**“The Sabbath-School. Acts, Chapter 20:24-27:14” The Signs of the Times, 10, 22.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST.-JUNE 15.  
ACTS, CHAPTER 20:24-27:14**

Our last lesson closed with Paul’s speech before Agrippa. The last two verses of this defense (Acts 26:22, 23), are worthy of more extended notice than the limited space last week allowed. We quote: “Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both too small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show a light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.” {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 342.1}

These verses alone are sufficient to refute the somewhat prevalent idea that the doctrine of immortality through Christ was unknown to the Old Testament writers. The apostles were not foolish enough to make assertions without any authority to back them up. Paul himself had written, “For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 4:5. But their only means of proving Jesus to be the Messiah, were the prophecies. They could testify that one Jesus of Nazareth had been crucified and raised from the dead, but what of it? This would have availed nothing, had they not been able to prove from the Old Testament, the only Scripture then in existence, that these very things were predicted to occur at a definite time, and for a special purpose. Both Moses and the prophets declared, not only that Christ should suffer, but also the reason for his suffering. Even before Moses, we learn that the gospel had been preached to Abraham. Galatians 3:8. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 342.2}

Verse 23 has been the source of much perplexity and controversy. It is certain that many were raised from the dead before Christ was-Lazarus, the son of the widow of Nain, and others-even hundreds of years before he came to earth. Many, to avoid this seeming contradiction of facts, have concluded that the text means that Christ was the first who should rise to immortality. But the text does not say so, and we have no means of proving that such is the case. The Revised Version follows the original more closely in this instance than does the King James. It reads thus: “How that the Christ must suffer, and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles.” Not that Christ should be the first absolutely to rise from the dead, but to proclaim through that resurrection light to the world. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 342.3}

There were many that were raised prior to the time of Christ, but their resurrection gave no pledge that another would be raised. And they themselves were raised only by virtue of the promise that Christ would pass through the gates of death and come forth a triumphant conqueror, bearing the keys of death and the grave. This promise was made before any man had fallen under the power of death; he was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. But God “calleth those things which be not as though they were.” A thing promised by him is just as sure as though already fulfilled. With this thought in mind we may even consider that Christ was actually the first to rise from the dead, for his resurrection was as well assured as was his death; and he was “slain from the foundation of the world.” And since this promise was the pledge of immortality, it is a matter of no more wonder that man should be raised to immortality before the time of Christ than that they should be raised from the dead at all. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 342.4}

We do not say that all who were raised were made immortal (of this we are not informed), but there is certainly nothing in this text to forbid the idea that some were made immortal. We know that some, as Enoch and Elijah, went to Heaven without seeing death-were made immortal-but this was only by virtue of the same promise, for immortality is brought to light only through the gospel. 2 Timothy 1:10. Their translation was possible only because the resurrection of Jesus was an assured fact (by promise), and the same power that made them immortal through translation, could make others immortal through a resurrection. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 342.5}

When Paul touched upon the resurrection from the dead, Festus cried out, “Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.” This preaching was to him foolishness. There was nothing in philosophy that could explain the fact of a resurrection. He had doubtless seen Paul bending over his rusty parchment copy of the Old Testament, and he concluded that intense application had turned his brain. But Paul courteously replied, “I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth in soberness.” Well might he say this, for they were the words of the Bible. Philosophy is just as powerless as ever to explain the doctrine of the resurrection; its professed devotees may scoff at the simple faith of the unlearned Christian; but it is nevertheless true that the words of truth and reason are to be found, above all other places, in the word of God. The doctrine of the resurrection is a most reasonable one, not because it can be grasped by human reason, but because it is founded upon the unchanging word of the eternal God. It is consistent with the highest reason to believe what he says, whether we understand it or not. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 342.6}

Paul could appeal to Agrippa as he could not to Festus. “Believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.” Since he understood and believed the prophets, and Paul had shown their accurate fulfillment in the person and work of Christ, his declaration, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian,” was almost a necessary consequence. Had it not been for his wicked heart, the source of unbelief, he could have omitted the “almost.” We do not believe, with some, that these words of Agrippa were uttered in a sneering manner, but that they were forced from him, even against his will, by the power of the apostle’s reasoning. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 342.7}

The reply of Paul showed him to be at once a perfect gentleman and a perfect Christian. “I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am except these bonds.” If Paul had passed his life among courtiers, he could not have framed a more delicate and forcible rejoinder. And this shows that communion with God and his word may be depended upon to give men a true polish, not excelled by the most skilled worldly diplomat. But how many professed Christians are there who would dare make the reply that Paul made? {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 342.8}

How many are living so near to God, leading such holy lives, as to be able to say to all around them “I would to God that you were altogether such as I am”? I fear that the most of us would hesitate. And yet Paul had attained no height of godliness that is not possible to all. It is not only the privilege but the duty of all to be like Christ, so that when he sits as a refiner and purifier of silver, he may rejoice to see his own image reflected in us, that when he shall appear we may be able to see him as he is. E. J. W. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 342.9}

**“Romans 13:1-10” The Signs of the Times, 10, 22.**

E. J. Waggoner

**NOTES ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSON.  
JUNE 22.-Romans 13:1-10.**

Verse 1: “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God; the powers that be far ordained of God.” By the “higher powers” is meant those who are in authority in the earth. Submission to authority is one of the chief requisites; it lies at the foundation of all goodness. It is eveywhere taught in the Bible. The child that is disobedient to his parents, or the man who despises the authority of the Government, cannot be submissive to the will of God. To teach children perfect submission to authority when they are young, is to prepare them to be good citizens of the State, and humble followers of God. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 343.1}

