; and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; his ways are everlasting." From the sixteenth verse of this chapter we learn that this is the description of the time of trouble that shall just precede the coming of the Lord. It is the same that is referred to in the ninety-first psalm, where we read of the "terror by night," the "pestilence that walketh in darkness," the "destruction that wasteth at noonday," and the plagues which the wicked shall suffer, and which the righteous will see, although they shall be unharmed by them.

Now if with these texts we read Joel 1:15-20, which also describes the time of trouble, we shall understand about the devouring fire and the everlasting burnings. That text reads thus:-

"Alas for the day for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn

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is withered. How do the beasts groan the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Lord, to thee will I cry; for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field cry also unto thee; for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness." Read also Joel 2:1-3.

We find from this text that just before the coming of the Lord there is a time of trouble for the wicked, in which there is pestilence, and plagues, and devouring fire; and that the righteous witness these plagues that are poured out upon the wicked, but are protected. The enemies of the Lord will be consumed by the devouring fire, but those who are described in Isa. 33:15 will be able to dwell with everlasting burnings. Of such a one Isaiah says, "He shall dwell on high;" David says, "He shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." While the meat is cut off because the corn is withered, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, "Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure." And while the wicked behold only a desolate wilderness, he "shall behold the land that is very far off." This last reference also show that the time of the everlasting burnings is before the coming of the Lord.

The thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah gives the result of this time of trouble. There it is said of the earth that "the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch" (verse 9); and to show that it is the same everlasting burnings that accomplish this, verse ten says: "It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it forever and ever." Now, to show that even this is limited in duration, and that the fire ceases to burn when that upon which it

feeds is consumed, read the next chapter, especially the first two verses: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God."

Happy indeed will be the lot of the man who in that awful time of trouble can say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in him will I trust." They who in this day of salvation wash their robes of character, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, can say in that day when God stands and measures the earth, scattering the everlasting hills, and causing the perpetual hills to bow: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." Ps. 46:1-3. Who would not wish for such confidence in a time when fearfulness surprises the hypocrites? E. J. W.

"What We Gain by Being in Christ" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 15.

E. J. Waggoner

[Extract from a discourse, at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Battle Creek, Mich., March 22, 1891, by Elder E. J. Waggoner.]

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Eph. 1:3. "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:2-4.

Christ has all power, and he *hath* given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness. Notice that the past tense is used. This has been done for us. Then why don't we have them?-For just one reason,-because we don't take them. We have been mourning for so long, and saying that we want these things; well, we can have them, they have been given to us, and there is no reason why we should not appropriate them to ourselves.

Suppose I come to you and say that I am very hungry, and that I would like something

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to eat. "All right," you say, "just sit down here to the table, and we will get something for you." Soon you place the best of what you have on the table, and tell me, "There it is, and now eat." But I say, "Oh, I am so hungry, and I do want food so much!" "All right, take it and eat." "But I am so hungry, and I do want something to eat; I have not had anything for days." "Well, take it." "Yes, but I do want food so bad." You would say that I was out of my mind if I acted that way, and did not eat of the food that was so freely placed before me.

Said one to me the other night, "If that is the way that the Lord does with these blessings that pertain to life and godliness, we are certainly foolish that we do not take them; but I do not think that the illustration is a fair one, because we cannot see these things that the Lord has to offer, and we can see the food." Neither do I think that it is a fair illustration, because it does not half fill the bill.

Have you not often thought you saw something that you did not see? Does not your sight often deceive you? Sometimes you thought you saw a thing that you did not see, and then again you saw things that when you came to look at them closely, were not as they really appeared to be. But the word of God never deceives. Therefore I am more sure of the things promised in the word of God than if I could see them. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all." Rom. 4:16.

"The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:18. We must revise our logic a little in this matter. We think that anything that we can see is all right and sure. Therefore we get hold of a house or a piece of land or some other property, and think that we have something, because there is in our possession something that we can see. But the truth of the matter is that the only things that we can depend on are the things that we cannot see. We can see the earth, and we can see the heavens, but they are going to pass away. "But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." 1 Peter 1:25.

With the Psalmist we can say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Ps. 46:1-3. Can we say that? Brethren, that time is coming. The earth will reel to and fro like a drunken man, and be removed like a cottage, and the mountains will skip away, and pass over into the ocean. That is going to happen, and there will be some people at that time who will feel perfectly calm and trustful; but they will not be composed of man and women who have never learned to say that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose. The man that doubts God now will doubt him then. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? That promise includes *all*. "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." 1 Cor. 3:21-23. This is not in the future. All things are yours at the present time. Everything is ours, and therefore we can say with the Psalmist, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage."

Yes, we have everything; we are children of the King, of the Most High. What difference does it make if people do not own us? God owns us, and he knows us; and therefore, if men heap on us reproach and persecution, the only thing we

can do is to pity them, and labor for them, for they do not know the riches of the inheritance.

April 20, 1891

"Effects of Erroneous Opinions" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

It is very common for those who are quite loose in their belief, or who do not believe much of anything, to ease their consciences by saying, "God will never condemn a man on account of his opinions; it is how a man lives that determines his condition at last." How these people acquired such intimate knowledge of God's plans, so as to be able to speak so definitely of what he will or will not do, is not apparent, for it is very evident from the Bible that a man's opinions have a good deal to do in deciding his final destiny.

It seems never to occur to those who use the expression quoted above, that they are strangely inconsistent with themselves. The very ones who use such language will speak very slightly of one who "has not the courage of his convictions," that is, one who holds opinions which he dare not act out. Such a man they justly accuse of leading a double life; and yet they seem to think that God will be perfectly satisfied with a man who leads such a life.

But the great mistake is in supposing that a man can hold opinions which will not to a greater or less extent influence his actions. The statement by Watts, the "the mind's the standard of the man," is but another way of expressing the truth uttered by Solomon that as a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he." A man cannot entertain vile thoughts and still have all his actions pure. Neither can a man entertain erroneous opinions without acting in accordance with them, unless his circumstances hinder him; and in that case he is entitled to no more credit than the thief in prison is to be commended for not stealing.

In times past people have suffered severely on account of their opinions. When Paul says, "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace," he says in effect that the inhabitants of Jericho perished because they believed not. If they had believed, they might have been saved as well as the harlot Rahab. But they were of the opinion that their gods were stronger than the God of Israel. Somebody might have said to them, "It doesn't make any difference what ideas you have about God; it is your actions that will determine your final lot." But their ideas of God had everything to do in shaping their actions, and their erroneous ideas led them into practices which caused their ruin.

Again we read of the children of Israel: "For some, when they had heard, did provoke; howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he [Christ] grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." Heb. 3:16-19. Here we have the plain declaration that it was the unbelief of the Israelites that shut them out of the promised land. "They

could not enter in because of unbelief." But would they not have been allowed to enter in if they had not sinned?-Certainly; and they would not have sinned but for their unbelief. Their sin was a necessary consequence of their unbelief.

How was it with the inhabitants of Sodom? When Lot, who believed the warnings of the angels, went out to tell his relatives that God was going to destroy the city, "he seemed as one that mocked." They regarded him as a fanatic; very likely they thought he was losing his mind, and would have to be cared for. But the Lord did destroy the city, and all those who disbelieved perished with it. It was their opinion that they were safe enough,

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and in consequence of their erroneous opinion they perished.

We may learn a lesson from them. Indeed, their case is recorded for our admonition. Christ says: "As it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:28-30. All over the land the coming of the Lord is being proclaimed. The sure word of prophecy foretells that his coming is now very near. Yet these things are to thousands as idle tales. Those who preach the nearness of the second advent are regarded as fanatical. It is the common opinion that the world is just in its infancy. Men say, "Well, it doesn't make any difference how we believe in regard to the coming of the Lord, if we only live right." But still the truth exists that only "unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28. Why will this be so?-Simply because those who do not believe that his coming is near at hand, will not be getting ready for it.

Let no one delude himself with the idea that he has "a right to his own opinions," and that he can believe what he pleases and still be safe at last. It is true that so far as other men are concerned he has a right to his own opinions; that is, he is not answerable to any man for what he believes; but all men are answerable to God for their opinions. No man has a right to hold an opinion contrary to what God has revealed in his word. And those who will cling to their self-assumed right to believe what they please, will find at the last that it was a dearly-bought privilege. Among those who "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," the *unbelieving* occupy a prominent place. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." E. J. W.

"The Working of the Mystery of Iniquity" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

Among ancient church Fathers, Origen stands at the head. Mosheim says that he "unquestionably stands at the head of the interpreters of the Bible of this [the third] century;" and Farrar says of that century and the one following, that "half the sermons of the day were borrowed, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, from the thoughts and methods of Origen." This being the

case, it becomes a matter of the greatest importance, in studying the change that took place in the church, to know what were the thoughts and methods of Origen, especially in regard to the Bible. These we find very plainly set forth in the first chapter of his fourth book, "*De Principiis*," in which he treats of the inspiration of the Scriptures. Having stated his theory of the "threefold sense" of Scriptures, he says, in section 15:-

"But since, if the usefulness of the legislation, and the sequence and beauty of the history, were universally evident of itself, we should not believe that any other thing could be understood in the Scriptures save what was obvious, the word of God has arranged the *certain stumbling-blocks*, as it were, *and offenses, and impossibilities, should be introduced into the midst of the law, and the history*. In order that we may not, through being drawn away in all directions by the merely attractive nature of the language, either altogether fall away from the (true) doctrines, as learning nothing worthy of God, or, by not departing from the letter, come to the knowledge of nothing more divine. And this also we must know, that the principal aim being to announce the 'spiritual' connection in those things that are done, and that ought to be done, where the Word found that things done according to the history could be adapted to these mystical senses, he made use of them, *concealing from the multitude the deeper meaning*; but where, in the narrative of the development of super-sensual things, there did not follow the performance of those certain events, which was already indicated by the mystical meaning, the Scripture *interwove in the history (the account of) some event that did not take place, sometimes what could not have happened, sometimes what could, but did not*. And sometimes a few words are interpolated which are not true in their literal acceptance, and sometimes a larger number. And a similar practice also is to be noticed with regard to the legislation, in which is often to be found what is useful in itself, and appropriate to the times of the legislation; and *sometimes also what does not appear to be of utility*; and *at other times impossibilities are recorded* for the sake of the more skillful and inquisitive, in order that they may give themselves to the toil of investigating what is written, and thus attain to a becoming conviction of the manner in which a meaning worthy of God must be sought out in such subjects."

In order that the reader may see a practical illustration of Origen's thoughts and methods in regard to the Bible, we quote further, from section 16:-

"*Nor even do the law and the commandments wholly convey what is agreeable to reason*. For who that has understanding will suppose that the first, and second, and third day, and the evening and the morning, existed without a sun, and moon,

and stars? And the first day was, as it were, also without a sky? And who is so foolish as to suppose that God, after the manner of a husbandman, planted a paradise in Eden, towards the east, and placed in it a tree of life, visible and palpable, so that one tasting of the fruit by the bodily teeth obtained life? And again, that one was a partaker of good and evil by masticating what was taken from the tree? And if God is said to walk in the paradise in the evening, and Adam to hide himself under a tree, I do not suppose that anyone doubts that

these things figuratively indicate certain mysteries, *the history having taken place in appearance, and not literally*. . . . And the attentive reader may notice in the Gospels innumerable other passages like these, so that he will be convinced that in the histories that are literally recorded, circumstances that did not occur are inserted.

"And if we come to the legislation of Moses, *many of the laws manifest the irrationality*, and others the impossibility, of their literal observance."

When we are told that Origen stood at the head of Scripture interpreters of his age, the question naturally arises, With such a view of the Bible, what need was there of interpretation? Why not let the Bible go entirely? It would, indeed, have been better if Origen had utterly repudiated the Scriptures, instead of undermining their authority while professing to believe them. But before we call attention to the inevitable result of such teaching, we wish to quote a short passage from another renowned Father of the same school, namely, Clement of Alexandria. Says he:-

"For many reasons, then, the Scriptures hide the sense. First, that we may become inquisitive, and be ever on the watch for the discovery of the words of salvation. Then it was not suitable for all to understand, so that they might not receive harm in consequence of taking in another sense the things declared for salvation by the Holy Spirit. Wherefore the holy mysteries of the prophecies are veiled in parables-preserved for chosen men, selected to knowledge in consequence of their faith; for the style of the Scriptures is parabolic."- *Miscellanies, book 6, chap. 15*.

We have not quoted these things for the sake of holding those men up to reproach, but that the reader may learn a lesson from the past that will keep him from wandering from the right way at the present time. Let us, therefore, see what was the inevitable result of such teaching in regard to the Bible.

First, the acceptance of these views naturally tended to discourage the common people from attempting to study the Scriptures. Why should they trouble themselves to try to understand a book that was purposely couched in language that none but philosophers could understand? So Neander tells us that as early as the time of Clement of Alexandria there were those who, when exhorted not to follow certain heathen practices, replied: "We cannot all be philosophers and ascetics; we are ignorant people; we cannot read; we understand nothing of the Holy Scriptures; why should we be subjected to such rigorous demands?"

Second, the key of knowledge being thus taken away, the people would naturally take men for their authority, instead of the Bible. Not only would they unquestioningly accept the statements of men as to the meaning of Scripture, but, not having any incentive to read the Bible for themselves, they would soon have no knowledge of its contents, except as retailed to them by their teachers. And in a short time the Bible would sink entirely out of sight, and those self-constituted interpreters of the Bible would stand in its stead.

Third, human reason being thus placed above the Scriptures, and put in place of them, there would necessarily arise a demand for some ultimate authority, to whose decision final appeal could be made. For, while the common people were resting with calm and unthinking confidence in the superior knowledge of their

philosophical teachers, those teachers, having each one supreme confidence in his own wisdom, would naturally fall to disagreeing among themselves. Thus, from this setting up of human reason above the Bible, arose church councils and finally an infallible pope. Thus the Saviour's statement that the truth of God was revealed unto babes, was ignored; and the Scriptures being by a natural process removed from the people, there was nothing to hold them, and gross immorality and licentiousness inevitably resulted. And this tide of evil, instead of being checked by knowledge in the sciences and the arts, was rather accelerated by it. The truth of the words of Paul concerning the heathen was again demonstrated:-

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man; . . . wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts." Rom. 1:22-24.

In the above recital the reader can see that we have simply traced in brief the rise of the Papacy, with all of its abominations. But what of it? What similar danger is imminent at the present time, which we may avoid by considering the above facts? The story is quickly told, and the thoughtful reader will see that the saying is as true as it is trite, that "history repeats itself." E. J. W.
(*Concluded next week.*)

April 27, 1891

"The Working of the Mystery of Iniquity. (Concluded .)" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

A short time ago Union Theological Seminary, of New York City, one of the principal Presbyterian theological seminaries in this country, founded a new professorship of Biblical Theology, to which it called Rev. Charles A. Briggs, D.D., who has for a long time occupied the chair of Hebrew in the same institution. Professor Briggs is a very learned man, a natural teacher, and one who has through his natural and acquired gifts an unbounded influence over the young men with whom he comes in contact. As a theologian he occupies a high place.

