**“The Honor Due to God” The Signs of the Times, 9, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live.” Luke 10:25-28. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.1}

There are very many degrees of service which we may render to God, but there is only one that is acceptable to him, and that is undivided service. God requires that all the faculties both of body and mind shall be consecrated to him; he will accept nothing less. We are to regard ourselves and all our talents, both of mind and means, as belonging to him without reserve. It is a rare thing to find one who realizes the full extent of the claims that God makes upon us. Our minds have been so warped by selfishness that it is difficult to even conceive of such perfect service as the law requires, and much more so to do it. It should be the great object of every person to have his spiritual discernment so quickened that he may be able to comprehend the completeness of service that God requires of him. It could not be any more forcibly stated than it is in the text above quoted, but to understand and carry out all the details is the work of a life-time. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.2}

But it should be constantly borne in mind that God does not make this claim upon us arbitrarily, and without sufficient reason. He claims no more than is his just due. In Revelation 4:11 we find the basis of God’s claim upon his creatures as follows:- {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.3}

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.4}

It is because God has created us that he has a right to our service. This fact is made very prominent in the Bible. Why should we serve Jehovah, rather than the gods which the heathen worship? Because God created us and all things that we enjoy, and they did not. Paul says: “There be gods many and lords many, but to us there is but one God, the father, of whom are all things, and we are in him.” 1 Corinthians 8:5, 6. The psalmist says: “Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. 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.” Psalm 100:2, 3. If we had made ourselves, or could by our own aided efforts maintain our existence for a single moment, we would be under no obligation to any being; but since we are indebted to God not only for life, but for all that is necessary for its continuance, common gratitude requires us to render him all the service of which we are capable, for it is impossible for us to do as much for him as he is done for us. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.5}

Some may cavil at the expression, “Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created;” but such persons forget that what is for the pleasure of God, is for our highest good. They forget the possibilities of a life which he has given us; that is only preparatory to a life that shall never end, a life filled with joys of which it is impossible for the mind of man to conceive. It is the Father’s “good pleasure” to give us the kingdom that shall have no end. The service of which the lawyer spoke, and of which Christ approved, is summed up in one word, “godliness,” and of this Paul says that it ‘is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” 1 Timothy 4:8. It is only because men lose sight of what God is doing and propose to do for them, that they refuse to render him the service which is his due. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.6}

But love to God must be expressed in some tangible form. The love that consists merely of a dreamy sentimentality, and indefinable “good feeling” that is dissipated by a call to the performance of some duty, comes far short of the love that will win eternal life. True love consists in doing, not in simple feeling; and words and protestations of affection are of little value unless accompanied by corresponding deeds. Said the Saviour: “If ye love, keep my commandments.” John 14:15. And again: “Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” Luke 7:46. The apostle John also says: “And hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.” 1 John 2:3; also, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.” 1 John 5:3. When the lawyer quoted, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,” etc., the Saviour replied, “thou hast answered right; this *do* and thou shalt live.” There is something for us to *do* as well as to *feel*. A person can no more love God and fail to manifest it by deeds, than he can live without breathing. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.7}

But before we can manifest our love to God by deeds, we must know what would please him; and he has therefore specified the ways by which he would have men express their love for him, so that they can have no excuse for taking a course of which God disapproves, under the impression that they are pleasing him. Following are two of the ways in which we may honor God and show our love for him:- {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.8}

1. 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, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Isaiah 58:13, 14. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.9}

By these two texts we see that God requires us to devote to him a portion of both our time and our means. Of our time he requires one-seventh; of our means one-tenth. We shall proceed to show that these requirements are exactly similar; that the same reasons exist for each; that both are explicit and unconditional; and that the same degree of guilt attaches to the neglect of one as to the other. In comparing them we shall give a few leading facts in regard to the Sabbath, and then consider the tithe in its various relations. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.10}

**THE SABBATH**

1. It is based on the right of property. Our time, as well as ourselves, belongs to God; but he reserves only one-seventh for himself, leaving the rest to us. We may devote a part of the six days to him, and we ought to, but we are not allowed to appropriate any portion of the seventh to our own use. Of it God says that it “*is* the Sabbath of the Lord thy God;” he calls it “my holy day.” It is obvious, then, that if we should appropriate any of this time to our own use, we would be guilty of theft. When the people violated the Sabbath, God said that he was “profaned among them.” Ezekiel 22:26. That being said he was robbed of his honor, and treated with contempt. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.11}

2. The Sabbath existed prior to the Jewish dispensation. There is nothing in it of a ceremonial nature. God claimed it as his own in the beginning. See Genesis 2:2, 3. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.12}

3. Since the Sabbath existed before and during the Jewish dispensation, it cannot have been affected by the close of that dispensation, and hence must exist to-day in as full force as in the beginning. This is what we would naturally expect, and we have direct testimony to that effect. Our Saviour positively affirmed that not one jot or one tittle of the law should pass away. Matthew 5:17-19. He kept the Sabbath himself, Luke 4:16; John 15:10; and showed that his true disciples would be keeping it at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, nearly forty years after the Jewish dispensation closed. Matthew 24:20. We have already referred to Ezekiel 22:26; if it were necessary, we could easily show that this chapter has reference to the last days,-our own time. The Lord says: “Thou hast despised my holy things, and hast profaned my Sabbaths.” Verse 8; but the Sabbath could not be profane by wicked men, if it were not sacred; therefore it exists as sacred time in the last days. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.13}

**THE TITHE**

The above propositions hold good in regard to the tithe. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.14}