“The powers that be are ordained of God.” That is, God has appointed that there should be governments in the earth. Paul has reference more to authority in the abstract than to individual rulers. God has ordered that there should be government; but it does not follow that the men in authority are always men that he would approve. We read that in the redeemed estate there will be nations and kings, who will bring their glory and honor into the New Jerusalem. Revelation 21. We may learn, therefore, that God has no sympathy with anarchy and confusion. Those who are trying to overthrow existing forms of government are not doing work which God approves; a Christian cannot engage in such a work. And right here it is worth while to notice that socialists, communists, and the nihilists are almost invariably atheists, as much opposed to the government of God as they are to earthly powers. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 343.2}

“Whosoever therefore resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God.” These words of Paul are greatly misapprehended by many. They do not teach that we are to obey every human ordinance. No Christian is justified in *resisting* authority, and yet it may be absolutely necessary for him to disobey the commands of rulers. For instance: The apostles were often commanded by those highest in authority not to preach in the name of Jesus, but they paid no attention to this command, saying, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” Here was a case where the laws of men work in opposition to those of God. Such laws they were warranted in disobeying, but we will see that they did not resist authority. They said nothing against the rulers, and did not try to create insurrection among the people; they submitted to authority and took their punishment without a word of complaint. When the hearts of the people were with the apostles, in consequence of the wonderful miracles thay had performed, they might easily have organized a force that would have compelled the rulers to revoke their unjust decrees, or even to flee from office. In the course which they did pursue, all Christians have an example to follow. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 343.3}

In the ninth and tenth verses we find a statement of our duties as citizens, and of the rights of rulers. The last five commandments are quoted as comprising the whole of the law, with the statement that “if there be any other commandment it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” To do this, Paul says, is to fulfill the law. Now he has not said anything about idolatry, image-worship, profane swearing, or Sabbath-breaking. Why not? Was it because he regarded these things as of no consequence? No; but because he was writing about our duty as citizens and not concerning our special duty to God. That this is not all the law, we know from our Saviour’s words. He places, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,” first, as being greater than the one which Paul quotes, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Paul does not repudiate that first and great commandment, as is abundantly shown in his writings elsewhere; but he only quotes so much of the law as it is applicable to the case in hand. And there is a thought here for those who would have special legislation by earthly rulers on matters of religion. If all our duty as citizens of the State is comprehended in this thing, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” then it surely follows that all the power of the rulers of the State are comprised in seeing that the people obey that law. To this extent they are God’s ministers (servants). He intrusts to them the enforcing of laws, the violation of which would work ill to man; beyond this they have no right to go. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 343.4}

“He that loveth another [literally, *the* other] hath fulfilled the law.” That is, he obeys all the law that relates merely to our duty to man. No one can tell another, steal from him, bear false witness against him, violate the chastity of any of his family, or covet his goods, and at the same time love him. If he loves his neighbor as he does himself, he will not offend in any of these points, and then he will be doing all that human laws can require of him. But after he does this, there yet remains his duty to God, as covered by the first and great commandment. If he does not fulfill this law, he is amenable to God alone; and if those that resist earthly rulers receive to themselves damnation, who can measure the guilt of him who refuses to render to God the honor that is due him? E. J. W. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 343.5}

**“Our Sabbath-School Department” The Signs of the Times, 10, 22.**

E. J. Waggoner

It has been our aim to make this department of our paper one of general interest. From the very nature of our work the Sabbath-school department of the SIGNS must be different from that of any other paper. The SIGNS is a missionary paper. Devoted to an exposition of the great truths of the Bible, especially those for the last days, and as such it goes to all parts of the world, and is read by all classes of people. Its circulation is not confined to our own people, but thousands not of our faith, and many with no well-defined belief in Christianity, read it with interest. Of the thousands of readers of the SIGNS, comparatively few study the Sabbath-school lessons upon which it comments, the great majority using the international series; and those who study the lessons published in the *Youth’s Instructor*, are so widely scattered that many do not get the SIGNS in time to make the notes of the immediate use in preparing their lesson. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 345.1}

All these things have been taken into account in preparing our Sabbath-school department, and we have endeavored to make the notes and comments of such a nature as will interest the general reader. The mission of the SIGNS is such that we cannot afford to have any part of it of merely local interest. We have evidence from Sabbath-school teachers and scholars that this department has been useful to them in their work; and we know that it has not been unappreciated by the larger class whom we have had in mind. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 345.2}

But there are many who study the International lessons, who would derive more direct benefit if the SIGNS contained notes on that series also, and we have decided to meet this want. As all doubtless know, the International lessons are necessarily non-sectarian, being simply portions of the Bible selected by the Lesson committee. While all the Sunday-schools in the country study the same portion of Scripture at the same time, each denomination or journal may publish its own notes and comments. Since the SIGNS is a Bible expositor, to comment on these lessons will be directly in the line of our work. We therefore begin this week to add these to our own Lesson notes. To those unacquainted with this series, we will say now for all time, that there are only twelve lessons in each quarter; each school can use whatever it desires for the thirteenth lesson. There will therefore be no notes next week. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 345.3}

As in the past, we will endeavor to make these notes of interest and profit to all; we shall also get them out in time so that those who desire may use them in preparing their lessons. We believe that this move will be appreciated by all our present readers, and by thousands yet to come. E. J. W. {SITI June 5, 1884, p. 345.4}

**“God’s Seventh Day Man’s First Day” The Signs of the Times, 10, 23.**

E. J. Waggoner

There is nothing that can be proved so conclusively that no one can find a chance to cavil, if his inclination or selfish interest prompts him to do so. The infidel Hume once said that if there were anything in the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid that crossed any person’s selfish interests, or limited the power of any man or class of men, there would be hundreds who would dispute the mathematical demonstration that the square of the hypotenuse of the right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides. And so it is. It is not difficult, with the mass of mankind, to gain their assent to the most absurd theories, if their passions or business interests lead the way; but it requires more than mere human reason to thoroughly convince a man of the plainest truth, against his inclinations. Only the grace of God can subdue the evil heart of unbelief. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 360.1}

