**“Punishment of the Wicked” The Signs of the Times, 11, 1.**

E. J. Waggoner

**THE SABBATH-SCHOOL.**

**LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST—JAN. 17**

1. How many classes of people does the Bible recognize as existing in the world? Matthew 13:24, 25. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.1}

2. What are these classes? Verse 38. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.2}

3. How long do they remain mingled together? Verses 28-30. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.3}

4. When is the harvest? Verse 39. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.4}

5. Is there any class between these two? Matthew 12:30. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.5}

6. Can one be in both these classes at the same time? Matthew 6:24. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.6}

7. When will the separation between these two classes be made? Matthew 25:31-33. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.7}

8. Briefly describe the character of these two classes? Verses 34-45. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.8}

9. What will finally become of them both? Verse 46. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.9}

10. When it is said that the righteous shall go into “life eternal,” what is meant? Luke 20:35, 36. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.10}

11. Define the words “everlasting” and “eternal.” {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.11}

12. How much difference in duration will there be between the reward of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked? Matthew 25:46. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.12}

13. What is to be punished with the wicked? Romans 6:23. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.13}

14. Since their punishment is to be everlasting, or eternal, what can you say of the death which is the wages of sin? {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.14}

15. What is said of the punishment of those who do not obey the gospel? 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.15}

16.From whom does the apostle say the everlasting destruction comes? {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.16}

17. What is it that comes from God and destroys the wicked? Revelation 22:9. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.17}

18. Will any wicked person escape the wrath of God? Nahum 1:3. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.18}

19. How many of earth’s inhabitants have never sinned? Romans 3:23. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.19}

20. Then how will it be possible for anybody to escape eternal death? 1 John 1:7. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.20}

There are innumerable classes of people in the world, according to a human reckoning, but according to God’s standard-the Bible-there are only two. These are the righteous and the wicked. God made man upright, and designed that he should remain so; but the enemy came in and marred the handywork of the Creator. Since the fall of Adam there has not been a time when there have not been wicked persons on the earth. Indeed, so great has been the contamination that there has been no man since that time who was not to a greater or lesser extent a sinner. It is evident, then, that if at that time the tares-the wicked of earth-had it been plucked up, there would have been no wheat left. Both are to grow together until the harvest-the end of the world. Then a separation will be made by the only one who is able to distinguish between the good grain and the worthless matter. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.21}

From these facts two things are evident. 1. There are only two classes. Christ said: “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.” Matthew 12:30. There is no provision made for people who are “as good as the average.” To be only as good as the average of mankind, is to be very bad. The standard is-*good*. Anything different from that is bad. 2. None receive the reward until the Lord comes. In the end of the world-the harvest-the master sends for his angels, and they “sever the wicked *from among* the just.” The farmer does not reap one portion of his wheat-field in the spring, another in midsummer. And still another in the fall. There is a special harvest-time, and then all his grain is reaped. So the Lord has not been all the time gathering from this field that he has sown, but has “appointed a day in the which he will judge the world.” “The harvest is the *end* of the world,” not the beginning, middle, and end. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.22}

From Matthew 25:35-45 we learn that the Lord weighs not only *actions* but intentions. Those to whom the king says, “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom,” etc., have not an opinion of their merit. They have had such exalted ideas of right that their humble deeds seem as nothing in comparison. But love to Christ is the mainspring of all their action, and that glorifies every deed however small. Christ identifies himself with his people so closely that whatever is done to them is accounted as done directly to him. On the other hand, we learn that no act, however worthy in itself, is of any value in the sight of God unless done for love to Christ. The heathen did many good things. Their philosophers taught what they called “virtue,” some things in which were really good. But all their boasted virtue was only for the exaltation of self. Selfishness was the motive that prompted all their deeds; and since a fountain cannot send the forth at the same time both sweet water and bitter, neither can a good accompany evil, it follows that even their seeming good deeds were really evil. On this same basis, whatever is done “*In order* that we may have eternal life,” with the idea that good deeds are going to make one worthy of reward, is all in vain. Love must be the ruling motive. If we serve God because of gratitude to him for his love that has already been manifested to us, his love will be still further manifested in *giving* us eternal life. His love will always be as much greater than ours as he is greater than we; consequently the utmost efforts that our love can prompt will fall infinitely short of compensating for his benefits to us. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.23}

“And these [the wicked] shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life the eternal.” Matthew 25:46. The words of “eternal” and “everlasting” are from the same word in the original, and mean the same. We know that in this case they mean “without end,” for Christ tells us that those who obtain that world, cannot die anymore (Luke 20:35, 36); hence eternal life means life without end.Then eternal or everlasting punishment means punishment without end. This will be the fate of the wicked. But mark; this verse; does not tell the *nature* of the punishment; only tells us that the punishment will be inflicted, and that it will last eternally. Romans 6:23 tells us what the punishment is to be: “The wages of sin is death.” Then Matthew 25:46 might very properly be paraphrased thus: “And these-wicked-shall go away into eternal death; but the righteous into eternal life.” This is exactly what the text teaches. In harmony with this Paul says of those who know not God, and do not obey the gospel, that they “shall be punished with *everlasting destruction*.” This cannot be the case if they are never *destroyed*. The agent of this destruction is to be fire, which is to come “from the presence of the Lord.” See 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 20:9. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.24}

“The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked.” Nahum 1:3. No guilty person can escape the wrath of God. How then can anybody escape eternal death, since “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”? Only by having their guilt taken away by the blood of the Lamb of God. If we do not come to Christ, we can never have life; but if he is “made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification,” he will also be unto us “redemption.” E. J. W. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 6.25}

**“Fate of the Wicked” The Signs of the Times, 11, 1.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON FROM THE JEWISH SACRIFICES**

The prophet David had in his lifetime an experience similar to that of many others. That to which we refer is recorded in the seventy-third psalm. He thought things were very unequally and unjustly divided. He saw that the wicked were as a rule in better circumstances than the righteous; and in contemplating this, he came very near making shipwreck of this faith. Said he: “But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm. They [are] not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.... Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression; they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.... And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High? Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.” Verses 2-12. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 8.1}

As he contrasted his condition with theirs, he concluded that the service of the Lord didn’t pay. His words were: “Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.” Verses 13, 14. How many people we have heard reason in the same way. “If God is just,” they say, “why does he allow Mr. A, who is a humble, devoted Christian, to suffer so much of poverty and sickness, while Mr. B, his blasphemous neighbor, has an abundance of everything, with nothing to trouble him?” It is short-sighted reasoning, as David himself found out, although not from his own reasoning as to what God ought to do. He continues: “When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.” Verses 16-20. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 8.2}

In these verses we find a striking confirmation of the texts which have before been quoted as proving the final utter extinction of the wicked. Their present security is only apparent, not real; they are in slippery places, and are to be cast down to destruction. As in a moment they are to be brought into desolation. More than this, when the Lord arises to take vengeance on his adversaries, they are to be as a dream when one awakes from sleep-vanished into nothingness. As elsewhere expressed, they are to be “as the early dew that passeth away.” {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 8.3}

All this the psalmist found out when he went into the sanctuary of the Lord. Let us then, go in with him, and see for ourselves what is there taught concerning the fate of the wicked. It is evident that we must consider that part of the sanctuary service which has to do with sin, if we are to learn anything concerning the end of the wicked. This service is given somewhat at length in the fourth chapter of Leviticus. We will quote enough of the chapter to bring the matter directly before us:- {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 8.4}

“And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty; or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering. And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the Lord; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.” Leviticus 4:27-31. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 8.5}

With some modifications, of a minor character, this was the ceremony to be performed when sin had been committed. The victim to be offered might be a bullock, a goat, a lamb, or a pidgeon, according to the rank or wealth of the sinner, the poor not being required to bring so costly an offering as the wealthy. But in all the principle was the same, and that principle is so simple that a child can easily grasp it. The sinner, by laying his hands upon the head of the offering, transferred, in figure, his sins to the victim, which represented Christ, “who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree.” 1 Peter 2:24. The offering having thus, in figure, received the sins of the transgressors, was slain, thus prefiguring Christ, who was “delivered for our offenses,” and who “died for the ungodly.” When this was done and the blood or flesh of the victim had been carried into the sanctuary, the man’s sins were forgiven him. If he remained penitent until the day of atonement, his sins were blotted out entirely when the sanctuary was cleansed. Leviticus 17. In all this reference was had to Christ, who “appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.1}