1. It also is based on the right of property. God created all things; they are his. The psalmist says: “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.” Psalm 24:1. Again the Lord speaks for his servant: “For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof.” Psalm 50:10-12. “The silver is mine, and the gold is mined, saith the Lord of hosts.” Haggai 2:8. We may gain some of this world’s goods for ourselves, but it is God who gives us power to get wealth. Deuteronomy 8:18; it is he that “giveth us *all things* richly to enjoy.” 1 Timothy 6:17. Without God, we could not exist a single moment; we are utterly dependent on him for “life, and breath, and all things.” {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 343.15}

But, as with time, so with property, God has reserved a portion for himself. That which he claims is one-tenth; the other nine-tenths he places entirely at our disposal. We may and should devote a portion of this to the Lord, and hold it all subject to his call; but we have nothing to do with any part of the tithe, except to pass it over to the Lord. In Leviticus 27:30 we read: “And *all the tithe* of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, *is the Lord’s;* it is holy unto the Lord.” Compare this verse with the fourth commandment: “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work.” The same words are used concerning the tithe that are used in regard to the Sabbath, and it must, therefore, the equally sacred with the Sabbath. “It is the Lord’s.” {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 344.1}

Since the tithe belongs wholly to God, it needs no argument to prove that if we use it, or any part of it, ourselves, we are guilty of robbery. This is a self-evident fact; but lest any should doubt it, we will quote the Lord’s own words: “Will a man rob God? Yet *ye have robbed me*. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? *In tithes* and in offerings.” Malachi 3:8. These are solemn words. Reader, do they apply to you? We shall come back to this point again. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 344.2}

2. The tithe is not peculiar to the Jewish dispensation. By reading God’s instruction to the Jews, on this subject, we learn some things that we would not otherwise know; but the tithe did not originate with the Jews. God said to the Jews: “The tithe of *is* the Lord’s,” not “shall be the Lord’s.” The tithe was the Lord’s before the Jews had an existence; the Lord simply refreshed the memory in regard to the fact. Turn to Genesis 14, and you will there find recorded a transaction that took place in the patriarchal age. The facts are these: Lot, Abraham’s nephew, lived in Sodom. Several kings made war against the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, and, having conquered them, took all their goods. Among the prisoners was Lot. When Abraham heard this, he pursued and attacked the victorious army, and recovered all the booty and captives that they had taken. As he was returning from the slaughter of the kings, he was met by Melchizedec, king of Salem, who brought forth bread and wine. Melchizedek was “the priest of the most high God,” and he blessed Abraham. To him Abraham gave tithes of all that he had gained. See Genesis 14:17-20; Hebrews 7:4. This was four hundred years before the covenant was made with the Jews, and nearly two hundred years before Judah, from whom the Jews received their name, was born. It is true that this is the first instance on record of the payment of tithe, but we are not told that the system of tithing was instituted here; and since the same conditions existed before this time that did afterwards, we must conclude that tithes were paid from the beginning. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 344.3}

3. Since the tithing system, like the Sabbath, existed before the Jewish dispensation, it also must exist still, unaffected by any changes that have been made. And here also we have the most positive testimony. In Matthew 23:23 we find the following language of Christ: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” He did not rebuke them for paying tithes, for he plainly says that they ought to do so; but he rebuked them for their hypocrisy. They were scrupulous about paying tithes, because that was something that could be seen; they could take care that everybody should know that they performed this duty, and thus they would gain a reputation for piety and devotion to God. But when it came to heart-service,-judgment, mercy, and faith,-they could not make so much of an outside show, and therefore they omitted it. It was for this hypocrisy that the woe was pronounced upon them. They could not atone for the neglect of one duty by the strict performance of another; for both were essential. E. J. W. {SITI August 2, 1883, p. 344.4}

**“The Honor Due to God.—No. 2” The Signs of the Times, 9, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

Last week we showed that besides honoring God in a general way with our means, we are called upon to honor him with the first-fruits of all our increase-to devote a tithe to God. We showed that it rests upon the same foundation as the Sabbath, and is as binding on men. The payment of tithes dates from long before the Jews were called as God’s peculiar people, and is one of those things which our Saviour said *ought* to be done. Perhaps we do not always grasp the full force of that word “ought.” Webster says it denotes “obligation to duty,” “moral obligation.” When, therefore, Christ said, “These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone,” it was the equivalent to a command. In effect he said, It is your duty not only to do judgment, mercy, etc., but also to pay tithes. Reader, do you profess to love the Lord? remember that he has said: “Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.1}

There is one more thought which we will present as showing that tithing is not a Jewish but a Christian doctrine. We turn to the case of Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings. Genesis 14. When Melchizedek, king of Salem, and “the priest of the Most High God,” came forth, Abraham gave him tithes of all that he had gained. In the seventh chapter of Hebrews, the apostle Paul, in the course of an argument based on this circumstance, to show the superiority of the Melchizedek priesthood, makes incidentally a strong argument on the obligation to pay tithes. We quote verses 4-10. {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.2}

“Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham; but he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him.” {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.3}

The argument for tithing, which is none the less forcible because it is brought in incidentally, to illustrate another point, is as follows: Under the Mosaic law the tribe of Levi, which was appointed for the service of the sanctuary, received tithes of the people. The tribe of Levi was, therefore, superior in rank to the other tribes. Abraham was the father of all the Jewish tribes, and consequently he was greater even than Levi. The Jews regarded Abraham with peculiar reverence. But Melchizedek was greater even than Abraham, as is shown by the fact that he received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him. Hebrews 7:4, 6, 7. Abraham had the promises of God, yet Melchizedek blessed him, and the act of blessing implies superiority of age for rank, as Paul says, “And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.” Abraham was himself a priest, empowered to offer sacrifices, as were all the patriarchs, yet he was inferior to Melchizedek, “the priest of the Most High God.” And from this Paul concludes that the priesthood of Melchizedek was far superior to that of Levi. {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.4}