By no other means than by the existence of the principle just cited, can we account for some of the (so-called) arguments against the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. One of the weakest of these is that “the day which is observed by the majority of people is indeed the true Sabbath of the fourth commandment,” since “God’s seventh day was Adam’s first day.” We would not think this objection worthy of notice in this paper, had not several correspondents especially requested it. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 360.2}

What is meant by the expression “God’s seventh day”? Of course nothing else can be met but the seventh day of time, according to God’s count. This, it is claimed, is man’s first day, because he could not have any knowledge of time that had passed before his creation! To be consistent, the advocates of this theory should keep as their Sabbath, the seventh day, counting by seventh from the day of their birth. If this chanced to be on Wednesday, then they should keep Tuesday, for how do they know that there was any such thing as time before they were born? It will be replied that others have kept a record of time, and we accept their testimony and reckoning. Exactly so; and is it not possible that the same God who imparted to Adam the knowledge of the Sabbath, could inform him of the fact that there was a measurement of time before he was created? It seems that Moses found out a great deal about things that occurred before his own time, even as far back as the very beginning, because he was willing to take the Lord’s word for it; and the first day of Adam’s existence is rather early for him to be setting up his own reckoning in opposition to that of his Maker. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 360.3}

But it is strange that none of those who have stumbled at this objection raised by their leaders, have never questioned the truth of the assumed fact. They have never thought to inquire if God’s seventh day was indeed man’s first day. This point can be settled by reading the first chapter of Genesis, which contains a record of the transactions of each day of the creation week. There we learn that man and the lower animals were created on the *sixth* day of the week. If Adam, then, as is claimed, commenced an individual reckoning of time, the seventh day of his week would have been the fifth day of the week according to God’s reckoning. No one can deny this. We know it is claimed that Adam was created late on the sixth day, and that the next day was really his first day. Really, it was no such thing, we are not informed as the exact hour of the day when Adam was created, nor does it matter; we do know that he was created on the sixth day, and, consequently, that was his first day of life. If a child is born on the twelfth of June, the twelfth and not the thirteenth of June in each succeeding year is celebrated as his birth-day, even though he were born late in the afternoon. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 360.4}

Now why do not the advocates of the theory in question stick to the facts in the case? Simply because the facts would demolish their theory. If the facts were adhered to, they would find in them no semblance of an excuse for Sunday-keeping, and it would not be for their interest to advocate the observance of the fifth or the sixth day of the week. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 360.5}

The absurdity of the theory is apparent enough, but we want to consider it a moment in the light of the fourth commandment. That says, “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in yet thou shalt not do any work.” Did God mean by this the seventh day, or the first day? “Both,” say our friends; “he meant the seventh day according to his own private count, but the first day according to man’s reckoning.” We have heard that the Jesuits say a thing that they do not mean, and which is not true, and making mental reservation, or repeat the truth in an undertone; but this theory charges God with the same duplicity. The commandment was spoken to and for man, and must of course, be in the language to which men are accustomed, otherwise it would be meaningless. Now if God’s seventh day was Adam’s first day, then man’s seventh day must be God’s sixth day; and, this theory being true, it follows that the fourth commandment enjoins the observance of neither the first nor the seventh day, but the sixth! {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.1}

But this, and similar absurd theories, arise from the assumption that the Sabbath is a human institution, and that God has nothing much to do with it, except to advise man to rest when he feels like it. The fact is, that it is God’s day upon which we are to rest,-the one upon which he rested, and which he blessed and set apart. It is “*the* seventh day” which is “the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” Man could not make a day holy if he tried; but God made the Sabbath holy, and he commands man not to desecrate it. Man had nothing to do with making the Sabbath; his only duty in regard to it is to keep it. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.2}

One word, in closing, to our brethren who may sometimes be at a loss to know how to answer an objector. Do not hold yourselves under obligations to refute at sight every assemblage of words that may be called an argument. Ask the objector first to *prove* his proposition, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred he will demonstrate that there was nothing to refute. In the remaining instance you may need to aid him by quoting a few texts of Scripture. E. J. W. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.3}

**“Facts Against Supposition” The Signs of the Times, 10, 23.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the SIGNS of March 6, the editor, commenting on a sermon on Spiritualism, penned the following words: “We record our emphatic denial of the assertion that the Scriptures give any instances of the spirits of the departed reappearing; and we invite any one to point out to us the texts wherein such reappearing is supposed to be given.” {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.4}

Had the call been for texts which *prove* the return of departed spirits, eternity might pass before a response could be made, the word “supposed” gives the Spiritualist considerable latitude; for there is no limit to what a man may “suppose” about a Bible text, if he only gives loose rein to his fancy. A gentleman from Boston, taking advantage of the above invitation, sends us his supposition as follows:- {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.5}

“Permit me to call your attention to one of the many to be found in the Bible. Luke 16, verses 9, 12, 14; Luke 24, verses 14, 29, 30, 31, 36; John 20, verses 19, 20, 26, 27, and 29. The latter part of the 29th verse contains the following: ‘Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.’ To what extent the above will apply to those of the present day, who have the opportunity to see and believe, and won’t do either, remains to be seen.” {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.6}

We are willing to give our correspondent credit for believing without seeing, for we doubt much if he has ever seen some of the texts to which he refers. If he had, he certainly would not have to used them. We refer to those in Luke 16, not one of which contains even the most indirect allusion to a spirit either present or absent. As we said before, though, there is no accounting for what a man may “suppose,” especially if he is wandering in the fog of Spiritualism. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.7}