As a victim, when it had in figure received the sins of the transgressor, was slain, so Christ, when the Lord had laid on him the iniquity of the all, “poured out his soul unto death.” He died for us, “the just for the unjust;” thus showing what would be man’s fate had the offering not been made, or should he not accept it. And so, in the figure, the penitent Jew, as the victim bearing his sin was slain before his eyes, was reminded that “the wages of sin is *death*.” The victim was then burned to ashes, thus showing both the instrument and the completenesss of the sinner’s destruction; and so the penitent was taught in a manner that he could not misunderstand nor forget, “the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.” {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.2}

Now no one can deny that these sacrifices typified Christ’s sacrifice, nor that Christ himself did really die for sinners, unless he denies the truth of the Bible. Then the conclusion is unavoidable that if Christ had not died all men must have died, for all men are sinners; and further, since “he was manifested to take away our sin,” thus saving us from death because he saves us from sin, it is just as evident that those who do not wash their robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, will in the end perish. Their fate will be the same as though no sacrifice had been made. This is what David learned when he went into the sanctuary of the Lord, and this made him content with his hard lot. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.3}

One text more must suffice for the direct testimony concerning the destruction of the wicked. We give it because the contrast between the righteous and the wicked is so marked. It is Psalm 37:37, 37: “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace. But the *transgressors shall be destroyed* together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off.” Note the contrast: The end of the upright is peace, but the end of the wicked shall be cut off. Dr. Barnes says that the word rendered “end” means properly “the last or extreme part; then, the end or issue of any thing, that which comes *after* it; then, the after time, the future, the hereafter. Isaiah 2:2; Micah 4:1; Genesis 49:1. Daniel 10:14. It may, therefore, refer to *anything* future; and would be well expressed by the word *hereafter*.” The Septuagint has *engkatateimma*, the meaning of which is, according to Liddell and Scott, “a reminder.” Substituting this meaning in the place of the word as translated, we get the full force of the text. Thus: “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the *remainder* of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the *remainder* of the wicked shall be cut off.” And this agrees with what the psalmist says in the earlier part of this, and in the seventy-third psalm. The righteous, although they may be plagued and afflicted in this earth, will, in the new earth, “delight themselves in the abundance of peace” all the remainder of their lives, which will last to all eternity. But the remainder of the wicked, who now have all that they desire, shall be cut off. Nothing could more clearly express their other extinction. “The end [remainder or hereafter] of the wicked shall be cut off;” *i.e.*, there shall be no remainder to their lives. E. J. W. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.4}

**“The Lord’s Supper and the Laying On of Hands” The Signs of the Times, 11, 1.**

E. J. Waggoner

The following earnest letter of inquiry to the editor was recently received from a reader of the SIGNS, in Iowa:- {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.5}

“To-night I have finished the second reading of your work, ‘Thoughts on Baptism,’ particularly that part relating to trine immersion. I bitterly opposed the Adventists here in Iowa, for nearly two years, but now I inquire of them. Baptism has been the hardest point to yield, so far. (I was a trine immersionist.) I have been looking up your references as far as I am able, and so far I have found them correct. I have compared yours and J. H. Moore’s tract, and as the light comes in, I believe more and more in single immersion. I believe your tract [pamphlet] will settle the difficulty with me. But there are other things that I do not yet understand. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.6}

“Why do not the Adventists observe the Lord’s Supper? as it is evident the Lord with his apostles partook of a full meal. John 13:4. And in 1 Corinthians 11:20, Paul speaks of the Lord’s Supper, and if a hint that it, as Paul gives, shows that such a thing did exist, why are not the Dunkards right; partaking of a full meal? They (the Dunkards) also lay hands on the baptized, that they may receive the Holy Ghost. Acts 8:17. Why do not the Adventist do so? {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.7}

“I write this verily for information and explanations of the Scriptures referred to. Please don’t delay. I desire to be in harmony with Christ and his people before probation closes. Yours fraternally, in hope. J. J. E.” {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.8}

**THE LORD’S SUPPER**

Our brother is mistaken in supposing that Adventists do not celebrate the Lord’s Supper. We judge, however, that he does not regard the ceremony which will serve as being really the Lord’s Supper, because it is not an ordinary, regular meal. That the Lord’s Supper as celebrated by Adventists, and Christian churches generally, is identical in the form with that instituted by our Lord, and that to making it an ordinary meal is a perversion of the ordinances, can be easily demonstrated by the Bible, to the satisfaction, we think, of our inquiring brother. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.9}

1. It is true that Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, does speak of a full meal in connection with the Lord’s Supper, but only to condemn the practice. In this first epistle the apostle corrects many errors of the Corinthian church. After rebuking certain other unseemly practices, he takes up their manner of celebrating the Lord’s Supper, and says (1 Corinthians 11:20, 21): “When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s Supper. For in eating everyone taketh the before other his own supper; and one is hungry and another is drunken.” That is to say, “Although you profess to celebrate the Lord’s Supper, you do not take it in fact, because you eat and drink to satisfy the demands of appetite.” No stronger evidence than these two verses is needed to show that those who partake of a full meal under the impression that they are celebrating the Lord’s Supper, are grievously mistaken. In astonishment at their obtuseness, the apostle continues: “What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the house of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.” {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.10}

2. Although the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper was instituted on the night of the last Passover, it was entirely distinct from that meal. This is apparent from an examination of the records of the evangelist. Matthews says: “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; *this* is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for *this* is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Chap. 26:26-28. Mark’s words are almost the same. Luke says (chap. 22:19, 20): “And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; *this do* in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup *after supper*, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.11}

From these texts we learn (1) That it is only the bread and the wine that commemorate our Lord’s death; and (2) That these emblems were partaken of “after supper,” *i. e.*, after the Passover meal. Both these points are very clearly made by Paul and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, after he had shown the Corinthians what the Lord’s Supper is not. We quote: “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: *this do* *in remembrance of me*. After the same manner also he took the cup, when *he had supped* [“after the eating of the evening meal”], saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood; *this do ye*, as oft as ye drink it, *in remembrance of me*. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.” {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.12}

This is too plain to be misunderstood. Paul did not depend upon hearsay for his evidence, but received it directly from the Lord himself. All that they were to do in remembrance of Christ, as showing forth his death till he should come, was to break and eat bread, and drink of the cup; and this memorial was instituted after the supper was over, and was entirely distinct from it. The Lord’s Supper consists simply in partaking of the bread and wine, emblems of the broken body and spilled blood of Christ; whatever more is added is a perversion of the ordinance. Since the institution of the memorial was entirely distinct from the Passover Supper, and had no reference to it, there is no more reason for having the celebration of the Lord’s Supper preceded by a full, ordinary meal, than there would be for introducing it by the performance of some other act of Christ on that day. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.13}

More proof might be given on this subject, but it would seem that these Bible statements of what the Lord’s Supper is, and the declaration by Paul that the eating of a meal is not the Lord’s Supper, should be sufficient to settle the matter. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.14}

**LAYING ON OF HANDS**

To the question why the Adventists do not lay hands on baptized persons, that they may receive the Holy Ghost, it would be sufficient reply to say that no such act is commanded. The gospel commission (Matthew 28:19, 20) says nothing of the laying on of hands, in addition to baptism; consequently we have no authority for such a custom. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.15}

More than this, we find that the Holy Ghost was not given in a fixed, arbitrary manner, even in the apostles’ time. In the case cited, and in Acts 19:6, we learn that the apostles laid hands on baptized persons, who then received the Holy Ghost; but in Acts 10:44, 45 we have an instance where the Holy Ghost fell on a room full of people who had not been baptized, and without the imposition of a human hand; and in the case of the conversion and baptism of the eunuch (Acts 8:26-40), which is related with great minuteness, we have no intimation concerning any act of laying on of hands. When the apostles laid hands on those whom they baptized, it seems to have been in view of an especial work which they were to perform. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 9.16}

With these facts before us, and others that might be cited, we think that might be cited, we think that Adventists would be acting in a very presumptuous and unwarranted manner, if, in partial imitation of the apostles, they should lay hands on people in order that they might receive the Holy Ghost. E. J. W. {SITI January 1, 1885, p. 10.1}

**“The Sabbath-School” The Signs of the Times, 11, 2.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST—JAN. 24**

1. When will all the nations of earth be gathered before the Lord? {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.1}

2. How many classes of people will there be? {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.2}

3. Name and describe them? {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.3}

4. What will be said to those on the right hand-the righteous? Matthew 25:34. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.4}

