**“Justification and Sanctification” The Signs of the Times, 12, 13.**

E. J. Waggoner

Having explained Romans 3:28, we are prepared to understand a parallel text that, without the explanation already given, might be considered a difficult one. The text referred to is Romans 3:21: “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.” The righteousness of God, as we have already learned, is a term applied to the ten commandments, or rather to that righteousness which the ten commandments enjoin. But the question arises, “If the righteousness of God is the perfect righteousness which the law demands, how can it be manifested “without the law?” Let Paul explain for himself, as he does in the following verses: “*Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe*; for there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” Romans 3:22-25. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 199.1}

By this we see that the righteousness of God which is manifested without the law, is simply the remission of sins that are past, for which no works of obedience on our part could make any satisfaction. Paul, speaking of Abraham, describes it as follows: “He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” Romans 4:20-25. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.1}

“Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.” The same thing, says Paul, will be done to us also, if we also believe. The case, then, stands thus: The law demands perfect and unvarying obedience, but it speaks to all the world and finds none righteous; all have violated it, and all are condemned by it. (Romans 3:9, 19.) Present or future obedience will not take away past transgression, therefore the law cannot help us. But Christ is perfect righteousness, for in him dwells “all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Now God says that he will impute the righteousness of Christ to every one who will fully believe on him. Impute means, “to set to the account of.” Therefore we are to understand that whenever we accept Christ, his righteousness is set to our account. Thus “the righteousness of God” is manifested in our past lives, even though we ourselves have never done a single act of righteousness. So we have the wonder of perfect obedience to the law, without a single righteous act on our part. The righteousness of God without the law-Christ’s righteousness imputed to us. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.2}

But what is the law doing all this time? Has it relaxed its claims? Not at all. Paul says, “The righteousness of God without the law is manifested, *being witnessed by the law*.” The law stands by, and witnesses to the righteousness that is thus manifested in our past life. Whereas it before condemned us, now it justifies us, for in the righteousness that is imputed to us it can detect no flaw. It makes no difference to the law that the righteousness to which it witnesses is not the result of our own works; the righteousness is accounted as ours, and that satisfies the law. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.3}

Right here we may profitably note the force of Romans 5:20: “Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” The “entering” of the law refers to the formal giving of it from Sinai. This will be readily seen from Romans 5:13, 14, and has already been noted in our comments on that passage. Before the giving of the law, from Sinai, it did not exist in written form in the world. The remains of the law “written in their hearts,” and the instruction of men who, like Enoch, and Noah, walked with God were what the people had to depend on for their knowledge of right and wrong. The law existed before that time, for sin was imputed to the people, and “sin is not imputed where there is no law.” But the law was given “that the offense might abound.” The apostle does not mean that the law was given so that there might be more sin, but that it was given so that the sin which already existed *might abound*, that is, might appear greater than it did before. Paul expresses the exact meaning in another place when he says that sin, by the commandment, became “exceeding sinful.” {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.4}

To illustrate: Here stands a glass of water; it does not look perfectly pure, yet it does not seem very impure. Now a rod is thrust down to the bottom of the glass and given a few vigorous turns, when, behold, the water at once becomes exceedingly foul. Did the rod make the water impure? No; the impurity was there all the time; the rod simply made it appear. So there was sin in the world; but the law, when it was written on tables of stone, and copies could be multiplied in books, and scattered among the people, made the extreme hideousness of sin to appear. And why was this necessary? The answer is implied in the last clause of the verse: “But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” Men could not be saved while defiled by sin, even though they did not realize its heinousness. So the law was brought close to them, to show them their deformity, and make them feel their need of help from some source outside of themselves. And this effect it had; for no matter how much their sins were made to abound, “grace did much more abound.” Christ’s righteousness was seen to be sufficient to cover all the sins of the past. With Wesley, the repentant sinner may sing:- {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.5}

*“Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin;” {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.6}*

and with David he can realize the blessedness of the man “whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered,” and unto whom the Lord will not impute iniquity. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.7}

We have seen that the law stands as a witness to the sinner’s justification. This shows that no act of Christ has in any way robbed the law of it force. Indeed, without the existence of the law there could be no such thing as justification. Now what about the man’s future relation to the law? It is evident that unless he keeps it he will again fall into condemnation. The man’s faith secured his justification; but that justification was simply the “showing to be just, or conformable to law.” His justification was simply pardon for having violated the law; it was an act by which another’s righteousness was put in place of his unrighteousness. Now since “faith without works is dead,” it follows as a necessary conclusion, that if the man’s faith was genuine (and if it were not he could not have been pardoned), it will now be proved by works of obedience. And therefore the characteristic of the justified man is that he keeps the law. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.8}