But what has this to do with tithing? Just this: The Melchizedek priesthood received tithes. Christ is now, our priest, but as he is “made a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek,” Hebrews 6:20; 7:21; Psalm 110:4, we also are under the Melchizedek priesthood, as was Abraham, and therefore we are under obligation to pay tithes, as well as he was. For if it was necessary that those living under the Levitical order should take tithes, it is far more necessary that we should do so who live under the order of Melchizedek, since the Levitical priesthood itself, and the person of its head, paid tithes to Melchizedek. And this point is enforced by Paul when, evidently referring to Christ, he says: “And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them of whom it is witnessed that *he liveth*.” Hebrews 7:8. {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.5}

We have now given sufficient evidence, we think, to show that Christians are under obligation to pay tithes. Other points will be noticed, however, as we consider various questions that arise in regard to the tithe. The first thing that will claim our attention is the question as to {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.6}

**WHAT THE TITHE IS**

When Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek it is said that “he gave him tithes of all,” Genesis 14:20, the “all” referring to the spoil which he had captured from the kings. The remaining nine-tenths, less the amount that the young men that had accompanied him had eaten, Abraham turned over to the king of Salem. See verses 22-24. It should be particularly borne in mind that the tithe was taken from the whole amount, verse 20, without regard to what may have been taken out, and that the support of the servants while on the march came from the nine-tenths. Since Abraham generously refused to keep anything himself, the king of Sodom received nine-tenths of the spoil, less the portion which Abraham’s confederates took. {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.7}

Another point in connection with this circumstance should not be overlooked. The spoil that Abraham recovered originally belonged to the king of Sodom. Although it was now his, as the king of Sodom himself admitted, verse 21, Abraham refused to consider it so, and persisted in returning it to its original owner, lest he should seem to be under obligation to the king of Sodom. Here is the conversation:- {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.8}

“And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will *not take any thing that is thine*, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich; save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.” Genesis 14:21-24. {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.9}

Now mark, Abraham had sworn that he would not take any thing that belonged to the king of Sodom, except the portion for the young men, and yet he took out one-tenth to give to Melchizedek. What does this show? It shows that Abraham regarded the tenth as belonging solely to God, no matter in whose hands it might be. The king of Sodom had never paid any tithe on this property, and so Abraham, when it came into his possession, promptly gave the Lord his tithe. And in so doing he acted perfectly consistent with his determination to restore to the king of Sodom all his property; for the tithe had always been the Lord’s, and the king of Sodom had never had any just claim on it. {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.10}

We come down about one hundred and twenty-five years, and we find Jacob fleeing from his brother Esau, as recorded in Genesis 28. One night on his journey he slept and dreamed that he saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, upon which the angels of God were ascending and descending. It was here that God renewed the promise that he had made to Abraham and Isaac. When Jacob awoke, his heart was touched, and he felt solemn. The result is stated in the following words:- {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.11}

“And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God; and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and *of all that thou shalt give me,* I will surely give the tenth unto thee.” Genesis 28:20-22 {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.12}

It is worthy of note that Jacob’s past life had been very faulty. It was in consequence of his deceptions that he was now fleeing for his life. And now when he turns to the Lord, and resolves to serve him henceforth the first thing in his mind is that he will pay tithes. Surely Jacob must have had some instruction as to the importance of tithing, even though he may not have carried it out heretofore. Some persons seem inclined to sneer at this vow of Jacob’s, and say that he was trying to make a sharp bargain with the Lord. Such an idea can only come from a very superficial reading of this chapter. When Jacob said, “If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go,” etc., he was only repeating what the Lord had already promised, verse 15: “And behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee into this land. “This, with the two preceding verses, was a great promise on the Lord’s part; and Jacob, filled with gratitude, solemnly entered into a covenant with God, promising to serve him; and in the promised service the payment of tithes occupies a prominent place. {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 355.13}

But now to the main point, as to what the tithe is. Read it again verses 20-22, already quoted. Upon how much of the property that he might receive did Jacob promise to pay tithes answer: “Of *all* that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.” And now notice particularly that Jacob did not say that he would first pay his expenses-provide himself with food and clothing, and then give a tithe of the remainder to the Lord. Not at all. Read verse 20, and you will see that Jacob did not expect to amass great wealth in Syria; all he asked for was bread to eat and raiment to put on; and this was the “all,” of which he promised to give a tenth to Lord. According to the word, if he had earned only a bare living, one-tenth of it was to be returned to the Lord. {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 356.1}

From these two cases, then, we may learn that before we use any part of our income, even for the absolute necessaries of life, we must take out a tenth of the whole for the Lord. We have also direct testimony to this effect, in these words: “Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the *first-fruits of all thine increase*.” Proverbs 3:9. Many persons who believe it is their duty to pay a tithe, fail to give the Lord all that is his due. We may rob God by withholding a part of the tithe as well as by withholding the whole. When, through the prophet Malachi, God accuses the people of robbing him in tithes and in offerings, he says, “Bring ye *all* the tithes into the store-house.” Malachi 3:10. We cannot effect a compromise with God, and satisfy him with the performance of only a part of our duty. E. J. W. {SITI August 9, 1883, p. 356.2}

**“The Sabbath-School. Acts 13:50-52; 14” The Signs of the Times, 9, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Lesson for the Pacific Coast.-Aug. 26. Acts 13:50-52; 14.
NOTES ON THE LESSON.**