5. What will the Lord say to those on the left? Verse 41. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.5}

6. Have any people ever yet been punished with everlasting or eternal fire? Jude 7. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.6}

7. Describe the fate of Sodom and Gomorrha. Genesis 19:24, 25. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.7}

8. How long a time, in comparison with eternity, did it take to accomplish this overthrow? Lamentations 4:6. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.8}

9. As the result of being overthrown by “everlasting fire,” what did those cities become? 2 Peter 2:6. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.9}

10. After the cities became ashes what must have become of the fire? {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.10}

11. Then does “everlasting fire” necessarily burn to all eternity? {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.11}

12. What did the prophet Malachi say of the fierceness of the fires of the last day? Malachi 4:1. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.12}

13. As the result of this fire, what will the wicked be? Verse 3. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.13}

14. When this takes place, what will have become of the fire which devoured them? {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.14}

15. What wonderful promise was made concerning Jerusalem, on condition that the people should obey the Lord? Jeremiah 17:24, 25. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.15}

16. What did the Lord say that he would do if they did not obey him? Verse 27. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.16}

17. What did he say that this fire should do? *Ib.* {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.17}

18. What did he say should not be done to the fire? *Ib*. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.18}

19. What is the meaning of the word “devour”? {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.19}

20. If the fire, when kindled, had been quenched, would the gates and palaces have been devoured? {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.20}

21. When that upon which the flames were feeding was “devoured,” what must have become of the fire? {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.21}

22. What did Christ say of the fire into which the wicked are to be cast? Mark 9:45. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.22}

23. Since the fire is not to be quenched, what will it do? Revelation 20:9. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.23}

24. Then how much of the wicked will there be left? Malachi 4:1. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.24}

It has been said that the Bible is like a fiddle, because it will play any tune that is desired. To this it has justly been replied that you can get only one tune from a fiddle if you keep your fingers off from the strings. So the Bible of itself does not teach many and contradictory doctrines, but only one, harmonious in all its parts. In no case is this better illustrated than in the doctrine of the punishment of the wicked, which we are now considering. If we only let the Bible explain itself, nothing more harmonious was ever seen. Our lesson covers one or two texts which suffer much from being tampered with by human hands; let us see how they appear when the Bible is used as a commentary. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.25}

“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.” The “angels that kept not their first estate” sinned against such great light that there was for them no forgiveness. If man had not yielded to temptation, they would alone have suffered the torments of the everlasting fire; but now they are to be accompanied by wicked men who will not be forgiven. “And this torment is never to end,” says one, and then, of perchance, he asks, “Is it just for God to cause a man to suffer the eternal torment for the sins committed in one short life?” We answer, It must be, if that is what he has threatened to do. We are not to decide by our ideas of justice what God ought to or will do, but must derive our ideas of justice from what God says he will do; for he is the embodiment of justice, as well as of every other desirable thing. Perhaps if we study carefully, we shall find that God has not threatened anybody with eternal torment. Eternal *punishment*, as we learned last week, is threatened; but we must remember that this punishment is *death*, and that no one has received his punishment until death takes place, and then *torment* must necessarily cease. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.26}

As we read along the New Testament, with this text in mind, our attention is caught by a similar expression in Jude, the seventh verse: “Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, 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.” Everybody is familiar with the story of the destruction of Sodom. It is found in Genesis 19. There we learn (verses 24, 25) that God rained upon Sodom and Gomorrha fire and brimstone, and *overthrew* them and all their inhabitants. Peter tells us how complete was this overthrow: “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.” 2 Peter 2:6. When a thing is reduced to ashes, we know that every particle of it that is combustible has been burned, and that fire can no longer be kept burning upon it. In fact, there is no surer way of putting out a fire than of covering it with ashes, for they are incombustible. So then the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha having been long since turned to ashes, must have, for an equally long time, ceased to burn; nobody will question this, for all believe that a portion of the Dead Sea covers a place where they once stood. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.27}

And still those cities suffered the vengeance of “eternal fire.” This being true, we reasonably conclude that although the wicked are to go into everlasting or eternal fire, they need not necessarily continue to burn to all eternity. At least Matthew 25:41 does not teach that they will. Now if we carry our investigation a little further, we shall see that, as in the case of the cities of the plain when they were turned to ashes, the fire which prey upon the wicked must cease to burn. “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.” Malachi 4:1. Stubble cannot long withstand the action of fire, and we are not surprised to learn that if the wicked are stubble nothing will be left of them when once they are subjected to the flames. But read verse 3: “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.” That settles the matter beyond controversy. We know not how long a time it may take to reduce the wicked to ashes; to our comprehension it will doubtless be a very long time; but we are certain that they eventually will be ashes, and are just as certain that when that time comes, the “everlasting fire” which consumed them will have ceased to burn. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.28}

The learned commentator, Dr. Barnes, although he believed in the eternal torment of the wicked, has given the following just criticism on Jude seven:- {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.29}

“The phrase ‘eternal fire’ is one that is often used to denote future punishment-as expressing the severity and intensity of suffering. See Notes on Matthew 25:41. As here used, it cannot mean that the fires which consumed Sodom and Gomorrha 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 January 8, 1885, p. 22.30}

Mark 9:45 is another text that is sadly misunderstood. People think, or, rather, conclude without thinking, that “fire that never shall be quenched” must of course always continue to burn. But what is the natural consequence to perishable substances when the fire into which they are cast is not quenched? Why, they are burned up, of course. They are speedily reduced to ashes, and then the fire, which was not quenched, dies a natural death. Throw stubble into the fire; if you speedily quench the flame, the stubble may be saved; but if the fire is unquenchable, nothing can keep the stubble from becoming utterly consumed. So of the wicked; if the Bible said that the fire shall be quenched, we should know that they would escape punishment; but no human power can quench the fire of the last day, and God said that he will not. So we must conclude, even if the Bible did not tell us, that the wicked are to be *devoured*, not preserve alive. When the fire has done its work, they will be left “neither root to nor branch.” E. J. W. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 22.31}

**“False Witness” The Signs of the Times, 11, 2.**

E. J. Waggoner

Some time ago we received a circular from a crank who pretended to know exactly when the Lord would come. We say “a crank,” because his professed “calculations” showed that in his mental make-up he was decidedly crooked. He represented nobody, and made no pretensions to, and we thought we treated his guess-work with great respect when we promptly granted it a place in the waste basket. The time that he had set was Jan. 5, 1885, and as this date is in the past, he is doubtless now at work on a new and improved computation. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 25.1}

But news was scarce after election, and the most of the papers to which this circular was sent, gave it a prominent place in their columns. More than this, both secular and religious papers have given the gratuitous information that “the Adventists have fixed it that the end of the world is to be January 5, 1885.” When this statement was first noticed, a denial of it, and a true statement of the case was sent to the San Francisco *Bulletin*, which showed its fairness by giving it as prominent a place as it did the other. But not one of the papers that copied the original charge have copied the refutation. After that refutation appeared in the *Bulletin*, a religious journal in San Francisco repeated the statement that the Adventists have fixed the time for the end of the world. We can only conclude that, not having been able to make any headway against the doctrines of the seventh day at best, it is willing, in order to create prejudice against them, to place itself among those who love and make a lie. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 25.2}

Wherever Seventh-day Adventists are known, it is well understood that they set no time for the Lord to come, and have no sympathy with those who do so. It is true that some who profess to be Adventists do presume to fix the time when the Lord will come; but the unwarranted act of a few irresponsible persons should not be set down against an entire denomination, which repudiates both the persons and their methods. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 25.3}

The Lord himself, speaking of his coming, said, “But of that day and hour knoweth no man.” This is in the same chapter in which he says that after certain signs have taken place, we must “*know* that he is near, even at the doors.” The same word that obliges us to be Adventists, also obliges us to confess our ignorance as to the day, or month, or year when the Master will return. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 25.4}

We have no expectation of causing false reports to cease. We do not suppose that, because of our protests, people will cease to show their contempt for the Bible doctrine of the coming of the Lord, by maligning and ridiculing those who profess it. On the contrary, we expect that such things will increase. Personally they did not trouble us, and our only object in noticing them is to disabuse the minds of some who have innocently believed these false reports, and who, but for them, would look with favor on the doctrines which we are sure are of vital importance. E. J. W. {SITI January 8, 1885, p. 25.5}