On taking the chair, Professor Briggs delivered an inaugural address, on the subject of "The Authority of the Scriptures," and the New York *Independent* of January 29 contained an authorized syllabus of it, from which we extract a few leading points. The first paragraph is as follows:-

"Divine authority is the only authority to which man can yield implicit obedience. There are historically three great fountains of divine authority: 1. The Bible. 2. The Church. 3. The Reason."

Here we see that the Bible is made only once source of divine authority, and the church and human reason are put on a level with it, and both are regarded as divine. Thus the way is opened for men to reject the simple statement of the Bible whenever it conflicts with human reason. The Bible is not to be the instructor and guide of reason, but reason is to be the judge of the Bible.

Again, after speaking of the superstition of "Bibliolatry" as equal to that of Mariolatry, he says, "The divine authority is not in the style or in the words, but *in the concept*." That is, the authority lies not in the Bible itself, but in what the learned teacher conceives concerning it; and since different teachers have different conceptions, we shall have many different standards of divine authority, necessarily requiring that there shall be some ultimate tribunal, as a pope or a council.

The fourth barrier to the Bible is given as follows:-

"*Inerrancy*.-This confronts historical criticism. There are errors in the Scriptures which no one has been able to explain away, and the theory that they were not in the original text is sheer assumption, upon which no mind can rest with certainty. The Bible itself nowhere makes this claim. The creeds of the church nowhere sanction it. It is a ghost of modern evangelicalism to frighten children."

Here again we have human reason exalted above the Bible. On what grounds is it claimed that there are errors in the Bible?-On the same grounds on which Origen made the same claim, namely, that there are things in it that are not agreeable to human reason. This being admitted, it follows that the number of errors claimed to be in the Bible will differ according to different men's conception of it. Thus again the Bible ceases to be even one source of divine authority, and fallible human reason becomes supreme.

Finally, to pass by other things, Dr. Briggs says:-

"The neglect of the church as a means of grace retards the rise of the Bible itself as a means of grace, and dulls our sensitiveness to the presence of God. The reason has also its rights, its place, and importance in the economy of redemption. *I rejoice in the age of rationalism*, with all its wonderful achievements in philosophy. I look upon it as preparing men to use their reason in the last great age of the world. It is impossible that the Bible and the church should ever exert their full power until the human reason, trained and strained to the utmost, rise to the heights of its energies and reach forth after God and his Christ. Let us remove every incumbrance out of the way of a new life; the life of God is moving Christendom; the spring-time of a new age is about to come upon us."

But to this "new age" the words of the wise man will most aptly apply: "Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is

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new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us." Eccl. 1:10. And that time which this "new age" will be like is the Dark Ages. Like causes invariably produce like effects. The exaltation of human reason above the Bible, by ancient "Christian philosophers," notably Origen and Clement, resulted directly in the Papacy and the destroying of the Bible; Professor Briggs stands on the same ground that they did; and just in proportion as such views become popular, will the same results follow.

It is a sad fact that, although Professor Briggs' views have met with a hearty protest from many religious journals, notably the *Independent*, those views are gaining in popularity. Professor Briggs is not the only theological professor who holds such loose views concerning the inspiration and authority of the Bible; and

a very few men in places where the young men resort, who are to mould the thought of the people at large, can soon cause their loose ideas to permeate the great mass of people.

It is time for people to awake. While many are watching the progress of religious legislation, and tracing in it a likeness to the growth of the Papacy, few realize that the great danger lies primarily and chiefly in the growing disrespect to the Bible as the supreme authority in all matters of faith and practice, and the tribunal to which human reason must yield. Many men who will fight to the last every semblance of religious legislation will, because of their neglect of the Bible, or disregard for it, suffer themselves unconsciously to be bound in the most cruel religious despotism. Let them cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils. "To the law, and to the testimony." The Bible not only contains the truth, but is itself the whole truth, and the only truth that makes free. He who acknowledges its authority, who studies it prayerfully, seeking the aid of the Holy Spirit, and who hides it within his heart, esteeming it more than his necessary food, will alone know true religious liberty, and be saved from the foolish ignorance which will engulf even the most learned who trust in their own reason. E. J. W.

"Judged by the Law" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

[Synopsis of a discourse on the first part of Romans 2, by Elder E. J. Waggoner, at the late General Conference.]

The first chapter of Romans, after its introduction, can be summarized as the condition of man without God, and how he gets in that condition. The cause of this condition can be stated in one word-unbelief

Coupled with unbelief is self-exaltation; with faith, humility. They lost God, "because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Verse 21. They attributed everything to *themselves*, and as *self* was advanced, faith in God decreased, till they were in the darkness of idolatry.

Men, in the days of Plato, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius, taught what they called moral science; Confucius taught moral precepts. But what they all lacked was to tell men how to do what they taught to be right. Even these men who taught moral science and virtue were themselves practicing the things they condemned, and coming far short of doing what they set forth as moral duty.

While those teachers tell us what to do, but fail to give us power to do it, the religion of Jesus Christ not only makes known what is right, but gives us ability to perform that which is good. Thus when Christ is not woven into the teaching, the very effort to teach morals is simply the old pagan science of morals, which is immorality.

All admit that the State should not teach Christianity; but some say we must teach morals without it. Moral science aside from Jesus Christ is immorality; it is sin.

The works of the flesh are clearly stated in the last part of chapter one. These are found in every individual that has not been converted to Christ; we denounce

the heathen for doing these things, but "there is no respect of persons with God" (Rom. 2:11), and he condemns those things in us just the same, and shows us that we are no better than they.

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." Rom. 2:1. Whoever knows enough to condemn the evils of the heathen is condemned himself, for he does the same things.

The first part of Romans 2 may be summed up in, God is no respecter of persons. He will render to *every man according to his deeds*. In the judgment nothing is taken into account but a man's works. "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give *every man according as his work* shall be." Rev. 22:12. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward *every man according to his works*." Matt. 16:27.

The character of the works shows the amount of faith in Christ. A simple profession will not do. "Thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" God does not respect our person or profession. We may call ourselves Christians, and pretend to keep the law, and pity the poor heathen, but God classes all together who fail to have good works.

"As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law." Rom. 2:12. This with the verses following shows that the law is the standard by which ever man in the world will be judged.

But what is it to keep the law?-It is to keep all its precepts; our righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees, which was only an outward form. If we hate, it is murder (Matt. 5:22); if we have impure thoughts, it is adultery (verse 28); if we have an impure heart, we violate all the rest of the law. We may be ever so strict in outward Sabbath observance, and adhere closely to the outward obligations of all the rest of the law, but an impure heart renders every act sinful.

"When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves." Rom. 2:14.

God has by various agencies placed enough light in the heart of every man to lead him to know the true God. Even nature itself reveals the God of nature. And if a man in the darkest heathenism has a desire to know the true God, he will, if necessary, send a man around the world to give him the light of truth.

So every man that is finally lost will have rejected light that, if cherished, would have led him to God.

May 4, 1891

**"The Development of the Mystery of Iniquity" *The Signs of the Times*
17, 18.**

E. J. Waggoner

Last week we noted the similarity between the theological professors of this age and those of the third century, and pointed out the rapid progress that is being made toward a new Papacy. We showed how the inevitable result of the loose theological teaching that is becoming so popular, is to banish the Bible entirely from common life. This, of course, is naturally followed by a loose state of morals, because, the people being deprived of the Scriptures, there is nothing to restrain them. Even if the Bible is not wholly removed from the common people, its sanctions and prohibitions are nullified in proportion as such teaching as that to which we call attention becomes popular.

This week we have to note another step in the progress toward setting the Bible aside, and substituting for it the teachings of man. The following, from the literary columns of the New York *Independent* of March 12, will set the matter quite clearly before the reader. It is concerning a little pamphlet, entitled "Easy Lessons in Christian Doctrine. Prepared for Use in Mixed Schools." (Stevenson & Foster, Pittsburg, Penn.) The *Independent's* notice in full is as follows:-

"With the approval of the managers of the Pennsylvania Reform School at Morganza, near Pittsburg, the chaplain of the institution and the vice-president of the board prepared this little manual of fifty pages, which has been in use long enough to justify the high expectations entertained of its usefulness. It is not a colorless, emasculated system of doctrine, which might be accepted by all simply because it contained nothing positive. It follows a broad and truly Christian path, teaching nothing militating against the doctrines of any church that retains faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is simple language, convenient in arrangement, clear, concise, positive in the general treatment of the essential truths of the Christian religion, and neither goes beyond the Scripture nor brings up the mooted points of Scripture. As the Pennsylvania school contains many Catholic youth, a copy of the catechism was sent to Bishop Phelan, of the Diocese of Western Pennsylvania, who, after examination, wrote as follows to Mr. J. A. Quay, superintendent:-

"The book, "Easy Lessons in Christian Doctrine," is the only book of religious instruction that has come under my notice which claims to keep within lines of belief common to all who profess faith in Jesus Christ. It is, therefore, well suited for a text book in public institutions, where Catholics and Protestants at all times receive instruction. *Catholics can accept all that the book contains*, and the important truths of the Catholic religion which it does not contain can readily be supplied by the priest who conducts special services for the Catholic inmates of the institution in which the book is read.'

"The bishop here suggests an important point. The manual, while teaching the fundamental truths of Christianity, can for the rest be supplemented by pastors of any denomination. Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, or Presbyterians will find in the minds of the students a scriptural basis of truth upon which, if they please, they may build up the distinctive dogmas of their various creeds. The Rev. James Allison, D.D., of Pittsburg, a 'pillar of orthodoxy,' a hearty believer in, and a staunch defender of, Calvinistic doctrine, connected with the Morganza Board for many years, and much experienced in this difficult field of labor, writes to the superintendent:-

"As you know, I am a Presbyterian minister, and editor of the *Presbyterian Banner*, as well as chairman of the Committee of Instruction and Discipline of the Pennsylvania Reform School. After careful examination of "Easy Lessons in Christian Doctrine," I am happy to say that I believe this little work to be admirably adapted to be useful in reform schools and similar institutions, and also that it *contains nothing to which anyone can reasonably object.*'

"In these days of church unity and plans for reuniting the separated fragments of the church universal, there is an earnest desire to remove the practical barriers existing between churches which hold much in common. The use of the little book, "Easy lessons in Christian Doctrine," is evidence that there is, and that there may always be, a comprehension and an acceptance of the fundamental truth of pure Christianity, separate and apart from the denominational theories and practices which have divided the church catholic. We bespeak for the collection careful examination on the part of teachers, and considerate judgment on the part of ministers and prelates."

We do now know of any seemingly trifling thing that has more significance than this notice. It shows that the way has been found for the long-looked-for union of Catholics into practically one church. Surely, when Presbyterians of "the most straitest sect" can unite with Catholics in studying Christian doctrine from the same book, a union of all denominations is not a Utopian dream. The union has already virtually been effected. The *Independent* says that this book contains all the essentials of the gospel, and all agree that no reasonable person can object to anything in it.

But does not the reader see that this takes away the only argument that "National Reformers" and their allies have ever raised to show that there cannot be in this country any union of Church and State? They have claimed that for such a thing to be effected the State would have to make an alliance with some one denomination, and that all others would object to this. Here, however, we have the way all cleared for just what we have all the time said would take place. All the denominations will agree on the "fundamental truths" which are common to all, so that there will be no more real separation and division in "the church catholic." All, therefore, that is needed to effect a perfect union of Church and State is for the State to recognize, protect, and support the teachings and practices of this "church universal."

And this is already done, to some extent, at least, for we find that this catechism has been for some time in use in a State school of Pennsylvania. With this start, and with the fact that many churchmen and statesmen have been looking for a book setting forth the "nonsectarian

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principles of Christianity," which could be used in the public schools, it will readily appear to the thoughtful reader that the question of Church and State in the United States is rapidly approaching a settlement on the basis of an effective union. E. J. W.

(Concluded next week.)

May 11, 1891

"The Development of the Mystery of Iniquity. (Concluded.)" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

There is, however, another feature that must not be overlooked. We have frequently shown that such a union would be an exact image of the Papacy, that was formed in the early centuries. We have copies of this little book, "Easy Lesson in Christian Doctrine," and we find, what was to be expected, that it is essentially Roman Catholic. It must have been written by a Roman Catholic; and the fact that it is so heartily indorsed by professed Protestants is a striking comment on the extent to which Catholic dogmas have already permeated the entire church. The reader is well aware that while professed Protestants pride themselves on their "liberality," Catholics never give countenance to anything that is not distinctively Catholic. But a few extracts from the book will show the nature of the teaching which will remove the barriers and reunite "the separated fragments of the church universal." In this connection let it be remembered that Catholic writers very commonly speak of Protestant denominations as the "separated fragments." We have space to notice only a few features of the book. On page 15 we find the doctrine of purgatory thus set forth:-

"*Question*-Where did Christ's soul go after his death?

"*Answer*-It descended into hell.

"Q.-Did Christ's soul descend into the hell of the damned?

"A.-The hell into which Christ's soul descended was not the hell of the damned but a place or state of rest.

"Q.-Who were in this place of rest?

"A.-The souls of the just, who died before Christ.

"Q.-Why did Christ descend into this place?

"A.-To announce to those spirits that were in prison the joyful tidings of their redemption.

"Q.-When did the souls of the just who died before Christ go to heaven?

"A.-When Christ ascended into heaven.

"Q.-Where was Christ's body while his soul was in limbo, or the place of rest?

"A.-In the sepulcher, or grave.

"Q.-On what day did Christ rise from the dead?

"A.-Christ rose from the dead, in body and soul glorious and immortal, on Easter Sunday, the third day after he was crucified."

On page 23 we find the following concerning witchcraft:-

"Q.-What is witchcraft?

"A.-Witchcraft is to try, with the help of the devil, to injure others in their person or property."

From this it appears that only that which is an attempt to injure somebody's person or property can be considered witchcraft. Dealings with the devil that seem to have a good object are legitimate, according to this standard of faith.

Mariolatry, or the exaltation of Mary to the place of Christ, is thus taught, on page 38:-

"Q.-How was a Redeemer promised?

"A.-To show how hateful sin was to him God cursed the serpent which had deceived Eve, condemning him to crawl upon the ground and to eat the dust; besides, he said enmity should exist between the serpent and the woman, but in the end the woman would crush his head."

On page 7 we find all necessity for the Bible thus summarily disposed of:-

"Q.-How can we know God on earth?

"A.-By learning the truths which he has taught.

"Q.-Where shall we find the chief truths which God has taught?

"A.-We shall find the chief truths which God has taught, in the Apostles' Creed."

And then follows the Apostles' Creed, which was devised by the Catholic Church in the third or fourth century.

This is sufficient to show the distinctively Catholic nature of the teaching of these "Easy Lessons in Christian Doctrine," which are recommended to all sects. But one point more remains to be shown, and that is the essentially immoral tendency of the teachings, a thing that is inevitable in any doctrinal teaching that sets aside the Bible in its purity. On pages 12 and 13 we find the following deliverance concerning sin:-

"Q.-What is actual sin?

"A.-Actual sin is any willful thought, word, deed, or omission, contrary to the will of God.

"Q.-Are all actual sins equally great?

"A.-No; all sins are not equally great; there are grievous offenses against the laws of God, and there are also small offenses against the law of God.

"Q.-What are the effects of grievous offenses against the law of God?

"A.-Grievous offenses against the law of God kill the soul, by depriving it of the true spiritual life of grace, and make it liable to eternal punishment in hell.