Paul perceived that the lame man at Lystra had faith to be healed. He had heard Paul preach the gospel-forgiveness of sins through Christ-and he believed. In this case, doubtless, as in that of the palsied man whom Christ healed (Matthew 9:2-8), forgiveness of sins preceded the miracle; the healing of the soul was first the healing of the body second. As the man heard of the great love of Christ for suffering humanity, and his power and willingness to forgive sins, how naturally the question would arise in his mind, “Why may I not as well be healed of my lameness as of my sins?” As Christ said, “Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk?” Divine power is required for both, and it is no more wonderful that the sick should be healed than that sins should be forgiven. Most religious teachers at the present time scoff at the idea that in this age of the world God miraculously healed diseases in answer to prayer; yet they profess to believe in the forgiveness of sins. There is a close relation between the two acts. They go together in the promise in James 5:14, 15; also in Psalm 103:3. Why should not Christians depend on God for the healing of the body as well of the soul? “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?” Romans 8:32. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.1}

At Lystra the Lord wrought a notable miracle through Paul; a man was healed who had been a crippled from his birth. The people, in their astonishment, cried out that they were gods, and the priest of Jupiter, with the people, was about to offer sacrifices to them. But Paul earnestly spoke against their idolatry. Verses 18, 19, convey a striking lesson:- {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.2}

“And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.” {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.3}

“And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.” {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.4}

The man was healed; the miracle remained among them. Yet the same people who were scarce restrained from offering sacrifices to them as gods, with a little persuasion stoned Paul, and supposing he was dead, drew him out of the city and left him as they would a dead dog. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.5}

This is a most remarkable illustration of the fickleness of man and of the utter worthlessness of popular applause. A minister of God should never be elated when the multitude praised him. Especially if the hearts of the people are not stirred by the truth and the Spirit of God, and if the current of popular favor is setting in his direction for the time he should look with great distrust upon words spoken in his praise. Satan would not at all object to having the priests of Jupiter or Mammon do homage to the servants of God, if he could persuade those servants to accept the worship; for he well knows if they do accept it he has destroyed their influence for good. “Beware of the flatterers.” Christian workers have no worse enemies. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.6}

Neither should the minister be discouraged if the people turn against him. It is no evidence that God is not with him. The well-worn saying: “The voice of the people is the voice of God,” is a miserable falsehood, and will lure to ruin all those who trust in it. The people of Lystra had not as good reason to stone Paul as they had to do him reverence; but while he could dissuade them from worshiping him, he could not prevent their stoning him. So it always was, and so it is. A little playing upon the evil passions of men will quickly cause them to forget the best deeds and the greatest benefits. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.7}

We have no doubt that if Paul had permitted them to worship him, they would not have been so easily persuaded to stone him; for *man does not so readily turn against his own idols*. Forgetting this, many of a minister has gone to destruction because he measured his success in his work by the applause he received. It was not without an evident reason that the Saviour said: “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the false prophets.” {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.8}

“Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.” Verse 16. Of course “all nations” does not here include the Jews, since God had given them his law so that they might not walk in their own ways. The reason why the other nations were allowed to do so is stated by Paul in the first chapter of Romans: “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.” God does not force himself upon any. If they do not wish to remember and acknowledge him, he withdraws from them, and lets them have their own way. The depraved condition of the Lystrans, and the heathen of other nations, shows the level to which men soon sink when they cast off from God. It may be said that infidels and atheists are often men of good morals. The answer to that is that they have the good fortune to live in a land where the public opinion is to a certain extent against immorality. Whatever of good there may be in an atheist is due solely to his surroundings or to the force of early instructions, for there can be no principle to hold him. Let those that fear God be removed from a country, leaving only atheists to and have it, having no communication with any who fear God, and the country would soon be worse than the vilest heathen country on earth. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.9}

Although God one time suffered the nations to walk in their own ways, they were not without excuse. “He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.” Paul uses the same argument in Romans 1:19-21. Since the creation of the world, the eternal power and godhead of the Creator clearly seen through the things that he has made, so that all unbelievers are without excuse, even though they have not his revealed word. Paul did not preach Christ to these men of Lystra, on this occasion; that would have been beyond their comprehension. They must have a knowledge of the true, and see that they had sinned against him, before they could receive Christ, the remedy for sin. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.10}

Many professed teachers of the gospel do not profit by Paul’s example. They tell sinners to come to Christ, but do not tell them why they should come; or, if they tell them to come and find pardon for sin, they do not tell them what sin is, nor of what sins they must repent. We say that Paul did not preach Christ, but he was working toward it as fast as possible. He told the people that they were sinners; and not in any general way, but directly. He pointed out the special sin of which they were guilty. Had they acknowledged that much, he would have proceeded to point them to Christ. The only true order is, first the law and the gospel of good news-the relief from sin. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.11}

The testimony of Paul and Barnabas to the brethren was that “we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” But we are told that the world is constantly growing better, and that soon the whole world will accept the gospel. If this be so, then those words of Paul do not apply now as they did when spoken, and there will come a time when they will not apply at all. In another place, however, Paul said that “*all* that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;” and by a further examination of the chapter in which these words occur, we find that they apply “in the last days;” and further, the reason why the godly will suffer persecution is that “men shall be lovers of their own selves,” corrupt in mind, and “reprobate concerning the faith.” This state of things will not improve this time passes, but “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” It must be, then, that Paul’s words to the brethren apply to all, and to none so much as to those who live in the last days. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.12}

Suppose that the time should come when we would not be obliged to enter the kingdom through tribulation. Then we should have the wonderful spectacle of the disciple being above his master, and the servant greater than his lord. Who is there that aspires to such a position? Who is there that would rejoice to hear the Master say, “This one endured nothing for me”? Said Christ, “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers unto the false prophets.” There are religious teachers who commend themselves to the world, and are applauded; but we never hear them boldly condemning all sorts of sin. They speak against sin in a general way, but they keep silent concerning sins that are popular. Such are not to be envied. The Christian may and should be like Daniel, so that no fault can be found in him except it be concerning the law of his God; but when he is universally popular, he should tremble for himself. Christ will purify to himself a “peculiar people,” and peculiar people are not usually held in high repute. Their peculiarity consists not in grotesqueness, but in goodness. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.13}

