**“The Sabbath-School” The Signs of the Times, 10, 42.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST—NOV. 29**

1. What do the afflictions of this life work for us? 2 Corinthians 4:17. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.1}

2. Under what means do we behold unseen things? Hebrews 11:1. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.2}

3. By what means do we behold unseen things? Hebrews 11:1. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.3}

4. While looking (by faith) at unseen things, of what are we assured? 2 Corinthians 5:1. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.4}

5. What is meant by “our earthly house of this tabernacle” being dissolved? Compare 2 Peter 1:13, 14 with John 21:18, 19. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.5}

6. What does Paul say that we earnestly desire while in this earthly tabernacle? 2 Corinthians 5:2. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.6}

7. Why do we desire to be “clothed upon”? 2 Corinthians 5:4. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.7}

8. Then to what is being “clothed upon with our house which is from heaven” equivalent? {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.8}

9. What do these two “houses”represent? 1 Corinthians 15:44. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.9}

10. Which of these is first? 1 Corinthians 15:46. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.10}

11. When is the spiritual body bestowed? 1 Corinthians 15:42-44. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.11}

12. Whence does this spiritual body come? 1 Corinthians 15:49. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.12}

13. When is it that corruption puts on incorruption, and mortality puts on immortality? 1 Corinthians 15:42, 51-53. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.13}

14. Then when is it that mortality shall be “swallowed up of life”? {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.14}

15. And to what is this equivalent? 2 Corinthians 5:4. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.15}

16. Who hath wrought us for this thing? Verse 15. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.16}

17. What is it for which God hath wrought us? {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.17}

18. As a pledge of immortality, what does he now give to us? Verse 5. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.18}

19. If when this earthly house is dissolved, and we are “clothed up” with our heavenly house, mortality is swallowed up of life, what opposite conditions do the two houses represent? {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.19}

20. Then in what condition are we while in this earthly body? {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.20}

21. And while “at home in the body,” from whom are we absent? Verse 6. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.21}

22. When is it that we shall be with the Lord? 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.22}

23. And what do we “put on” at that time? 1 Corinthians 15:21-54; 2 Corinthians 5:2-4. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.23}

24. Since that is the dissolving of this present body, and we are not “clothed upon” with our spiritual body till the resurrection, in what condition are we between death and the resurrection? 2 Corinthians 5:4. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.24}

25. But is that a desirable state? {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.25}

26. What do we desire rather than this? 2 Corinthians 5:8. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.26}

27. Quote the three texts to prove that we can be “present with the Lord” only at his second coming. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.27}

In the portion of Scripture covered by this lesson the apostle sets before us the grounds for hope. The matter what we may be called upon to suffer, we are to be of good courage, and trust in the Lord; for this is what is meant by 2 Corinthians 4:16: “But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day-by-day.” In the next verse he tells us why he is thus hopeful: “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” Surely if we believe this, we could, with the apostle, “glory in tribulation.” {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.28}

It is not, however, for every one, nor under all circumstances, that afflictions accomplish this result. It is not to all that afflictions seem light. Each person is inclined to feel that his own trials are the most severe of any; but certainly there are none that have to endure more than Paul did. Now what was the means by which he lightened them? “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” And thus it is that everybody can make their own trials light or heavy, just as they please. If they choose to look only at the present time, and think of their trials, they will appear enormous; but if they looked at eternal things-the world to come, and its joys-earthly sorrows will be entirely lost sight of. Who would not endure a moment of pain to secure a year’s pleasure? If during an entire year we should suffer pain but a single second, would that instant of pain be remembered? Certainly not; it would not attract our attention. Well, a second of time is infinitely greater in comparison with a year, than a life-time is in comparison with the eternity. So, then, if our entire life were filled with pain, it would not be remembered in eternity. Now in order to get the benefit of this comparison *now*, and make our present afflictions seem light, we have only to transport ourselves, by faith, to the eternal world, looking so steadfastly at it that what it has to offer appears real to us. Christians are to live not alone in the present, but in the future-“for we walk by faith, not by sight.” {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.29}

But what is that unseen thing at which we look, that affords this hope? The first verse of chapter 5 gives the answer: “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” This verse gives the answer in full; the remaining verses are devoted to enlarging upon and explaining this point. The question to be solved, then, is, What are these two houses? and when are they occupied? {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.30}

There can be no question but that by the dissolution, of this tabernacle the apostle refers to death. Peter uses the same expression in referring to his decease. 2 Peter 1:13-15. The fourth verse, being partially a repetition of verse 2, affords data for determining when the second house is bestowed. “For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.” Thus we see that when we are clothed upon with our heavenly house, immortality is bestowed, or, still better, that the being “clothed upon with our house which is from heaven” is the same as the putting on of immortality. We have already learned (1 Corinthians 15:51-54) that immortality is given only when the Lord comes; so we conclude that this heavenly house is not received at death. This will appear still more plainly hereafter. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.31}

By referring to the 15th of 1 Corinthians, we find still more about these two “houses.” In the forty-fourth verse we learn that there are two bodies, a natural body and the spiritual body. These bodies do not exist at the same time, but the first is the natural body, “and afterward that which is spiritual.” Verse 46. Verse 49 tells us that this spiritual body is heavenly, thus more fully identifying it with “our house which is from heaven.” And now from verses 42-44 we learn that this spiritual, heavenly body is given at the resurrection: “So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.” Thus we find that the two houses are the natural and the spiritual body; that the spiritual body is given at the resurrection, which is at the coming of the Lord; and that this receiving of the spiritual body, or “putting on immortality,” is the same as mortality being ‘swallowed up of life.” {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.32}

But what about the state of death? What house do we occupy then? None at all. Our condition at that time is represented by the term “unclothed.” While we are in this house-this mortal body-we groan, “earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.” In Romans 8:23 Paul says that that for which we groan is “The redemption of our body,” thus proving what we have already learned, that the heavenly house is the putting on of mortality. “If so be dead been clothed we shall not be found naked.” 2 Corinthians 5:3. Now if this earthly house is dissolved at death-which none will deny-and the heavenly house is given only at the resurrection, it must be that there is a time of being unclothed. But this was not what Paul desired; it is not for which we groan. Death is not given as the object of desire. We groan with the burden of mortality, not that we desire death to rid us of the cares of this life, but desiring that mortality shall be swallowed up of life. Because we do not desire to be thus unclothed, however, is no sign that that may not be our lot. But “we shall not all sleep;” some will be living when the Lord comes, and they will change mortality for immortality “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.’ {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.33}

Mortality and immortality are then the two houses-the one earthly, and temporal; the other heavenly, and eternal. Now while we are in the first state we are absent from the Lord; for it is only when Christ comes, and immortality is bestowed, that we shall be “forever with the Lord.” And since this is the case, we are not only willing to be absent from this mortal state, and be present with the Lord, but that is the thing for which we groan. Our confidence rests in the fact that God has created us for this self same thing; he designs that we shall have immortality, and to assure us that it will be given, he has given unto us the earnest of his Spirit. So long as we have that, we are sure of our future, immortal inheritance. And our faith in God’s promise brings that inheritance so near, and makes it so real, that, in spite of present tribulation, we may be always “rejoicing in hope.” E. J. W. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 662.34}

**“Everlasting Fire” The Signs of the Times, 10, 42.**

E. J. Waggoner

Last week we considered the condition of the world without Christ, the state from which Christ saves those who believe in him, and which unbelievers are to receive. It was bound to be *perdition*-the exact opposite of life eternal. In our further investigation of this subject, in order that doubts may not embarrass the mind of any, we will first consider those texts that are supposed to teach just the opposite of what we have found to be the case. And first, we will say that it is not a subject on which philosophy or mere human reason can throw light. We can know nothing about it, except what we learn from the Bible. It is not for man to say what God will or will not do. Believing that the Judge of all the earth will do right, we must prepare our minds to accept what his word says concerning the fate of those who rebel against his Government. If we should find that they are to be kept alive through eternity, suffering infinite torture, we are bound to accept that view, even though it is repugnant to our ideas of justice. And so, also, if we find, as we have already, that they are to perish, *i.e.*, be blotted from existence, then we must accept that view, however contrary it may be to our previous instruction. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.1}

We have said that there are, and will be at the end of the world, but two classes-believers and nonbelievers, or righteous and wicked. In the twenty-fifth of Matthew these two classes are brought to view. The King is represented as separating the two classes, setting the righteous on his right hand and the wicked on his left. “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Verse 34. This disposes of the righteous; they then receive the reward of eternal life. The time will then have come for the saints to “take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.” Daniel 7:18. But what of the wicked? “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Matthew 25:41. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.2}

Does the fact that the wicked are to go into “everlasting” fire, prove that they will live and be tormented to all eternity? We will not presume to decide without an examination of the Scriptures. Let the Bible be its own interpreter. In the seventh of Jude we read that “Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of *eternal* fire.” The reference will be understood by all. On account of the wickedness of the cities of the plain, God rained down fire from heaven upon them, and their fate,-“suffering the vengeance of the eternal fire,”-is given as an example and warning to other evil-doers. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.3}

Now must we understand, because those cities suffered the vengeance of “eternal fire,” that they are therefore now in existence, and will be eternal? Turn to 2 Peter 2:6, and read: “And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.” What was the result of that eternal fire? The cities upon which it fell were turned to ashes. And Jeremiah shows that, instead of its requiring an eternity for eternal fire to accomplish its work, it takes but a short time. He says: “For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her.” Lamentations 4:6. Now if the cities were “overthrown,” and turned to ashes, then the fire must have long ago ceased to burn. And this is the case, for the waters of the Dead Sea now roll where those cities once stood. The “eternal fire” in that case did not burn to all eternity. If that was so in one instance, it may be in another. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.4}