**“Punishment of the Wicked-Continued” The Signs of the Times, 11, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

**THE SABBATH-SCHOOL.**

**LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST—JAN. 31**

1. With what does Paul say that the wicked shall be punished? 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.1}

2. When will this punishment take place? {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.2}

3. From whom does this destruction come? {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.3}

4. What does the prophet Joel say of the day of the Lord? Joel 1:15. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.4}

5. What is the agent of this destruction that comes from the Lord? 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 20:9. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.5}

6. What does the inspired writer say of the suffering of those who are thus *devoured*? Revelation 20:10. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.6}

7. Repeat another testimony on this point. Revelation 14:9-11. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.7}

8. What, in ancient times, was the law concerning Hebrew servants? Exodus 21:2. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.8}

9. If in the seventh year the servant refused to leave his master, what was done? Verses 5, 6. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.9}

10. After the ceremony of boring the servant’s ear had been performed, how long was he to serve his master? *Ib*. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.10}

11. Can this by any possibility mean that in such a case the servant was never to die? {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.11}

12. What must we understand by the expression, “he shall serve him forever”? (See note.) {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.12}

13. Then what may we understand by similar expressions concerning the torment of the wicked? {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.13}

14. What positive proof can you give that those sufferings will eventually be terminated by cessation of existence? Malachi 4:1, 3. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.14}

15. How many other texts do you remember that prove the same thing? {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.15}

“Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled 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.” 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9. The time when this vengeance will be taken on the disobedient is stated in verses 7 and 10. It is when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, and when he shall be glorified in his saints. Compare Matthew 25:31-36. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.16}

There is a quite general misunderstanding of this text in Thessalonians. We frequently hear it quoted as though it read that the wicked shall be banished from the presence of the Lord. But the text says no such thing. Further, to be banished from the presence of the Lord is an impossibility, for God is omnipresent; he fills the universe; and still further, if such a thing were possible, it would be no punishment for the wicked, but would be what they would desire. No position could be more unsatisfactory to a wicked man than to be continually in the presence of God. What the text does say of the wicked is that they “shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” The destruction comes from the Lord. So we read in Joel 1:15 that the day of the Lord comes “as a destruction from the Almighty.” And Paul in another place says that the wicked shall be consumed by the spirit of his mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming, thus showing how they are destroyed from, or by, the glory of his power. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.17}

From Revelation 21:9, as well as elsewhere, we learn that fire is to be the agent in the destruction of the wicked. As they compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, fire comes down from God out of heaven, and *devours* them.This indicates complete extermination. Then what are we to understand when, in the next verse, we read that they “shall be tormented day and night forever and ever”? Some may answer that this applies only to the devil, who deceived them. This will not meet the difficulty, since the Scriptures do not teach that Satan is to be punished differently from the wicked, except in degree; and in Revelation 14:11 we have a statement concerning the wicked, that is similar to that in Revelation 22:10. Now since John, looking at things that are to be, as though they had been, saw that the fire *devoured* the wicked, and Paul says that they shall be punished with everlasting *destruction*, we must conclude that “forever and ever” must be limited in duration. For if the wicked are always to exist in torment, then it would necessarily follow that they will never be destroyed nor devoured. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.18}

The Bible must be its own interpreter, and we will let this text, which seems obscure, be explained by another one, which has no obscurity. Turn to Exodus 21, and read verses 2-6: “If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master’s, and he shall go out by himself. 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.” We say that there is no obscurity in this passage. The different parts of the transaction are clearly indicated, and the result is plainly stated: after having his ear bored through which an awl, the servant was to continue a bondman forever. And no one would mistake the statement, and suppose that the servant was to endure the rigors of servitude throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Certainly not. All would agree that this means simply that the servant could, under those circumstances, derive no benefit from the Sabbatic year, but that he must serve without intermission just as long as his life should last. This is all there is to it. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.19}

“But why,” says one, “do you introduce such an instance as that?” In order to show that the term “forever” does not necessarily indicate that the thing to which it is applied has no end. It may be applied to an object that is in its nature perishable, as in the case of the servant. In general this rule may be laid down: Whenever there is anything in the nature of the object spoken of that forbids the idea of its eternal existence, the term “forever” merely implies continuity of existence. God’s word forbids us to imagine that the wicked shall exist throughout eternity; so when we read that they shall be “tormented day and night forever and ever,” we are to understand that their torments will be long, and will be unintermitting until they are utterly consumed. That such a time will come is taught by the word of the Lord: “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*.” Malachi 4:1. “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.” Verse 3; Matthew 3:11, 12; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 2:8; Revelation 22:9; Romans 6:23 John 3:16, 36; and many other texts may be cited to prove the same thing, namely, that the wicked will eventually be utterly exterminated. E. J. W. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 38.20}

**“A Puzzled Correspondent” The Signs of the Times, 11, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

From a gentlemen in Medina, Ohio, who has read a few copies of the SIGNS, we have received a letter which contains objections that are common to so many, and which seems to indicate a spirit of kindness and candor on the part of the writer, so that we are constrained to print it entire. It reads as follows:- {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 40.1}

“DEAR BRETHREN: I have just received a copy of the SIGNS, and have read it with great pleasure and profit, though the journal is not new to me. Your views of the second advent, immortality through Christ, etc., all meet my views exactly. I do not understand the Sunday question, however, as you do. You seem to imply that if we begin on Sabbath, Dec. 5, 1884, and go back by sevens, we should arrive at the Sabbath which God gave to Moses; but as no sane man pretends to tell the year the law was given, of course we cannot tell where to stop, and hence all is guess-work. I am just as sure that to-day [Dec. 7] is the truth Sabbath, as you can be that Dec. 5 was. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 40.2}

“But even if we did know this, what then? I profess to be a Christian, and hence I care no more for what Moses commanded, than I do for what Mohammed commanded. Christ is the *end* of the law to everyone that believeth. He who follows Christ does more honor to Moses and the law than he does who worships law only. Christ elaborated every one of the commandments in the decalogue except regarding Sunday, or the ‘Sabbath,’ and of that he speaks as though it were more for us than we for that. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 40.3}

“If infidels cared nothing for Sunday, how can you make them respect Saturday? Why not change their hearts instead of their calendar? {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 40.4}

“Yours in Christ, W. P. R.” {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 40.5}

Our brother has got things sorely confused in his mind, but we will endeavor to set him straight in regard to them. In the first place, we shall inform him that since December 5 fell on Friday, we do not count that day either backward or forward, to find the Sabbath. We are Christians, not Mohammedans. He says, “I am just as sure that today [Dec. 7, the date of the letter] is the true Sabbath, as you can be that Dec. 5 was.” Granted; but unless his confidence exceeds that, he will not be likely to do much homage to the Sunday. We can say ourselves that we also are “just as sure” that Sunday, December 7, was the Sabbath as we are that Friday, December 5, was, and not one particle more so. There is just the same Bible authority for keeping Sunday that there is for keeping Friday, and that is-just none at all. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 40.6}

Of one thing we are just as certain as it is possible to be of any thing, and that is that if, beginning with any Sabbath (Saturday), we should count back by sevens, we should find that we have the same seventh-day Sabbath which God commanded the Jews to keep, and upon which he rested in the beginning. It is not at all necessary that we should know the exact age of the world, nor the exact year in which the law was given. The following points establish the matter beyond all controversy: 1. The Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the one upon which God rested at creation. See Exodus 20:8-11; Genesis 2:2, 3. 2. It was the same day that was kept in the time of Christ, and of which he declared himself Lord (Mark 2:28), for the women who followed Jesus to the sepulcher returned and rested the Sabbath day “according to the commandment.” Luke 23:56. 3. It is not possible that the reckoning of days since that time could have been lost, for the Jews, who as a nation have kept the Sabbath quite strictly ever since the Babylonian captivity, were dispersed to every nation under the heavens, and there is not the slightest disagreement among them as to which day is the true Sabbath, no matter how widely separated they may be. Moreover, within a comparatively short time after the days of Christ, his professed followers adopted the day of the heathen festival of the sun,-the first day of the week,-professing to do it in honor of Christ’s resurrection on the first day of the week; not in whatever part of the world you go, you invariably find that the so-called “Christian Sabbath” is the day following the Sabbath which to Jews observe. Thus we know that the day of the Sabbath has never been lost since the creation. On this point, Bishop E. O. Haven, of the M. E. Church, said: {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 40.7}

“There is no good reason for denying that the Jewish Sabbath is the true seventh day, reckoning from the creation of man, and that the Christian Sunday is the first day of the Hebrew week, or of the genuine week.”-*Pillars of Truth, p.89.* {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.1}