It does not necessarily follow from Paul’s words in Acts 14:22 that all who strive to enter the kingdom will suffer outward persecution; that they will all be stoned, or burned at the stake, or cast into prison, or even brought before the council. Tribulation includes more than this. The word is derived from the Latin, a threshing-sledge. This was “a wooden platform studded underneath with pieces of flint, or with iron teeth.” It was dragged over the grain to cut up the straw, separating the chaff from the grain. All Christians have to undergo this process. Burdens that are very unpleasant have to be borne; duties the most distasteful have to be performed. We may take ourselves off from the threshing-floor of Christ, but the chaff of evil dispositions and inherited faults will remain upon us, effectually shutting us out of the heavenly garner. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.14}

When the clumsy instrument had finished its work, a strong wind was directed against the mass, and all the chaff was blown away; the sound, heavy kernels of grain alone remained. But if wheat was still encased in its covering, the chaff became as it were a sail, by which it was borne away to destruction. So it will be with us, if we do not submit to God’s cleansing process, however hard it may be at the time. E. J. W. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 365.15}

**“The Honor Due to God. No. 3” The Signs of the Times, 9, 31.**

E. J. Waggoner

We notice briefly, in passing, the object of the tithe, and to whom it should be paid. From the statement in Leviticus 27:30, “the tithe is the Lord’s,” we would naturally gather that it is to be used in his service; and if used in his service it must, of course, be given to his servants. From the instances of its use their recorded in the Bible, it seems to have been designed wholly for the support of the ministry. Abraham paid his tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High God. Under the Levitical law the tithe went for the support of the tribe of Levi, who were engaged in work pertaining to the sanctuary. They, in turn, were to devote a tenth of what they received in tithes, to the support of the priests. See Numbers 18:20-26. “All the tenth to Israel” is said to have been given to the tribe of Levi for an inheritance. The remaining nine-tenths was again tithed for charitable purposes. Numbers 14:22-26; Deuteronomy 26:12-14. This is additional evidence that the tithe was designed solely for the support of the ministry. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 357.1}

Whether or not a portion of the tithe might be appropriated to any other use than the support of the ministry, it is certain that the individual never disposed of his own tithe, further than to bring into the treasury. When Nehemiah was restoring the worship of God, he cleansed the chambers of the temple, and brought in the holy vessels. Then he says:- {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 357.2}

“And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them; for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, or fled everyone to his field. Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place. Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries [margin, storehouses]. And I made treasurers over the treasuries.... and their office was to distribute unto their brethren.” Nehemiah 13:10-13. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 357.3}

That the tithe is to be brought to one place, and distributed from thence, is proved by Malachi 3:10: “Bring ye all the tithes into the *storehouse*, that there may be meat in mine house.” Every man is under solemn obligation to pay tithes, but no individual has any right to dispose of it according to is own notions. “It is the Lord’s.” {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 357.4}

And right here we wish to emphasize the fact that, strictly speaking, we cannot “give” a tithe. We cannot give what does not belong to us, and the tithe is the Lord’s. Earthly Governments, in consideration of the protection they afford to the lives and property of their citizens, collect taxes for the support of their officers; but men do not speak of “giving” their taxes, nor do they usually take credit to themselves for liberality, when they have paid them. In God’s government the same plan exists. In return for the protection and many blessings that God bestows upon his creatures, he demands a tithe of all their increase, which may be considered as the taxes of his Government. But let it be distinctly understood that the church levies no taxes; the tax is levied by God himself, nor does he *compel* men to pay. Each one must decide for himself whether or not he will thus honor God. There is no compulsion; but the punishment for dishonoring God in this regard, though delayed, is none the less sure. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 357.5}

It is evident from what we have just said, that a man can by no means be called liberal merely because he pays his tithe, no matter how great it may be. The wise man says, “The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.” Proverbs 11:25. Now while it is true that blessings will follow the strict payment of the tithe, it is clear that that is not what is meant here, for paying tithes is not liberality in any sense of the word. This brings us to a brief consideration of {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 357.6}

**OFFERINGS**

In addition to their tithes, the Israelites spent much in offerings. There were special offerings, such as sin-offerings, peace-offerings, and thank-offerings. The name of each of these is sufficiently descriptive. For the law in regard to them, see Leviticus 4; 5; 7. The point to be remembered is that these sacrifices cost something, the cost of varying with the wealth or position of the one making the offering. Those ancient Jews had no idea that a man could profess to be a religious man for a score of years, and yet contribute nothing to the cause. And they really seemed to think that there was something disreputable in dead-head worship, even when they could worship for nothing as well as not. When there was a plague upon Israel on account of David’s sin in numbering the people, the prophet directed the king to “rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.” Accordingly David went up, and was met by Araunah, to whom he told his errand. “And Araunah said unto David, Let my Lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, here be oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood. All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The Lord thy God accept thee.” 2 Samuel 24:22, 23. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 357.7}

Imagine now that you hear David say, How providential! Here is everything ready; I could worship God, and it will cost me a farthing. But no; David had a better idea of what true worship is. “And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely by it of thee at a price.” That, you say, was very natural; the king did not want to be under obligation to anybody. But it was not because he was averse to receiving a gift that he refused Araunah’s offer; there was a principle involved. Here is his reason: “Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing.” And the result was that “David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.” {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 357.8}