"Q.-What are the effects of small offenses against the law of God?

"A.-Small offenses against the law of God do not rob the soul of the true spiritual life of grace; but they hurt the soul by lessening its love for God and by disposing to great sins.

"Q.-Is it a great misfortune to fall into grievous sin?

"A.-It is the greatest of all misfortunes."

This ends the chapter on sin, leaving it to be inferred that it is not a "misfortune" to fall into a "small offense," as indeed it cannot be if such an offense does not rob the soul of the true spiritual life of grace. Notice, also, that to fall into "a grievous offenses" is only a misfortune, and that each individual is left to decide for himself what are grievous offenses and what are small offenses. Of course everyone will draw the line at the farthest possible limit. And here, again, we see the necessity for a church council or an infallible pope to which all such questions may be referred. But the above confirms our statement that the tendency of the teaching of these "Easy Lessons" is toward immorality, and this is corroborated by the following, on pages 30 and 31:-

"A.-Are impure thoughts and desires always sinful?

"A.-They are not sinful if they displease us, and we try to drive them from our mind as soon as possible."

So, according to this, all that one has to do is to *try* to drive the impure thoughts from his mind, and when he finds that he cannot, he can entertain them with the comfortable feeling that he is not committing sin.

But this is surely enough. Further comment is unnecessary. No one who reads this can fail to see that the image of the Papacy is rapidly forming in this country, and that a union of Church and State must necessarily be the legalizing of sin or the full development of the mystery of iniquity. And let it not be forgotten that all this arises from neglect of the simplicity of the Bible. Whoever would keep clear from papal delusions, let him cleave to the inspired word, not as set forth in catechisms, by authority, or interpreted by popes or councils, or any third party, but solely as taught by the Spirit of truth. E. J. W.

May 18, 1891

"How Righteousness Is Obtained" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

[Synopsis of a discourse on Romans 3, by Elder E. J. Waggoner.]

The basis of the lesson of the evening is the latter half of the third chapter of Romans, beginning with the nineteenth verse: "Now we know that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

Verses 21-23 contain, in condensed form, all that is treated of in the remaining verses of the chapter. The remainder of the chapter is an amplification of that which has gone before. In this chapter also occurs the climax of the thought of the epistle. In the first part of this chapter is emphasized the fact that God makes no distinction of persons; works alone are taken into account in the judgment. But while it is true that a tree is known by its fruits, it is also true that it is not within the province of men to judge of those fruits. God alone is judge. He looks upon the heart, while man can judge only from appearances; therefore, while the works of men may seem good to their fellows, to God, who sees what man cannot see, they are known to be corrupt.

Against, the just shall live by faith. How much of a man's life must be just?-All, every moment; for the just shall live by faith. But by the deeds of the law shall no act be just. This is a hard saying, but one that must be believed, for it is what the Bible says. No deed that we can do can be just by the law only. By faith alone can a man or any act of his be just. The law judges a man by his works, and the law is so inconceivably great that no human act can rise to its height. There must, therefore, be a Mediator through whom justification shall come. And that justification properly belongs to him to whom it is granted by reason of his faith.

The heart unrenewed is desperately wicked. Only evil can come from a wicked heart. To bring forth good deeds there must be a good heart, and only a

good man can have a good heart. But, as all have sinned and come short, therefore all the deeds of humanity are vitiated.

The law itself is the standard of perfect righteousness, but Christ is the truth, the way, and the life. In Christ is the perfect righteousness of the law, and the grace to bestow the gift of his righteousness through faith. And of this the prophets themselves are witnesses, for they preached justification through Christ, by faith.

When a man seeks to justify himself by his deeds, he only heaps imperfection upon imperfection, until, like Paul, he counts them all as loss, knowing that there is no righteousness but that which is of Christ by faith.

There is but one thing in this world that a man needs, and that is justification-and justification is a fact, not a theory. It is the gospel. That which does not tend to righteousness is of no avail, and not worthy to be preached. Righteousness can only be attained through faith; consequently, all things worthy

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to be preached must tend to justification by faith.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." It is well understood that no act of ours can make right that which is past, but it is just as true that we cannot be justified in any present act any more than we can render the past perfect. We need the righteousness of Christ to justify the present just as much as to make perfect the imperfect deeds of the past.

In the case of the publican and the Pharisee, the one who put no trust in his own works went down to his own house justified, but he who desired to assume righteousness in himself failed of justification. Everyone can have it who will ask for it, but each must come to the level of all other sinners, and there receive it with the rest, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." What is "redemption"? It is a free gift to us, but it has been paid for. The blood of Christ has paid for it. We are exhorted to consider his greatness, that we may know that although the thing to be done is beyond our comprehension, the power which is to accomplish it is also beyond our knowledge.

"To declare his righteousness" for the putting away of our sins. It is he that puts away our sins, and if we but yield ourselves to him, they will be remitted utterly. Christ grants no indulgences, but his righteousness remits the sins that are past, and keeps the heart free from sin in the present, so long as his righteousness fills that heart.

Faith is the beginning of all wisdom; it lies at the foundation of all knowledge. The child would never learn anything if it did not believe what it is told. Now, that being so in physical things, why can we not be as reasonable in spiritual things?

Redemption comes through the creative power of Christ, and that is why I love to think that he is the Creator of all things; for he who created the worlds out of nothing, and who upholds all things by the word of his power, can by that same word create in me a clean heart, and preserve that which he has created. To him is all power, and also all glory.

"It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good-pleasure."
"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law."

June 1, 1891

"An Example of Faith" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

[Extract from a discourse on Romans 4 at the late General Conference.]

In the fourth chapter of the book of Romans we have faith in a concrete form. The narrative of the lives of Abram and Sarai in connection with the birth of Isaac, furnish a practical example of justification by faith.

Abram was not justified by works; but he believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Abraham received the seal of circumcision. Why? To cause him to believe?—No, but because he had believed. It was a seal of the righteousness which he had by believing. The promise to Abraham and to his seed was that he should be heir of the world. This promised inheritance was to be for an "everlasting possession." Gen. 17:8. Therefore it was a covenant of righteousness, sealed by a seal of righteousness, and the inheritance was to be a righteous inheritance, which none but the righteous can gain. 2 Peter 3:13.

The promise to Abram depended upon one thing—his having a son. Twenty-five years elapsed from the time the promise was made until it was fulfilled. "Abram staggered not at the promise of God," but Sarai did, and "Abram hearkened unto the voice of Sarai." She undertook to help the Lord to carry out his plan. But Hagar was a slave, and her child could be nothing but a slave, born after the flesh.

The seed promised Abram were to be free men, not slaves, therefore nothing was gained by this plan of Sarai's. The time came when Sarai realized that the only thing for her to do was to believe that God was able to carry out his promise without her help. Then "through faith" she "received strength to conceive seed." The birth of Isaac was a miracle. From a human standpoint it was utterly impossible for Abram and Sarai to become the parents of a child. She conceived by the power of God.

Abram and Sarai did nothing to gain the promise, except to believe, and yet the child of the promise was their own child. So with Christians. Nothing can be done to gain the righteousness of Christ save only to believe the promises. We are told to believe the promises. God has promised to make us righteous, and the only way to obtain that righteousness is to believe that God is able to impute it.

When men are content to believe God, and submit themselves to him, there is power in his promises to work out their righteousness for them, without any power of their own. How are men made righteous, or partakers of the divine nature?—"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that *by these* ye might be partakers of the divine nature." The power lies in the promise of God. How can we make the promises effectual to us?—By believing

them. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Confess your sins, believe that God forgives them as he has promised, and the promise is yours, your sins are forgiven.

The promises of God may be likened to "promissory notes." How many may have these notes?-"Whosoever will." They are good for a certain amount of blessing. That amount can never be drawn in full, because God is able "to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think." Men take a promissory note to the bank and get the gold on it. Christians take the promises of God to him and cash them for a blessing.

How can God give us righteousness when we are so sinful? We cannot understand how, nor do we need to inquire. It is just as great a miracle for God to make an unrighteous man righteous as it was for him to create the world. If a man calls a thing which is not as though it were, he tells a falsehood; but when God calls a thing which is not

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as though it were, the very fact of his calling it makes it so. God not only makes our hearts righteous when there is no righteousness there, but he does more than that, he makes our hearts righteous when there is nothing there but unrighteousness.

A man is just as much an infidel who does not believe that God can speak righteousness into his heart as a man who, by the theory of evolution, does away with the Mosaic record of creation. No limit can be put upon the power of God.

We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. We get to be the children of God in the same way as Isaac was born,-by believing, as Abraham and Sarah believed. The promise is to him "that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly."

There was much implied in the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. Through no other son could the promise of the inheritance come. Christ could not come into the world except through Isaac. Cut off Isaac, and what hope was there of a Saviour?-None; Abraham, to all appearances, would cut off all hope of his own salvation.

Wonderful is the faith here exhibited. Abraham believed that God could raise Isaac up again, and yet the very one (Christ) through whose power he believed Isaac would be raised up, had not come, and could not come except through Isaac. Nevertheless God had promise, and Abraham believed, although he was called upon to do that very thing which to human sight would cut off all hope of even having the promise fulfilled.

The promise itself was immutable, and that immutable promise was confirmed by an immutable oath. Therefore God is under obligation to fulfill his promises to all who claim them. The very throne and existence of God are pledged to this, and not to do it would be for God to deny himself.

By and by God will come and say, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." Christ is the sacrifice here referred to. It is through him we come. He is the surety of the covenant. E. J. W.

June 15, 1891

"The Peace of God" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

[Abstract of a talk on Romans 5 at the late General Conference at Battle Creek.]

"Therefore being justified by faith," that is, being made conformable to the law by faith, "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The only way that man can be made conformable to the law, and live free from condemnation, is by having faith in the promises of God. In Christ there is no unrighteousness, therefore there is nothing but righteousness. By believing on Christ, the Christian has the righteousness of Christ.

But does not James say that there must be works, or the faith is of no avail? It is true that faith is made perfect by works. Jas. 2:22. But it is by faith and faith alone that men are justified. The very text which speaks of Abraham's being justified by faith, states that the works were only the outgrowth of underlying faith, and that by this work the scripture was fulfilled which says: "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." Works are the outgrowth of faith. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good-pleasure." We give ourselves into the hands of Christ.

He comes and *takes up his abode* with us. We are as clay in the hands of the potter; but it is Christ who does all the good works, and to him belongs all the glory.

"We have peace with God." What is peace? It is not a feeling, but a fact. Many think that they must experience a "certain feeling" which they will know is the "peace of God." But they have never had the peace of God, and therefore cannot know what kind of feeling it ought to be. Satan might give a certain happy feeling, and if the Christian had only the feeling to go by, he would be deceived. The Lord does not deal in feelings, but in facts. Peace is the opposite of war, strife, emulation. We are either at peace with God or else at war. If at war, it is because we are carrying on rebellion.

How do we fight God?-By following sinful practices. Anyone knowingly indulging in one sinful practice is warring against God. God is a God of peace. Christ left his peace with his followers. "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts." Between God and his dear Son in heaven there is a "counsel of peace." They counsel for the peace of man. There is only one condition on which man can have that peace-unconditional surrender, surrender all to God, and then there is peace in the heart, no matter what the feeling may be.

"Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them." "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." What rich comfort in these words! Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." So his peace is likened to the continual flowing of the river, and the never-ceasing roll of the ocean wave; therefore it matters not what the feeling is, for if all sins

have been confessed, God is faithful and just to forgive them; and we are at peace with him. The condition of peace is the condition of being justified by faith.

"By whom [Christ] also we have access by faith into this grace [unmerited forgiveness and favor] wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Righteousness can be wrought in men day by day by the same power by which Isaac was born of parents who were practically dead. When people once gain this experience, the next thing they will be constrained to rejoice in the hope of the coming of the Lord.

We live in the present, not in the future. Read 1 Peter 1:5-9. Salvation belongs to us to-day just as much as it will when in the kingdom of God. No one but ourselves can deprive us of it. Says Peter, "Receiving [present time] the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." Our present salvation is our only hope of a future salvation. "Kept by the power of God" is the expression used by Peter, and it denotes precisely the same condition-"being justified by faith"-in the fifth chapter of Romans.

The same power that will make men immortal in the life to come justifies them-makes them conformable to the law-by being in harmony with it every day. Says Paul in the letter to the Philippians, chapter three, verse twenty-one: "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, *according to the working* whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

In Eph. 3:16 Paul, in an inspired prayer, prays that they might be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, "according to the riches of his glory." The grace of God is equal to the glory of God. God's throne is a throne of glory, and the grace wherein we stand is backed by the glory of God.

"We glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience." Some say that tribulation worketh *impatience*. This is not true. If a man is not justified by faith, tribulation will develop the impatience that is in him. How is it, then, that tribulation worketh patience? Let these texts answer: "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." 1 Peter 5:7. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Ps. 55:22. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28.

He takes the heavy loads away. What is that burden?-Anything that worries or vexes us. It matters not whether it be a small thing-a little trial-or a great one. Cast it on the Lord. We rejoice in tribulation because we have Christ with us, and we cast all the burdens on him. He is able to bear them. He has already borne them for all the world, so we cannot add to his burden.

How do we get rid of the burdens?-Give them to Christ, and then say, "He has them." And he has them whether you feel any different or not. Then you will experience the truth of the words, "I will give you rest." It is rest even though the physical pain still racks the body, for Christ bears that tribulation, and you are lifted up above all pain.

How did the martyrs go to the rack and the stake with songs of joy on their lips? Was that mere bravado?-No; Christ bore their burden, and in him they had peace. Out of a full heart they sang their praise to him. Thus they were happy and joyous, and scarcely noticed the pain while the flames crept around them.

We will have to "pass through great tribulation." It may be the lash on the naked flesh, or it may be the thumbscrew. Human nature shrinks from such torture. In Christ we can bear it. Gain an experience in him now, and in the trying time he will not forsake you. He can bear that great burden as well as a small one.

Christ will be ours then as well as now, and the life we live will be in him. No man in this world will be able to stand in that time unless he has previously learned the lesson of faith. Now is the time, while the lesson may be learned under easy circumstances. Great as will be the tribulation of that time, we will pass through it with rejoicing. That rejoicing must be learned now. E. J. W.

June 22, 1891

"Life in Christ" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

[Extract from a discourse on Romans 5.]

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, *much more*, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Many act and talk as if Christ was dead, and irrecoverably dead. Yes, he died; but he rose again, and lives forevermore. Christ is not in Joseph's new tomb. We have a risen Saviour. What does the death of Christ do for us?-Reconciles us to God. He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Now mark! It is the *death* of Christ that brings us to God; what is it that keeps us there?-It is the life of Christ. We are saved by his life. Now hold these words in your minds: "Being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

Why was the life of Christ given? "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Then Christ gave his life that we might have life. Where is that life? And where can we get it? In John 1:4 we read, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." He alone has life, and he gives that life to as many as will accept it. John 17:2. Then Christ has the life, and he is the only one who has it, and he is willing to give it to us. Now what is that life? Verse 3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Has a person who *knows* Christ eternal life?-That is what the word of God says.