And now that we *know* that we have the original seventh-day Sabbath, “what then?” Says our brother: “I profess to be a Christian, and hence I care no more for what Moses commanded than I do for what Mohammed commanded.” Well, we profess to be Christians too, yet we care, far more for Moses than we do for Mohammed, because “we know that God spake unto Moses” (see Numbers 12:6-8; Deuteronomy 34:10), and there is no evidence that God ever manifested himself in any way to Mohammed. Christ was the prophet the Lord was to raise up, like unto Moses (Deuteronomy 18:18, 19; Acts 3:22-26); and he reproved the Jews because they did not really believe the words of Moses. Indeed Christ plainly says that they could not believe on him unless they first believed the words of Moses (John 5:46, 47); and therefore if our brother really cares no more for Moses than he does for Mohammed, he has the word of Christ before for it that his profession of Christianity amounts to nothing; that without believing Moses he cannot be a Christian. We do not believe that he carefully considered what he was writing. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.2}

But the Sabbath commandment does not rest on the authority of Moses. “And God spake all these words, saying, ... 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,” etc. Exodus 20:1-11. “These words *the Lord spake* unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.” Deuteronomy 5:22. Certainly our brother cares something for what the Lord commanded, even if he has no regard for Moses. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.3}

“Christ is the *end* of the law to everyone that believeth.” True; but must we therefore conclude that with every believer in Christ there must be an end of keeping the law? Let us try a case, and see if our brother will agree with us. I believe in Christ, therefore I will curse and swear, because Christ is the end of the law which says, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.” Again, because I believe in Christ, who is the end of the law, I will shoot the next man I meet, and take his watch and purse. “No, no,” our friend will surely say, “that would not do; if you believe in Christ you must forsake sin.” Exactly; so say the Scriptures: “He that saith he abideth in him [Christ] ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” 1 John 2:6. And he “did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” 1 Peter 2:22. Sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4); so then if we profess to abide in Christ we must cease transgressing the law, or, in other words, we must keep the law. Now by what rule does our brother decide that, because Christ is the end of law, we are at liberty to violate the fourth commandment, and are not at liberty to violate the third, sixth, or eighth? “Are not your ways unequal?” {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.4}

Is the follower of Christ at liberty to break the law in any particular? Listen to the words of Jesus himself: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:17-19. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 7:21. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.5}

The follower of Christ it is not free to break the law, although Christ is the end of the law. Then in what sense is he the end of the it? In this sense that in the present state of the world Christ is the object of the law; *i.e.*, the law, having no power of itself to make sinful man perfect, drives them to Christ, in whom they may attain all the perfection which the law requires. Paul clearly expresses the case in a few words: “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak *through the flesh*, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:3, 4. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.6}

“He who follows Christ does more honor to Moses and the law than he does who worships the law only.” Very true; for if any one “worships the law only,” he will make a miserable failure; “without me,” says Christ, “ye can do nothing.” Christ’s office is to enable us to *do*, as well as to cleanse us from past transgressions. One cannot be a follower of Christ without keeping the law. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.7}

“Christ elaborated every one of the commandments of the decalogue, except regarding Sunday.” Very much mixed. Christ said nothing about the second commandment, and did not elaborate the eighth, ninth, nor tenth; yet we do not feel of liberty to slight them on that account. And he certainly did not elaborate the commandment regarding Sunday, because no such commandment was in existence until the rise of the “man of sin,” many years after the time of Christ’s earthly ministry. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.8}

“The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” Mark 2:27. These are the expressed, not implied, words of Christ. It was made for man’s use. Now if our brother wishes to know just how God designs that man shall use the Sabbath, let him read the fourth commandment, and he will find out. God made the Sabbath for man to keep holy. Will our brother keep it so, and thus use the Sabbath as God intended it should be used? {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.9}

The paragraph concerning infidels and the Sabbath will be noticed in another article. E. J. W. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.10}

**“Easy Conversion” The Signs of the Times, 11, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

Much ado has been made over the announcement that Mr. M. K. Schermerhorn, one of the most prominent of Unitarian preachers, has been admitted into the Episcopal Church, and this taken orders therein, and “the church” has been congratulated upon so valuable and accession. According to Mr. Schemerhorn’s own statement, however, his “conversion” does not seem to have been prompted wholly by unselfish motives. He says:- {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.11}

“As to Unitarianism, I will say that it has been a constant disappointment to me, though I always tried to make the best of it. I have seen the Unitarian cause steadily declining. Out of fifteen societies in the New York and Hudson River Conferences, for instance, six have died outright during the past twelve years. No new ones have been started, and those remaining are, with three or four exceptions, just alive, and that is all. This same is more or less true all over America and England, too. In short, I lost all hope for any permanent growth of Unitarianism long before I left Newport, and this, in part, was what (providentially, as I now feel) caused me to turn my studies and thought in the direction of the older churches and faith.” {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.12}

Even in politics such an avowal as that would not be considered a credit to any man. Much has been said, especially during the last campaign, about standing up for a principle, even though the party be in the minority; but here we find a clergyman openly announcing that he his left the church of which he was long champion, solely because he had no hope that it would ever rival other denominations, and people do not think that there is anything out of the way in his course. Well, why should they? Isn’t popularity getting to be the standard of orthodoxy? Of late the discussion between Catholics and Protestants has waxed hot, as to whether Catholicism has really made the progress that is claimed for it, as though its character were to be judged by its ability to gain converts. One of the most common objections as we hear against the Sabbath of the Lord is, “Oh, there is only a mere handful of people that keep it, anyway.” And the argument upon which Sunday advocates are willing to rest their cause is that “everybody keeps Sunday.” {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.13}

When people can pass from one church to another, or from the world to the church, so easily, what is to hinder the whole world from being “converted”? and then the millennium will be ushered in. It is natural for man to love to be on the winning side; and as soon as the church can demonstrate that she is the strongest power in the world, people without number will feel “providentially” directed to join her communion. E. J. W. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.14}

**“‘Christian Consciousness’ vs. the Bible” The Signs of the Times, 11, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

In a recent number of the *Independent*, Prof. Francis L. Patton sharply criticizes a statement by Dr. Harris, in the *Andover Review*, that “Christian consciousness” must be recognized as the final authority in matters of faith and practice. In the course of his article he says:- {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.15}

“Common consciousness cannot be appealed to as the criterion of religious progress without danger of jeopardizing the Protestant principle that the Bible is the rule of faith. Dr. Harris admits that what he calls the ‘obsolescent theology’ agrees as well with a word of God as it ever did, but affirms that it does not agree with the Christian consciousness. Suppose, however, that the Bible should say one thing, and Christian consciousness should say something else; or suppose that Christian consciousness should undertake to supplement the Bible. What then? It is an old charge against those who have had an objective rule of faith, that they made the word of God of none effect through their traditions, and that they taught for doctrines the commandments of men. We know how the Roman Catholic churches followed the example of the scribes and Pharisees in this respect. Is there no danger that a party will rise in the Protestant churches, committing the same error? We think that there is great danger. And when, under the influence of a zeal that lacks both knowledge and discretion, the attempt is made to force upon the conscience of men the yoke of party fanaticism and popular clamor, there is little doubt but that an earnest, but at the same time ignorant, quietism will find great use for the phrase that is under discussion, and *as a phrase*, catchword, appealing to the sympathies of the unthinking, that Christian consciousness may become the ‘organ’ of what some will call religious progress.” {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.16}

There is as little doubt that the state of things outlined by the professor is imminent, as there is that “Christian consciousness” is superseding the Bible, as a test in matters of religion. We see this “Christian consciousness” manifested in that form of worship which mistakes feeling for faith, whose adherents *know* that they are right, because their hearts tell them so! {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.17}

And especially is it manifested in those who would be enforce the observance of the Sunday because a majority of Christians had declared, by precept and example, that Sunday is the Lord’s day. The plain language of the fourth commandment is ignored by the Protestants and Catholics alike, for the custom and sentiment of “the church.” E. J. W. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 41.18}

**“The Work in Healdsburg” The Signs of the Times, 11, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

The winter term of the College opened on Monday, January 5, with 120 students in attendance. Of this number fifty-six are now enrolled in the special Bible course. Besides these, we know of several who expect to join us in a few days. All seem to be in earnest, and disposed to make the most of their present opportunities. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 48.1}