We hear much about the superior privileges of the Christian dispensation; of the increased light that we enjoy. Very true; but do we realize the responsibility that these rich blessings bring? If the ancients had such exalted ideas of the sacredness and importance of the worship of God, what ought we to do? Do we appreciate the blessings that God is showering upon us without measure? Gratitude will show itself in a tangible form as well now as it would three thousand years ago. It is true that “salvation is free,” but is it any freer now that it was then? Did the patriarchs and prophets buy their salvation with their tithes and offerings? Did not they obtain pardon for sin through Christ alone, as well as we? Most certainly. All that they could do or give would not purchase the pardon of a single sin, and this they knew; but they had a deep sense of the amazing love of God in holding out to them a free pardon through Christ, and their hearts overflowed with gratitude. Salvation is indeed free, but it has cost a price beyond the comprehension even of angels, and when men begin to realize its value, they will not be anxious to avoid making sacrifices, but, with David, their cry will be, “What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.” E. J. W. {SITI August 16, 1883, p. 357.9}

**“The Honor Due to God. No. 4” The Signs of the Times, 9, 32.**

E. J. Waggoner

**TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

We have seen that the tithe is to be used solely for the purpose of supporting the ministry; but money is required for various other purposes in the cause of God, besides this. Therefore we find in the Bible that offerings were made for special purposes. In the 25th of Exodus we have an instance. The people needed a sanctuary, where they could worship God. Did they vote to reserve a portion of the whole of their tithe for this purpose? No; the Lord directed them as follows: “Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering; of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.” “And let them make be a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.” Exodus 25:2, 8. The intervening verses tell of what the offerings were to consist. {SITI August 23, 1883, p. 379.1}

Remember that these offerings were all to be given willingly, with the heart. The Lord takes no pleasure in service grudgingly performed. Paul says, “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:7. In the case under consideration we have an example of the results of such giving; for that the children of Israel did give cheerfully and willingly is stated in Exodus 35:20-29. And here is the result:- {SITI August 23, 1883, p. 379.2}

“And all the wise men, that wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made; and they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.” Exodus 36:4-7. {SITI August 23, 1883, p. 379.3}

What a contrast this presents to modern giving! Who ever heard of a similar instance among any other people? Here there was nothing like a fair, or an oyster supper, or a strawberry festival, by which people now coax unwilling dimes from the pockets of worldlings and professors alike, for the benefit of the church; we do not read that Moses went around to remind the people of their duty, and urge them to help the good work along; but “the children of Israel brought a willing offering.” We are forced to the conclusion that when people need urging even to make a pledge to help on in the cause, and then need continual reminders of their obligation, there must be a great lack of that cheerful readiness to give that is so pleasing to God. {SITI August 23, 1883, p. 379.4}

Now we will compare with this an incident in connection with the tithe. When Hezekiah came to the throne of Israel, he found things in a very bad condition. The temple of the Lord was forsaken, and the people were worshiping idols. In 2 Chronicles, chapters 29 to 31, we have an account of the restoration of the true religion by Hezekiah. He revived the ancient worship, and brought the priests and Levites back to their service in the temple. But of course the treasury was empty, for while the people were worshiping idols, they did not pay their tithe. But Hezekiah gave commandment to set aside the portion of the Levites, and the people came promptly forward and did their duty. The record says: “And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly.” 2 Chronicles 31:5. {SITI August 23, 1883, p. 379.5}

For four months the people continued to bring in their tithe, laying them in heaps, and then Hezekiah and the princes came to see what had been done. “Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the Lord hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store.” Verses 9, 10. {SITI August 23, 1883, p. 379.6}

Now what did the people do? Did they stop bringing in the tithes, because there was enough on hand? We read further, “Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare chambers in the house of the Lord; and they prepared them, and brought in the offerings and the tithes and the dedicated things faithfully.” Verses 11, 12. That is, instead of stopping, they made additional room in which to place the tithes, and continued bringing them in. This is just what we should expect from those who realize the sacredness of the tithe. “The tithe is the Lord’s,” and must be restored to him, whether it is little or much. {SITI August 23, 1883, p. 379.7}

We have heard of men who would stop paying their tithe because it seemed to them that there was enough money in the treasury to supply all present wants. We have known others to stop paying because they have not received as much ministerial labor in their churches they thought was their due. Others refuse to pay because some one has wronged them; and there is no limit to the excuses that may be made to evade the payment of the Lord’s portion, when the individual does not want to pay. But no excuse will avail. Suppose that the people have done their duty, as the Israelites did, and have been blessed in consequence, as they were. According to the promise (Proverbs 3:9, 10) the Lord has given them abundance, because they have honored him. Now shall they say, “We have done enough; the Lord has received all he needs”? That would not only be foolish, but positively wicked. Yet that is just what some people do. Perhaps the Lord has designed a much greater work than has been done, and is preparing in this way the means with which to carry it forward; but men, by withholding his due, say, there is enough being done; and while they profess to want to see the cause advance, and may even pray for its prosperity, they stand in the way of its advancement. {SITI August 23, 1883, p. 379.8}

We would not deal in this way with a neighbor. If we owed them a man a sum of money, we would not think of refusing to pay it to him, on the ground that he was already well provided for. And if we should do so, our creditor would soon take steps to compel us to give him his due, and we would be made to understand that the fact that he was rich would not absolve us from a just obligation. Why will men deal more honestly with their fellow-men than with their Maker? Is it because God is seemingly indifferent, and does not at once present his claim? And in that case, are we to judge that these same ones would defraud their neighbors, if they could do so without fear of prosecution? Think of it in this light; but always remember that God keeps an account, and, although it may be after a long time, he will surely reckon with his servants. {SITI August 23, 1883, p. 379.9}

And yet it should not be for this reason alone that we give the Lord his due. Remember the privileges that we enjoy, far exceeding those of the ancient Jews, whose liberality has never been exceeded by any people. Christ said to Simon, that “to whom little is given, the same loveth little;” and by the same rule, he to whom much is given, will love much, unless he fails entirely to realize what has been done for him. When we realize the infinite price that has been paid for our redemption, we shall be able to sing from the heart the words. {SITI August 23, 1883, p. 379.10}