Again he says in John 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." These are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. How do we know that we have this life? This is an important question. "We *know* that we have *passed* from *death* unto *life*, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

Says one, "We know that we will get eternal life by and by." Yes, that is true, but there is something better than that; we get it *now*. This is not a mere theory, it is the word of God. Let me illustrate: Here are two men-brothers-to all appearances they are alike. But one is a Christian, and the other is not. Now the one that is a Christian, although there is nothing in his external appearance to

indicate it, has a life that the other has not. He has passed from *death*-the state in which the other one is-to life. He has something that the other has not got, and that something is *eternal life*. The words, "No *murderer* hath eternal life abiding in him," would mean nothing if nobody else had eternal life abiding in him.

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; *because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.*" 1 John 5:10. God cannot lie, and so when we say that the words of God are not so, we make liars of ourselves. Now, according to this scripture, we make God a liar, if we believe not the record that God gave of his Son. What, then, must we believe in order to clear ourselves of that charge,-of not believing this record and thus making God a liar? The next verse explains it: "*And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*"

Some people are afraid that this idea of justification by faith, and eternal life, will get men away from the commandments. But nobody but the one who is justified by faith-who has Christ's life-does keep the commandments; for God says that we are justified by faith, and if we say we are not, then we make God a liar,-we bear false witness against him, and we break the commandment. In the verse just quoted we are told what we are to believe in order to be cleared from the charge of making God a liar. We are to believe that God has given to us eternal life in Christ. As long as we have the Son of God, we have eternal life. By our faith in the word of God we bring Christ into our hearts. Is he a dead Christ?-No; he lives and cannot be separated from his life. Then, when we get Christ into our hearts, we get life there. He brings that life into our hearts when he comes. How thankful we ought to be to God for this?

When Jesus went to Bethany, he said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life." We have already read about passing from death unto life; how was that done?-Only by a resurrection. In Christ we have a resurrection to a new life. Note the following: Paul prays that he may know him and the "*power of his resurrection.*" What is the power of that resurrection? In Eph. 2:4, 5, 6, and 7 we read: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us [made us alive] together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)."

Notice, he *hath* done this, and he "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We were dead, we are quickened, and we are raised up to sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. We must have, and we can have, the life of Christ to-day; for when he comes, he will change our vile bodies by the same power by which he *has* changed our hearts. The heart must be changed now. It cannot be changed except by the life of Christ coming in and abiding in it. But when Christ is in the heart, we can live the life of Christ, and then when he comes, the glory will be revealed. He was Christ when he was here upon earth, although he did not have a retinue of angels and glory visible about him. He was Christ when he was the Man of Sorrows. Then, when he ascended, the glory was revealed. So with us. Christ must dwell in our hearts now, and when he comes and changes these bodies, then the glory will be revealed.

In Heb. 5:2 we learn that the work of the high priest was to be one of compassion. "Wherefore in all things it behooved him [Christ] to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Heb. 2:17. What is done by the compassion of Christ?-Strength is given to us. What benefit is the compassion of Christ to us?-He know the strength we need. He knows what we need, when we need it, and how we need it. So the work of Christ as priest is for one thing-to deliver us from sin. What is the power of Christ's priesthood?-He is made priest, "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an *endless life*." That is the power by which Christ delivers you and me from sin this day, and this hour, and every moment that we believe in him.

Christ was immortal before he came to earth. He was God. What is the essential attribute of divinity?-Life. If Christ was immortal, and therefore had life, how could he die?-I don't know. That is a mystery; but I am so glad that One did die for us, who had life that could not be touched by anything, and that was successful in resisting the attacks of the enemy. Then so powerful was he that he could lay his life down and take it up again. Why was it that no one could take life away from Christ?-Because he was sinless, and if there ever had been another man on earth who lived without sin he too could never die. But there never was but the One who trod this earth who was perfectly sinless, and that was Jesus Christ of Nazareth. No one could take life away from Christ. The wicked had no power to kill him. He laid his life down. If he had not chosen to do that, no one ever could have taken it from him.

God raised him up, "having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." It was not possible that death should hold Christ. He had power in his life that defied death. He laid down, and took death upon himself, that he might show his power over death. He defied death, he entered right into the realms of death-the grave-to show that he had power over it. Christ laid down his life; and when the time came for him to do so, he took it up again. Why was it that death could not hold him?-Because he was sinless. Sin had spent all its force on him, and had not marred him in the least. It had not made a single blot upon his character. His was a sinless life, and therefore the grave could have no power over him. It is that same life which we have when we believe on the Son of God. Give your sins to the Lord, and take that sinless life in their place.

The life of Christ is divine power. In the time of temptation the victory is won beforehand. When Christ is abiding in us, we are justified by faith, and we have his life abiding in us. But in that life he gained the victory over all sin, so the victory is ours before the temptation comes. When Satan comes with his temptation, he has no power, for we have the life of Christ, and that in us wards him off every time. Oh, the glory of the thought, that there is life in Christ, and that we may have it!

The just shall live by faith, because Christ lives in them. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave

himself for me." Yes, we are crucified with Christ; but is Christ dead?-No, he has risen again; then we have risen with him. But we are in the flesh. That is true; but in the flesh there may be the divine life that was in Christ when he was in the flesh. E. J. W.

July 6, 1891

"Disestablishment vs. Religious Liberty" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

The sentiments uttered by the speakers at a recent annual meeting of the English "Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control" are very suggestive as showing that it is not necessary to have what is technically known as an "established church" in order to have all the pernicious effects of religious legislation. They demonstrate, also, the fact that very many who seem to be zealous workers for religious liberty, do not have any just conception of what religious liberty really is. The meeting in question was presided over by Sir George O. Trevelyan, M.P., who, in his opening speech, which was the principal one of the evening, spoke as follows:-

"Addressing himself to those who held aloof from the work of the society because from a religious movement it had not become a political one, he said that the very words of the charge answered themselves. It did not require that a man should be a very deep Greek scholar in order to know that the meaning of the word 'political' was 'that which concerns the State.' Their object was to separate the Church from the State, and if that was not a political movement, he did not know what was, and he should specially like to put the question to those who appeared to think that religious equality was to come down like manna from heaven, and that it was not now as ever to be won by human effort, human courage, and human self-sacrifice. [Cheers.] Now, as ever, the motive power of their cause was religious, but their weapons were human, and as long as those weapons were honorably, safely, and valiantly used, they were not ashamed to look in the face anyone who told them that they ought not to bring their cause into the arena of politics. In a free country no cause was ever successful until it became political. [Cheers.]

"But it was not only a question of taking the aggressive in politics; it was likewise a plain question of self-defense. There were in that hall, he supposed, a good many ministers of religion, and tomorrow certain newspapers would taunt them with being partisans and politicians, and yet those very newspapers would tell them that if they only maintained the church in Wales for another generation they would kill out dissent in the Principality. [Laughter.] The Nonconformist ministers of religion were warriors, and why should they not be when they were fighting for the life of churches whose life was as dear to them as their own? All the religious endowments of the country, all the prestige of State connection, not in Wales only, was conferred on one religious body in order that it should be able to extinguish all the others; and as long as that was the case, then, not in Wales

only, but elsewhere, political action on the part of churches that were threatened became not only a necessity and an obligation, but absolutely a religious duty. [Cheers.]"

The above is taken from the report in the London *Daily News*, and, while not *verbatim*, is a correct summary of a portion of the honorable gentleman's speech. Before making any comments, it may be well to have before us a statement made at the same meeting by Sir Wilfrid Lawson: "It is said that ministers of religion should not be political, but it might just as well be said that politicians should not be religious. For his part he regarded a man who had no politics as a human cabbage or an idiotic oyster."

In all this we see a failure to distinguish between things that differ. While as long as society exists there must be force for its legislation, and consequently must be politics (in the best sense of the word), it does not follow that politics and religion must have any connection. Politics concerns the entire body of citizens, as a body, while religion is solely a matter between an individual and God. But when men fail to distinguish between things that differ, it soon results in there being no difference between those things; and so the result of such movements as the one under consideration is to make religion and politics identical. Thus the separation of Church and State, when gained, will be a separation only in name.

One of the most celebrated of England's poets wrote:-

"How small of all that human hearts endure.

That part which laws of kings can cause or cure."

But men, and women too, nowadays seem to think that legal enactment is a panacea for all the ills that human flesh and human souls are heir to. If they could but come to know practically the religion of Jesus Christ, they would know that true and perfect freedom is obtained in it alone, and that the freedom which it bestows may be enjoyed in the most autocratic government as well as in the freest democracy. The apostle Paul rejoiced in true religious freedom while he was held a prisoner in chains by the despotic Nero. On the other hand, the "Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control" will, if successful, make religious liberty in England a much rarer thing than it now is.

One not acquainted with the situation would naturally think that the disestablishment of the Church in England would be a long step in the direction of religious liberty; but from the extracts quoted above it can readily be seen that the society which is working for the establishment in England is almost identical with what is known as the National Reform Association in America. The Society in England is dissatisfied because one church has the monopoly of State emoluments; its members are not opposed to church members and ministers engaging in politics in behalf of (a form of) religion, but they want that all the churches should have an equal chance. Likewise, the National Reform Association is opposed to the idea of one church or sect being singled out as the recipient of special favors by the government, but is most heartily in accord with religious legislation in favor of all religious bodies as a confederated whole.

A religio-political movement may be intensely religious, but it can never be godly or Christlike. Sir George Trevelyan said that "their cause was religious, but their weapons were human." But with human weapons only human results can

be obtained; consequently the "religious liberty" resulting from the success of such a movement can be nothing else than liberty as regards a *human* religion. But a human religion is of no use whatever so far as salvation is concerned, and salvation is supposed to be the ultimate object of religion, although it is too often lost sight of. In contrast with the words of Mr. Trevelyan are the words of Paul. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [human], but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

The lesson that we commend to the thoughtful reader is to learn to distinguish between true and false movements in behalf of religious liberty. The term "religious liberty" is getting to be popular, and we need to be on our guard lest we be carried away with some movement having that as its watchword, while it is actually, though unconsciously, not only tending toward, but is really in itself, religious bondage. We must remember that true religion does not confine itself to church and society lines, but is an individual affair. Human nature averages the same in all parts of the world, and in all societies; in every established church there are many who are advocates and actual possessors of real religious liberty, while dissenting bodies, as bodies, are very far from being acquainted with the real meaning of the term.

From the prophecies we are sure that religious despotism and religious persecution will prevail in all the world before the end comes; but that can only be when a vast majority of the people assent to such a condition; and that majority will be made up from all classes and all denominations. Majorities, as well as minorities, are always composed to individuals, and they take the color of the sentiments of the individuals composing them; therefore religious despotism can be prevalent only when the majority of people are ignorant of true religious freedom, and have a religious despotism in their own hearts. As in days past, relentless and bloody persecution was carried on in the name of Christianity, so in the time to come, religious liberty-which is but another name for pure Christianity-will be the rallying cry of the men who will enact and enforce the most intolerant laws.

Let us remember that the only religious liberty is "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," and that this is obtained, not by human weapons, but by the weapons which the Holy Spirit furnishes, and which it alone can wield. It is not the possession of any society of men, as a society, whether that society be religious or political, or not, neither is wholly an affair of the individual heart, and can be properly advocated only by those whom the Son has made free. It can no more be gained by political action than can love be gained by personal violence. All such action is death to that which it vainly thinks to gain. Jerusalem which is above is alone free, and the kingdom of which it is the capital is not of this world; hence, its children cannot fight with human weapons of any sort. May the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES be so thoroughly acquainted with Christ and the freedom which he alone can give, that they will not be deceived by vain movements for religious liberty. E. J. W.

Hamburg, Germany, June 2, 1891.

July 20, 1891

"What the Gospel Teaches" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

"And he said unto him, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:15, 16. These words were plainly spoken by our Saviour, after his resurrection, and shortly before his ascension. They are perfectly in harmony with his words recorded in Matt. 24:14, that "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." There is no mistaking the extent of territory in which the gospel must be preached—nothing less than the whole world. And how long must it be preached? Read the whole of Matt. 24:14: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Then the gospel is to be preached until the end. The end here referred to is the same that is mentioned in verse 3, "The end of the world." That this "end of the world" is in connection with the coming of the Lord is shown by the words of the disciples in the verse last mentioned, and by the words of Christ in Matt. 13:40-43; 24:30, 31.

The fact that, by divine command, the gospel is to be preached in all the world until the coming of the Lord and the end of the world, proves conclusively that until the Lord comes, a necessity for its being preached will exist in all the world. This needs no further argument, for it is nowhere disputed. We will, therefore, turn our attention to a consideration of what the gospel is, and what creates the necessity for its being so long and so extensively preached.

The word "gospel" means, literally, "a good message;" Webster's first definition is "glad tidings." According to its derivation, it might be applied to any good news; but in the Bible it is used with exclusive reference to one thing; what that thing is we may easily learn from the Bible itself.

In Luke 2:10 we find these words, addressed by the angel of the Lord to the shepherds in the field: "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings [a gospel] of great joy, which shall be to all people." The next verse tells what this gospel is: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Then the gospel which is to be preached to all people is the announcement of a Saviour. It is from this that Webster derives his specific definition of the gospel as, "especially, the good news concerning Christ and his salvation."

But the simple heralding of Christ, without stating the nature and object of his work, would not be the preaching of the gospel. The "good news" consists in the fact that Christ the Lord is a *Saviour*. That Christ comes as a Saviour necessarily implies that there are people to be saved. Turning to Matt. 1:21, we read the angel's declaration before the birth of Christ, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Paul says (1 Tim. 1:15), "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the

world to save sinners." So it is manifest that the preaching of the gospel consists in the announcement that Christ will save people from sin.

But while the gospel is the good news that Christ brings salvation from sin, it is evident that that simple announcement would not suffice to produce the desired results, viz., that men should believe and be baptized. For there are millions of people who virtually say that they are "rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," not knowing that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." No matter how destitute a man may be, it would be of no use to offer him money if he were ignorant of his necessities, and perfectly satisfied with his condition. So no man can feel any interest in the gospel as a means of salvation from sin, unless he (1) knows what sin is, and (2) is convinced that he is a sinner, and (3) understands the nature and results of sin so as to realize that it is something to be shunned. Therefore the gospel, with its announcement of salvation from sin, must also make known what sin is. This it does, as we shall see.

John the evangelist, so called because it is he who more than anyone else dwells on the love of God and Christ in the salvation of man, defines sin. He says, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for *sin is the transgression of the law*." 1 John 3:4. In harmony with this, Paul says that "where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom. 4:15. And "sin is not imputed when there is no law." Rom. 5:13. Volumes could not define sin more clearly than do these three texts. We have found out, then, (1) that "gospel" means good news; (2) that the gospel of the Bible is the good news of a Saviour-Christ the Lord (Luke 2:10, 11); (3) that Jesus saves from sin (Matt. 1:21; 1 Tim. 1:15); and (4) that "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4).