We have seen (Matthew 25:41) that fire is to be the means by which the wicked are punished. What will be the result of this fire? Read Malachi 4:1, 3, and we shall see: “For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” “And ye shall tread down the wicked; for *they shall be ashes* under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts.” So we see that this “eternal fire,” into which the wicked are to go, like that which fell upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, will turn into ashes. That seems reasonable enough. Fire always turns to ashes that which is thrown into it, if that thing be combustible; and in this case we are told that the wicked “shall be stubble.” Why should they not be ashes when the fire has done its work? {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.5}

On Jude 7, Dr. Barnes has the following comment:- {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.6}

“The phrase ‘eternal fire’ is one that is often used to denote future punishment-as expressing the severity of the intensity of the suffering. As here used, it cannot mean that the fires which consumed Sodom and Gomorrah were literally eternal, or were kept always burning, for that was not true. The expression seems to denote, in this connection, two things: (1) That the destruction of the cities of the plain, with their inhabitants, was as entire and perpetual *as if* the fires had been always burning-the consumption was absolute and enduring-the sinners were wholly cut off, and the cities forever rendered desolate; and (2) That in its nature and duration this was a striking emblem of the destruction which will come upon the ungodly.” {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.7}

But does the Bible also say that the fire into which the wicked are to be cast shall not be quenched? It certainly does; let us read: “And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched. Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” Mark 9:43, 44; also verses 45-48. We would not in the least evade the full force of this text; we believe in it, and yet we still hold that the wicked are to become ashes, and cease to be. Let us see if we cannot also find an instance of unquenchable fire that has already existed and ceased to be. In the seventeenth chapter of Jeremiah, the Lord, by his prophets, warned his people against the sin of Sabbath-breaking. He told them that if they would keep the Sabbath according to his commandment, their city, Jerusalem, should stand for ever. “But,” said he, “if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and *it shall not be quenched*.” Jeremiah 17:27. But the Jews did not heed this warning; they continued to violate the Sabbath, and the Lord brought upon them that which he had threatened. Read what is said of it:- {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.8}

“And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place; but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary; .... and they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.... To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah.” 2 Chronicles 36:15-21. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.9}

Here we see that as the result of that fire that was not to be quenched, the palaces were *burned*, and the vessels were *destroyed*. Is the fire burning in yet? Certainly not. Are the palaces and walls still in existence? No; the fire made an end of them. But suppose the fire that was kindled in the gates of Jerusalem had been quenched; what would have been the result? Why, the walls and palaces would not have been *devoured*, as Jeremiah had said they should. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.10}

Take a common occurrence. A fire breaks out in a city. The wind fans the flames so that every effort to extinguish them is in vain. The next day the papers say that certain blocks of buildings were burned to ashes. Why was it? Because the fire *could not be quenched*. If it could have been, the buildings would have been preserved. But does the fire still continue to burn? No; it went out as soon as the buildings were consumed. There was nothing then for it to feed upon, and it died. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.11}

Now what did we read in Malachi that the fate of the wicked shall be? “They shall *be ashes* under the soles of your feet.” But this result would not be accomplished if the fire into which they are to be cast should be quenched. The fact that the fire shall not be quenched is the fullest proof necessary that they will be utterly consumed. Mark the strong language used by John the Baptist: “Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Matthew 3:12. Here, as in many other places, the wicked are likened to chaff; now if they are to assist in the flames of punishment to all eternity, this would be an inappropriate figure, for chaff does not long withstand the fire. And the fact that they who are represented by the chaff will not be proof against the destructive action of the fire, is indicated by the statement that he will “burn up” the chaff. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.12}

Right here we may notice a passage in Isaiah. “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” Isaiah 33:14. This is a very pertinent question. Shall we conclude from that that the prophet teaches that the wicked will dwell in the fire to all eternity? That would be a hasty, shortsighted conclusion. The very next verse answers the question: “He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.” Such, and such alone, can dwell with the devouring fire, and with everlasting burnings. While the “devouring fire” seizes upon the chaff, and *burns it up*, the righteous ones, gathered into the garner of the Lord, shall dwell in safety. Well may the sinners in Zion be afraid, for the day is coming that “shall *burn them up*, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” E. J. W. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 664.13}

**“The ‘Teaching of the Apostles’” The Signs of the Times, 10, 42.**

E. J. Waggoner

The reader must bear in mind the reason why these articles are written. It is not because we attach any importance whatever to the document called the “Teaching of the Apostles,” but because some people are lauding it to the skies, and claiming that it would completely overturn all seventh-day observance. Our object was to show just how much weight it does have, so that none can have the “Teaching” as an excuse for Sunday keeping. In our investigation we have found, (1) That when correctly translated, the document does not mention the “Lord’s day;” (2) That it is not claimed by its most zealous defender that the “Teaching” was written by any of the apostles; (3) That no one knows when it was written, but they *suppose* that it was in the first, the second, or the third century; (4) That no one pretends to know who wrote it; (5) That the fact that it was written early in the Christian era adds nothing to its value, because writers on church history agree that it was a common thing to forge the names of imminent men, and that to deceive and lie in a good cause was thought to be commendable, even by those calling themselves Christians; and that even when we concede honesty of purpose to them, we cannot depend on what they say, because they were in every way unfitted to be expositors of Bible doctrine. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.1}

Still further, we found that the immediate company in which it was found does not recommend it, because the so-called “Epistle Barnabas” is universally conceded to be a forged document, besides being full of blunders, and puerile and absurd to the last degree. Concerning the *two* “Epistles of Clement,” we found that one is not an epistle at all, and is not claimed by scholars to be the production of Clement, and that the other *bears no author’s name*, so that nobody knows who wrote it, and, more than all, is admitted by all to have been the object of as much interpolation. And as for the “Epistles of Ignatius,” they are declared by higher authority to be base forgeries, “the last shifts of a grave imposture,” “utterly spurious,” and said only to be “swept away from among the genuine remains of early church literature with the bosom of scorn.” Such is the company in which this document that is to upset all the calculations of Sabbath-keepers was found. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.2}

And now comes the venerable Bishop Bryennios himself, the one to whom the world is indebted (?) for the discovery of this wonderful production, and says that of the sixteen chapters that compose the “Teaching,” the “last ten chapters are entirely distinct, and have no authority whatever, except so far as the writer happens to be correct in his injunction.” And the *Independent* of October 16th, the one from which the last quotation is taken, commenting upon it, says: “European and American scholars have not claimed that *any* part of the ‘Teaching’ is authoritative; the first six chapters no more so than the last ten. They only insist that a whole document has value and significance as a reflection of the teachings and usages of the sub-apostolic age.” {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.3}

Surely we need quote no more testimony, the learned Bishop grants that the last portion of the “Teaching” has no authority, “except so far as the writer happens to be correct in his injunction.” That is a great concession. Now we can answer for seventh-day keepers that they are not disposed to regard any writings whatever as having authority, except so far as the writer is correct; the standard of correctness must invariably be the Bible; and when any writer makes a statement that agrees with that standard, we accept it, not because certain writers said so, but because it does agree with the standard. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.4}

The *Independent’s* statement that the whole of the “Teaching” has value only “as a reflection of the teachings and usages of the *sub-*apostolic age,” is a confession that the document is simply one of the forgeries so common in the early centuries. It purports to be the “teaching of the apostles,” when it is nothing of the kind. This proves the truth of what we said in the second article, that nobody really believes that the “Teaching” carries with it in the weight of authority. Then why did the *Advance* say that it would tend strongly “to make keepers of the seventh day change their observance to the first day, and keepers of the first day are confident of their position than heretofore”? There can be but one answer: Advocates of first-day observance have no Scripture authority for their claims, have fallen into the habit of accepting anything which seems to support them, even though they know their witnesses to be false. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.5}

That this conclusion is not ill advised, appears from an examination of the quotations in our last article, concerning the so-called epistles of Clement, Barnabas, and Ignatius. Those quotations were made for a twofold purpose. First, to show the writings from whose company the “Teaching” derived so much of its honor, and second, that our readers might know the foundation upon which the Sunday institution is built. For, be it known, the same writings.-p those attributed to Clement, Barnabas, and Ignatius,-are constantly quoted in behalf of Sunday observance. The statements found in them, together with a few from other “Fathers,” equally untrustworthy, are the strongest proofs brought to bear in favor of Sunday-keeping. Men who write “D. D.” after their names, who have graduated at theological seminaries, where church history is a most prominent branch of study, and used textbooks in that study were those from which we have made our quotations, will quote the words of these “Fathers,” with as much assurance as though they were inspired. We will not question the honesty of such men, but we think that the following words are fulfilled in them:- {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.6}

“Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men; therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.” Isaiah 29:13, 14. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.7}

The reader will have little difficulty in estimating at its true value of the evidence that has formed the basis for Sunday observance, when he reads the statement of the *Advance*, that the “Teaching” will tend to “make first-day keepers more confident of their position than heretofore.” Vain confidence! As though any number of untruths could be made to equal one truth. Truly, when men turn away from the commandments of God, and are determined to abide by the “precept of men” their perceptions become blunted, and they become unable to distinguish truth from error. In closing, we would say to all who desire to *establish* Sunday observance, that it cannot be done unless they can bring a “Thus saith the Lord” in support of it, because the storm that is coming will “sweep away the refuge of lies,” but “the word of the Lord abideth forever.” Nothing will stand that is not built upon this foundation. E. J. W. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.8}