*“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a tribute far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all.” E. J. W. {SITI August 23, 1883, p. 379.11}*

**“The Sabbath-School. Acts 15:1-32” The Signs of the Times, 9, 33.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Lesson for Pacific Coast.-Sept. 8. Acts 15:1-32.
NOTES ON THE LESSON.**

It is doubtful if there is any chapter in the Bible that has been the subject of more controversy, among a certain class, than the 15th chapter of Acts. By many it is considered as proving conclusively that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is not binding on Christians. Some may ask in surprise what warrant this chapter gives for such a conclusion, since the subject of the Sabbath is not discussed, and is only mentioned incidentally. The reply is that four things were enjoined upon the new converts as “necessary,” verse 28, and the Sabbath not being one of them, it is therefore not to be observed. We have stated the case fairly, that all may judge of its soundness when contrasted with the truth on the matter. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 389.1}

And first, we ask, Who are they that bring this objection against the seventh-day Sabbath? Are they infidels, or those who do not believe that men should observe any day as a rest-day? Not as a rule. They are usually those who keep the first day of the week, a large part of whom claim Scripture authority for such a practice. Why, then, can they not see that if the seventh-day Sabbath is not binding, because of the silence of this council in regard to it, the Sunday is in an equally bad light, for it is not hinted at as one of those “necessary things”? We have never been able to explain this inconsistency except on the ground that Sunday advocates seem to realize that consistency is incompatible with an active warfare against the Sabbath of the Lord. We conclude, therefore, that people do not really believe that this chapter affords any evidence against Sabbath keeping. “Anything to beat,” the “Saturday-Sabbath,” is the idea; for having once put that out of sight, habit, early training, and public opinion, will lead people naturally enough to keep Sunday, in form, at least. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 389.2}

Another point may be noticed here, which will show the short-sightedness of those who urge the decision of this council as a reason for not keeping the Lord’s Sabbath. The apostolic letter to the converts from among the Gentiles closes thus: “For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.” It will be seen that no mention is here made of idolatry, of profanity, of disobedience to parents, of murder, nor of theft. Must we therefore conclude that these converts were granted license to commit all these sins? Is this the liberty of the gospel, to which they were admitted? However much anyone despises the law of God, he cannot admit for a moment that the apostles would sanction the commission of any of the sins above enumerated. Then may we not also conclude that they would not sanction the violation of any part of the law, since it all is of equal authority? See Matthew 5:17-20; James 2:8-12. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 389.3}

Our readers have doubtless by this time concluded that the law of God-the ten commandments-could not have been the subject of discussion; and that is exactly the truth. From verses 1 and 5 we learn that certain issues troubled the churches that had been raised up among the Gentiles, teaching the members that they must be circumcised and keep “the law of Moses,” if they would be saved. It was to settle this matter that this council was called. Both Scott and Barnes plainly state that the “Jewish ceremonies,’ for the “ceremonial law” was the subject of controversy. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 389.4}

The speech of Peter proves that the perpetuity of the moral law was not called in question. He said that God “put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.” Purifying their hearts from what? From sin, of course. And what is sin? “Sin is the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:4. But from what sins are they purified by this faith? Paul answers, in Romans 3:23-25: “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.” Christ’s blood purifies from past sins, but does not grant indulgences for future sin. Peter, whose speech we are considering, spoke in another place on this wise: “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.” 1 Peter 1:22. The law of God is the truth, Psalm 119:114; John 17:17. We learn, then, that having been purged from past sins by the blood of Christ, we are, by the aid of the Spirit, to keep ourselves pure for the future by obeying the law of God. This is the testimony of those apostles who took part in this famous council. And further, the very fact that we are purified by faith, proves the perpetuity of the law of God; as Paul says, “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we established the law.” Romans 3:31. That is, the fact that we can get rid of sin in no other way but by the death of Christ, shows that the claims of the law of God cannot be updated in the least; for if it were possible to remit the claims of that law, that act would free mankind from sin, and make it unnecessary for Christ to die. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 389.5}

“Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?” Verse 10. What was this yoke? The ceremonial law. The testimony of learned men has much weight with some, so we quote two comments on this verse:- {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 389.6}

“This did not relate merely to circumcision, but to the whole ceremonial law; which, though proper and useful for the time, required so many distinctions, burdensome purifications, expensive sacrifices, long journeys, and other things of a similar nature, that it was a very uneasy yoke, in every age, even to the inhabitants of the promised land, and still more to those Jews who had resided in other countries.”-*Scott*. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 389.7}

“This does not refer to the moral law; that was of eternal obligation; but to the ritual law, which, through the multitude of its sacrifices, ordinances, etc., was exceedingly burdensome to the Jewish people.”-*Clarke*. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 389.8}

But we have the testimony of those apostles who took part in this discussion, that by this “yoke” they did not mean the moral law. Thus John says, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3. James says, “But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” James 1:25. See also chap. 2:8-12. A “law of liberty” is very different from a yoke of bondage. And Paul says, “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.” Romans 7:12, 22. These testimonies should be sufficient to settle this matter. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 389.9}