So that, in short, the gospel announces the way by which man may be saved from the transgression of the law, and from the consequences of such transgression. Sin is the disease; the gospel is the remedy. And since the gospel is to be preached in all the world, until the coming of the Lord, it follows that "all the world," yea, "every creature," has sinned. This we read in Rom. 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

It must also be true that sin will be in the world till the Lord comes. And this we verify by a comparison of Gen. 6:5 and 13:13 with Luke 17:26-30. But since sin is the transgression of the law, it also necessarily follows that "the law" will be in full force in all the world until the coming of the Lord. In other words, Sin is the disease, and it cannot exist where there is no law. Rom. 4:15. The disease, sin, does exist in "every creature" in "all the world;" for the remedy, the gospel, is to be thus extensively made known, and the Great Physician would not send the remedy where it is not needed. "They that be whole need not a physician; but they that are sick" (Matt. 9:12); and therefore the law, by which alone "is the knowledge of sin"-the disease-is binding upon "every creature" "in all the world." Now since "the wages of sin"-the transgression of the law-"is death" (Rom. 6:23), it is important that all men know just what that law is the transgression of which brings death, and just what its nature and requirements. These points will, therefore, next claim our attention. E. J. W.

July 27, 1891

**"The Law and the Gospel Co-extensive" *The Signs of the Times* 17,
30.**

E. J. Waggoner

In Nehemiah 9:13 we find the following words in the Levites' confession to God: "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai; and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments." Here we have reference made to true laws and good statutes. A good and true law would in every case condemn sin; therefore the law here referred to is of the same character as that which, being transgressed, makes it necessary for the gospel to be preached. This law was given upon Mount Sinai; so we examine the law there given to see if it meets the requirements.

In the nineteenth chapter of Exodus we have a description of the preparation of the people to hear the law from Sinai. We read:-

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai." Ex. 19:10, 11.

"And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." Ex. 19:16-18.

This was the condition of Mount Sinai when from it God spoke "true laws, good statutes and commandments." Chapter 20, verses 3 to 17, contains the words which God spoke at that time. We quote them in full:-

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

2. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

3. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

4. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and

rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

5. "Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

6. "Thou shalt not kill.

7. "Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8. "Thou shalt not steal.

9. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

10. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbors."

These are the words which the Lord spoke in the hearing of all the people, from the midst of the fire and smoke upon Mount Sinai. Soon afterward he spoke to Moses, as follows:-

"Come up to me into the mount, and be there; and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them." Ex. 24:12.

Accordingly, we find by reading the remaining verses of the chapter, that Moses went up into the mount, and remained there with God forty days and forty nights. While he was there, the Lord gave him minute directions concerning the building of the sanctuary. Then we read:-

"And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." Ex. 31:18.

"And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand; the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables." Ex. 32:15, 16.

Then we are told how Moses, as he drew near the camp, saw the golden calf, and the people dancing around it, "and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath [at the foot of] the mount." But this was not the end of the matter; for very soon we read thus:-

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of

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stone like unto the first; and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest." Ex. 34:1.

We will now read the words of Moses, as he rehearses the whole matter to the Israelites, just before his death. We begin with the point last quoted:-

"At that time the Lord said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark. And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand. And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount, out of the

midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me. And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me." Deut. 10:1-5.

One more quotation on this point. In the course of Moses' final address to the people, in which he rehearsed all their history in the wilderness, he repeated the substance of the ten commandments, and at the close he said:-

"These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me." Deut. 5:22.

The gist of these texts of Scripture may be expressed as follows: The good and true laws which were spoken upon Sinai (Neh. 9:13) were the ten commandments, found in Ex. 20:3-17; these ten commandments were written by God himself on two tables of stone; and there was nothing spoken to the people by the Lord, except that which was placed upon the tables of stone (Deut. 5:22). Therefore the words found in Ex. 20:3-17, *and no others*, form the ten commandments, the perfect law of God.

But what has this to do with the gospel? Just this: We found that the gospel is the remedy for sin, which is the transgression of the law; and that the law must be in force as long and as extensively as the gospel is preached. We were concerned to know what law it is the transgression of which makes it necessary for the gospel to be preached, and we have now found it. One more step completes the identification. It is this:-

Paul says (Rom. 7:7): "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not know sin, but by the law; for I had not know lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." The law here referred to must be the same law that is referred to in John 3:4, because it is one that points out sin; it does this because it is "holy, and just, and good." Therefore it is the law to which the gospel relates. And what law is it?-It is the law which condemns unlawful desire by saying, "Thou shalt not covet." But this is the last one of the ten commandments. Therefore we have proved to a demonstration that the ten commandments of Ex. 20:3-17,-those commandments which were spoken by Jehovah, in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the smoke, and of the thick darkness, and which were written on two tables of stone and deposited in the ark,-form the law which points out sin. They are the law which has been universally trodden underfoot, making it necessary that the gospel should be preached in all the world, to every creature; and, therefore, it is as plain as the Scripture can make it, that they are still binding upon every creature in every part of the world. If it were otherwise, there would be no sin, and, consequently, no need of the gospel. Whoever, therefore, says that he is not under the jurisdiction of those ten commandments, virtually says that he has no sin; and whoever says that he has no sin, places himself outside of the gospel plan; for "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and no others. His salvation has reference only to those who have transgressed the law of God, the ten commandments.

The above argument is, we think, so conclusive as to make it almost unnecessary to notice the assumption that the gospel of Christ is that which

points out sin. If this were true, we should have Christ introducing the gospel into the world in order to save men from the rejection of it! That is, the remedy for the disease creates the disease, the remedy being introduced to cure that which without it would never have existed! Such an absurdity is too puerile to be entertained for a moment. The gospel must relate to something outside of and prior to itself. Since the gospel saves from sin, it is evident that sin existed before the gospel, and that it continues to exist so long as the gospel exists; and since sin is the transgression of the law, it is just as evident that the law existed before there was sin, and, consequently, before there was any gospel, or any need of it, and that it exists as long, at least, as the gospel exists. E. J. W.

August 3, 1891

"Nature of the Law" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

Having found that the law must be in force wherever the gospel is preached, it is very proper that we learn something in regard to its nature. What we have already learned would teach us that it is just the opposite of sin, for "sin is the transgression of the law." But we will see what the Bible has to say further on this subject.

We first quote the words of the Psalmist, in Ps. 19:7, 8, 10, 11:-

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward."

This comprises all that may be said of the law; for nothing can be more than perfect. Nothing can be added to that which is perfect, neither can anything be taken away without leaving it imperfect. Therefore the testimony of David teaches us that when God spoke his law it was in just the form that he wanted it, and that he never designed that any change should be made in it.

In perfect accord with the above testimony, the apostle Paul says: "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Rom.7:12. This being so, we would naturally expect that the keeping of the commandments would make the keeper thereof perfect and holy. This we find is the case. Moses said to the Israelites:-

"And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us." Deut. 6:25.

Observe how perfectly this agrees with what we find in the New Testament: Moses said that to keep the law is righteousness. Of course the opposite of righteousness is *un*righteousness, and John tells us that "all unrighteousness is sin." 1 John 5:17. Then we must conclude that sin is just the opposite of obedience to the law; and that brings us to the original definition: "Sin is the

transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. Unrighteousness means any deviation from that which is right; and since all unrighteousness is sin, we know that the slightest deviation from right is a transgression of the law. To show that this reasoning has solid scriptural foundation, we quote Ps. 119:96:-

"I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad." And to show how broad and far-reaching it is, we have only to read Heb. 4:12:-

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Thus we learn that the law is so broad that it takes cognizance of the very thoughts of the heart, and not alone the outward acts. As illustrating this, we have our Saviour's words in the sermon on the mount:-

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Matt. 5:27, 28. See also verses 21, 22.

Other instances might be given; but this is sufficient to show the breadth of the commandments of God. The sixth commandment may be broken by a single angry thought that may never be expressed; and the seventh may be as effectually broken by a single wrong desire as by the overt act.

Surely the law of God is broad; and since in all its prohibitions and requirements it is perfect, we can readily and naturally accept the words of the wise man, in Eccl. 12:13:-

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is *the whole duty of man*."

This statement, we repeat, is a natural consequence of what has preceded; for the keeping of a perfect law will make a man perfect, and nothing more than perfection can be required. There is no sin conceivable that is not forbidden by the ten commandments, and no righteous act or thought that is not commended and enjoined by them. Of course it would be impossible to go through the whole list of possible thoughts and deeds, in order to demonstrate this; but it will be found true in every case. Things may be mentioned which at first sight may seem to many persons to be outside of the ten commandments; but a little careful thought will show that nothing can be done that is beyond or outside of the perfect law of God. We have not the slightest fear of being brought to confusion because of this statement. We repeat, Nothing more than the duties enjoined in the ten commandments can be required of any man.

In this connection it will be well to notice Matt. 5:20, which some may think opposed to the statement last made, but which strongly supports it. We quote: "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." This text would be opposed to the statement made in the preceding paragraph if it could be shown that the scribes and Pharisees kept the law perfectly, but not otherwise. Indeed, this verse could not teach that it is a man's duty to do more than the ten commandments, without contradicting the

nineteenth verse, which says that "whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." It must be, then, that the scribes and Pharisees, while professing to keep the commandments, did not do all that the law requires. This we shall find was the case, if we read Matt. 23:25-28:-

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

The scribes and Pharisees pretended to keep the law, and so far as their outward acts were concerned, they did keep it; but Christ, who "knew what was in man," saw that in their hearts they despised the law, and that they grievously transgressed it, but yet in such a way that men could not know their wickedness. Such obedience, Christ taught will not suffice to gain an entrance into heaven. Unless your obedience to the law is more thorough than that, you can in no case enter the kingdom of heaven.

Here we see the difference between obedience only to the letter and obedience to the spirit of the law. The law is spiritual, and therefore the spirit of it must be obeyed; but some people think on this ground to excuse themselves for disobeying the law. Say they: "The Lord reprov'd the scribes and Pharisees for their obedience to the letter of the law, therefore we should not think ourselves bound by the letter; if we keep the spirit, that is sufficient." But mark, The Saviour did not say that our righteousness must be entirely different from that of the scribes and Pharisees, but that it must *exceed* it. To *exceed* means "to pass or go beyond;" and by using that word the Saviour showed that we must keep the law as well as the scribes and Pharisees did, and a great deal better. Not only must the law be kept outwardly, but it must be obeyed from the heart. He did not reprove the Pharisees for refraining from open adultery, but he reprov'd them for the lust with which their hearts were filled, and which nothing but their love for the applause of men kept them from manifesting openly. Christ did not reprove them because they refrained from actual murder, but because they cherished envy, hatred, and enmity, thus as effectually breaking the sixth commandment as though they had actually taken human life. E. J. W.

(To be continued.)

August 10, 1891

"Nature of the Law. (Concluded.)" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

A moment's thought will show anyone the folly of supposing that the law may be kept in spirit and not in letter. Can a man worship gods of gold, or stone, or brass, and yet have a proper regard for the God that made heaven and earth?

Can a man blaspheme the name of God, and at the same time have perfect love and reverence in his heart? Is it possible to wantonly violate the letter of the sixth commandment, by taking human life, and yet have no trace of enmity, but only perfect love in the heart? Will a man deliberately and persistently take the goods of others, if he has no covetous desires in his heart? And does not everybody know that the committing of adultery is only the outward manifestation of the lust that burns within? There can be but one answer to these questions. Even so there can be no spiritual obedience without obedience to the letter as well.

The statement of the wise man, that to keep the commandments is the whole duty of man, and of Christ, that whosoever shall do and teach them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven, prepares us for the truth stated by the apostle in Rom. 2:13:-

"For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."

Since to keep the commandments of God is the whole duty of man, of course the one who keeps the law will be justified; a man can never be justly condemned when he does his whole duty. We will not, at this time, inquire just how comprehensive the term "the doers of the law" is, nor whether or not there are any such. For the present we shall be content with the truth, which allows of no exception, namely, that "the *doers* of the law shall be justified."

In Rom. 6:23 we read that "the wages of sin is death." But if a man never sins, he will never receive the wages therefor, and consequently the doer of the law will live. And this, again, is no more than we find plainly stated in Rom. 10:5: "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them." The man whom the law justifies-the one who is really a *doer* of all its requirements-will certainly live. Now it is a self-evident fact that when God made a perfect, holy, and just law, he designed that all his subjects should obey it. And since the law, when it is kept, gives life, we can see the force of the apostle's statement, that the law "was ordained to life." Rom. 7:10. As we shall hereafter see more fully, the law was given that man might ever keep in harmony with God's will, in which condition he must necessarily have life.

There is just one more point which we wish to bring out concerning the nature of the law. Let the reader mark it closely; for in the future consideration of this subject it will often be referred to, as it really covers the whole ground; upon it everything else depends. David says (Ps. 119:172): "My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness." This is really nothing more than is brought out in Ps. 19:7, and other texts; but it leads to another text which materially widens the range of our view of the law of God. In Isa. 51:6 we read:-

"Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished."

Abolish the righteousness of God? Of course not; but what is the righteousness of God? The very next verse tells us of what the Lord, through his

prophet, is here speaking. We proceed: "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law." The conclusion to be drawn is very evident. The people who know righteousness are they in whose hearts God's law is enshrined; they know righteousness, because the law is itself righteousness (Ps. 119:172); and not only is it righteousness in the abstract, but it is *the righteousness of God*. This is an expression which the apostle Paul often uses in referring to the law.

What an exalted idea of the law of God does this give us! To say that it is perfect may convey various ideas to different persons, for many would be apt to measure the law by their own standard of perfection; but when we learn that it is "the righteousness of God," we know that it must be infinite in its breadth. The law is a transcript of God's character, a photograph of character which is infinite in its perfection. It is his nature represented in words, for the benefit of his creatures, so that they may know what is required of them if they would be partakers of the divine nature. God says to man, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:16. But without some description of the holiness of God, it would be impossible for man to know how he should order his life; for "the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. 10:23.

Since the law is "the righteousness of God"-a brief yet comprehensive description of his character-it may properly be termed the way of the Lord. And so in Isa. 55:8, 9 we have an additional evidence of the exceeding greatness of that law: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." The holiness of God's law is just as much superior to any goodness that man possesses as God is greater than man. The law of God, then, is very justly called his way, and since those who become acquainted with God by walking in the way with him are at peace (Job 22:21), it follows that a proper term for the law is, "the way of peace." It is the ten commandments, then, to which Paul refers, when, speaking of the universal wickedness of mankind, he says: "Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes." Rom. 3:16-18. This idea is still further proved by Isa. 48:18: "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."

The law of God is also called *the truth*. "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth." Ps. 119:142. It is the very perfection of truth, since it is the expression of God's character. This point is brought out in Rom. 2:17-20. Paul here says:-

"Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law."

In that justly-celebrated work, "The Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul," by Conybeare and Howson, the last clause of the above text is thus rendered: "Possessing in the law the perfect pattern of knowledge and of truth." This

accurately describes the law, which is such a perfect pattern of truth that whosoever follows it will live a life of perfect truth. It is because it is perfect that it enables the one who is instructed in it to "try the things which differ" (see margin of verse 18), or, as Conybeare and Howson render it, to "give judgment upon good or evil."

It is impossible for mortal tongue ever to express, or even for mortal intellect ever to comprehend, the breadth, the beauty, and the perfection of God's law. There is in it abundant food for meditation both day and night; and the more we learn of it, the more we can appreciate the Psalmist's glowing descriptions of it, and his exhortations to continually study it. But as man, by searching, can never find out God so that he can fully comprehend all his attributes, so no man, even when glorified and made immortal, can ever exhaust the law of God. On earth, as we meditate in the law, we can only exclaim, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" and in heaven, even to the countless ages of eternity, as in the glory of his presence we are permitted to look with unveiled eyes upon Him whose character is portrayed in the ten commandments, our wonder will not cease, and we can only join with the angelic beings that support his throne, in saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!" E. J. W.