The family at the Students’ Home now numbers fifty-six. This number will soon be increased. The new students readily fall in with the ways of the place, and cheerfully perform their allotted tasks of labor and study. We are certain that the benefit derived from the discipline at the “Home” is fully equal to that gained at the college proper. No parent should think of sending his child to the Healdsburg College, and not have him live at the Students’ Home. We hope that God will bless the labors of this term, and make them fruitful for good in his cause. {SITI January 15, 1885, p. 48.2}

E. J. W.  
Healdsburg, January 8.

**“Punishment of the Wicked-Continued” The Signs of the Times, 11, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

**THE SABBATH-SCHOOL.**

**LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST.—FEB. 21**

1. Give a scriptural explanation of Revelation 14:9-11; 20:10. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.1}

2. When the wicked have been simply *tormented* with fire and brimstone, have they received their reward? Romans 6:23. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.2}

3. Then what must that fire do in order that the wicked may receive their deserts? Malachi 4:1. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.3}

4. What is appointed unto all men? Hebrews 9:27. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.4}

5. Can this death, to which all men are appointed, be the death which is the wages of sin? {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.5}

6. What is promised to all men, regardless of their character? 1 Corinthians 15:22; Acts 24:15. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.6}

7. Are the wicked now suffering their punishment? 2 Peter 2:9. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.7}

8. When will ever man be rewarded according to his works? Matthew 2:9. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.8}

9. Then for what purpose will they come forth from their graves? Job 21:29, 30. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.9}

10. Give further proof that the death which is common to all men is not the wages of sin. Ezekiel 18:26. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.10}

11. What is it that causes the death which is the wages of sin? Revelation 20:9. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.11}

12. What is this death by fire called? Revelation 21:8. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.12}

13. How long is it after the resurrection of the righteous before the wicked are “brought forth” to destruction? Revelation 20:4, 5. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.13}

14. Who will escape the second death? Revelation 2:11; 20:6. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.14}

“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.” Revelation 14:9-11. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.15}

It is not the province of this lesson to explain the meaning of the beast, his image, or his mark. It is sufficient to say that to worship the first two, or receive the last, must be the most heinous crime that man can commit, since it brings down upon the offender the unmingled wine of the wrath of God. The point to be explained is the expression, “and the smoke of their torment ascendeth but forever and ever.” As this has been explained in past lessons, a brief mention here will be sufficient. If the student will read Exodus 21:2-6, he will find that the term “forever” does not necessarily denote that the thing to which it is applied shall never cause to exist; for under certain conditions a servant was to serve his master *forever*, which could not possibly mean “without end.” Now if that term does not *necessarily* mean “without end,” Revelation 14:9-11 affords no proof that the wicked will be tormented to all eternity. That doctrine, if true, must be approved by other texts. But we have already learned that the wicked are to be stubble in a fire that shall “burn them up,” and will leave them “neither root nor branch.” Then, as in Exodus 21:2-6 we understand that “forever” means as long as the servant might live, so we must understand that Revelation 14:9-11 teaches that the smoke from the torment of the wicked will ascend without any cessation, until there are no wicked left in existence. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.16}

This explanation will also suffice for Revelation 20:10: “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” The preceding verse shows that the fire has already “devoured” the wicked; this shows that the devil, the author of sin, survives to see the destruction of all his works. That he himself will, after a long torment, cease to exist, we are well assured, because Christ did not die in vain, and he died that he might “*destroy* him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.” Hebrews 2:14. Satan is the “root” from which all wickedness springs; the day that cometh shall leave neither root nor branch. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.17}

It is true that “indignation and wrath, tribulation, and the anguish” are threatened to “every soul of man that doeth evil” (Romans 2:8, 9), yet we are by no means to suppose that those things comprise the sum of the punishment which the wicked are to receive. “The wages of sin is *death*,” and then until death takes place, the sinners will not have received their punishment. They are to be “punished with *everlasting destruction;*” and this will not be until their torment has been ended by the eternal death. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.18}

Certainly no one can gather from the Scriptures that the death with which we are so familiar is the wages of sin. “It is appointed unto man wants to die;” all men, both good and bad, die because they have inherited a mortal nature, and not because they have sinned. To all men, whether good or bad, there is promised a resurrection (Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:22) from the death which they die as a consequence of being the descendants of mortal Adam; now if this death were the penalty for sin, then the resurrection would be the revoking of the penalty; but this can never be, because, when once inflicted, it is to be everlasting. That none of the wicked are now receiving the penalty for their sins is evident from 2 Peter 2:9: “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.” Those who are dead are preserved in their graves, from which, at the voice of Christ, they shall come forth. John 5:28, 29. Job also says that “the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction,” and that ‘they shalt be brought forth to the day of wrath.” Job 21:30. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.19}

In Ezekiel 18:26 we have most conclusive evidence that the death which Adam died, and which all his posterity have likewise suffered, was not as a penalty for sin. It reads thus: “When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and *commiteth iniquity*, and *dieth in them*; for his iniquity that he hath done *shall he die*.” The prophet here mentions two deaths. If a man dies in his sins, *i.e.*, if he does not repent before death overtakes him, then he shall die. But if he is dead, how can he die? Evidently he must have a resurrection, and this, as we of seen, is promised to all men, irrespective of character. Those that have done evil come forth from their graves to the resurrection of damnation. John 5:28, 29. And in harmony with this idea are the words of Revelation 21:8: “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: *which is the second death*.” {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.20}

Revelation 20:6 shows when the wicked are “brought forth” to suffer the second death. The apostle in verse 4 mentions the righteous who have been martyred, who, he says, lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. They had been dead, but now lived. This, he says, is the “first resurrection.” It is the first because “the rest of the dead lived not *again* until the thousand years were finished.” The word again implies another living, or a resurrection. So a thousand years intervene between the resurrection of the righteous and that of the wicked. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; upon such the second death hath no power.” This statement has no force unless those who do not have part in the first resurrection do suffer the second death. This is the death which is the wages of sin, and is brought about by fire. It is yet future, and will not take place until the harvest,-“the end of the world”-when the tares will be gathered out and bound in bundles to be burned. Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43. E. J. W. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 54.21}

**“Will Worship, and No Worship” The Signs of the Times, 11, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

The last paragraph of the letter upon which we commented last week reads as follows:- {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 56.1}

“If infidels care nothing for Sunday, how can you make them respect Saturday? Why not change their hearts instead of their calendar?” {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 56.2}

We will notice the last question first. That such a question could be asked, is evidence of the almost entire absence of *thought* concerning the subject of the Sabbath. How the questioner could have obtained the idea that anybody wants to change the calendar, is beyond all comprehension. It is certain that *we* do not desire any such thing. We are satisfied with the calendar that we have. With Bishop Haven, we believe that our week corresponds to the Hebrew week,-the genuine week,-and that “the Jewish Sabbath,” as he termed Saturday, is the true seventh day, the one which God blessed and sanctified. All the change we desire, is a change in men’s hearts, a change which will be indicated by their changed practices. Keeping the calendar that they have, we want them to rest upon the day which God appointed, instead of on one of which he spoke nothing; to obey the word of the Lord, instead of their own inclinations. If we were in the habit of going to San Francisco every Wednesday, and should change our custom and afterward go on Tuesday, would we thereby change the calendar, or the reckoning of days? Of course not. Why cannot people of reason as intelligently in regard to moral duties as they do concerning ordinary, temporal affairs? {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 56.3}

The first question in the paragraph above quoted indicates another erroneous idea that has obtained considerable currency. It is imagined that if people lose their confidence in the Sunday institution they will pay no regard to any day; and from this point people jump to the conclusion that we do wrong in exposing the fraud by which Sunday is made to appear to be the Sabbath. We shall see how much truth there is in these conclusions. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 56.4}

“If infidels care nothing for Sunday, how can you make them respect Saturday?” In turn, we would ask, If people *do not* lose their respect for Sunday as a sacred institution, how can they be made to respect the Sabbath of the Lord? Said the Saviour, “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon;” “no can serve two masters.” So no man can regard the Sabbath as holy to the Lord, and at the same time give equal homage to Sunday. To answer more directly, we say that we would get them to respect the Sabbath, by inducing them to respect its Author. Let their hearts be changed, so that they will reverence God and his word, and the work is already done. If people really have reverence for God’s word (not merely such portions as suit their fancy, but the whole of it), they will reverence the fourth commandment; and if they respect the fourth commandment, they must necessarily keep the seventh day,-Saturday,-as is therein enjoined. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 56.5}