**“A Mixed Case” The Signs of the Times, 10, 42.**

E. J. Waggoner

At the last Methodist conference in California a “Sabbath Committee” was appointed, whose report appeared in full in the *Advocate*. It is but just to state that the report as given was not adopted, but what the objections were is not stated. If they were against the first paragraph, which we quote below, we shall be happy to make them known if we are informed of them. Here it is:- {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.9}

“Sabbath is made binding upon the human conscience by the law of God. Some statuary provisions, intended to impress the world with its holiness, passed away with the exigencies to which they were made specially to apply; but the fourth commandment is yet as binding as the first for the sixth. The decalogue is fundamental law. It is the constitution of the moral world, and the full force of its fourth section passed over to the first day of the Jewish week by the change which the Holy Spirit distinctly announced and the apostolic church adopted immediately after the resurrection.” {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.10}

It is doubtful if so great a medley of truth and error could be found in one paragraph of any subject except the Sabbath. The first half is straight enough. The law of God contains our rule for Sabbath observance. The statutory provisions, that were local and temporary, form no part of the fourth commandment, as is admitted above. Consequently their existence or non-existence in no wise affected the force or meaning of the fourth commandment. That, as the committee truthfully said, “is yet as binding as the first were the sixth.” This being the case, it necessarily follows that all our knowledge concerning the Sabbath must be derived from the fourth commandment. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.11}

Thus far we agree. But now, after stating that the decalogue is the constitution of the moral world, they add, “and the full force of its fourth section passed over to the first day of the Jewish week.” If that be so, then we must find some statement to that effect in the fourth commandment, or else must find it in an amendment to the constitution. Read the commandment: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work, but *the seventh day* is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in *it* thou shalt not do any work; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.” This commandment, the committee say, is as binding as the first or the sixth. By what legerdemain do they make it uphold first-day observance when it mentions only the seventh day, and that explicitly? We would like to have that committee explain their words. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.12}

We will ask another question: What did the commandment mean when it was given? What day did it specify as the day of rest? All will admit that it was not the first but the seventh day of the week. The committee admitted this, when they said that the force of the fourth commandment “passed over” to the first day of the week. If any are in doubt as to just what day the Lord did point out by the commandment, let them read the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, and remember that the order of things therein stated continued forty years. For forty years the seventh day was marked by the regular occurrence of miracles. Now, then, another query: Since the wording of the commandment has not been changed, and it clearly designated the seventh day when it was given, how is it possible for it to mean the first day now? Can the same commandment teach one thing at one time, and another thing at another time? If it can, why could it not teach both things at the same time? And if it did that, would it really teach anything? {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.13}

Let us try this mode of reasoning on the first commandment. That says, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” There is no mistaking who is meant by this commandment, for it is prefaced with, “I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” The living God is the one who thus claims supreme honor, and so it was and is understood. But we find that in after years the Jews, as an entire nation, forsook the Lord, and served Baal. For this cause God visited them with punishments. What a pity they did not have the wisdom of modern theologians, for then they could have said: “The decalogue is the constitution of the moral world, and the full force of its fourth section has passed over to Baal.” We are not sure that this argument would have been of any advantage to them, for they doubtless had an abundance of the excuses with which to quiet their consciences, and we very much doubt if they could have brought the Lord over to their way of thinking by any such reasoning. But why should not the Lord be satisfied with that kind of obedience to the first commandment as well as to the fourth? We are certain that neither the *Advocate* nor the “Sabbath Committee,” would be willing to allow that the first commandment justifies the Chinaman in his worship of Joss. And why not? Because it particularly specifies the God who is to receive our adoration. Very good. But the committee admit that the fourth commandment is as binding as the first; why then do they keep the first day when it enjoins the seventh? Can they give a satisfactory answer? {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 665.14}

“But we have already given our authority,” perhaps they will say. Let us look at it. They say concerning the decalogue that “the full force of its fourth section passed over to the first day of the Jewish week by the change which the Holy Spirit distinctly announced, and the apostolic church adopted immediately after the resurrection.” We can only say that we have read The New Testament through more than once, and we never came across any such distinct announcement; and we have never seen any one that did. If that committee have some revelation from the Holy Spirit that other men have not, we think it is their duty to make it known. One thing is certain: neither Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, nor James, ever made that “distinct announcement” known. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 666.1}

We think all candid persons will agree that the committee have not established their case. It must stand with the Scotch verdict of “not proven.” To all who are inclined to accept their conclusions without proof, we would say, Be cautious how you proceed. God himself declares that he is a jealous God, and we are very sure that in the Judgment they will not be able to convince him that when he said one thing he meant something directly opposite. E. J. W. {SITI November 6, 1884, p. 666.2}

**“The Sabbath-School” The Signs of the Times, 10, 43.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST.—DEC. 6**

1. When Christ was crucified, who were put to death with him? Luke 23:32, 33. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.1}

2. While they were hanging on the cross, what did one of the thieves do? Verse 39. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.2}

3. What did the other one do? Verse 40. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.3}

4. With what words did he rebuke his companion? Verses 40, 41. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.4}

5. To whom did the penitent thief address himself? Verse 42. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.5}

6. What request did he make? Verse 42. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.6}

7. What reply did Jesus make? Verse 43. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.7}

8. What is the midst of paradise? Revelation 2:7. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.8}

9. By the side of what river is the tree of life? Revelation 22:1, 2. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.9}

10. From what does the river of life proceed? {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.10}

11. Then since both the tree and the river of life are in Paradise, where is God’s throne? {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.11}

12. When people go to paradise, in whose presence do they go? {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.12}

13. How long after Christ’s crucifixion was the resurrection? 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.13}

14. On the morning of the resurrection what did he say to one of his disciples? John 20:17. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.14}

15. If he had not yet ascended to the father could he have been in Paradise on the day of this crucifixion? {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.15}

16. Since Christ cannot deceive, can it be that he intended to meet the in Paradise three days before? {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.16}

17. If not, why did he use the word “to-day”? {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.17}

18. At what time did the thief want to be remembered? Luke 23:42. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.18}

19. When does Christ have his kingdom? Matthew 25:31. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.19}

20. And when will all who believe on him be with him? John 14:3. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.20}

21. Then to what time did the penitent thief look forward? {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.21}

22. Will his request then be granted notwithstanding he is now dead? 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.22}

The lesson this week covers that much discussed passage. Christ’s answer to the thief on the cross. Comments on this subject need not be extended to any great length, for if the texts referred to are each read carefully, and a comprehensive view of them all is then taken, there can be no difficulty in arriving at the true interpretation. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.23}

In the first place we must consider the present and previous circumstances of the malefactor, and what it was for which he asked. One source of the popular error on this subject is the supposition that the thief had never before heard of Christ. Such a supposition is not probable. The wonderful thing about his action was which he manifested. But faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17), and in no other way. So the thief must have heard of Christ and his mission. While others, even his chosen disciples, thought that Christ’s career was ended, and that there was no hope of his saving any one, the thief grasped the great truths which Jesus had been trying to impress upon his followers, of a resurrection and a future coming in glory, when he would reward every man according to his deeds. In harmony with this new born hope, the penitent thief exclaimed, “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.24}

It is evident that whatever might have happen to the thief that day would not be in answer to his request; for Christ did not have his kingdom that day. He himself had likened the kingdom of heaven to a nobleman that “went into a far country to receive for himself the kingdom, and to return.” In the seventh of Daniel we learn that the kingdom is not given to the Son of man until all earthly kingdoms have run their course. When he receives the kingdom he will return. So he says, “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, *then* shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.” Matthew 25:31. And therefore Christians are instructed still to pray, “Thy kingdom come;” as yet they are only “*heirs* of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love him.” It is worthy of note in this connection that, according to Griesbach, Luke 23:42 should read, “Lord, remember me in the day of the coming.” {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.25}

The next point to be noted is what the Lord promised. It was, “Thou shall be with me in Paradise? Where and what is paradise? A few words in answer must suffice. Paul plainly intimates (2 Corinthians 12:2-4), that it is in, or corresponds to, the third heaven. We can identify it still more closely. In Revelation 2:7 we learn that the tree of life is “in the midst of the paradise of God.” In Revelation 22:1, 2, we learn further that the tree of life is on either side of their river of life. Then the river of life must also be in Paradise. From this same passage we also learn that the river of life proceeds from the throne of God, thus showing that the throne of God is in the midst of the Paradise of God. Whoever goes to Paradise must necessarily be in the presence of God. Christ’s promise to the thief, then, was virtually this: “Thou shalt be with me in the presence of God.” {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.26}

Now what about the fulfillment of that promise? Was it fulfilled that day? or is its fulfillment still future? We can determine this in two ways: (1) By considering, as we have done, what an answer to the thief’s request would imply, and (2) By examining the actual facts in the case. By the first we learned that if Christ intended his promise as a direct answer to the thief’s request, then its fulfillment must still be future, because Christ’s coming is still future. Now as to the recorded facts. On “the third day” after the crucifixion, as Mary, suddenly recognizing her risen Lord, was about to embrace him, Jesus said: “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.” John 20:17. This at once settles the matter, for if he had not ascended to the Father, of course he did not go to Paradise-into his presence-three days before. But it is not possible that Jesus should have prevaricated in the least, for “he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth” (1 Peter 2:22); and therefore he did not go to Paradise on the day of his crucifixion, it must be that he did not promise the thief that he should be with him there that day. In the light of the facts of the case we are forced to conclude that they who think that Jesus and the thief met in Paradise on the day of the crucifixion, do not understand the Saviour’s words to the thief. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.27}