August 17, 1891

"Jurisdiction of the Law" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

We have already anticipated this division of the subject, and have shown, by the extent of the gospel commission, that the law of God has been known and transgressed by men in every part of the world; that, as the gospel is to be preached in all the world until the coming of Christ, sin will exist just as extensively, and just as long; and that, consequently, the law, of which sin is the transgression, will be binding in all the world till the end of time. We wish, however, to carry the subject a little further.

The apostle says that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," and that he has committed the carrying on of this work to his ambassadors-the ministers of the gospel-who, in Christ's stead, pray the world to be reconciled to God. 2 Cor. 5:19, 20. Now, reconciliation implies a previous condition of enmity; and, if the world needed reconciling to God, it was because the world was at enmity with him. And since the work of reconciling is still being carried on, it follows that the rebellion, or enmity, still exists. Then the question arises, In what does that enmity consist? The same apostle tells us: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; *for it is not subject to the law* of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. Men are rebels, because they are in opposition to God's law. And this is the same truth that had been uttered, centuries before, by the inspired prophet: "Now to, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come forever and ever; that this is a *rebellious people*, lying children, children *that will not hear the law of the Lord*." Isa. 30:8, 9.

This brings out again the fact previously stated, that the gospel announces, and carries on its forefront, the law. It was the transgression of the law that made it necessary for Christ to come to reconcile men to God. And as men by continued sin, lost their sense of its heinousness, and of their obligation to God, it became more and more necessary that the gospel, in announcing to men the way of pardon and reconciliation, should make known their need of such reconciliation and pardon by setting forth, in plain terms, the law which they had transgressed. This is what is plainly stated by Peter, when, after quoting Isaiah's tribute to the enduring nature of the law, "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever," he adds, "and *this* is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." 1 Peter 1:24, 25.

The quotations made from John Wesley and Bishop Simpson are in harmony with this conclusion. Indeed, the conclusion is so nearly self-evident that it must be reached by all thoughtful, candid minds. The very fact that a pardon is granted, attest the authority of the law; and before a pardon can be granted, the individual must know and acknowledge his guilt. If a man thinks himself righteous, he will indignantly spurn any offer of pardon, even though he may really stand in need of it. Human nature would leave such to the fate which their own blindness and stubbornness deserve; but God loves the world, and desires that all men shall accept his pardon, and thus be reconciled to him; and therefore he takes pains to bring men to a sense of their sinful condition, so that the pardon which he offers may be accepted. The same messenger who is commissioned to announce the pardon, proclaims the law of God, which awakens the self-confident sinner, so that he may appreciate his lost condition.

Let me look still further into the matter of the extent of the law's jurisdiction. Read Rom. 3:19: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." The law speaks only to those who are within the bounds of its jurisdiction; it cannot condemn any who may walk contrary to its provisions, if they are outside of its limits. For example, a man in Russia may commit an act which is forbidden by the laws of the United States; yet he cannot on that account be declared guilty, simply because the United States law has no jurisdiction in his case. He is not amenable to it. But, as a consequence of what the law of God says, all the world are found guilty before him. This, again, shows conclusively that all the world are in duty bound to keep God's law.

There are no exceptions to this fact. We have before learned that "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4), and that "where no law is, there is no transgression" (Rom. 4:15); and therefore we know that wherever we find sin, there must also be the law. To whomsoever sin is imputed, upon him the law has claims; for "sin is not imputed when there is no law." Rom. 5:13. Now we find these statements in the third of Romans: "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one;" "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Verse 9, 10, 23. Here the apostle descends to particulars, and shows that not to the Jews alone, but to Gentiles as

well, is sin imputed, thus proving beyond all controversy that the Gentiles as well as the Jews are under the jurisdiction of the law of God, and have violated it.

Our investigation of the law began with the time when it was given on Mount Sinai; and we must therefore now examine to see if that was the first of its existence. And here, as in all our study of the law, we find help from our knowledge of the fact that the law is "the righteousness of God." Then it must necessarily have been in existence before the exode. Since it is a transcript of God's character, it necessarily follows that its existence is coeval with the existence of God.

"But," it may be objected, "the law, as a manifestation of God's righteousness, might exist without being transcribed for the government of mankind." So it might, if there were no creatures to whom it could be made known, or if there was any time after creatures had been brought into existence when God did not exercise government over them. But it is not for us to speculate on the state of affairs when God dwelt alone, inhabiting his own eternity, before the existence even of the "sons of God" that shouted for joy at the creation of this earth; and there certainly has never been a time since intelligent creatures were formed, either in heaven or on earth, when God was not supreme ruler. No created beings have ever been independent of his control. But if God has always been ruler, he must have had some rule of government, and that could be nothing else than his righteousness-his law. The ten commandments are righteousness; they are perfect, holy,

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just, and good, and therefore fitted to be the rule of a righteous and just government. Then, from the very nature of the law, we would conclude that it was binding on men before it was spoken from Mount Sinai. We shall shortly recur to the argument broached in this paragraph, but first we wish to show from positive evidence that the law of ten commandments is known by men, and was binding on them, before the giving of it on Sinai.

In Rom. 5:12 we read that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Here the apostle shows that death is a consequence of sin; death came into the world because there was sin in the world. If there had been no sin, there would have been no death, and wherever death is found, it is positive evidence that sin exists. With this passage we may well place 1 Cor. 15:56: "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law." Here death is represented as a cruel monster that has brought many people into its power. It has poisonous fangs with which it strikes its victims, and these fangs, this sting, is sin. Let the fangs be drawn,-let sin be obliterated,-and death's power would be gone. But "the strength of sin is the law." "Sin is the transgression of the law," and it is the violated law which provides death with its powerful sting. Were it not for the law, death would have no sting, that is, it would be powerless to destroy. So here, again, we have proof that wherever death is, there is the law also.

We read on: "For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." Rom.

5:13, 14. Here we have the statement that until the law, that is, until the time of Moses, when it was spoken from Sinai, sin and death were in the world: therefore, we know that the law was in the world. And hereby we know that the expression, "until the law," does not indicate that the time so specified was the first existence of the law; for both sin and death were in the world before that time, and neither can exist without the law, and the law violated.

Let us go still further into particulars. "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4), and "sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13). But sin was imputed to Cain (Gen. 4:7, 8), and consequently the law was there to condemn. Turn to the commandments, and you will find that the sixth commandment was the one especially transgressed.

Again we read that "the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Gen. 13:13. "Sin is not imputed when there is no law," and consequently we know that God judged the Sodomites by his law. If he judged them by his law, of course they knew of the existence of that law; otherwise their punishment would have been just; but we may be sure that the "Judge of all the earth" will do right.

Take the case of the sons of Noah (Gen. 9:22-26). Here we have direct evidence that the fifth commandment was known; that it was violated by Ham, the young son of Noah, and kept by the other two; and that the one was cursed for his sin, while the others were blessed for their observance of the commandment. These things show the existence of that commandment, a knowledge of its existence, and also a knowledge that it was in full force to condemn the guilty and to acquit the innocent.

We find also the violation of the eighth commandment mentioned in Gen. 31:30. It is not necessary to particularize concerning each of the commandments, but we will notice one more. In Gen. 15:15, 16, we read these words of the Lord to Abraham: "And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they [his seed] shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." This shows that in the days of Abraham the inhabitants of Canaan, the Gentiles, were guilty of iniquity. Iniquity is sin, and "sin is the transgression of the law;" so, therefore, the Amorites had the law of God. Turn now to 1 Kings 21:25, 26, and you will learn of what the Amorites were guilty:-

"But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel."

Here we find that the Amorites were cast out of Canaan because of idolatry,- idolatry, which, in its rites, involved the violation of not only the first and second commandments, but of all the ten. So we find that all the commandments were known and violated hundreds of years before the Jews came to Mount Sinai, and before there ever was a Jew. The point has not been proved, both from the nature of the law, and by actual illustration of the fact. E. J. W.

(To be continued.)

August 24, 1891

**"Jurisdiction of the Law. (Continued.)" *The Signs of the Times* 17,
34.**

E. J. Waggoner

Thus far we have shown the existence of the law of God from the earliest history of mankind. We wish now to carry the argument a step further, as we have already intimated that we should do. We have found the law to be "the righteousness of God," the rule of his government. Since God has always been supreme ruler, and his rule has always been just and righteous, he must have judged only by his own righteous character, which is embodied in the decalogue. Now God has created many worlds besides this one (Heb. 1:2), and since he formed ours that it might be inhabited (Isa. 45:18), the conclusion is legitimate, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, that he made the others for the same purpose. No thinking person can suppose that this little earth, one of the smallest among the innumerable planets of the universe, is the only one that is inhabited. Now of all these vast worlds, God is the King. "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all." Ps. 103:19. And since he can rule by naught except justice and righteousness, and all righteousness, even the righteousness of God himself, is comprised within the ten commandments, it follows that they, and they alone, form the rule of action in all God's universe. Of the correctness of this conclusion we have direct evidence in Ps. 103:20, where we read that the angels "do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word." If the commandments are the rule in heaven, where God himself resides, certainly they are the rule "in all places of his dominion."

This view of the law, and we are confident that it is a just view, lifts the law question far, far above the plane on which its opposers would fain confine it. Instead of being imperfect and not calculated to bring man into proper relation to his Maker, it is the righteousness of God; instead of being confined to a small portion of this earth, the bounds of its jurisdiction are as extensive as the universe; instead of being given to one nation of earth, and to that alone, it is that to which all loyal creatures, even the angels of heaven, bow in humble allegiance; and instead of being limited to a few centuries of existence, it "stands fast forever and ever," even as long as God exists and his kingdom ruleth over all.

We are aware that at first sight many will think that this is going too far, and will possibly raise objections, and say that when we consider the nature of certain commandments, it is not reasonable to suppose that they could be in heaven for the restraint of heavenly beings. We will therefore add one or two more points. But first we would remark that when a case is supported by positive evidence, we are not at liberty to reject it because there are points about it which we do not understand. Nothing can be proved so clearly that no one can raise an *objection*, or even frame an argument, against it; and many things that are susceptible of the clearest proof, cannot be fully comprehended even by those who present the

proof. Take, for instance, the question of the existence of God. Both nature and revelation plainly teach that there is a God, who has existed from eternity; yet it is impossible to state the case so clearly that no one can cavil or raise objections; and there is no one, no matter how clearly he can demonstrate that there is a God, who can comprehend him, or understand how he could exist from eternity. The argument from ignorance is no argument at all. Truth is truth, however great our ignorance of it may be. The merchant sitting in his office can put a question to his agent a thousand miles distant, and receive a reply the next minute. Tell this well-known fact to a savage, and he will not believe you; he cannot comprehend how such a thing can be done, and will present objections and arguments which, to his mind, show the utter impossibility of such a thing. Yet in spite of his ignorance, the thing is true. So there are many things in connection with God and his government which finite wisdom cannot explain, but which we must accept.

Now to further show the reasonableness, nay, the absolute necessity, of the ten commandments existing as a rule for all the creatures of the universe:

1. "The law of the Lord is perfect." Ps. 19:7. Since it is perfect, nothing can be added to it or taken from it without making it imperfect. If, then, any creatures should be governed by more or less than this law, they would be governed by an imperfect law. But that, of course, would result in imperfect characters, and would further show the Lawgiver, to be imperfect; therefore such an idea cannot be entertained.

2. "The law of the Lord is perfect," because it is a transcript of his will, - his righteousness. Therefore all intelligent creatures must be governed by it.

This has already been stated, but it will bear repetition. Too much stress cannot be laid upon it. Wherever God rules, his will must of necessity be law. That the ten-commandment law, the law out of which the Jews were instructed, is the will of God, Paul shows in Rom. 2:17, 18: "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and *knowest his will*, and approvest the things that are more excellent [margin, "triest the things that differ"], *being instruction out of the law*." That the ten commandments here referred to, may be seen from verses 21-23. Paul, therefore, speaking to a Jew, said, You know the will of God, because you are instructed out of the law. No further evidence is needed to show that the ten commandments are the will of God. Now, since all intelligent creatures must be governed by the will of God, it is evident that they are governed by the ten commandments, unless it could be shown that God changes, having one will at one time and toward one people, and another will at another time and for another people. But this cannot be; for "with him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1:17. There is, then, one law for all.

3. There are none who can have a greater interest than the righteous, whether of the redeemed or of those who never sinned, in having the ten commandments maintained as the standard of right. And this for the very reason that it is the standard of right. It is the badge of their loyalty. If there were a place where the ten commandments were not held as the law, the righteous ones would not want to go there; for there would be nothing to show that they were righteous. But enough has been said to prove beyond a reasonable doubt the

universality of God's holy law. In all places of God's dominion, rational beings are by this law either justified or condemned. E. J. W.

(To be continued.)

August 31, 1891

"Jurisdiction of the Law. (Continued.)" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

While we have been making the claim and proving it, that the law of God covers every possible act or thought, and that no responsible being is outside of its jurisdiction, someone has been looking for the verse which says that the Gentiles do not have the law, but are a law unto themselves. Perhaps this is as good a time as any to consider that text. An answer to it will also involve the consideration of the question why the ten commandments, since they have such universal jurisdiction, were spoken from Mount Sinai only to the Jews. Let us now read the passage above referred to:-

"For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law (for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another)." Rom. 2:12-15.

A brief examination of Paul's argument in this chapter will be necessary in order to get a proper understanding of this text. It will be noticed that the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth verses are parenthetical, and are therefore secondary to the main argument. Therefore, in stating the argument, we shall omit those three verses. In the first chapter of Romans, Paul has shown the terribly immoral condition of the heathen world; and in the second chapter he proceeds to show that whoever condemns the heathen, condemns himself, for all are guilty. God, he says, "will render *to every man* according to his deeds." To those who patiently persevere in well doing, he will render eternal life; but to those who are contentious, and do not obey the truth (see Ps. 119;142), he will render indignation and wrath. And these rewards of good or ill will be rendered to every man, whether he be Jew or Gentile. "For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."

In the first two chapters of Romans, the apostle brings out the fact, which is plainly stated in the third, that "both Jews and Gentiles" are "under sin," and that "there is none righteous, no, not one." In the passage under consideration, he states that, as a consequence, all who do not repent shall suffer "the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds." This will

be done without regard to nationality; "for there is no respect of persons with God;" that is, it is not a man's birth, but his character, that gives him favor with God. It is the *doers of the law* whom he justifies, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, and not those who, as did many of the Jews, hear the law, but do not obey. All who sin, whether with the law or without it, shall perish.

In the twelfth and fourteenth verses we have the two classes brought to view—those who have the law, and those who have it not. There is no question but that the Jews had the law; they rested in it (Rom. 2:17), and by breaking it dishonored God (verses 23, 24). And the fourteenth verse tells us plainly that those not having the law are the Gentiles. Before considering their case, we must not fail to note the fact that both the Jews who had the law, and the Gentiles who had it not, had sinned. They were alike guilty before God. Rom. 3:9, 10. Now "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4), and "where no law is, there is not transgression" (Rom. 4:15). Therefore it is beyond controversy that both classes here mentioned had transgressed law, and more than that, had been conscious of the fact, for "sin is not imputed when there is no law." So it is certain that the Gentiles had transgressed the law and that they "sinned without law." How shall we explain this seeming contradiction? Let us see. Read again verses 14, 16:—

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another."