In the references made to Luke 24 and John 20, our friend is equally unfortunate. These texts speak of the appearing of Jesus to his disciples after his resurrection; but they say nothing about the return of his spirit. Jesus was then alive, not dead; and we do not question the fact that living beings may appear to whomsoever they please. Luke 24:36, one of the verses referred to, says: “And as they thus spake, *Jesus himself* [not his spirit] stood in the midst of them.” And verses 38 and 39, *not* referred to, plainly declare that it was not a spiritual manifestation. They read thus: “And he said unto them, Why are ye trouble? and why do thoughts are rise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” We are inclined to think that it is far easier to believe some things without having seen them, than after the light of truth has shown clearly upon them. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.8}

We are well aware that Spiritualists, and many who are pleased to style themselves orthodox, claim that the resurrection is simply the act of the soul or spirit leaving the body at the death of the latter. In such a case there would be no resurrection from the dead; there would, in fact, be no death. But the Scriptures invariably speak of a resurrection “from the dead.” Paul was willing to suffer all things if by any means he might attain unto the “resurrection from the dead;” literally, from “dead ones.” Philippians 3:11. When Jesus was transfigured before his disciples, he charged them to tell no man of it until after he was “risen again from the dead.” Matthew 17:9. And this resurrection was not the escaping of the spirit at the dissolution of the body, for we are told that “he began to teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” Mark 8:31. Those who claim that the real Christ did not die, or that it was his undying spirit that appeared to the disciples the third day after the crucifixion, must squarely deny the above and many other Scripture texts. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.9}

And right here we would drop a word of warning, and urge upon all the necessity of a well-grounded, intelligent faith in the Scriptures. There is no doctrine upon which it is more necessary that we be firmly settled than that of the State of the dead. Error is wonderfully blinding and seductive. We may think that we are proof against temptation on this point, but the human heart is in itself deceitful, and Satan knows how to take advantage of it, if it is left unguarded. Our only hope of safety is in having a *thorough* knowledge of the true teachings of the inspired word, and in being led by the Spirit of God, that when we are brought into the conflict with Satan, we may meet him at every point with, “It is written.” We are to resist him steadfast ‘in the faith.” {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.10}

Our correspondent says: “Your paper is good in many ways. Pray be good enough to spend half as much time in the investigation of Spiritualism as you have in attacking it, and give the readers the result of your investigations.” Why, we have spent a great deal more time in the investigation of Spiritualism than we have in attacking it. But we don’t propose to investigate in the way that our friend wishes us to. We do not like to investigate in the dark. We have studied the Bible, and we find Spiritualism there exposed so plainly that we have no need to go nearer. As we said, error is blinding; and those who investigate Spiritualism by going into it, or by going where spiritual manifestations are given, will do so at the peril of their souls. It is simply putting themselves on the devil’s ground and inviting him to try his power upon them. Christ will not accompany us when we needlessly go on to the enemy’s ground, and without him human strength is powerless against the prince of darkness. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.11}

The man who is groping about blindfolded in a dark cavern does not have nearly so good a chance to know what it is like, as the man does who stands outside with open eyes, and holding in his hand a lamp whose beams shine into its utmost recesses. The man who sinks in the ocean knows nothing of its depth, compared with the one who stands secure in a boat and casts in a sounding line. So the man who ventures into the mazes of Spiritualism, is no proper judge of its real nature; while the man who holds in his hand the lamp of God’s word can see all its terrible dangers,-dangers all the more terrible because they are so seductive. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.12}

We do not need to take poison in order to know its deadly character. We learn its nature and effects from books, and are therewith content. And so we would say again to all: Study the word of God carefully; and earnestly and continually pray, “Lead us not into temptation.” E. J. W. {SITI June 12, 1884, p. 361.13}

**“The Sabbath-School. Acts, Chapter 28” The Signs of the Times, 10, 24.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness.” “The Greeks regarded all as barbarians who did not speak their language, and applied the name to all other nations but their own. It does not denote, as it does sometimes with us, people of savage, uncultivated, and cruel habits, but simply those whose speech was unintelligible. See 1 Corinthians 14:11. The island is supposed to have been peopled at first by the Phoecians, afterward by the Phoenicians, and afterward by a colony from Carthage. The language of the Maltese was that of Africa.”-*Barnes*. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 374.1}

“And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks.” This was perfectly in keeping with Paul;s character. He was never idle. He was the foremost preacher of the age, commissioned directly by the Lord, yet he was not above engaging in the most menial work when it was necessary. In Paul we find all the characteristics of a true missionary. He was able to adapt himself to all circumstances. His knowledge was varied. He could preach the truth in such a way as to make kings tremble, could direct the management of the ship, and control a mutinous crew, and when shipwrecked, could at once provide for the comfort of himself and companions. He was what we would call a man of resources. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 374.2}

When Paul reached Rome he acted with characteristic promptness. Within three days he called the chief of the Jews together to lay his case before them. Although he was manifestly in the hands of God, he did not think it unnecessary to taking the precaution for his defense. It was best for him to get the goodwill of these Jews as far as possible before the case came to trial, by disabusing their minds of wrong impressions which they might have gained. He asserts his innocence in these words: “Though I have committed nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.” This was all strictly true. He had not done anything against his own nation. On the contrary, he had devoted much time and strength to the collection of alms for the poor of Judea. And he had really done nothing against the customs of the fathers-the special point of which he was accused. It was while he was engaged in the performance of duties enjoined by the ceremonial law that he had been arrested. While it is true that Paul had mingled with the Gentiles, and had held that circumcision was a matter of indifference, he was entirely innocent of the charge brought against him, and it is of this that Paul speaks. It is a common form of speech, when one is falsely accused, to say, “I have committed no crime, nor been guilty of any wrong act.” By this the speaker is not understood as claiming that he never did anything wrong in his life-time, but that he is innocent of the thing brought against him. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 374.3}