Consider the circumstances under which Jesus uttered those words. He had told his disciples that he was the one spoken of by the prophets, who was to occupy the throne of David. He had told the twelve that when he should sit on the throne of his glory they also should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Their hopes had been raised to the highest pitch when, but a few days before, he had entered Jerusalem in a triumphant manner, while the multitude waved palm branches before him. They had thought that their hour of triumph had come, and that he was then to assume his kingdom. Instead of that, however, they had seen him taken by a cruel mob, hurried unresistingly from judgment-seat to judgment-seat, subjected to the most brutal insults, beaten, spit upon, and scourged, and finally fainting and under the load of a heavy cross, to which he was now fastened with huge nails, dying the death of the malefactor. The hopes of the disciples were blasted, and while they had all confidence in the integrity of their Master, they thought he had been deceived. To them the future looked dark and gloomy. Not so with Jesus. From the beginning of his earthly ministry he had foreseen this event; and his confidence in God’s power to raise him from the dead, and in the final success of his mission,-that true suffering he should bring many sons into glory,-remained unshaken. And so when the penitent thief, with a faith that has seldom, if ever, been equaled, preferred his request, the mind of Jesus reached forward to the consummation of his work, and like a king he replied in words calculated to strengthen the faith of the petitioner, “I say unto thee *to-day*, thou shalt be with me in Paradise.” Truly so royal a gift was never before promised under such untoward circumstances. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.28}

“But,” some one will say, “the punctuation will not allow of such interpretation.” Well, we have found that the words of Jesus himself will not allow any other interpretation, so what shall be done? Shall we preserve the present punctuation, and thus make Jesus contradict himself? or shall we alter the punctuation so that the passage will be in harmony with the after statement of Jesus, and with the rest of the inspired record? Reason and reverence would say the latter, because the punctuation is only the work of man, while the words of Jesus cannot disagree. If we just imagine ourselves back in the time when Luke wrote these words, or else that the art of punctuation has not yet been invented, our difficulty will vanish. Remembering that there were no marks of punctuation when the Bible was written, we can read the words of Jesus so that they will harmonize with other statements of Scripture. We will not say to change the position of the comma, but just drop it out, leaving the texts as it was originally written. Then read it, making the emphasis where a due regard for the harmony of the sacred word would suggest that it be made. Surely there is no more of presumption in dropping out a comma than there is in placing it there in the first place. In fact, there is no presumption in either case. Those who placed it there doubtless thought that it was necessary to the sense. We, with clearer light on God’s word, see that it destroys the sense, and read it in harmony with that clearer light. E. J. W. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 678.29}

**“Everlasting Punishment” The Signs of the Times, 10, 43.**

E. J. Waggoner

In our last article, based upon Matthew 25:41, we found that the “everlasting fire” into which the wicked are to be cast at the last day, will have the defect to “burn them up,” so that they will “be ashes;” that the fire is “unquenchable,” thus showing that there will be no hope of escape for those who are cast into it, but that it will continue to burn as long as there is anything left for it to feed upon. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 680.1}

We now come to the forty-sixth verse, and here we are obliged to make another stand, for so firmly is the doctrine of eternal torment fastened on the minds of men, that simple proof to the contrary is not sufficient, unless every text bearing upon the subject is examined, and shown to be in harmony with that proof. In summing up his discourse, the Saviour marks the final disposition of both the righteous and the wicked in these words: “And these [the wicked] shall go way into everlasting punishment; the righteous into life eternal.” {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 680.2}

In order to a perfect agreement on this text, we will state that the two words “everlasting” and “eternal” mean in this place exactly the same thing. They are both translated from the same Greek word. If, instead of two different words the translators had rendered both by the same word, making it either “eternal punishment” and “eternal life,” or “everlasting punishment” and “everlasting life,” it would have saved much unnecessary controversy. We are taught, then, from this text, that the punishment of the wicked is to last as long as does the reward of the righteous. This we most firmly believe. But it must be borne in mind that this verse conveys no intimation of what that punishment shall be. To say that one who violates a certain statute shall receive the penalty of the law, does not determine how, nor to what extent, he is to be punished. It may be by fine, imprisonment, confiscation of goods, or death. In the text before us, however, we are told that the length of the punishment; it is to be as long as the reward of the righteous. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 680.3}

Now what is that punishment? Return to Romans 6:23 and read: “The wages of sin is *death;* but the gift of God is eternal life to Jesus Christ our Lord.” The punishment, then, is to be death; and since that punishment is to be everlasting, we conclude that eternal death will be the portion of the wicked. This agrees exactly with our previous investigation. As corroborating this conclusion, we cite 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: “And to you who are troubled [God will recompense] rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with *everlasting destruction* from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” This destruction comes “from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power,” and this agrees with the eighth verse of the next chapter, which says: “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” And this again is in harmony with the statement in Revelation, concerning the wicked: “And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.” Revelation 20:9. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 681.1}

That which has caused the misunderstanding in regard to Matthew 25:46, is the mistaken idea of the punishment. Because “indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish,” are threatened to “every soul of man that doeth evil” (Romans 2:8, 9), men seem to think that tribulation and anguish constitute the sum of the punishment. All these things are threatened, they are nowhere declared to be eternal, as in the death which is “the wages of sin.” Everywhere in the Bible, death and life are the alternatives set before the individual. He may believe and live, or he may do evil and die. “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live .... But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish.... I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.” Deuteronomy 30:15-19. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 681.2}

Whatever of anguish may be accessory, the above language shows that so surely as life shall be given to the obedient, death shall be the portion of the sinner. If not, what force is there in the words of the prophet: “Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” Ezekiel 18:31. Here the prophet, like Paul, “knowing the terror of the Lord,” persuades men to turn from sin. But his persuasion from that standpoint loses all its power if he has made a mistake as to what that “terror” is. Let it be borne in mind that the punishment-“the wages of sin”-is death. Until death has been inflicted upon the sinner, he has not *been punished*, however much he may suffer. Now the Saviour does not say that the wicked shall go into an everlasting condition of *being punished*, which would be everlasting dying, but into *everlasting punishment*, which is *everlasting death*. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 681.3}

The wise man has said, “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Proverbs 14:12. And the apostle James only repeats the statement in another form when he says: “Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bring a forth death.” James 1:15. In short, throughout the inspired record, we find only a repetition of our Saviour’s words: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not *perish*, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16. The death that was threatened to Adam, the execution of which was stayed that he might, by the aid of Christ, have another chance for life, still hangs over his posterity. They may escape from the “wrath to come” by believing in Christ, and thus becoming new creatures. If they do not accept this offer, the penalty will be allowed to fall upon their guilty heads. And to these are the words of Christ: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” John 3:36. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 681.4}

“But the wrath of God *abideth* on him.” Let us see how much force there may be in this statement. The second psalm is devoted to a brief history of those presumptuous mortals who “take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.” Unto these the Lord shall speak in his wrath, and he will vex them in his sore displeasure, even giving them to the Son to be broken with a rod of iron, and dashed in pieces like a potter’s vessel. In view of this threatened punishment, they are exhorted to be instructed, and to repent, and believe on Christ; or, in the words of inspiration, to “kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and he perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.” Psalm 2:12. The wrath of God and of the Son is the same, for the Father hath “committed all judgment under the Son,” and has given him authority to execute it. John 5:22, 27. Now what is the result of the manifestation of this wrath? Even when it is “kindled but a little,” its effect is to cause those against whom it is directed to “*perish* from the way.” Then if a slight manifestation of God’s wrath will cause the sinner to “perish,“ *i.e.*, “to die; to be blotted from existence,” what will be the effect if the wrath of God *abideth* on him? It can be nothing less than to keep him in everlasting death. And thus we find, from whatever portion of the Scripture we approach the subject, that the verdict is the same. The Lord “reserveth wrath for his enemies” (Nahum 1:2); the effect of that wrath, when let fall upon them, is to blot them from existence (Psalm 2:12); they will never afterward, to all eternity, have any existence. E. J. W. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 681.5}

**“‘The Lord’s Day’” The Signs of the Times, 10, 43.**

E. J. Waggoner

**CONSIDERATION OF THE ARGUMENT FROM THE PRACTICE OF THE EARLY CHURCH**

It will be remembered that our articles on the “Teaching of the Apostles” were called out by an article that appeared in the *Advance*, making extravagant claims for that document, as for ever settling the Sunday question. Its argument was as follows: The “Teaching” exhorts all to come together on the Lord’s day to break bread and gives thanks; the disciples at Troas, with Paul, did on one occasion assemble on the first day of the week to break bread; and Justin Martyr said, in first apology to the Roman Senate, and that “on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gathered together to one place,’ etc. From these they arrived at the conclusion that when the apostle John said, “I was in the Spirit on a Lord’s day,” he intended by the term “the Lord’s day” to designates the first day of the week. This is a fair statement of the Sunday Lord’s-day position, which we designed to candidly examine. In this examination we have nothing to do with the so-called “Teaching of the Apostles,” because (1) we have already shown that it has not the slightest degree of authority, being the uninspired production of some unknown person, and (2) the expression “Lord’s day” no where occurs in that document, whether it be good or bad. The term “Lord’s day” is used, however, by the apostle, and people have a right to demand that teachers of the Bible tell whether he referred to the seventh or the first day. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 681.6}