When God made man in his own image, he made him upright. Eccl. 7:29. Not alone in his physical form, but also in his moral nature, he was in the image of God. While Adam continued in this upright, sinless condition, the law of God was in his heart. We know this from Ps. 40:8, where David, speaking for the Messiah, says, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." The existence of the law of God in the heart is manifested by the willingness to obey that law; and he who, as was the case with Christ, has the law perfectly formed within his heart, will render perfect obedience to the law. This was the case with our first parents in the garden of Eden.

But man fell from his high estate; he sinned against God, and thus marred the perfect copy of the law which had existed in his heart. The tendency of sin is to multiply itself; like the tares sown among the good grain, it will grow without any attention. So the first sin prepared the way for many more, till at last nearly all the world became wholly given up to sin. In Heb. 3:13 the apostle says that men become "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin;" that is, the more men sin, the less heinous does sin appear to them, until at last evil appears to be only good, and good evil, and they sin without the slightest compunction of conscience. This principle is something with which everybody is familiar. Now this progressive love of sin, and the indifference to it, is nothing else than the obliterating of the copy of the law which exists in a more or less perfect state in every heart. This work is not done instantaneously; it takes time for men to so completely obliterate the law from their hearts that they will feel no restraint. But when it is entirely gone, then man is in the condition in which he was just prior to

the flood, when "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. 6:5. So long, however, as any portion remains in his heart, the Spirit is enabled to strive with man, and, by means of that law, to convict of sin; and this whether the individual knows anything of the written revelation or not.

Now the Gentiles did not have the law written on stone and in books, as did the Jews; they only had that portion which still remained unobliterated from their hearts. Of course the Jews, having much more light than the Gentiles had, were far more responsible. The former would necessarily be judged by the fullness of the law, for they could not plead ignorance of any portion of it. If they sinned, justice required that the condemnation of the law should be visited upon them in full measure. But the Gentiles could be judged only by the light that they had. Since they had not the written revelation, that, of course, would not be brought up against them. They knew, however, the difference, in many things, between right and wrong; and by this they are judged. Had they lived fully up to the light which they had by nature, they would have been counted as doers of the law; but since they did not, since their own consciences condemned them, they must suffer the consequences. The Jews, having the written law, are judged by the law; and the Gentiles, not having the written law, perish without being brought into judgment by it.

Perhaps this can be made plainer by illustration. The Jews had every one of the ten commandments in such shape that they could constantly be reminded of them, and know the extent of their claims. Now when they come into judgment, it is no more than justice that the whole law should be held up before them, that the enormity of their guilt may be manifest. But here is a poor, ignorant barbarian, who, we will suppose, knew, by the light of nature, only two precepts of the law,- that it is wrong to kill and to commit adultery. His knowledge of the sinfulness of these acts is shown by his trying to conceal the fact when he has done one or the other of them. His own conscience accuses him. Now it is not necessary, in order to convict him of sin, that the whole ten commandments be held up beside the record of his life. In the judgment let the two precepts with which he was familiar be recalled to his mind. By these alone he stands condemned as a sinner; and since "the wages of sin is death," he justly perishes, without ever having seen the written law. Thus we see that all men, whatever their condition, are amenable to, and are to be judged by, the law of God. When Paul says that the Gentiles have not the law, he means that they had not the written revelation, but not that they did not have some knowledge of right and wrong, as defined by the moral law. E. J. W.

(To be concluded.)

September 7, 1891

**"Jurisdiction of the Law. Why the Law Was Spoken Only to the Jews.
(Concluded.)" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 36.**

E. J. Waggoner

Now why was it that only the Jews had the written law? Did the giving of the law to them indicate partiality on the part of God?—Not by any means; "for there is no respect of persons with God." Before the exode, all the world was on a level, so far as written revelation was concerned. When sin separated man from God so that he could no longer talk with him face to face, then God supplemented the light which men had in their own hearts by communicating with them in visions and dreams given to his prophets (Num. 12:6), and by sending angels to them (Gen. 22:15). Had all men hearkened to the voice of conscience, the communication thus opened between God and man would have been sufficient to bring them at last to the state where the law would be perfectly restored in their hearts. This is that which God is still striving to accomplish. Heb. 8:10.

But men did not care to follow even that portion of the law which they retained in their hearts, and consequently God could not send them more light through his prophets. Thus, "as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a mind void of judgment." Rom. 1:28. In process of time, only one family retained the knowledge of God, and all the rest of the world were destroyed for their abominable wickedness.

Within four hundred years after the flood, men had again corrupted their way on the earth, and only Abraham remained loyal to God. He kept God's commandments (Gen. 26:5), and had the determination to command his children and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment (Gen. 18:19). In order that the descendants of Abraham might retain the knowledge of God, God called Abraham away from his corrupt associates, and gave him the rite of circumcision, in order that the separation might be complete. This rite was not designed to be a mark of birth or nationality, but simply as a means of keeping the observers of God's law from the contaminating influence of those who did not regard it; for whenever one of any other nation became willing to separate from his people and keep the law, he also became circumcised. Gen. 17:12.

This precaution served to keep the descendants of Abraham a distinct people through all their wanderings, and to preserve among them the knowledge of the true God. Some from other tribes, getting the light from them, would occasionally turn to the Lord, to keep his commandments, and, becoming circumcised, would be counted as the descendants of righteous Abraham; but the great mass of the world chose to remain in the darkness of heathenism. Thus it happened that when the Lord brought his people from Egyptian bondage, they alone of all the people in the world had a knowledge of God. All the rest could say with Pharaoh, "I know not the Lord." At that time the Lord chose to give mankind his law in a manner so plain that it could not possibly be mistaken, and so that they could always meditate in it in its perfection, even though no prophet were at hand. By this means the Spirit could make greater progress, so to speak, in writing the law in their hearts. But to whom could he speak the law? Only to those who knew him, and would accept the law as coming from him. Therefore he was compelled to give the written law to the Jews, and make them light bearers to the world. The law, when it entered, came to the Jews, not because it was designed for them alone, but because they alone would receive it.

As a further evidence that God was not moved by race considerations, and did not give the law exclusively to the Jews as a nation, we may notice the fact that when the Jews left Egypt, "a mixed multitude went up also with them." Ex. 12:38; Num. 11:4. This "mixed multitude" was composed to Egyptians, and, no doubt, of people of other nationalities. These went along with the Jews, and with them received the law from God at Mount Sinai.

We cannot close this portion of our subject without giving, from the pen of another, the following graphic portrayal of the condition of a people who should have no regard for the law of God:-

"No error accepted by the Christian world strikes more boldly against the authority of Heaven, none is more directly opposed to the dictates of reason, none is more pernicious in its results, than the modern doctrine, so rapidly gaining ground, that God's law is no longer binding upon men. Every nation has its laws, which command respect and obedience; no government could exist without them; and can it be conceived that the Creator of the heavens and the earth has no law to govern the beings he has made? Suppose that prominent ministers were publicly to teach that the statutes which govern their land and protect the rights of its citizens were not obligatory,-that they restricted the liberties of the people, and therefore ought not to be obeyed; how long would such men be tolerated in the pulpit? But is it a graver offense to disregard the laws of States and nations than to trample upon those divine precepts which are the foundation of all government? When the standard of righteousness is set aside, the way is open for the prince of evil to establish his rule in the earth.

"Wherever the divine precepts are set aside, sin ceases to appear sinful, or righteousness desirable. Those who refuse to submit to the government of God are wholly unfitted to govern themselves. Through their pernicious teachings, the spirit of insubordination is implanted in the hearts of children and youth, who are naturally impatient of control; and a lawless, licentious state of society results. While scoffing at the credulity of those who obey the requirements of God, the multitudes eagerly accept the delusions of Satan. They give the rein to lust, and practice the sins which called down judgments upon the heathen.

"Let the restraint imposed by the divine law be wholly removed, and human laws would soon be disregarded. Because God forbids dishonest practices,-coveting, lying, and defrauding,-men are ready to trample upon His statutes as a hindrance to their worldly prosperity; but the results of banishing these precepts would be such as they do not anticipate. If the law were not binding, why should any fear to transgress? Property would no longer be safe. Men would obtain their neighbors' possessions by violence, and the strongest would become richest. Life itself would not be respected. Those who disregard the commandments of God sow disobedience to reap disobedience. The marriage vow would no longer stand as a sacred bulwark to protect the family. He who had the power, would, if he desired, take his neighbor's wife by violence. The fifth commandment would be set aside with the fourth. Children would not shrink from taking the life of their parents, if by so doing they could obtain the desire of their corrupt hearts. The civilized world would become a horde of robbers and assassins; and peace, rest

and happiness would be banished from the earth."-Mrs. E. G. White, in *Great Controversy*, vol. 4, chap. 31.

This is just the state of things that would exist, not only in this world, but in all the universe, if the ten commandments were not the universal rule of action. If there be any portion of the universe where the decalogue is not the recognized law, the above paragraphs accurately describe the condition of its society. E. J. W.

September 14, 1891

"The End Approaching" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14. This language occurs in the discourse which the Saviour delivered in answer to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The entire chapter in which these words occur is an answer to this question. The question as to whether or not the Lord will come again is not mooted. There was no uncertainty in the minds of the disciples on this point. They very well knew that the Lord would come to reign over his people; all that troubled them was to know the signs which should precede his coming. These the Saviour proceeded to give. Besides the physical signs in the sun, moon, and stars, which have all been fulfilled, he gave the one which heads this paragraph, and which is now in process of fulfillment.

What is "this gospel of the kingdom"? It is that which our Saviour preached in all his earthly ministry. Matt. 4:23; Mark 1:14. "Gospel," means "good news." The gospel which is to be preached "in all the world," "to all people," is the good news of a Saviour, "which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:10, 11. A Saviour must save people from something, and so we find that Jesus saves his people from their sins. Matt. 1:21. But the wrath of God (Rom. 1:18; Eph. 5:5, 6), resulting in death (Rom. 6:23), is visited upon all sin; so that the salvation of people from sin must also be salvation from the wrath of God, and so it is (Rom. 5:9). Being saved from sin may be equivalent to being justified by faith, but being saved from wrath is the final and complete salvation from sin and all its consequences. And this is the salvation of which Isaiah speaks when he says that "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an *everlasting salvation*." Isa. 45:17. It is that salvation which the apostle Peter says shall be brought unto us "at the revelation of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 1:9-13.

This final salvation is the end or object of our faith. 1 Peter 1:9. People may talk as much as they please about doing right for its own sake, but the fact remains that if there were to be no future life there would be no incentive to right living. Paul says, that "if in this we" only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Cor. 15:19), and in harmony with this he continues that if there is no resurrection we would do well to eat and drink, and get all the enjoyment we can from this life while it is passing (1 Cor. 15:32). What comfort

would it be to a sinner to assure him that his sins are all forgiven, but that there is nothing for him beyond this present life?-None at all. In such a case forgiveness of sins would profit him nothing. So then the preaching of the gospel comprehends not alone the announcement that Christ died for sinners, but that through his death he has brought immortality to light. We believe that no one who has ever professed to preach the gospel has omitted the fact that an eternal inheritance awaits the overcomers.

But this eternal inheritance is "reserved in heaven," and is to be revealed only "in the last time." 1 Peter 1:4, 5. It is only when Christ comes "the second time" that salvation is brought to them that look for him. Christ himself told his disciples (John 14:1-3) that he would come again

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to receive them unto himself so that they might be with him, plainly indicating that they could be with him in no other way except by his second coming. Even though they should die they could not be with him unless he should return. Compare John 8:21 and 13:33. And in harmony with this Paul says, "by the word of the Lord," that "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so [that is, by this means] shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

Now what have we found?-Just this: That the gospel brings to view eternal redemption, and that any preaching of the gospel which should omit the future inheritance of the saints would be very incomplete, and that there is no future inheritance for the saints unless the Lord comes again. Therefore we are justified in saying that the preaching of the gospel necessarily includes the preaching of the second coming of Christ, and that those who ignore or deny the second coming of Christ do not preach the whole gospel. Still further; in the fourteenth of Revelation we read of three messages that immediately precede the second coming of Christ. Verses 6-14. The first of these messages announces the hour of God's judgment come, and it and the two which follow give instruction how to prepare for that event. The Third Angel's Message includes both the others, and contains the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus,-the sum of all the instruction necessary to make "the remnant of Israel" a pure people, prepared for the coming of the Lord. It is the gospel in its simplicity and purity, and is therefore the gospel just as it was preached by Christ and his apostles. It announces the second coming of Christ, and tells how to be ready for that event. Therefore we confidently affirm that our Saviour's words in Matt. 24:14 may justly be paraphrased thus: "And the Third Angel's Message shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." We think that no one who has carefully followed this brief exposition can dissent from this conclusion.

This thing,-the preaching of the Third Angel's Message in all the world, to all nations,-is all that remains to be done before the coming of the Lord; and this work will be cut short in righteousness; "because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Rom. 9:28. And short indeed it must be, for we *know* from our

Saviour's own words that his coming is now so near that he is "even at the doors." Matt. 24:33. The generation now living upon the earth will witness the coming of the Lord with all his holy angels. There is no conjecture about this, no assumption. It is just as true as that Christ is the Son of God. E. J. W.

September 21, 1891

"Carest Thou Not That We Perish?" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

The disciples of Jesus were on the sea in a terrific storm. The winds sweeping down from various quarters into the valley of the lake had "lifted up the waves thereof" so that the boat was tossed about like a toy. The men were at their wits' end, for neither sail nor oar could make any headway against the tempest. The waves dashed over the boat, and beat into it until it was full and in a sinking condition. Destruction seemed to be the only thing before them, when they thought of the Master. Where is he? In the midst of the tumult he is quietly sleeping in the hinder part of the boat. "And they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" Mark 4:38-40.

As we read the record we cannot help wondering at the reproachful question which they asked Jesus, "Carest thou not that we perish?" Are you so unmindful of us that you can calmly sleep while we are about to be swallowed up by the sea? Is this your care for those who have left all to follow you? Their thought was only of themselves, and they did not stop to consider that he was in the boat with them. In their faithless fright they did not think that if the boat went down with them, supposing that it were possible, it would take him down too.

If they had but allowed this thought to come into their minds, it would not only have checked their selfish reproach of the Master, but it would have calmed their fears; for surely He who made the sea, and to whom it belongs, who "hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm," could not perish in the stormy waves. The creature could not destroy the Creator. So the fact that Jesus was in the boat was the surest protection that they could have. It was safer in the storm with him than in the calm without him.

Is there not in this a lesson for us? How often when people are in deep distress and affliction, -when the waters have almost overwhelmed them and the proud waters have actually gone over their souls, -they say, "Why do we suffer this? Has God forgotten us? Does not the Master care for our trouble?" Oh, how many, many times has the Master been pained by such words of selfish, faithless reproach from those who call themselves by his name!

But, what are the facts in the case? The Master is actually in the same trouble with them, and, although to them he may seem to be sleeping, and indifferent to their fate, he is suffering as much as they. Listen to the words of eternal truth: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers,

they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not; for I am with thee." Isa. 43:2-5.