We would not be understood as intimating that Paul had committed any wrong act at any time, although he had, during his ministry, done many things which a Jew of that age would not have done. But he refers to the fathers, and we have evidence that the exclusiveness which led the later Jews to refuse all intercourse with Gentiles was not shared by them. It is worthy of note, however, that even the Pharisees, those zealous advocates of law, never brought any charge of immorality against Paul. He was never accused of breaking the Sabbath or of any other violation of the ten commandments. This is a strong evidence as is needed to prove that Paul was always a devout Sabbath-keeper. If he had not kept the Sabbath of the commandment-the seventh day of the week-his enemies would have speedily become aware of it. Such a flagrant violation of the law would not be allowed to pass unreproved. And the fact that when they were clamoring for his blood, and inventing grievous charges against him, they did not accuse him of Sabbath-breaking, shows that Paul had never even technically violated the fourth commandment. He could truly say to the Sanhedrim,” have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.” Acts 23:1. He believed “all things which are written in the law and in the prophets;” and what he believed he acted upon. So we see that when Paul preached in the synagogues of Antioch, Thessalonica, and Corinth on the Sabbath-day, it was not an accidental occurrence, but in perfect harmony with his life-long habit and settled convictions. E. J. W. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 374.4}

**“An Important Question” The Signs of the Times, 10, 24.**

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, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour 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.” Matthew 19:16-22. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 377.1}

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. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 377.2}

The reader will notice that Jesus did not at once answer the young man’s question, but asked him one on another subject. “Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God.” Our Saviour did not mean to intimate by this that he was not good. He himself said that it was his meat to do the will of the Father (John 4:34); and again he said to his disciples, “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” John 15:10. To the Jews he said, “Which of you convinceth me of sin?’ (John 8:46), thus demanding the closest scrutiny of his life. Paul says that he “knew no sin” (2 Corinthians 5:21); Peter says of him that he “did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth” (1 Peter 2:22); and even the devils acknowledged him to be “the Holy One of God.” Mark 1:24. His character on earth was the same that it is now as our High Priest, “holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners.” Hebrews 7:26. He was absolutely good; the perfection and embodiment of goodness. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 377.3}

This being the case, we can understand his words, “there is none good but one, that is God,” as nothing but a statement of the fact that he himself was entitled to be called God. If there is but one that is good, viz., God, and Christ is good, then Christ must be God. And this agrees with what the prophet had said of Christ: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, *The mighty God*, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6. John also said: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.’ John 1:1. Since he is the Son of God, he partakes of the divine attributes; and so Paul says that he occupies a more exalted position than the angels because “he hath *by inheritance* a more excellent name than they.” Hebrews 1:4. He was never on probation, as a candidate for life, as are all created beings, but has “life in himself’ (John 5:26), being the creator of all things. John 1:3; Colossians 1:16. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 377.4}

The Father and the Son are one. John 10:30. Both are worthy of worship. God alone may be worshiped (Revelation 22:8, 9), but Christ did not refuse the adoration of his disciples. Luke 24:52. We are not called upon to explain the mystery of godliness, nor expected to understand it, but Christ has explained to us how he and the Father are one. In his memorable prayer for his disciples, he said: “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, *as we are one.*” “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; *that they may be one even as we are one.*” John 17:11, 22. This oneness, then, is that of two distinct individuals having the same thoughts, the same purposes, the same attributes. The Father and the Son were one in creating the earth, and one in the devising and carrying out of the plan of salvation. They never worked at cross purposes; and in harmony with Christ’s prayer that union may exist among his disciples, Paul exhorts us to “all speak the same thing,” and to “be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” 1 Corinthians 1:10. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 377.5}

We understand, therefore, that when Christ addressed to the young man the words found in Matthew 19:17, it was because he saw that this ruler, like Nicodemus, did not appreciate the divine character of Jesus, but thought him to be a mere man. Christ penetrated the young man’s thoughts, and by this question and reply revealed to him his own true nature. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 377.6}

Having incidentally settled this point, 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 and ceremonies, is proverbial. The young man, doubtless, like Paul, lived under the “straitest sect” of the Jew’s 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 that 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. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 377.7}

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. Exodus 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.” Nehemiah 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 to Moses, we shall have discovered that which we seek-the condition of eternal life. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 377.8}

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. Exodus 19:16-18. In the 20th chapter, verses 3-17, we find the words which the Lord spoke from the mount. In Deuteronomy 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 Exodus 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 unto me.” Deuteronomy 5:22. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 378.1}

Of these commandments, Moses said, “And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, 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.” Deuteronomy 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.” {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 378.2}

We have now found the commandments to which our Lord referred. We are not now concerned with the particulars of the laws given to 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 now 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. {SITI June 19, 1884, p. 378.3}

**“2 Samuel 6:1-12” The Signs of the Times, 10, 25.**

E. J. Waggoner

**NOTES ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSON.  
JULY 13 - 2 Samuel 6:1-12.**

“Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.” Verse 1. The sixth chapter records two great victories gained by the army of David,-one over the Jebusites, and one over the Philistines. Now he once more assembles the chief of his men, but for another purpose. The ark of God was to be brought to the capital of the kingdom. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 390.1}

In order to understand this chapter, it is necessary to go back in the history of the Jews about a hundred years. In the fourth chapter of first Samuel we have the account of a great battle between the Israelites and the Philistines, in which the Israelites were conquered, and the ark, on which they had depended for safety, was captured. At that time God showed the people that the mere possession of the tables of the law would afford them no protection when they were trampling upon the law itself; that to have the thing from which God was accustomed to manifest himself, was a vain thing unless he himself was enshrined in their hearts. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 390.2}