The statement of Justin Martyr will be considered first. The reader will notice that even he does not say that the first day of the week was termed the Lord’s day, but uses the expression, “on the day called Sunday.” If that day had been regarded as sacred, some other title would have been bestowed. This, however, is of little consequence. The argument is that John speaks of the Lord’s day, and the fact that Christians of Justin Martyr’s time assemble on Sunday, proves that Sunday is the day which John had in mind. The reason why he spoke of it as “the day called Sunday” was, as is stated by the *Advance*, because it was called by the Romans “the day of the sun.” {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 681.7}

This argument for Sunday as the Lord’s day would be a good one, and indeed conclusive, if it could be shown that the practices of Christians in the early centuries were always in harmony with the Scriptures. In order to make the argument of any account whatever, it must be shown that their customs were necessarily correct. But how shall we know whether or not their practices were correct? Only by comparing them with the Bible, for that alone contains the rule of righteousness. Our Sunday friends, in their appeals to the practice of the early church, make the mistake of determining by the actions of men what the Bible teaches, when, instead of that, they ought to appeal to the Bible, to determine the correctness of those actions. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 681.8}

We will give a few quotations to show how little we can depend on the practices of Christians, even in the first centuries as exponents of a true Christian doctrine. First we quote the words of Paul. To the elders of the church at Ephesus, he said:- {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 681.9}

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” Acts 20:28-30. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 681.10}

Not only did he predict that there would be heresies taught in the church after his departing, but writing to the Thessalonians, he said, “For the mystery of the iniquity doth already work.” Church history, written by first-day authors, bears witness to the truth of Paul’s words. Mosheim, writing concerning the second century, says, {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 681.11}

“A large part, therefore, of the Christian but observances and institutions, even in this century, had the aspect of pagan mysteries.”-*Book I, Part II, chap. IV, sec. 5*. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 682.1}

Again he says:- {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 682.2}

“There is good reason to suppose that the Christian bishops purposely multiplied sacred rites for the sake of rendering the Jews and pagans more friendly to them.”-*Book I, Cent. II, Part II, chap. IV, sec. 2*. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 682.3}

In a footnote to the above passage, Mosheim says further:- {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 682.4}

“It will not be unsuitable to transcribe here a very apposite passage which I met with in Gregory Nyssa’s life of Gregory Thaumaturgus: ‘When Gregory perceived that the ignorant and simple multitude persisted in their idolatry, on account of the sensitive pleasures and delights it afforded, he allowed them, in celebrating the memory of the martyrs, to indulge themselves, and give a loose to pleasure (*i.e.*, as the thing itself and both what precedes and follows a place beyond all controversy, he allowed them in the sepulchres of the martyrs, on their feast days, to dance, to use sports, to indulge conviviality, and to do all things that the worshipers of idols were accustomed to do in their temples on their festival days), hoping that in process of time they would spontaneously come over to a more becoming and more correct manner of life.” {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 682.5}

Such was the policy of the leaders of the church in the second century, this century in which Justin Martyr lived. Let anyone read the last quotation, and then read a description of the abominations practiced at even festivals, and he will hardly be willing to adopt any custom whatever on the example of such Christians. Sunday was so called by the Romans, because it was dedicated to the worship of the sun. Its Latin name was *Dies Solis*, day of the sun. Now if the bishops of the church, in their desire for “converts” from among the heathen, allowed them to observe their festivals with the most abominable orgies, is it to be considered a strange thing if they allowed them to retain the very day of one of their festivals? If they did not scruple to multiply rites and ceremonies to suit the superstitions of the ignorant crowd, certainly they would not hesitate to accept one that was already in use. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 682.6}

Thus far we have simply shown that we are not to be influenced in favor of any custom because it was practiced by the early Christians. Their course determines nothing for us. We will therefore leave them, and in our next article will allow the Bible to determine which day of the week is the Lord’s day. E. J. W. {SITI November 13, 1884, p. 682.7}

**“The Sabbath-School” The Signs of the Times, 10, 44.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST.—DEC. 13**

1. Upon whom did Christ pronounce a special blessing? Matthew 5:10. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.1}

2. For what did Peter say it was better to suffer? 1 Peter 3:17. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.2}

3. For what did Christ once suffer? Verse 18. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.3}

4. For whose sins did he suffer? Isaiah 53:5. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.4}

5. Why did he thus suffer? 1 Peter 3:18. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.5}

6. How did he suffer for our sins? *Ib*. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.6}

7. By what was he made alive? *Ib*. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.7}

8. To whom is it said that Christ preached? Verse 19. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.8}

9. By what agency did he preach to the spirits in prison? Verses 18, 19. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.9}

10. But who are they who walk at liberty? Psalm 119:45. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.10}

11. Who may be said to be in prison? {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.11}

12. When was it that Christ by the Spirit preached to those disobedient ones? 1 Peter 3:20. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.12}

13. Did the Spirit of God indeed strive with the antediluvians? Genesis 6:3. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.13}

14. When did the Spirit cease to strive with them? {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.14}

15. To what place do the dead go? Psalm 16:10. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.15}

16. Where did Christ go before he ascended to Heaven? Ephesians 4:9. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.16}

17. Did the same Jesus that ascended to Heaven also descend into the grave? Ephesians 4:10. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.17}

18. Did the soul of Christ go into the grave (*hades*)? Acts 2:29-32. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.18}

19. What Scripture proof can you give that Christ did not preach while in the grave? {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.19}

20. When we read that Christ suffered for sin, “being put to death,” does it mean that the soul of Christ suffered even to death? Matthew 26:38; Isaiah 53:10, 12. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.20}

21. What had the Lord promised concerning death? Isaiah 25:8. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.21}

22. How only could he destroy death? Hebrews 2:14. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.22}

23. If Christ himself had not died, what would be the condition of the human race? {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.23}

The Scripture which calls out the texts that compose this lesson, is 1 Peter 3:18-20. The text itself teaches a lesson far different from that which is commonly supposed to teach, and the design of the lesson is to correct this mistaken idea. The apostle exhorts Christians to be patient under reproach, even though it be unjust, citing the example of Christ, who, though sinless, suffered for sins, “the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which also he went in preached and to the spirits in prison.” It is concerning this last expression that the misapprehension exists, people supposing that because preaching to the spirits in prison is introduced almost immediately after the death of Christ is spoken of, therefore Christ must have preached to those spirits after his crucifixion and before his resurrection. If this supposition be true, then our previous teaching concerning the state of man has been at fault; therefore we will study the text carefully. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.24}

It would be well for those who hold to the theory that Christ immediately after his crucifixion went and preached to the spirits in *hades*, to compare this text with Luke 23:43, which was studied last week. It is claimed from that text that Christ went at once to Paradise; yet the same persons claim from 1 Peter 3:18-20 that Christ went to some place where the dead were congregated, and preached to them. If one theory be true, the other cannot be. A little examination of this passage will show us that no statement whatever is made in it concerning the condition of Christ between his death and resurrection. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.25}

Notice that the statement concerning his preaching to the spirits in prison does not immediately follow the statement that he was put to death. Between these two is the statement that he was “quickened”-made alive. So if we follow the order of the apostle’s statements, we find that the preaching was done while Christ was alive. But on reading the verses still more closely, we find that Jesus did not preached in person at all. It was by the Spirit that he preached. The apostle, having introduced the sufferings of Christ, mentions the fact that he was put to death. But the Bible writers always connect the death and the resurrection of Christ. They do not have Christ put to death, and then leave him. So he says, “put to death in the flesh, but quickened,”-made alive. This is not all, he was “quickened by the Spirit; by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.” The verse teaches simply that the Spirit which raised Christ from the dead, is the very same spirit by which Christ preached to the imprisoned spirits. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.26}

Now when did this preaching take place? The twentieth verse contains the answer. “When the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.” Turning to Genesis 6:3, we read: “And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.” Thus we find a harmony between the two passages; the Spirit of the Lord was striving with the antediluvians. Christ was preaching to them, through Noah, but all true preaching is accompanied by the Spirit of God. It is the Spirit that impresses the truth of God upon the heart, and convinces of sin. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.27}

“But,” says one, “you forget that those to whom Christ preached by the Spirit, were in prison.” No, we do not. For what purpose was the Spirit upon Christ when he was here on earth? In Luke 4:16-21 we read that Christ read Isaiah 61:1, 2, and said, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” That scripture reads: “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to [them that are] bound.” Who are these captives? David says, “I will walk at liberty; for I seek thy precepts.” Psalm 119:45. And from that we would conclude that all others are not at liberty. So Peter says of false teachers, and those who are inspired by them: “While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” 2 Peter 2:19. Paul also teaches that if a man yields himself to sin, he is the servant of sin. Romans 6:16, 17; and in Romans 7:15-24 he gives a graphic description of the struggles of one who is seeking to escape from the cruel bondage of sin. At last he finds liberty in Christ; his servants alone are free man. So then all sinners are in prison; they have transgressed the law of God, and where the laws are not a nullity, transgressors are always consigned to prison. Through faith in Christ, they may get liberty. But this liberty is contingent on their obedience to the law. The Spirit presses the claims of the law home to the heart, and when the sinner repents and accepts the way of truth, the Spirit abides with him. See Romans 8:7-14. In Noah’s time “the wickedness of man was great” (Genesis 6:5); and therefore the Spirit, through the preaching of Noah, was striving to have them repent and find true liberty. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.28}