As a matter of fact there are thousands who now respect God’s holy Sabbath, who have not the slightest regard for Sunday; and the number of such persons is being increased every day. We readily grant that the great majority of people cannot be induced to respect the Sabbath; but shall we for this reason cease to work for those who will accept the truth? Because we cannot rescue *all* the inmates of a burning building, shall we make no effort to save any? {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 56.6}

And now we would like to ask our friend a question. If a man is an infidel, what difference will it make whether he respect Sunday or not? Will the respect that he may have for Sunday atone for his unbelief? Perhaps there are not many who would answer this question in the affirmative, and yet it is the position that thousands of professed Christians really hold. There is a society called the “National Reform Association,” which puts a premium on just such religion as that. To have Sunday kept strictly is really the one great point for which they labor. Says its organ, concerning some officials twh travel on Sunday, “Not one of those men is fit to hold office in the nation.” It would introduce a new kind of civil service reform. And make one’s zeal for the Sunday, and his strictness in observing it, the test of his fitness for office. Now when that party gets strong enough to dictate to the nation, how long will it be before every *politician*, whether infidel or Jew, will be a strict Sunday-keeper? Not long; and by the National Reform Association this will be counted to them for righteousness. Yet these same people charge Adventists with having no religion but the Sabbath. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 56.7}

A frequent charge against Seventh-day Adventists is that they destroyed people’s confidence in the Sunday Sabbath, and do not succeed in persuading them to keep Saturday. It is claimed that these people are left in a worse condition than they were before, and that therefore the work of Seventh-day Adventists is wholly bad. The charge is not true. As we before stated, the number of Sabbath-keepers is being daily increased; and these accessions, from the ranks of infidelity as well as from those who have always revered the Bible, and who have walked in all the light that they had. But not all that hear the truth obey. Now are these in a worse condition than before? Undoubtedly; a man cannot reject light with impunity. The preaching of Christ, while it won some, hardened others. He himself said, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin.” John 15:22. Will our friends charge Christ with doing a bad work because he left some people worse than they were before? {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 56.8}

And yet, in the particular case under consideration, we doubt if persons are made any worse by losing faith in the supposed sacredness of Sunday, even if they do not accept the true Sabbath. Is one error better than another? We know that it is a grievous sin for a man to refuse to regard any day as a holy, when the Lord has said, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy;” but is that man disobeying God any more than the one who not only deliberately refuses to obey the command of the Lord, but who shows his contempt for that command by doing something exactly the opposite? We would not wish to occupy the position of either one. Here is a father who has two sons. One of them hears his father’s wishes and commands, and then invariably goes contrary to them, and the other refuses to do anything; would you say that the first is better than the second? Would you not rather say that both are bad and deserving of punishment? {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 56.9}

Take the first commandment. Our friends can use their reason in regard to this commandment, because their own interests are not directly affected by it. But there are millions who now practice the grossest form of idolatry. Now it is a fact that thousands who hear the teaching of the missionaries, never accept it. Take the Japanese, for instance. As a nation they are idolaters. Much missionary work has been done among them, and now Christianity is tolerated in Japan. There are many Japanese Christians, many native Japanese who are preaching the gospel to their fellow-men. But we now find that of the educated Japanese the great majority are infidels. This is a noted fact. They look on the worship of God and the worship of idols with equal disdain. Why is this? They have been led to see something of the foolishness of worshiping gods of wood or bronze, and have gone to the other extreme, believing in nothing. Shall we call back the missionaries from Japan? Shall we conclude that they are doing a bad work? Will our opposers say that it would be better to let all the Japanese remain heathen than to convert a few at the expense of making the rest infidels? Is it better to worship a log of wood than to worship nothing? To all these questions we think we hear an emphatic, No. Better that a few be saved than that all perish. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 57.1}

We would that all could see this matter in its true light. We have known people who acknowledged that Saturday-the seventh day-is the only true Sabbath, but who thought that they would appease the wrath of God against their disobedience by keeping Sunday very strictly. How deceitful is sin! It blinds men so that they call evil good, and good evil. May the Lord enable our brother and many others who are in a like position, to realize that *obedience* is what is required, and that *all* stubbornness is iniquity and idolatry. E. J. W. {SITI January 22, 1885, p. 57.2}

**“Punishment of the Wicked—Continued” The Signs of the Times, 11, 5.**

E. J. Waggoner

**THE SABBATH-SCHOOL.**

**LESSON FOR THE PACIFIC COAST—FEB. 28**

1. What is given to those who believe on Christ? John 3:36. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.1}

2. What is to be the fate of those who believe not the Son? {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.2}

3. What does the Psalmist say will be the result to the wicked, if the Lord’s wrath is kindled only a little? Psalm 2:12. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.3}

4. Then what will be their condition if his wrath *abides* on them? {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.4}

5. What contrast did the wise man make between the continuance of the righteous and that of the wicked? Proverbs 10:25. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.5}

6. With what words of the Psalmist does this agree? Psalm 1:1-4. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.6}

7. What is to be done with the chaff? Matthew 3:12. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.7}

8. To what other perishable substances are sinners compared? Hosea 13:3. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.8}

9. To what is their destruction compared? Isaiah 5:24. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.9}

10. How has the beloved disciple described the fate of the wicked? Revelation 20:9. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.10}

11. In what manner will they be devoured? Nahum 1:10. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.11}

12. Into what shall the wicked consume? Psalm 37:20. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.12}

13. Of what was man formed? Genesis 2:7; 18:27. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.13}

14. After the fire of the last day, what will the wicked be? Malachi 4:3. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.14}

15. In view of this fact, what does one of the prophets say of the wicked? Obadiah 16. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.15}

16. What corroborative testimony can you give on this point? Psalm 37:9, 10. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.16}

17. Quote another text which proves that a time will come when there will be no wicked in existence in the universe. Revelation 5:13. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.17}

18. Who is the author of the doctrine that the wicked shall not die? Genesis 3:4. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.18}

19. Who is the serpent? Revelation 20:2. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.19}

20. For what purpose did the devil invent that doctrine? Ezekiel 13:22. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.20}

If the reader will only take pains to look up the references given in this lesson, he certainly will not need comments to aid his understanding of the subject. Just note the strong expressions that are used concerning the wicked: They “shall not see life.” John 3:36. They pass away as does the whirlwind. Proverbs 10:25. They are “like the chaff which the wind driveth away.” Psalm 1:4. This chaff is to be burned up with a fire so intense that it cannot be extinguished. Matthew 3:12. “They shall be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that passeth away, as the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney.” Hosea 13:3. “As the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust.” Isaiah 5:24. “They shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.” Nahum 1:10. They shall consume “into smoke.” Psalm 37:20. “The day that cometh shall burn them up,” and “they shall be ashes” under the feet of the righteous. Malachi 4:1, 3. “They shall be as though they had not been.” Obadiah 16. “For yet a little while, and *the wicked shall not be;* yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.” Psalm 37:10. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.21}

One who reads these texts may well wonder how those who profess to believe the Bible implicitly can hold to the doctrine that the wicked shall exist in torment to all eternity. That doctrine squarely contradicts every one of the texts which we have quoted. Yet the contradiction is no more emphatic than was the serpent’s contradiction of the words of the Lord, when he said to the woman, “Thou shalt not surely die.” Genesis 3:4. This was the origin of the doctrine of eternal life for the wicked. It is the only doctrine held by religionists, that can be traced *directly* to the devil. His object in inventing this doctrine was to induce Eve to transgress the command of the Lord; and it has been for the purpose of holding men in the bondage of sin, that he has kept the doctrine prominently before all mankind ever since. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.22}

In Ezekiel 13:22 we have the testimony of the Lord on this subject. When threatening punishment upon certain evil ones, he says it is, “Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life.” Let us see how this result has been accomplished. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.23}

We do not know the exact motive of the one who introduced this doctrine of eternal life for the wicked, into the Christian church. It was no doubt mainly a result of his heathen training, and without any definite motive. But so far as he had any definite idea, it was designed to deter men from sin and to frighten them into repentance. This is why all denominations have advocated it in times past. We have often heard it said by ministers, that if the doctrine of eternal torment were not preached, sinners would have no fear of the consequences of sin. Just as if the Lord did not know what he was about when he made *death* the penalty for sin! The Lord has said, “The wages of sin is death,” and, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die;” but these persons say, in effect: “No, no, Lord; you must not tell people that for if you do they will all keep sinning.” And so, making light of the real penalty, and ignoring the love of God as the great factor in turning men to righteousness, they presume to improve upon his word. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.24}