From this overthrow the Israelites did not recover for many years. The possession of the ark, however, proved disastrous to the Philistines, as we learn from 1 Samuel 5 and 6. God showed them that the things pertaining to his worship must not be handled irreverently. They were glad to purchase rest from the afflictions which he sent upon them, by returning the ark. When it arrived at Beth-shemesh, the man of that place were smitten, because they presumed to look into the sacred chest, and they sent to the citizens of Kirjath -jearim, requesting them to come and get it. Here it remained until the time of the present lesson. The reader will notice, by the margin of 2 Samuel 6:2, that “Baale of Judah,” from which David sent to bring the ark, is but another name for Kirjath-jearim. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 390.3}

“To bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims.” Verse 2. The margin of this verse gives the more literal rendering, and the one that makes sense: “To bring up the ark of God, at which the name, even the name of the Lord of hosts, was called upon.” “That dwelleth between the cherubim.” In Exodus 25:10-22, we have a full description of this ark, and the object for which it was used; there we find the statement that God would commune with the people from between the cherubim that were upon the mercy-seat-the cover of the ark. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 390.4}

“And they set the ark of God upon a new cart.” Verse 3. This was contrary to the instructions given by the Lord. How the ark was to be borne by the staves (see Exodus 25:12-14); the sons of Kohath were appointed to carry it and the other holy vessels, but even they were not to touch or look upon any of them. See Numbers 4:4-15. In no case was the ark to be placed upon a wagon. Numbers 7:7-9. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 390.5}

“And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.” Verse 5. As Dr. Clarke says, this place should be corrected from the parallel passage in 1 Chronicles 13:8. There it is said that they played *with all their might*, on harps, etc., and that makes good sense. The Hebrew letters of the two passages are nearly identical, which doubtless accounts for the difference. The Septuagint has in this place the reading as in 1 Chronicles 13:8, with might. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 390.6}

“And when they came to Nachon’s threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.” Verses 6, 7. In this we have and other illustration of how God, regards his work and worship. It may seem to some that Uzzah’s punishment was too severe for so small an act, but such judgment comes from setting up our standard instead of God’s. How do we know that Uzzah’s error was a small one? From the punishment that followed we would suppose that God regarded it as a great sin. Indeed, we must so regarded unless we are willing to admit that God was unjust. God is just to; the punishments which he inflicts are always proportionate to the sin committed; therefore Uzzah’s error must have been a grievous one. The whole proceeding was irregular, but Uzzah, in presuming to lay hands on the sacred ark; overstepped all bounds. Had not that swift punishment been meted out to him, the worship of God would have been degraded, as a common affair, and reverence for sacred things would have entirely died out among the people. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 390.7}

What was it that made that little box of wood and gold so sacred? Why was it to be approached with such awe and reverence, and only by persons duly set apart for that purpose? It was because it contained a copy of the law of God. That which God declares to be his own righteousness-a transcript of his own character-was inclosed in that ark. That law is the foundation of the government of God; it is that by which the loyalty of all creatures is tested. When men lose their reverence for that, they lose their reverence for God’s Government, and for God himself. It was on this account that God had given such specific directions concerning the ark. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 391.1}

How do we know what is right and what is wrong? It is evident that it is only by being told. And what warrant have we for calling any violation of one of God’s commands a little sin? Do we not by so doing become judges of God? The lesson to be learned from this circumstance is that to disregard any one of God’s requirements is a heinous sin; that sin of any kind is exceedingly displeasing to God. Familiarity with sin hardens us; we learn to excuse it, and our standard lowerd to correspond with existing circumstances. But God is sinless, and the more sin there is committed the more odious it becomes to him. If we, then, desire to do what is right, and thus displease God, it is evident that we must in all cases accept the standard of right and wrong which God gives. Our feelings are no criterion whatever, for that which we look upon as trivial, may be regarded by God is a terrible sin. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 391.2}

It is by his law that God reveals his will. Two texts will prove this. “I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea by law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8. Here we find that to have the law of God in the heart, is to cheerfully do all his will. Again Paul says: “Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest 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.” Romans 2:17, 18. Here we learn that those who know the will of God are those who are instructed out of the law. But God does not change; we have his word for this. His will concerning man is just the same now as it ever was. This being the case, it follows that his law is always the same. And so it is. Christ said: “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.” Luke 16:17. And what has this to do with the lesson? Simply this: “If God regarded it as so terrible an offense merely to touch the receptacle which contained his law, how much to look upon those who dare to trample upon the law itself? The pope of Rome has impiously presumed to change the law, especially that portion which enjoins the observance of the seventh day of the week, and millions of people have accepted his act. It is considered all right to labor upon the day which God sanctified, because “everybody does so.” But the Lord says: “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.” We are to make God’s law, and not our feelings, or the practice of the multitude, our standard of right and wrong. “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily [as in the case of Uzzah], therefore the heart of the sons of man is fully set in them to do evil.” Ecclesiastes 8:11. But judgment, though long delayed, is sure to come, and when it does, it will be according to righteousness, or, in other words, according to the law of God. E. J. W. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 391.3}

**“Nature of the Law” The Signs of the Times, 10, 25.**

E. J. Waggoner

Last week 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 enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14. We now want to examine this law, in order to learn its character. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 392.1}

First we quote the words of David: “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” Psalm 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 any one. Paul also adds his testimony to that of David, and says that “the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” Romans 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.” {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 392.2}