It is not alone for the bearing that the popular theory of this text has on the Bible doctrine of immortality, that it deserves notice. There is a deeper reason. The popular interpretation of both 1 Peter 3:18-20, and Luke 23:43, but only makes these texts contradictory, but overthrows the foundation principles of the gospel. In what way? By virtually denying the death of Christ. When man had sinned, he could not save himself. He could not by any obedience atone for his own sin. Neither would the life of one man answer for the life of another, for all have forfeited their lives by sin. Human sacrifices, then, would avail no more than with the blood of bulls and goats. Nothing but the life of a divine being, one who was sinless, and the giving of the law, could answer for man. Such an one was which Christ. He offered himself freely, not because law had any claim on his life, but that his righteousness might be counted instead of the past transgressions of those who should believe in him, and obey him. But now they tell us that Christ, the divine Son of God, did not die; that only his earthly, human body died, if that be so, then indeed is our faith vain, and we are yet in our sins. With the sorrowing Mary we may say, “They hath taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.” An interpretation that makes such a conclusion necessary should not be held for a moment by those who profess to love the Lord. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.29}

That Christ himself did die, there is abundant proof. Aside from the texts which say that the dead know not anything, we have special statements concerning Christ. The Jesus that “ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things,” who now sits at the right hand of God, there making intercession for us, is the same Jesus who “descended first into the lower parts of the earth.” Ephesians 4:9, 10. Not merely his human body, but his soul, which certainly must include his divinity, went into the grave. As we read in Acts 2:29-31, David did not, in the sixteenth psalm, speak of himself, but, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath that he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne, “He seeing this before spake of *the resurrection of Christ* that *his soul was not left in* hell [*hades*, the grave], neither did his soul see corruption.” If, by the resurrection, the soul of Christ was not left in the grave, then it must previously have gone into the grave. Christ himself declared in the garden that his soul was “exceeding sorrowful; even unto death,” and this is just in harmony with the prophet’s statement that he “poured out his soul unto death.” Isaiah 53:12. By death alone could he “destroy him which had the power of death, that is, the devil.” Hebrews 2:14. So then, notwithstanding the theories of man, “the foundation of God standeth sure,” viz., that “Christ died for the ungodly.” E. J. W. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 678.30}

**“Punishment of the Wicked” The Signs of the Times, 10, 44.**

E. J. Waggoner

**“FOREVER AND EVER”**

There is one text that should have received attention in connection with the article concerning the “everlasting fire” into which the wicked are to be cast. Before introducing it, however, and we will briefly review the points already made. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 696.1}

1. Those only who accept Christ receive eternal life; all others perish. John 3:16. That is, they will be blotted from existence. This is the penalty which was threatened in the beginning, before sin entered, and which is now simply delayed a little in order to allow mankind an opportunity to repent. Thus it is that “the long suffering of our Lord is salvation.” 2 Peter 3:15. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 696.2}

2. The agent by which the death penalty is to be executed, is fire-“everlasting fire.” We saw that it was “eternal fire” that destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Jude 7), and that by means of “unquenchable fire” the walls and palaces of Jerusalem were *devoured*. Jeremiah 17:27; 2 Chronicles 36:18-21. We learned also that the “eternal fire” that fell upon the cities of the plain turned them to ashes (2 Peter 2:6), and that this is what is always accomplished when fire is unquenchable. The wicked being likened to chaff, and stubble, it does not tax our imagination in the least to understand how, when cast into unquenchable fire, they will be burned up, and be ashes. Matthew 3:12; Malachi 4:1, 3. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 696.3}

3. We have also seen that the wicked go into “everlasting punishment.” But this punishment is death (Romans 6:23), so that Matthew 25:46 simply teaches that from the death which the finally impenitent suffer, there will be no resurrection. This point was still further shown by the statement in Psalm 2:12, that even a slight manifestation of God’s wrath causes the one against whom it is directed to perish, and that since that wrath *abides* on the sinner (John 3:36) there will be no recovery from that perdition. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 696.4}

The texts already cited are amply sufficient to prove the final utter destruction of the wicked; but we have no desire to evade the point, or to pass by any text which would seem to militate against the positions taken. We therefore turn our attention to Revelation 14:9-11: “And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.” {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 696.5}

The question is, Does the expression, “the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever,” necessarily imply that the torments of the wicked will never cease? If it does, then there is an unexplainable contradiction between it and those texts which speak plainly of the final extinction of the wicked. But this cannot possibly be; it cannot for a moment be admitted that there are contradictions in the sacred record. This text, then must harmonize with the great mass of testimony already quoted. We might quote authorities on the meaning of the Greek word rendered “forever,” but we shall let the Bible explain this text, just as we have all the others, for it is only when men take it by itself, without regard to other Scriptures, that it presents any objection to the position we have taken in regard to the destruction of the wicked. In the twenty-first chapter of Exodus, the first four verses, we find the law in regard to the length of the time a Hebrew might be kept as a servant. Six years was the limit; after he had served six years, his master was bound to let him go free, for nothing, and allow him to take away as much as he brought with him. If during his term of service he had married one of his master’s servants, she and her children were to remain with the master. In such a case, however, it would often happen that the servant would rather stay with his wife and children than have his liberty; if so, the law made the following provision: {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 696.6}

“And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free; then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and *he shall serve him for ever.”* Exodus 21:5, 6. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.1}

Now will anyone claim that the life of that servant, as well as that of his master, was to be prolonged to all eternity? Certainly not; no one can be found who would gather from the above text that either the servant or his master would live any longer than a natural life-time. The text simply teaches that under the special circumstances mentioned, the servant should remain with his master and serve him continuously, as long as he should live. So we find that “forever” does not necessarily mean “to all in eternity.” {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.2}

Take another instance: In Isaiah 34:9, 10, we read, concerning the land, here called “Idumea,” as follows: “And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.” In a similar strain the prophet continues to the close of the chapter; and then we have read: “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.” Isaiah 35:1, 2. These words are spoken of the same land from which, in the preceding chapter, it is that the smoke should ascend for ever. So we see that there does come a time when the smoke does not arise from it; and that is when “the indignation of the Lord upon all nations” shall have been accomplished. Thus again we find that “forever,” even “forever and ever,” does not necessarily imply that there shall be no end. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.3}

This text is the more important to note, as it has a direct bearing on Revelation 14:11. The time when the smoke shall thus ascend for ever, is “the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion” (Isaiah 34:8), and the time when “the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations” (verse 2). This being so, and the fact having been proved that the land does afterward cease burning, and become renewed, we find that we are positively bound to admit that there will come a time when the smoke of the torment of the rebellious ones will cease; and that the statement that it shall ascend for ever and ever, means, as in the other two cases cited, but that it will ascend *continuously*, as long as there is any wicked in existence. There will be no reprieve in their case, or relaxing of the punishment. The fire which causes the smoke is unquenchable; it utterly devours the sinners; but when they have been *devoured*, and have become ashes, then the fire will of necessity cease to burn, and likewise the smoke will cease to ascend. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.4}

Read the verses (Revelation 14:9-11) once more. They (the rebellious ones) “shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture.” In our last article we learned (Psalm 2:12) the effect of the wrath of God when it is kindled even a little against the people of the earth; is to cause them to “perish,”-“to come to nothing.” Now if the wicked are made to drink of the “wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture,” certainly the result can be nothing less than their utter destruction. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.5}

We are not attempting to fix the duration of the “tribulation and anguish” which the wicked shall suffer previous to their death, nor to limit it in any way. The statement that “they have no rest day nor night,” implies that it will not be of short duration. That they will suffer anguish for a long time, there can be no doubt; neither can there be any more doubt that this anguish which will eventually be terminated by death; “for the wages of sin is death;” “sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” If we insist that the torments of the wicked never cease, then these texts have no meaning. Yet it must be borne in mind that there is no restoration to the favor of God. No; the wicked shall “go away into everlasting punishment,” even “everlasting *destruction*.” {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.6}

Revelation 14:10 is not the only place where the “wine of the wrath of God” is mentioned. In Jeremiah 25:15 we read: “For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it.” The different nations that shall drink of it are then specified, and the list closes with these words: “And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and *all the kingdoms of the world*, which are upon the face of the earth.” Verse 26. This corresponds with Psalm 75:8: “For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, *all the wicked* of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.” Now what will be the result of their drinking of this cup? We turn again to the prophecy in Jeremiah:- {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.7}

“Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Drink ye, and be drunken, and spue, *and fall, and rise no more*, because of the sword which I will send among you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; ye shall certainly drink. For, lo, I begin to bring evil on the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts.” “A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord.” “And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.” Jeremiah 25:27-29, 31, 33. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.8}

Thus we see that the drinking of the wine of the wrath of God produces death. They who drink it “fall, and rise no more.” This is perfectly in harmony with what we have previously learned of the effect of God’s wrath, when it abideth on the sinner. But there is one more text to be noticed in this connection, which settles the case absolutely. It is Obadiah 15, 16, which reads thus:- {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.9}

“For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen; as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy reward shall return upon thine own head. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, *they shall drink*, and they shall swallow down, and *they shall be as though they had not been.*” {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.10}