Of Abraham it is said that his faith was imputed to him for righteousness. But James takes the same subject up and says, “Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?” James 2:21. This is no contradiction of Paul’s statement in Romans 3:28; for James immediately adds: “Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.” Verses 22, 23. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.9}

By this we see that Abraham’s faith could not have been imputed to him for righteousness but for the disposition to work. And since justification has reference to the law of God, it is evident that the works that make perfect the faith that secures justification, must be the works which the law requires. But this continued obedience is sanctification; for Christ prayed for his disciples: “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” John 17:17. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.10}

Paul says that God has chosen us to salvation “through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth” (2 Thessalonians 2:17); but that by which the Spirit acts is the word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit. Ephesians 6:17. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.11}

Again Paul says: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” Philippians 2:12. But no one can accuse Paul of inconsistency; for he adds: “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” This is exactly in accord with our Saviour’s words: “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” John 15:4, 5. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.12}

Peter also bears the same testimony. He says: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.” 1 Peter 1:22. God’s law is the truth (Psalm 119:142), and to purify is to cleanse from guilt or defilement, to sanctify. So Peter’s sentence is that we are sanctified by obeying the truth; but he adds that this is done “through the Spirit.” Sanctification, then, is the result of obedience; but as obedience is not simply a momentary act, but the work of a lifetime, it follows that sanctification is not an instantaneous, but a progressive work. A man is justified as soon as he exercises true faith in Christ; but the work of sanctification goes on as long as there is any truth for him to obey. And since a man, after he has been justified by faith, would fall into condemnation if he should refuse to do any duty that was presented to him, and can only retain his state of justification by continuing in obedience to the law, it may be said that sanctification is but continued justification. Each new duty only makes the performance of others possible, and so “the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.13}

“Faith without works is dead;” and on the other hand, obedience without faith is impossible, as is shown by our Saviour’s words in John 15:4, 5; also by the words of Paul. “They that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Romans 8:8. The man who is destitute of faith in Christ cannot keep the law, or do any act that is really good. In our best efforts there is so much imperfection, that but for the continual imputation of Christ’s righteousness to make up for our deficiencies, we should be lost. The best that we alone can do is bad. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Hebrews 11:6. And thus we see the force of the words: “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” 1 John 5:4. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.14}

“Where is boasting, then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.” Romans 3:27. The redeemed saint will have no cause for boasting over the lost sinner. True, the law, when applied to their lives, reports perfection in the one case, and only sin in the other; but the saint cannot boast, for without Christ he would have been nothing. If Christ had not put his own righteousness upon him, he would be in as hopeless a condition as the sinner. And to all eternity the redeemed host will join with the heavenly choir in saying, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” Revelation 5:12. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.15}

“That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” 1 Corinthians 1:29, 30. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.16}

“And this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” Jeremiah 23:6. E. J. W. {SITI April 1, 1886, p. 200.17}

**“Punishment and Torment” The Signs of the Times, 12, 14.**

E. J. Waggoner

A reader of the SIGNS sends the following:- {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 215.1}

“Your number of March 11, in ‘Notes on the International Lessons,’ says the doctrine of the eternal torment is contrary to the word of God. Will you please explain Matthew 25:41, Christ’s own words? I have had faith in your papers; its teachings compared in many respects to my belief. But without satisfactory explanations in this doctrine, my faith will have some doubts on other subjects.” {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 215.2}

The last verse of the 25th of Matthew reach thus: “And the [the wicked] shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.” We believe that this verse will be literally fulfilled. We know, also, that the words “everlasting” and “eternal” in this verse from the same in the Greek, and have the same meaning in the English; and therefore the text teaches that the punishment of the wicked will last just as long as the reward of the righteous. Our friend must certainly agree with us thus far. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 215.3}

Now what will be the punishment of the wicked? “The wages of sin is death.” Romans 6:23. Then since the punishment of the wicked is everlasting, it must be everlasting death-a death from which there is no awaking. Paul also in another place says that they “shall be punished with everlasting *destruction*.” 2 Thessalonians 1:9. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 215.4}

Our friend has confused the words “punishment” and “torment.” They are not synonymous terms. Whatever torment the wicked may suffer, they cannot be said to have *been punished* until they have suffered death; for the wages of sin is death. The “tribulation and anguish” which will be rendered to them may be a very long continuance; but their *punishment* consists in death.And this punishment-will be everlasting. To all eternity the wicked will “be as though they had not been.” Obadiah 16. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 215.5}

The 41st person of Matthew 25 reads as follows: “Then shall he say also wanted them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, and everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” This does not in the least contradict the explanation just given. Everlasting or eternal fire does not necessarily imply that its victims must exist eternally. How was it with Sodom and Gomorrah? The Lord rained fire and brimstone upon them, and they were consumed from off the face of the earth. Nothing marks where they once stood, and is supposed that the waters of the Dead Sea roll over it. They have no existence, yet the apostle says: “Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of *eternal fire*.” Jude 7. If “eternal fire” resulted in the complete destruction of the cities of the plain, it must have a like edict on those who are finally impenitent. Indeed, the connection shows that the destruction of those cities was an example of the final fate of the wicked. On this passage Dr. Barnes says:- {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 215.6}