And so the doctrine of eternal torment was for many years taught in all its horrible enormity. People accepted it as the word of God, because the priests and ministers said that it was such. Thousands were frightened into a nominal profession of Christianity, and to the infliction of severe punishments upon themselves, thinking by so doing to avert the wrath of God. It is safe to say that no *real* converts were made in consequence of the propagation of this doctrine; but “the church” gained immense sums of money by the sale of “indulgences,” or releases from punishment, to poor, deluded sinners; this money was spent by the popes in self-aggrandizment and riotous living, and the devil was doubtless satisfied. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.25}

But there was always a class of people who, believing that the word of God taught this horrible doctrine, repudiated the Bible entirely. They would have nothing to do with a book which taught, as they supposed, such barbarous cruelty. And thus the doctrine has fostered infidelity. Others believed the doctrine, and settled down into stolid indifference, while others determined to have as good a time as possible while they were on earth. The terrible French Revolution, when all religion was proscribed, and God and the Bible were insulted and ignored, was a recoil from this terrible doctrine of eternal torment. And now, in our day, we find that the church itself is passing from that extreme of error, to the other extreme. Instead of being the leading topic of sermons, as formerly, the doctrine of eternal torment is seldom mentioned. On the contrary hundreds, yes thousands, of ministers who are called “orthodox,” openly hold that God will not punish anybody, or that if he does, it will only be for a time, and that then all men will be restored to his favor. Now anybody who stops to think can see that if men believe this, there is absolutely no incentive for them to change their course of life. The fear of punishment has been taken away, and if they are taught that all men will ultimately be saved, whether they now wish to be or not, they can see no necessity for believing on Christ. And so we see the object that Satan had in the beginning is attained, the wicked are strengthened in their wickedness and carnal security, by the promise of life. The safest and the best way is to hold and teach only the simple truth, and leave the results with the Author of truth. E. J. W. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 70.26}

**“How It Was Done, and Why” The Signs of the Times, 11, 5.**

E. J. Waggoner

The Sunday-schools of the country are now engaged in studying the book of Acts, having recently begun with the twentieth chapter, where they left off six months ago. That chapter notes a certain meeting that was held by the disciples, on the first day of the week, and it was to be expected that many lesson commentators would make as much out of it as possible, to bolster up Sunday observance. In looking over the list, we find that they are all about the same. The following from the N. Y *Independent*, as of Dec. 25, 1884, is a fair sample of the whole:- {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 72.1}

“At Troas we find the brethren assembled on a Sunday. Indeed the early churches there was an observance of the seventh day and the first day both. The observance of the seventh day has never been formally abrogated; but it died out gradually, as the converted Jew of to-day does not circumcise his children, though the command to circumcise has never been formally repealed. Among the converted Gentiles the Lord’s Day [by this term the *Independent* means *Sunday*, and not the *Sabbath*.] would naturally command a more general observance then the seventh day, and as Christianity ceased to make converts among the Jews, but increased among the Gentiles, the observance of the first day became general and that of the seventh was gradually discontinued.” {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 72.2}

In nothing else would scholars, such as the editors of the *Independent*, tolerate jumping at conclusions in this way. A single meeting on the first day of the week is accepted as proof that Sunday was the regular day of worship among the early Christians. If this be logic, what conclusion must we draw from the fact that, beginning with the day of Pentecost, they held meetings every day? The Sunday controversy affords proof that the keenest logicians may be led by self-interest to take leave of logic, and reason like infants. Let us notice in detail the *Independent’s* position on the introduction of the Sunday into the Christian church. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 72.3}

1. “In the early churches there was an observance of the seventh day and the first day both.” Well, then, if we are to be guided by the *practice* of the early church, why do not all the churches now observe both days? Why is it that the *Independent*, which believes in following the example of the early church, has omitted one important item? One thing is certain: The *Independent* has no ground on which to condemn Seventh-day Adventists. It acknowledges that Christians generally have departed from the custom of the early church, which it regards as authoritative. For our part we make no claim to follow a certain course simply because someone did so long ago. The Scriptures are the only guide, and we can read them and understand them as well as people ever could. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 72.4}

2. “The observance of the seventh day has never been formally abrogated.” But it was formally enjoined, and is therefore still binding. “Yet [the observance of the seventh day] died out gradually.” Will the *Independent* please tell us what constitutes sin? Is it violation of law, or violation of *custom*? Among certain nations the worship of the true God gradually died out, until it ceased altogether. Must we conclude that in those countries the old law which says, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me,” is not binding? that the worship of titles is alright? Why cannot people remember that the command, “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil,” is for all time, and that wrong cannot be made right, no matter how many people practice it. The New Testament bears this testimony: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also *the law*, for sin is the transgression of *the law*.” 1 John 3:4. Modern and uninspired teachers would have us accept this version: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also *custom;* for sin is the transgression of *custom*.” We do not accept this new version. “The older is better.” If the law enjoining the observance of the seventh day has not been abrogated, then everyone who does not observe the seventh day is, to that extent, a sinner. With many, such action may be a sin of ignorance, but it is a sin nevertheless. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 72.5}

But the *Independent* claims to present a parallel to the neglect of Sabbath observance. It says: “It died out gradually, as the converted Jew of to-day does not circumcise his children, though the commandment to circumcise has never been formally repealed.” If a text could be found which should say, “Sabbath-keeping is nothing,” as 1 Corinthians 7:19 says of circumcision, how readily it would be quoted. Of circumcision Paul says: “For he is a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is all word and deed flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter.” Romans 2:28, 29. If now the *Independent* could find a text, saying, “For he is a Sabbath-keeper, who observes the seventh day; ... but he is a Sabbath-keeper, who observes the first day,” then it would have as good ground for Sabbath desecration as it has for not practicing circumcision. The *Independent* well knows that there is no point of comparison between circumcision and the Sabbath. By the style of argument which it uses, every one of the precepts of the moral law may be trampled upon without sin. The Spiritualist says, “Whatever *is*, is right;” that is, custom and the inclination must be allowed to settle questions of right and wrong. “Oh, no, says the *Independent*, “You must not say so of everything; that is true only when applied to the fourth commandment.” But it will not be long before Christian people who give a custom an inclination as reasons for disregarding the Sabbath of the Lord, will find the same argument thrown back on them concerning the sixth, seventh, and eighth commandments. Those who thus set at naught a portion of the law of God, are opening the flood-gates of the iniquity, and will certainly be responsible for the wickedness that follows. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 73.1}

3. “Among the converted Gentiles the Lord’s Day [Sunday] would naturally command a more general observance than the seventh day.” Of course it would; and so, likewise, falsehood, and demon-worship accompanied by licentious rites would *naturally* command more general observance than would the pure worship of Jehovah; but that would not make such practices right. In the last part of the paragraph quoted, the *Independent* has let us into the true secret of the change from the seventh to the first day of the week. The first day was the heathen festival day. Around that day clustered memories of wild revels in honor of their god; in fact, all their old religious prejudices were *naturally* in favor of that day, and as they increased in numbers until the true disciples became only a small minority, the old customs were indeed gradually brought in. And because a horde of them chose to call themselves Christians while retaining their heathen customs, Christians of to-day think that they must follow their example. Dr. Killen, in “The Ancient Church,” p. 440, gives us another custom for which these nominally converted heathen manifested a natural fondness. He says:- {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 73.2}

“The code of heathen morality supplied a ready apology for falsehood, and its accommodating principles soon found too much encouragement within the pale of the church. Hence the pious frauds which were now perpetrated. Various works made their appearance with the name of some apostolic man appended to them, their fabricators thus hoping to give currency to opinions or practices which might otherwise have encountered much opposition. At the same time many evinced a disposition to supplement the silence of the written word by the aid of tradition.” {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 73.3}

And the successors of those persons are now numbered by the million. Tradition is now exalted far above the law of God. Why do not the churches adopt lying as a Christian ordinance? It was practiced in the early church. To be sure there is a law against lying, and it was never formally abrogated, but the converts from among the Gentiles had a natural tendency to lie, and so a strict regard for truth began gradually to die out. If it is right to keep Sunday, then it is right to lie and deceive, for both practices stand on the same foundation, namely, the custom of the majority. Verily, “The customs of the people are vain.” E. J. W. {SITI January 29, 1885, p. 73.4}