What stronger language could be used to show the final *utter extinction* of the wicked? And let it be remembered that this language is used concerning those who drink of “the wine up the wrath of God,” threatened in Revelation 14:9-11. Certainly all must agree, then, that this latter text, instead of teaching the endless torture of the wicked, plainly shows that day, after suffering for an unknown length of time the “tribulation and anguish” which is their just due, and finally receive the full wages of sin, which is death. E. J. W. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.11}

**“The Lord’s Day” The Signs of the Times, 10, 44.**

E. J. Waggoner

“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.” Revelation 1:10. Strange as the statement dwell may appear, an examination of this text involves an answer to the question, “Who is the Lord?” Indeed, it may be said that this question covers a large portion of the ground at issue. The fact is not going to any difficulty in the text itself, but solely to the position taken by those who have appropriated the term “Lord’s day” to the first day of the week. They have made the settlement of the question as to what day is meant by the expression “Lord’s day” depend on something which is not, or ought not to be in dispute at all. This fact will be more clearly seen by the following, from an article entitled “The Lord’s Day,” which was sent to us sometime ago for review:- {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.12}

“To learn what day is the Lord’s day, it is necessary to know who is the Lord. Adventists deny that Jesus is Lord, therefore they are prepared to deny that that day which gives Jesus must honor is the Lord’s day.” {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.13}

If the writer of the above knew anything at all about Seventh-day Adventist (for of course they are the Adventists to whom he refers), he well knew that he was penning a falsehood when he wrote it. It is a good sample, however, of the method of argument (?) by which Sunday has been exalted to, and maintained in, its present position in the professed Christian world. Instead of going directly to the point, and bringing proved-Bible proof-that Sunday is the Lord’s day, its adherents attempt to turn the mind away from a consideration of the real question at issue. They erroneously assume that if Christ is Lord, then Sunday must be the Lord’s day; then they assert that Adventists deny the divinity of Christ. The result is that, in the minds of those whom they can induce to believe their statements, a very natural prejudice is aroused against the Adventist; and in proportion as they become prejudiced against Seventh-day Adventists, they increase in devotion to any institution or practice to which Seventh-day Adventists are opposed. But there is no more reason in the assumption that, because Christ is Lord, therefore Sunday is the Lord’s day, than there would be in the assumption that, because Noah built the ark, therefore he must have been the discoverer of America. And the statement that Seventh-day Adventists deny that Christ is Lord, is nothing less than willful of falsehood. Such methods are adopted only by a man who are conscious that they have no proof for their theory, yet are determined to sustain it at all hazards. Macaulay says that whenever people have made up their minds without knowing why, “discussion ends in scurrility, the last resource of the disputant who cannot answer, and who will not submit.” {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.14}

The inspired prophet exclaimed: “O Israel, thy prophets [teachers] are like the foxes in the deserts.” Ezekiel 13:4. The marked characteristic of the fox is craftiness. He will cover up his trail, and resort to various devices to throw the hunters off his track. His characteristic cunning is manifested in deceiving his pursuers as to his relocation, causing them to think that he is in a certain hole when he is far distant. That the prophet, by this figure, aptly describes the supporters of the Sunday-Sabbath, is evident to one who has studied their tactics. Take the case before us, for instance. They accuse us of denying the divinity of Christ in order to divert attention to the real question at issue, and also to conceal the fact that they themselves in reality deny his divinity. For proof of this last statement we offer the following: {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 697.15}

It is readily conceded that the seventh-day Sabbath was appointed by God himself at Sinai; this is not denied by those who will not allow that it was given at creation. Further, they do not claim that God ever appointed any other day. But they do claim that Sunday should be observed in honor of Christ, and that he sanctioned, if he did not institute, such observance. Thus they make the Father and the Son antagonistic to each other, or, to say the least, they have each one working on a plan of his own, and for his own pleasure. But this is utterly at variance with the truth uttered by Christ, “I and my Father are one.” John 10:30. Unity with the Father is an essential part of the divinity of Christ; and therefore to claim that Christ engaged in a thing that the Father did not, or that he has any interest separate from the Father, is to deny that perfect unity, and, consequently, to deny the divinity of Christ. Since the question of the divinity of Christ is made a prime factor in determining this matter of the Lord’s day, the remainder of this article will be devoted to that point. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 698.1}

Christ says, “I and my Father are one.” This we must accept as an absolute fact in the sense in which he designed it. He prayed to the Father for his disciples, “that they may be one, even as we are one.” John 17:22. The union between the Father and the Son is the same as should exist between brethren in the faith. It is a union of thought and purpose. See 1 Corinthians 1:10. The will of one is the will of the other. The language of Christ was, “I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8. Again, “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” John 14:10. A closer union than this cannot be imagined. So close is the union that Christ is called God, as in Isaiah 9:6, and Titus 2:13. In talking with the young man (Matthew 19:16, 17) he himself plainly showed his right to be called God. The apostle Paul, speaking of Christ, says that “in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Colossians 2:9. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 698.2}

This fact of the unity of the Father and the Son, must of necessity be true at all times, and under all circumstances. Let us see. Jesus is known as the Saviour, the Redeemer of the world. It is through his blood that we have redemption (Colossians 1:14), and besides his name there is no salvation in any other. Acts 4:12. But if he and the Father are one, the Father must have had an equal share in the work of redemption. And so it is. The plan of salvation was not devised and executed by Christ apart from the Father. It is God’s love that is commended to us in the death of Christ. Romans 5:8. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16. When Christ was on earth he was doing the Father’s work, for he said, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish *his* work.” John 4:34. And in harmony with this idea were his words to Mary, “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” Luke 2:49. The message that he bore was from the Father. He himself said, “My doctrine is not mind, but His that sent me” (John 7:16): “For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.” John 12:49. And so Paul says that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world under himself.” 2 Corinthians 5:19. Therefore whatever memorials of redemption are observed, must be in honor of God as well as of Christ. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 698.3}

Again, God is best known as the Creator of the world. This, indeed, is that for which he would be remembered, for his creative power is that which distinguishes him from false gods. See Jeremiah 10:10-12; Psalm 96:5; 2 Corinthians 8:5, 6; Acts 14:15. But if Christ and the Father are one, then Christ must have shared equally with the Father in his work of creation. And so he did. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.” John 1:1-3. Of the One through whose blood we have redemption, Paul says that “by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: *all things were created by him*, and for him; and he is before all things, and *by him all things consist*.” Colossians 1:16, 17. And finally, Paul exhibits the unity of Father and Son in both creation and redemption, in these words: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days *spoken unto us by his Son*, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, *by whom also he made the worlds*.” Hebrews 1:1, 2. Thus we learn that it was through Christ that God made the world, and through Christ that God conveyed to lost man his message of mercy. In Christ God’s will is made known and executed, and thus it is that he is called “the Word of God.” {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 698.4}

When we say that all Seventh-day Adventists hold to the truths taught by these scriptures as cardinal points of faith, it will be readily perceived that a denial of the divinity of Christ is not one of their peculiarities. With Peter they believe that God hath made this same Jesus who was crucified “both Lord and Christ;” and they also gladly acknowledge that fact “that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.” John 5:23. In what way they should honor him, will be shown next week. E. J. W. {SITI November 20, 1884, p. 698.5}

**“Helps in Studying the Lesson” The Signs of the Times, 10, 45.**

E. J. Waggoner

The question has been asked, “At what time in the study of the Sabbath-school lessons should *helps* be brought in, and how should they be used?” To this question it is difficult to get an answer in a few words. In order to have a thorough knowledge of the subject, it would be necessary to have a clear understanding of what is meant by “helps;” but that must be waived for the present. We will suppose it to include the concordance, dictionaries, atlas, commentaries, histories, etc. Some will derive help from that which would be of no service to others. Taking it for granted that the things at hand are such as may be a help indeed, we would mark out, in brief, the following as a good plan for starting the lesson:- {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 710.1}

Having learned from the lesson paper what the lesson is about, and what portion of Scripture it covers, take the Bible at once, there is where you will find the lesson to be studied. Read carefully, several times, all the texts that are quoted, so as to get them well in mind. The next step will be to commit to memory the portion that is to be memorized. This, of course, will not be accomplished at one effort; to commit the text thoroughly will be a work covering the whole week. If the student wishes, and is able, he may commit the whole of the lesson to memory; this is done by some, with profit. But it is not best to attempt too much at once. It is not the desire to tax the memory to such an extent that earnest thought cannot be put upon the matter thus committed. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 710.2}

While thus learning the texts referred to, the student should bear in mind the object for which they are quoted. Very often many things may be learned from a single verse; the question will indicate for what particular thing the verses is quoted. Then after learning the answers to each individual question, the lesson should be considered as a whole, to see the relation of the questions to one another, and what general point is made by the whole lesson. When this has been done, the student is ready to consult outside helps. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 710.3}

In the matter of consulting commentaries, great care and judgment must be exercised, as on doctrinal points they are often misleading.It is not safe for any one to consult commentaries indiscriminately, unless he is previously pretty well grounded in the truth. Commentaries are more for the learned than the unlearned. If one has a good general idea of the subject which he is studying, and is anchored to certain fixed principles, so that he can sift the chaff from the wheat, he will learn much from commentaries. It often happens that a positively erroneous exposition will awaken a train of thought in the mind of the careful student, that will be very profitable. Those, however, who are most familiar with commentaries, know that quite often the text upon which the student most needs light, is the one upon which the least is said. The reasons for this is obvious. It is perhaps needless to suggest that if there is any work bearing on the lesson, of whose orthodoxy you are fully assured, that is the one to be consulted first. It will aid your judgment in your further search. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 710.4}