Do you say that this promise is for those who have perfect trust in God, but that you are too unworthy for it to apply in your case? Not so; remember the disciples in the boat; their fears had drowned their feeble faith, yet the Master was with them none the less. And his promise is that he will be with us; nay, he *is* with us. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." 2 Tim. 2:13. It is this knowledge of his faithfulness that begets faith in us.

Read also the words concerning the Lord's presence with his people in the past, and remember that he is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." Isa. 63:9. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them." Deut. 33:26, 27.

"Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding? He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength." Isa. 40:27-29. And yet feeble men, who cannot see one moment ahead of them, and who can see only the most insignificant portion of that which is present with them, dare to murmur against God, because they cannot understand his dealings with them.

There is not a human ill but that Jesus knows it. "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Ps. 103:14. Not only does he *know*, but he *cares*. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." 1 Peter 5:7. Not only does he know our trouble, as something that he sees, but he actually shares it. He took on him our nature, being made in all things like unto his brethren. Thus he established a connection between us and him, so that whatever affects us affects him.

How, then, can we murmur and complain? How can we fear and be troubled for the future? Is not the Master in the boat with us? Is he not sharing our danger? Do we believe the assurance of his word? Then how can we spend time pitying ourselves? To do so-to murmur at our hard lot, or to wonder why such trials are allowed to come upon *us*-is to disbelieve the Master's words: "I am with thee;" "I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee."

And then it is not only that our selfish fears will be forgotten in the thought that Jesus shares our trouble, but we may rejoice in the midst of the storm, knowing that *he* cannot perish, and that therefore while he is with us *we* cannot perish. Though death itself may come, that need not shake our faith, for he died, and in

that very act conquered death. Even in this we may triumph. For "who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8:35-39.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Ps. 46:1, 2. Whatever the danger, however great the storm, we may be calm in the confidence that He who rules all things is with us, and so we may say, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid." Isa. 12:2. E. J. W.

September 28, 1891

"An Important Question" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

"And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions." Matt. 19:16-22.

The question asked by the young ruler is one that has been asked by thousands, and one that should interest every person. Life is a boon of inestimable value; men will spend the earnings of years, and travel to the utmost limits of the globe, in order to prolong their lives for a few years. How eagerly, then, should they grasp anything which will lengthen out their lives to all eternity! It is indeed wonderful that so few manifest an interest in that which pertains to their eternal welfare, while they are so zealous for life and happiness for a short time. In this the majority of mankind manifest only the wisdom of the infant who seizes the glittering toy, and rejects the infinitely more valuable bag of treasure. But there are some who are anxiously inquiring, "What must I do to be saved?" and to such the words of our Lord himself on this subject must be of all-absorbing interest.

Having incidentally settled the point of his oneness with God, our Lord immediately answers the question, "What good thing shall I do, that I may have

eternal life?" He did not say, "You must not do anything," but said plainly, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." The young man, greatly surprised, asked, "Which?" being a ruler of the Jews, he had, of course, kept the law, and prided himself on the strictness with which he had heeded all its requirements. The strictness of the Pharisees, extending even to the minutest forms of ceremonies, is proverbial. The young man, doubtless, like Paul, lived after the "straitest sect" of the Jews' religion. We can therefore imagine the astonishment and assurance with which he uttered the word, "Which?" as much as to say: "Why, are there any other commandments? Have you some new ones that are not written in the law? If so, tell me what they are." Jesus calmly quotes a portion of the ten commandments, as showing the law to which he has reference. The fact that he did not quote all of them is no proof that he did not design that all should be kept. He did not quote the first nor the third, yet no one would argue from this that Christ meant to indicate to the young man that he could worship idols or indulge in profanity and still be saved. He simply quoted enough to show that he referred to that which was regarded by all as the law, and that he had no new commandment to offer.

Before commenting further on the observance of the commandments as the condition of eternal life, or the truth of the young man's reply in verse 20, we wish to briefly notice what this law is. In a matter of life and death it will not do to make a mistake. If the commandments are to be the test of our fitness for eternal life, we must have those commandments so clearly defined that there can be no doubt. Fortunately, this is not a difficult thing to do. In the third month after the children of Israel left Egypt, they came to the wilderness of Sinai. The Lord told them to make certain preparations, for within three days he would come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. Ex. 19:10, 11. Nehemiah tells us why he thus came down: "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments." Neh. 9:13. His object, then, in coming down was to give the people laws of truth, good statutes. Besides this, Nehemiah says, "And commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant." Verse 14. If now we can distinguish between the statutes given by the Lord himself and those given through Moses, we shall have discovered that which we seek—the condition of eternal life.

Returning to Exodus, we find that when the necessary preparations had been completed, the Lord did come down upon Mount Sinai, with fire and smoke, thunders and lightnings, and an earthquake. Ex. 19:16-18. In the twentieth chapter, verses 3-17, we find the words which the Lord spoke from the mount. In Deut. 4:11-13 Moses rehearses the scenes of Sinai, and plainly says that the words which God spoke are the ten commandments. But may it not be that there is something besides these? Let us see. In the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses, in the course of his last charge to the people, repeated in substance these ten commandments as recorded in Ex. 20:3-17. When he had finished the recital, he said: "These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great

voice; and *he added no more*. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them to me." Deut. 5:22.

Of these commandments, Moses said: "Thou shalt teach them unto thy children,

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and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes." Deut. 6:7, 8. That these are the commandments, the keeping of which is the condition of eternal life, is proved by verse 25: "And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us."

We have now found the commandments to which our Lord referred. We are not now concerned with the particulars of the laws given through Moses, since the keeping of them is not required. "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" is the question in which we are now interested, and those things not pertaining to this may be passed by. We know what the law is. Next week we will consider the nature of the law, to see why the keeping of it should be able to confer immortality. E. J. W.

October 12, 1891

"Nature of the Law. (Concluded .)" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

In our last number we considered Christ's words, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," and found that the law of God-the ten commandments spoken on Mount Sinai-are the commandments referred to. In harmony with this, we have the words of Christ through the beloved disciple: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22:14. We now want to examine this law, in order to learn its character.

First we quote the words of David: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Ps. 19:7. A perfect law, if kept, will form a perfect character. If a man has a perfect character, he is a perfect man, and that is all that God requires of any of us, all that he can require of anyone. Paul also adds his testimony to that of David, and says that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Rom. 7:12. And this also agrees with the words of Nehemiah, that the Lord, on Mount Sinai, gave "true laws ['laws of truth,' margin], good statutes and commandments."

This idea of the perfection of the ten commandments is more fully expressed by David in Ps. 119:172: "My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness." They are not simply good; they are righteousness itself. We remember that Moses said of these commandments, "they shall be in thine heart," and that we should talk of them at all times. But it is as true of a man now as when Solomon wrote, that "as he thinketh in his heart,

so is he." Prov. 23:7. Therefore if a man continually meditates upon a law that is perfect righteousness, he can become righteous.

David says that the commandments are righteousness; but the Lord, through the prophet Isaiah, gives us a still deeper insight into their perfection: "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." Isa. 51:6.

If any reader fails to connect this verse to connect this verse with Ps. 119:172, and thus learn what the righteousness that shall not be abolished is, he can satisfy himself that it is the law of God by reading the next verse: "Hearken unto me ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law." Isa. 51:7. Now that we see that the commandments are God's righteousness, it needs no argument to convince us that they cannot be abolished. Abolish the righteousness of God! It would be equivalent to abolishing God himself. The thing is an impossibility.

It is not, however, to the fact that God's law cannot be abolished that we wish to call your especial attention, but that it is God's righteousness. God is all righteousness-perfection-and therefore the law must be a transcript of his character. God wanted man to be like himself, righteous, but how could poor, fallen man know what righteousness is? He must needs have a perfect guide to direct his actions. God could not associate with men, and thus teach them what is righteousness, for they could not stand even his voice, much less the sight of his person. So he wrote out a description of his character, in words suited to the comprehension of human beings, and committed it to us. Christ tells us that the ten commandments hang from the great principle of love, and God is love. By studying them and obeying them we become like them, or, what is the same thing, like God. We write this with all reverence. We would not be understood that any human being can approach the perfection of God in any particular; but God himself says, "Be ye holy, for I am holy;" and Christ says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 6:48. We are to become sinless and pure, and even then God in his goodness will be infinitely above us.

But someone may say, "I do not see anything about the ten commandments worthy to be called a transcript of God's character. It seems like degrading God to say that they are his righteousness." That simply shows that you have not meditated upon them sufficiently to become acquainted with them. Paul says that the law is spiritual, and spiritual things are only spiritually discerned. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him." We see beauty only in that which we love; and Paul says that "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7. But when the carnal mind has been subdued, and the man has yielded to the requirement of the law, he can exclaim with Paul, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Rom. 7:22); or with David, "O how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (Ps. 119:97).

The better acquainted we become with God's law, the greater it appears to us. David thought much on the law, and he said, "I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad." Ps. 119:96. It is so broad that it covers every act that any rational creature can perform, and every thought that the mind of man can conceive. For Bible proof of this we read: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12. There is no sin either of word, deed, or thought which the law of God will not search out and condemn. How necessary, then, that we make it our constant study! As we do not wish to cherish sin, and thus fail of eternal life, we must understand in all cases just what sin is; and to this end let us never cease to pray, with the Psalmist, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." E. J. W.

October 19, 1891

"Perpetuity of the Law" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

It is impossible to discuss one branch of this great subject of the law without touching more or less upon every other branch. So in considering the nature of the law and its relation to the gospel, we have necessarily shown that it must endure forever. We shall now take up this branch more in detail.

The law of God is the righteousness of God. It may not be amiss to review the proof on this point. David, in these words, bears witness to the fact that the commandments are themselves righteousness: "My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness." Ps. 119:172. Since there is no righteousness but that of God, the commandments must be his righteousness; but we have still more direct evidence. The prophet Isaiah thus contrasts the things of earth with the righteousness of God: "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be forever; and my righteousness shall not be abolished." Isa. 51:6. In the next verse he proceeds to tell what this righteousness is: "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law." Because the law is the righteousness of God, it enables those who are instructed in it to "give judgment upon good or evil."

The text says, "My righteousness shall not be abolished." Since there can be no question but that "righteousness" is here used with reference to the law of God, we may properly substitute "law" for "righteousness," thus: "The earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be forever, and my law shall not be abolished." This gives the exact meaning, and is no more positive than we shall find stated elsewhere.

God is from everlasting to everlasting. Ps. 90:2. As he cannot exist separate from his nature, or, in other words, separate from himself, and the law is the

transcript of his nature, it necessarily follows that the law exists from everlasting to everlasting. And since created beings, who are all subjects of God's government, cannot obey an abstract principle, but must have that principle clearly defined, we know that at least from the time that God created intelligent beings as subjects of his government, the law must have existed in written form, or must have been expressed in definite language. And from the beginning of his creation to everlasting ages, it must continue so to exist.

This is exactly what we are taught by the words of Christ in the sermon on the mount. Said he: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill [to ratify, establish, or teach]. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matt. 5:17, 18. Here two things are mentioned, the law and the prophets. Christ did not come to destroy either one. He came in fulfillment of prophecy, and also to teach the law, which he did in the sermon on the mount. He did not, however, fulfill all the prophecy; for some of it reaches far beyond his first advent. For instance, in Ps. 89:20-29 we read the following prophecy concerning the kingdom of David, over which Christ, as the Son of David, is to rule:-

"I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him; with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him; and in my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven."

In verses 35-37 we read further:-

"Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah."

Here is a prophecy that will be in process of fulfillment as long as the sun and moon endure, even to all the days of heaven. Now the words of Christ are that "one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." Till all what be fulfilled? Evidently till all the prophets be fulfilled, for he is speaking of the prophets, in connection with the law. Then, in view of the prophecy that we just read, we know that not the slightest change can be made in the law so long as Christ reigns on the throne of David; and that will be throughout eternity. E. J. W.

October 26, 1891

"The Spirit as a Guide" *The Signs of the Times* 17, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

When Christ told his disciples that he was about to go away and that they could not follow him, their hearts were filled with sorrow and anxiety. They dreaded to face an unfriendly world alone. He had been their guide and instructor, and they had learned much from his teachings. They knew of no one who could fill his place. Peter had echoed the sentiments of all the disciples when, in answer to Christ's inquiry if they also would go away, he said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." They knew that no one else could do for them what Jesus had done; and the thought of being separated from him was a sad one.

To comfort them, Christ gave them the assurance that he would come again, and receive them unto himself, and that by this means they could again be with him. But even this promise was not sufficient, for there would still intervene a long period during which they would be left alone. How could they do without the presence and counsel of their Lord?

Again Jesus meets the difficulty by promising that whatsoever they should ask in his name should be done for them; and he added, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth." John 14:16, 17. This Spirit was to be sent in his name, and was to take his place until his return. Said Christ, "I will not leave you comfortless [orphans]; I will come to you." This coming does not refer to his personal, visible coming, when he will receive his people to himself, but to the Spirit which should come in his name. The Spirit was to be their guide, to prepare them for his coming at the last day.

The offices of the Spirit are many; but there is a special one pointed out in this discourse of our lord. Said he: "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you, but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:25, 26. It is as a teacher that the Spirit is here brought to view.

Many persons entertain very erroneous views as to the manner in which the Spirit operates. They imagine that it will teach them something which the Bible does not contain. When certain Bible truths are presented to them for their observance, they excuse themselves from all responsibility in the matter by saying that they are led by the Spirit of God, and do not feel it their duty to do that particular thing. They say the Spirit was given to guide into all truth; and, consequently, if it was necessary to obey that portion of the Scripture, it would have been brought to their notice. The fact that they do not feel impressed to obey, is proof to their minds that there is no necessity for obedience. To such persons the Bible is of no account; they make its truth depend entirely upon their own feelings. And they actually charge God with the inconsistency of authorizing his Spirit to speak in contradiction of his revealed word. The fact that God cannot lie should convince anyone that his Spirit and his word must always be in harmony.

Christ prayed for his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." The Psalmist David said, "Thy righteousness, is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth." From these passages we learn that when

Christ said, "When he the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth," he meant that the Spirit would lead them into a proper understanding of that which had already been revealed. He plainly stated this when he said, "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Many things that Christ said were not understood at the time; but they were made plain by the Spirit after Christ had ascended to heaven. And it is thus that the Spirit teaches us now; it leads those who are humble and teachable into a proper understanding of the written word of God.

Paul gives testimony on this point which is not uncertain. In Eph. 6:13-17 he describes the Christian's armor. The following is the concluding portion: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, *which is the word of God*." Christ said that when the Comforter, the Holy Spirit

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should come, he would "reprove [convince] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Paul says that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Both these passages are harmonized by the one quoted from Paul to the Ephesians. The Spirit does indeed convince of sin, but it is by impressing on the minds and hearts of men the claims of God's word. The Bible is the sword, the instrument by which the Spirit pierces the heart, and lays bare its wickedness. The Spirit is the active agent, but the word of God is that through which it works. The two always act in unison.

We should look with suspicion upon any spirit that counsels opposition to the word of God. John tells us that there are many spirits, and that we are to try them. In Isaiah we are told by what we are to try them: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8:20. It is the spirit of darkness that leads me to act contrary to the word of God. E. J. W.