It is asked “Why was a positive sin, the violation of the seventh commandment, included among the prohibited things, and no other sin?” We reply that none of the things prohibited pertained to the ceremonial law. They were all “necessary things,” but the ceremonial law was not necessary. The partaking of meats offered to idols, if not in itself an evil, had the appearance of evil, which is always to be avoided. It would be a cause of stumbling to many, and more than all would, on account of the associations, be a stepping-stone to idolatry. The eating of blood was forbidden to Noah, for both physical and moral reasons, and is as much wrong now as it ever was. Dr. Clarke enters into an extended argument to prove this point, but we have not the space. The same argument would exclude things strangled. As to fornication, so far was it from being accounted wrong by the Gentiles that it formed a part of their heathen worship, and was considered a virtue rather than a crime. So common was it that the converts from the Gentiles would not be apt to think of it as a violation of the law of God; hence they needed special warning on this point. Abstinence from these things which were so common among the Gentiles would separate them in a great measure from their old associations, and prevent their lapsing into idolatry. The law of God, in general, they would keep as a matter of course, as a necessary part of their Christian profession. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 389.10}

“For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day.” Verse 21. This mention of the Sabbath by James, although incidental, is conclusive as showing which day was regarded by him as the true Sabbath. The day on which the Jews read the law in the synagogues is spoken of as the Sabbath. That day, as every one admits, was what is now called Saturday. But James further says that the law was read *every* Sabbath-day; and since the Jews had only one regular day-the seventh day-for worship and the reading of the law, it necessarily follows that James knew of no other Sabbath than the seventh-day of the week. And this statement, let it be remembered, was made in a Christian assembly, composed of apostles and elders, twenty years after the ascension of Christ. If the first day of the week is the Sabbath of the Christian dispensation, is it not strange that none of this assembly had learned of it during those twenty years? E. J. W. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 389.11}

**“The Honor Due to God. No. 5” The Signs of the Times, 9, 33.**

E. J. Waggoner

The question sometimes arises, “Who should pay tithes and make offerings?” As to the first part, the answer is simple: Every one should pay tithe who has any tithe to pay. If a person’s income is small, of course his tithe will be correspondingly small; and should there be a person with absolutely no income, dependent entirely upon charity for subsistence, of course he would have no tithe to pay. But that would not be the case with any one having a reasonable degree of health. We are not speaking now of professed Christians merely; every man is under obligation to pay tithe, whether he makes a profession of religion or not. “The tithe is the Lord’s,” and should invariably be returned to him, no matter in whose hands it may be found. This distinction may be made, however: Worldlings have never confessed that their obligations to God, nor agreed to honor him in the matter of tithes, or otherwise; but Christians profess to honor God, which includes the payment of tithes, and therefore while worldlings are guilty of robbery (Malachi 3:8), Christians who fail to meet their obligations, add to robbery the additional crime of falsehood. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 391.1}

The matter of offerings is of course left largely to the individual. For some, an offering of a few cents would involve more sacrifice than the gift of a thousand dollars would for another. Should the man with ample wealth give a hundred dollars without having to make any sacrifice, it would not be so acceptable in the sight of Heaven as would a few dimes from one who had to deprive himself of some necessity in consequence of his gift. “For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.” 2 Corinthians 8:12. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 391.2}

But while each individual must be his own judgment as to how much he will give, the obligation to make offerings rests upon all; for the Lord, through the prophet Malachi, accuses his people of robbing him in the matter of offerings; but the withholding of offerings could not be called robbery if the Lord had no claim on us beyond our tithe. There can be no exceptions to the general rule that all should make offerings, for it would seem to be impossible to find a person in more reduced circumstances than was the poor widow mentioned in Mark 12:42. She had only two mites (less than half a cent) in the world, yet she gave, not one-tenth merely, but the whole of it; and we do not read that the Lord condemned her in the least for this act. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 391.3}

A common idea is that if a man gives freely he will impoverish himself. The trouble is that men leave God out of their calculations. Dr. Clarke, in his comment on Acts 15:10, includes the payment of tithes, etc., in the ceremonial law-the “yoke of bondage”-and artlessly says: “Had not God, by an especial Providence, rendered both their fields and their flocks very fruitful, they could not have borne so painfully a ritual.” Well, that is just what the Lord promises to do for those who render to him his due. “Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.” Proverbs 3:9, 10. Again he says:- {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 391.4}

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.” Malachi 3:10, 11. It is “the Lord of hosts” that makes this promise; certainly he has the power to fulfill it; and who dare say that he will not keep his word? {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 391.5}

The wise man said, “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.” Proverbs 11:24. There can be no doubt but that many who bewail their (in most cases imaginary) inability to assist in the cause of God, owe their pecuniary embarrassment to the fact that they are not willing to make this sacrifice and help with what they have. A notable instance of this is described in the Bible. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 391.6}

We learn from the book of Ezra that the people who at the command of Cyrus, went up from Babylon to Jerusalem to build the temple, became discouraged on account of the opposition brought to bear against them, and abandoned the work for several years. Added to this opposition was a severe drought, which cut off their crops, depriving them of even the necessaries of life. Of course under the circumstances they could not be expected to give time and means for the building of the temple, and they very naturally concluded that the time had not come for the Lord’s house to be built. Haggai 1:2; “for,” they doubtless reasoned, “if the Lord wanted his house built now, he would give us the means with which to do it.” {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 391.7}

“Then came the word of the ord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.” Haggai 1:3-6. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 391.8}

Then the Lord gives the cause of this terrible want: “Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land,” etc. Verses 9-11. Read also chapter 2:11-19. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 391.9}

In this instance the people thought that the hard times was a sufficient reason for not building the temple, when the hard times came solely because they had not gone ahead with the work of building. The Lord now promised them that from this time he would bless them, if they would take hold of the work; and to assure them of his ability to give and to withhold prosperity, and also of his right to receive homage, he said, “The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.” {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 391.10}

The apostle Paul said in regard to the subject of giving, “But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap all so sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall read also bountifully.” 2 Corinthians 9:6. There are many who have proved the truth of this, and who know that it pays to take God into all their calculations, and in all their ways to acknowledge him; for, as Paul continues, “God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” E. J. W. {SITI August 30, 1883, p. 391.11}