One “help” should never be neglected. It is that of the Holy Spirit. It is the author of the Bible (2 Peter 1:20, 21; Ephesians 6:17), and can best give light upon it. One of its offices is to guide into all truth (John 16:13), and it may be had by any one for the asking. Luke 11:13; Mark 11:24. The promise, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men literally, and upbraideth not, and its shall be given him,” is given to all. This help should be sought before beginning the lesson, and during all the time of studying it. One thing more: The Saviour has said, “If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine.” He who earnestly and prayerfully studies the word, with a sincere desire to profit by it, cannot fail to be enlightened. Jesus also said: “If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” John 14:23. Now we read that “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” When John 1:5. If then he dwells in us, what an all-powerful, ever-present help we have. Without this help, all others are worthless. E. J. W. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 710.5}

**“Good Advice for Sabbath-Schools” The Signs of the Times, 10, 45.**

E. J. Waggoner

The advice which we have to give is not our own, but is a bit that we found in a book written more than eighteen hundred years ago. It is contained in the following words of Paul to Timothy: “But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.” 2 Timothy 2:23. If every school would have this verse engrossed in large letters, suitably framed, and hung in a conspicuous place in the classroom, we believe that it would be to its benefit. There is no school in which is not needed as a warning, if not as a reproof. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 713.1}

We would by no means be understood as deprecating a spirit of investigation, or as advocating the shutting off of questions, except such as are indicated in the verse quoted. They are certain death to spirituality either in the school, the teachers’ meeting, or anywhere else. It is a lamentable fact that among any body of persons there will be some whose minds always grasp the fact that is not under consideration. A text of Scripture always conveys to them a hidden meaning, and they feel called upon to make known their doubts, or their new ideas. Others are always reaching out after the unattainable. They want to know more than is revealed. The question as to where Cain got his wife is still current. “Who was Melchizedek?” is asked with as much anxiety as though eternal happiness depended on the correct answer. The question, “How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” is still put in spite of the fact that the inspired apostle has marked the mental ability of the questioner down to zero. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 713.2}

There is no end to these foolish and unlearned questions. We mention (though not without a blush) a case that occurred in a Sabbath-school which we recently visited. In the course of the lesson, Genesis 7:14, 15 was quoted as a proof text. At the close of the hour, when the leader inquired if any one had a question to ask concerning the lesson, one pupil rose and with much seriousness asked to know the difference between a bird and a fowl (!), since both words occur in Genesis 7:14. It will be said that this is an extreme case, and that so foolish a question is seldom asked. No doubt it is an extreme case, and if the question had been only *asked* we would not mention it; but there were no less than half a dozen persons who were unguarded enough to offer *answers*. It was this fact that convinced us that the bit of advice which we have quoted is greatly needed. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 713.3}

In the current lessons in the SIGNS, on immortality, there is room for an abundance of unlearned questions. Some will want to know *how* the Spirit can return to God. Others will demand, or offer to give, an exact definition of the terms “soul” and “spirit.” “How is it that the dead can hear the voice of God?” is a question that worries not a few. “What is life?” will probably be asked until mortals reach the state where they will not dissipate their intellectual powers by employing them on unprofitable questions. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 713.4}

“They do gender strifes.” The strifes do not always appear; in fact, we seldom hear of them in Sabbath-school, nevertheless strifes is the legitimate result of such questions. The reason is that there is nothing to decide the question at issue. There is nothing to which either party to the discussion can appeal as a final authority. The opinion of one is of as much value as that of another, and none are worth anything. If the discussion of such questions does not lead to strife, it is solely because the parties have enough grace in their hearts to yield a point, or let the matter drop. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 713.5}

As a general thing, the subject matter of the lesson will suffice to fill all the time allowed. If something in the lesson brings to one’s mind a text outside of the lesson, which throws additional light upon it, by all means let him speak of it for the benefit of others. The object of every lesson is to stimulate, not to repress, thought. If the leader sees that the text has no bearing, he can state that fact in a few words, and in a manner not to wound feelings of many. It may chance that the leader’s judgment is at fault, and that the text is to the point, but so long as he is leader he must be allowed to direct the course of the lesson. In a company of earnest students there will be no dearth of good thoughts, and it would be better to let one or two be lost, than to have a discussion to no profit. If a theory can be supported by Scripture, it must be good, but *guesses* concerning the Bible do not amount to much. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 713.6}

As we before said, these questions are usually dropped before they develop into strife; but of what profit are they? Are there not enough *revealed truths* in God’s word to occupy all our powers of mind, without frittering them away on foolish questions, or those to which no answer can be given, and which, even if answered, are of no practical importance? Time is too precious to spend on trifles, and therefore let us always and everywhere heed the apostle’s admonition: “Foolish and unlearned questions avoid.” E. J. W. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 713.7}

**“‘The Lord’s Day.’ (Continued.)” The Signs of the Times, 10, 45.**

E. J. Waggoner

(*Continued.*)

In our further investigation of this subject, we shall understand that the word “Lord” is applied both to the Father and the Son, and that even though we find it in various places applied specifically to one of them, the act predicated of that one is the act of the other also. We have seen that there is no working at cross purposes between the two, but that they are “one” in every thought and act. It is sometimes claimed, in connection with Revelation 1:10, that in the New Testament Jesus only is called “Lord,” some other title being invariably applied to the Father. One text (Revelation 11:15) is sufficient to disprove that claim: “And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Here there can be no question but that “Lord” refers to the Father especially. In one verse in the Old Testament (Psalm 110:1), the word is applied to both Father and Son: “The Lord said unto my Lord, sit down at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” But in this case, the Hebrew has a different word for each; but in Revelation 11:15 the word for Lord is *Kurios*, the same that is used throughout the New Testament. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 713.8}

From John 5:23 we learn “that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.” Wherever, then, we find an act enjoined by the Father, we know that the performance of that act honors the Son also, and that the neglecting of it is as much an insult to the Son as to the Father. Disobedience to the Father dishonors Christ. Now turn to Isaiah 58:13, 14 and we shall find one way in which we are to honor God: “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.” {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 713.9}

In this text the Lord, through his prophet, speaks of “my holy day.” So it is the “Lord’s day” that is under consideration. The text shows that the Lord claims but one day as his own, because it does not say “my holy days,” nor “one of my holy days,” but *“my holy day*.” From this we also learn that the “Lord’s day” is *holy*. And still further, we learn that this holy, Lord’s day is the Sabbath: “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,” etc. Now turn to Exodus 20:8-11, and you will find all these things combined, and in addition will be told exactly what day of the week this holy Sabbath-the Lord’s day-is:- {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 714.1}

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 714.2}

Right here we stop to notice an objection. A Presbyterian Catechism, which is before us, claims that the Sabbath is not the seventh day in order from the creation, but may be “any other seventh part of our weekly time.” The reason it gives for this claim is this: “In the beginning of the commandment it is not said, ‘Remember the seventh day,’ but, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ Just so in the end of this command, the words are not, ‘The Lord blessed the seventh day,’ but, ‘The Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.’” The fallacy of this reasoning is very evident, when we remember that “*the seventh day* is *the* Sabbath.” Since the seventh day is the Sabbath, that is, the seventh day and the Sabbath exactly coincide, and are one and the same thing, a blessing pronounced on the Sabbath day was, of necessity, a blessing on the seventh day. But that there may be no chance for any to imagine that our reasoning is not sound, we quote the direct statement of the sacred record: “And *God blessed the seventh day*, and sanctified [hallowed, see Webster] it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” Genesis 2:3. In the face of this scripture, men may speculate as much as they please, but it will be in vain. It will still remain a fact that “the seventh day is the Sabbath.” {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 714.3}

“But,” it is still objected, “the commandment does not say that the seventh day *of the week* is the Sabbath, and therefore we are left to decide for ourselves which seventh day we shall keep.” The inspired record desides this point, too. But first we would ask, If the commandment does not enjoin the observance of the seventh day *of the week*, what seventh day does it enjoin; it must be the seventh or last day of a period which consists of just seven days, the first six of which are devoted to labor. But the only period of that kind known is the week. Now turn to an incident recorded in the New Testament. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 714.4}

Immediately after the death of Jesus on the cross, Joseph of Arimathaea, begged his body, and took it down and laid it in a sepulcher. The inspired historian tells us “that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.” Luke 23:54. He says further that “the women also, which came with him to Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day.” Verses 55, 56. Here we have the record of two successive days,-the preparation day, and the Sabbath of rest, which immediately followed. What next? “Now upon *the first day of the week*, very early in the morning, they came onto the sepulcher.” Luke 24:1. This was “when the Sabbath was past.” Mark 16:1. Now if the first day of the week immediately follows the Sabbath day, on what day of the week does the Sabbath come? The seventh, of course, for there are only seven days in a week. The disciples, then, rested on the seventh day of the week. But what does that signify? If you read the fifty-sixth verse entire, you will see. “And they returned, and prepared spices and appointments; and rested the Sabbath day *according to the commandment*.” We have already seen that they rested on the seventh day of the week; now if this was “according to the commandment,” what is plainer than that the fourth commandment enjoins the observance of the seventh day of *the week*? {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 714.5}

We have learned, then, that the seventh day of the week was the Lord’s day from the beginning, that the Lord sanctified it, or made it holy, and that the followers of the Lord,-those who loved to honor him,-observed it as such even after the crucifixion. And here we will leave the subject for this week. E. J. W. {SITI November 27, 1884, p. 714.6}