This idea of the perfection of the ten commandments is more fully expressed by David in Psalm 119:172: “My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments our 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.” Proverbs 23:7. Therefore if a man continuously meditates upon a law that is perfect righteousness, he can but become righteous. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 392.3}

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 for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.” Isaiah 51:6. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 392.4}

If any reader fails to connect this verse with Psalm 119:172, and thus learn what the righteousness that shall not be abolished is, he can satisfy himself that 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.” Isaiah 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. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 392.5}

It is not, however, 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 man, 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.” Matthew 5:48. We are to become sinless and pure, and even then God in his goodness will be infinitely above us. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 392.6}

But some one 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.” Romans 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;” Romans 7:22; or with David, “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.” Psalm 119:97. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 392.7}

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 brought.” Psalm 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.” Hebrews 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 may 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 as never cease to pray with the psalmist: “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” E. J. W. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 392.8}

**“‘The Seventh Day Is the Sabbath’” The Signs of the Times, 10, 25.**

E. J. Waggoner

A card lately received from Mendocino County, Cal., informs us that the writer was somewhat disturbed by reading what the SIGNS has to say on the Sabbath question, but that after searching the Scriptures, and reading Baptist publications (especially the latter), he is satisfied that we are wrong. The writer also promises to send us papers containing a sermon on the subject of the Sabbath, which he wishes us to read with care, looking up the references, and thinks that it will convince us of our error. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.1}

The papers have come, and prove to be copies of the *Tennessee Baptist*, the sermon being by Dr. E. Daniel, a Presbyterian minister, of Memphis, Tenn. We thank our unknown friend for his kindly interest in our welfare, but we are obliged to say that after reading this sermon we are not convinced that we are wrong. The little tract, “Seven Reasons for Sunday-keeping Examined,” published at this office, takes up all the Scripture texts referred to in the article, and many more. There are, however, in the sermon, some good things, which serve to counterbalance the errors. We quote a few of them:- {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.2}

“The Sabbath was not for the Mosaic or Jewish dispensation only, because the Sabbath law was not originally given to Moses; but the institution runs parallel with the history of the human race from the beginning of time. Proof of this proposition is found in the Old Testament, of course. At the end of the week of creation, God bless the seventh day and sanctified it. Marriage and the Sabbath are the two divinely ordained institutions which we can trace backward to Eden..... At the gathering of manna we read, ‘To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord. Bake that ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seeth, and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning? And Moses said, ‘Eat that to-day; for to-day is a Sabbath to the Lord. They shall be gathered it, but on the seventh, which is the Sabbath, there shall be none.’ Let it be remembered that this gathering of the manna here referred to was before the Israelites had come to Mount Sinai, and consequently before the typical law was given. How, then, can the Sabbath be of merely a positive and ceremonial nature, to be abrogated as a part of the ceremonial law, when we find its origin in Eden, traces of its observance through all the patriarchal dispensations, and indisputable evidence of its existence before the Israelites had ever received their ceremonial law? Is not the conclusion irresistible, that it was given originally to the whole race in Eden, and as it did not begin with the Sinaitic positive enactments, so it did not end with them at the coming of Christ?” {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.3}

That is good, and now besides that we want to place one more quotation from the same sermon:- {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.4}

“The Sabbath, in its essence, as already defined, is not a part of the ceremonial law, because it is found in the heart of the moral law. It is one of the ten commandments. It belongs to the great decalogue. Whoever may sweep away one of those grand moral precepts, binding all men, as men, Jew or Gentile alike, may sweep away them all. But these words are written on the rock, and while time endures, they shall abide.” {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.5}

The reader may ask, If the Dr. believes that which he has written, as quoted above, how can he agree for first-day observance? We will let him speak:- {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.6}

“The substance of the Sabbath may be defined as this: The setting apart of one day in seven for purposes of rest and of religious worship. This is substantially all that is to be included as essential in a definition of the Sabbath. All else concerning it, as, for example, which day is to be observed, is a matter of positive enactments, and maybe changed, and has been changed.” {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.7}

Here we disagree with him, no more so than he does with himself. He has said above that the Sabbath originated in Eden, together with marriage. In the record of creation what do we read? That God blessed the Sabbath institution? Not at all, “And God blessed *the seventh day*, and sanctified it.” Genesis 2:3. It was the day that was sanctified and blest. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.8}

Again we come to the gathering of the manna. The Doctor says that this was before the typical, ceremonial law was given. Very good. Now what does Moses say? “*To-morrow* is the rest of the holy Sabbath;” “on the seventh, which is the Sabbath, there shall be none.” Here we find that the day is the proper thing; yet it is claimed that the matter of which day is to be observed is ceremonial. We submit to the intelligent reader that if the typical law was not yet given, then there can be nothing typical about the day. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.9}

Once more; it is said that the Sabbath cannot be done away, like ceremonial ordinances, because is a part of the Decalogue,-enshrined in the heart of the moral law. We agree. Now let us read a portion of the commandment. “Remember the Sabbath-day [literally, the day of the Sabbath], 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.” Here we find the day of the Sabbath clearly specified in the moral law. If the Sabbath is not ceremonial, but as enduring as the rock, because it is found in the heart of the moral law, then the day of the Sabbath must be unchangeable, because that is found there also. Nay, more; if the keeping of a definite day be not necessary to the observance of the true Sabbath,-if that part of the commandment is ceremonial, and has been changed,-then we have no moral precept for Sabbath observance at all; for that being taken out, nothing is left. Will our friends please try to read the fourth commandment, leaving out that part which refers to a definite day? They would have to omit the first clause, for that says, “Remember *the* Sabbath day.” The next clause would likewise have to be omitted, for the words, “six days shalt thou labor,” are simply introductory to the definite statement that “*the seventh day* is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” The next two words, *“in it*,” clearly show that something definite has been mentioned; they must therefore be dropped. The whole of the latter part of the commandment is simply historical and explanatory, telling why God gave such a precepts. Leaving out, then, all of the commandment which enjoins the observance of a specified day, we have this much left: “Thou shalt not do any work.” This would be indefinite enough for anybody. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.10}