“The phrase ‘eternal fire,’ is one that is often used to denote future punishment-as expressing the severity and intensity of the suffering. As here used, it cannot mean that the fires that consumed Sodom and Gomorrah were literally eternal, or were kept always burning, for that was not true. The expression seems to denote, in this connection, two things: (1) That the destruction of the cities of the plain, with their inhabitants, was as entire and perpetual *as if* the fires had been always burning-the consumption was absolute and enduring-the sinners were wholly cut off, and the cities were for ever 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 April 8, 1886, p. 215.7}

One word concerning the position taken by one correspondent. He says that he has had faith in the SIGNS, because its teachings corresponded to his belief. While we are pleased to have people favor the SIGNS, we do not like to have the favor rest on that foundation. If a men accept only what he already believes, he will make no advancement, and may only be confirmed in error; but if he accepts whatever is demonstrated to be truth, whether it accords with his previous belief not, he will always be in the right. This is in accordance with the apostolic injunction: “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” 1 Thessalonians 5:21. E. J. W. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 215.8}

**“Christ the End of the Law” The Signs of the Times, 12, 14.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the preceding articles we have considered the fundamental principles of the law, and all its bearings. We have by no means exhausted the subject; for that would be impossible; neither have we referred to all the texts relating to it; but we have given an outline of the nature of the law, its origin, perpetuity, extent of jurisdiction, and the relation to it of both righteous and wicked. By the principles of the law, which have already been enunciated, every text in the Bible that mentions the law may be explained; and bearing those principles in mind, we shall now proceed to consider the application of some texts that are too often regarded as antagonistic to the law. Without a knowledge of the principles of the law, these texts may justly be considered as difficult; but with such knowledge, we find not only that they are in perfect harmony with those principles, but that they greatly strengthen the argument already made. Right here, we will say that the task of “harmonizing” different portions of the Bible, is one which no man has to perform. The different portions of the Bible were harmonized by inspiration; all that the expositor has to do is to point out the harmony that already exists. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 215.9}

In Romans 10:4 we read as follows: “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Before showing what this text means, it may be well to briefly show what it does not mean. It does not mean that Christ has put an end to the law because (1) Christ himself said concerning the law: “I am not come to destroy,” Matthew 5:17. (2) The prophet said that instead of destroying it, the Lord would “magnify the law, and make it honorable.” Isaiah 42:21. (3) The law was in Christ’s own heart. “Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:7, 8. And (4) since the law is the righteousness of God, the foundation of his Government, it could not by any possibility be abolished. See Luke 16:17. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 215.10}

A reading of the verses preceding the one quoted should suggest its meaning. “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” Romans 10:1-3. Bear in mind that “the righteousness of God” is his law. Isaiah 51:6, 7. We can see that Paul uses the term in this sense; for, without any break for explanation, he adds, “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness,” etc. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 215.11}

From these verses we learn that Paul, instead of teaching that the law has come to an end, is showing that Israel, through ignorance, had failed to realize the design of the law in securing righteousness. What had caused this failure? Paul says it was because they were ignorant of God’s righteousness, and went about to establish their own righteousness. They had such low views of the righteousness of God, as required by his law, that they thought they could make themselves righteous. But, as we have already seen, all men are sinful, and while in the flesh cannot please God. Romans 8:8. The only way in which men can appear as righteous, is to have that “righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ.” When their faith is imputed to them for righteousness, they become, in Christ, new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17), and thenceforth it is possible that with them all things shall be of God. But the Jews rejected Christ, and therefore failed to secure that righteousness which the law was designed to perfect in man. A comparison of Scripture texts will show that the view here outlined is the correct one. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 216.1}

The reader must know that the word “end” does not necessarily mean “termination.” It is often used in the sense of design, object, or purpose. For instances where it is so used, see James 5:11; John 18:37; Romans 14:9; Amos 5:18; Luke 18:1; Hebrews 13:7; 1 Peter 1:9. In reading these texts no one would get the idea that faith is ended, or that the Lord had ceased to exist. So in reading Romans 10:4, even without an explanation, one need not suppose that “end” means cessation of existence. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 216.2}

Now for a more detailed exposition of the text. In 1 Timothy 1:5, the same writer says: “Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” The word here rendered “charity” is often rendered “love,” and is so rendered in this place in the New Version. In John 5:3, we read: “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments;” and Paul himself says that “love is the fulfilling of the law.” Romans 13:10. In both these texts, the same word (*agape*) is used that occurs in 1 Timothy 1:5. Therefore we say that this text means, Now the design of the commandment (or law) is that it should be kept. Everybody will recognize this as a self-evident fact. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 216.3}