Let us try this “indefinite” argument on the first commandment. The Lord says: “Thou shall have no other gods before me.” Why may we not say: “Man is a worshiping being; he must have some object of adoration. This commandment recognizes that fact, in providing a deity. The act of reverential worship is all that is essential; all else, as, for example, the specific object to be worshiped, is a matter of positive enactments, and maybe changed.” This reasoning is exactly parallel to that which we so often hear concerning the fourth commandment; yet the man who should act upon it would be called a heathen. Now will someone tell us the exact difference between ignoring the Creator entirely by setting up some god in his stead, and refusing obedience to plainly worded commandments, and especially that one of all the rest by which we recognize his creative power? The Saviour says, “Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” Let everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord remember that Christ and the Father are one, and then consider that question as addressed directly to him. It will do to meditate upon. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.11}

E. J. W. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.12}

**“The Foundation of Spiritualism” The Signs of the Times, 10, 25.**

E. J. Waggoner

Mr. Savage, a Unitarian minister of Boston, preached a sermon a short time ago on “Immortality from the Stand-point of the Modern World,” in which he took occasion to speak of Spiritualism as follows:- {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.13}

“There is nothing in it out of accord with the faith of those who already believe in continued existence. That our friends, if they still live and love us, should want us to know it, is only what we should expect.” {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.14}

That this statement is true, we do not see how anybody can deny. And this is why we do not regard it as a matter of indifference how we believe concerning the state of the dead. We say that no one who believes that man is conscious in death-that his thoughts instead of perishing with his breath goes forth (Psalm 146:4), are more clear and active than ever, has any warrant whatever that he will not become a Spiritualist. Let us see. Spiritualism, pure and simple, is a belief that the spirits of the departed may communicate with their living friends, and may even appear to them. The mass of mankind believe that the essential part of man never dies, but that what is called death simply releases it from its prison house. They believe that it is in Heaven, and conscious of what is passing in this world. Indeed, we have heard more than one “orthodox,” minister preach that the spirits of our departed friends hover around us and protect and comfort us by their influence. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.15}

Now we ask, What is lacking to make such ones real Spiritualists? Nothing, but to see and converse with one bearing every feature of a departed friend, having the same tone of voice, and who can recall incidents known only to that dead friend. This has been done to a certain extent, and will be done on a vastly more extended scale. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.16}

“But how would you account for such a thing?” We read that Satan is able to transform himself into an angel of light, and this being so, it does not surprise us to hear of his personating a human being. The Bible warns us against wonders that will deceive, if it were possible, the very elect, pointing out that which we have said, that a large portion of the world is in danger of being drawn into Spiritualism. The “elect” will not be deceived simply because they are grounded on Bible truth. So long as a man takes the Bible as it reads on the subject of the state of the dead, he cannot become a Spiritualist. When he holds to the popular theory, he has no safeguard against that terrible delusion. E. J. W. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.17}

**“A Want Not Gratified” The Signs of the Times, 10, 25.**

E. J. Waggoner

In an article in the *Christian at Work*, on “Baptism and the ‘Teaching,’” by Rev. F. Oxnard, we find the following:- {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.18}

“We are perfectly willing to concede that there is no authority in the New Testament for infant baptism. We would like to bring immersionists to admit that there is no authority for the exclusive use of immersion in baptism. We suggest, therefore, that to insist that the word used in the Septuagint for immerse must always be thus used in a Christian ordinance, is open to very reasonable and grave objections, and is not in accordance with the ultimate authority, the New Testament. To insist that a word from classic Greek, used to express a non-sacred act, and similar words in the New Testament, used to express a sacred act, have always the same meaning, is to allow authors who lived hundreds of years before the Christian era to settle the mode of baptism.” {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.19}

We admire the frankness of the author, as manifested in the above quotation. That the New Testament contains no authority for infant baptism there can be no doubt. Few theologians claim that it does. We have no doubt, moreover, that he, in common with many others, “would like to bring immersionists to admit that there is no authority for the exclusive use of immersion for baptism; but we can assure him that he can never do it unless he brings to bear some more weighty argument than that contained in his “suggestion.” He claims that to insist that words from classic Greek must have the same meaning when used in the New Testament, is to allow heathen authors to settle the mode of baptism. By this, the reader will clearly see that it is admitted that if we should give them the same signification, immersion would be a settled fact. That is the words as used by classical authors, signifying immersion. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 393.20}

Now is it true that if they are used in the New Testament in the same sense, those authors have determined the meaning of the Christian ordinance? By no means. Christ determined that himself. How? By using in the Christian commission, a term which was in common use, and universally understood to mean immersion. He determined what the ceremony should be, and then described it in language which his hearers could understand. It was for this reason that he was not obliged to make a lengthy explanation as to what he meant by baptism; the name carried the idea. If he had coined a new word to express the act, or if he had used the same word, with a different meaning from that which it ordinarily had, it would have been necessary to define it, so that his followers might not be misled; but this he did not do. Therefore we must insist that the word in the New Testament has the same meaning that it does anywhere else. And there is no more reason for saying that this allows authors who lived hundred of years before the Christian era to settle the mode of baptism, than there is for saying that they settle the mode of celebrating Christ’s sacrifice, because Christ, in instituting the Lord’s Supper, used the same words for eating and drinking that had been used by them to denote these acts. E. J. W. {SITI June 26, 1884, p. 394.1}