But this is not the ultimate design of the law. In the verse following the one under consideration Paul quotes Moses as saying of the law that “the man that doeth those things shall live by them.” Christ said to the young man, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” Matthew 19:17. Now since the design of the law was that it should be kept, or, in other words, that it should produce righteous characters, and the promise is that those who are obedient shall live, we may say that the ultimate design of the law was to give life. And in harmony with this thought are the words of Paul, that the law “was ordained to life.” Romans 7:10. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 216.4}

But “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,” and “the wages of sin is death.” Thus it is impossible for the law to accomplish its design in making perfect characters and consequently giving life. When a man has once broken the law, no subsequent obedience can ever make his character perfect. And therefore the law which was ordained unto life, is found to be unto death. Romans 7:10. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 216.5}

If we were to stop right here, with the law unable to accomplish its purpose, we should leave all the world under condemnation, and sentence of death. Now we shall see that Christ enables man to secure both righteousness and life. We read that we are “justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Romans 3:24. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1. More than this, he enables us to keep the law. “For he [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21. In Christ, therefore, it is possible for us to made perfect,-the righteousness of God,-and that is just what we would have been by constant and unvarying obedience to the law. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 216.6}

Again we read: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.... 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 8:1-4. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 216.7}

What could not the law do? It could not free a single guilty soul from condemnation. Why not? Because it was “weak through the flesh.” There is no element of weakness in the law; the weakness is in the flesh. It is not the fault of a good tool that it cannot make a sound pillar out of a rotten stick. The law could not cleanse a man’s past record, and make him sinless; and poor, fallen man had no strength resting in his flesh to enable him to keep the law. And so God imputes to believers the righteousness of Christ, who was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, so that “the righteousness of the law” might be fulfilled in their lives. And thus Christ is the end of the law. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 216.8}

But life is promised to the obedient, and as Christ enables his people to obey the law, he thus secures to them eternal life. Paul says that Christ has “brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Timothy 1:10. Christ himself says: “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 10:10. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16. And because Christ meets the end or design of the law which was ordained to life, he is called our life, as Paul says: “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” Colossians 3:4. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 216.9}

To conclude, then, we have found that the design of the law was that it should give life because of obedience. All men have sinned, and been sentenced to death. But Christ took upon himself man’s nature, and will impart of his own righteousness to those who accept his sacrifice, and finally, when they stand, through him, as doers of the law, he will fulfill to them its ultimate object, by crowning them with eternal life. And so we repeat, what we cannot too fully appreciate, that Christ is made unto us “wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” E. J. W. {SITI April 8, 1886, p. 216.10}

**“Abolishing the Enmity” The Signs of the Times, 12, 15.**

E. J. Waggoner

Although we have shown by repeated arguments and texts of Scripture, that the law endures forever, and have shown that Christ did not come to relax any of its claims, but that he is the “end of the law,” in that he enables sinners to keep it, and thus to secure the life to which the law was ordained, there is a text which to some may seem to be a contradiction, or which may at least cause confusion in their minds. That text, therefore, shall be our next study; it reads thus: “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.” Ephesians 2:14, 15. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 231.1}

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable.” 2 Timothy 3:16. Therefore there can be no contradiction in the Bible, and the text just quoted cannot contradict those texts which say that the law cannot be abolished. Although a certain “law of commandments contained in ordinances” is spoken of as having been “abolished,” even before we study it, our faith in the integrity of the Scriptures forces us to conclude that in this text a law is referred to, different from that of which Christ said, “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.” Luke 16:17. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 231.2}

Let us contrast certain expressions. That which is abolished is said to have been “enmity;” but Paul says: “Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” Romans 13:10. And John says: “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3. Certainly the same thing cannot be both love and enmity. Again Paul says: “The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” Romans 7:12. Surely then it is not the law of God to which he applies the term “enmity.” He also says: “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.” Romans 7:22. But he would not delight in that which was enmity; therefore we *know* that Ephesians 2:15 has no reference to the law of God, or ten commandments. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 231.3}

Go back now to the time when the law was given from Sinai. The record says that after God had spoken the ten commandments, “he added no more” (Deuteronomy 5:22); and we have seen that all that God spoke from the mount on the day of the assembly, was written by him on the two tables of stone, and that nothing but the ten commandments was so written. The people, however, could not know that God intended to speak no more than his own holy law, and they said to Moses: “Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” “Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee.” Exodus 20:19; Deuteronomy 5:27. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 231.4}

Accordingly God told Moses to say to the people, “Get you into your tents again.” “And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.” Deuteronomy 5:30; Exodus 20:21. Moses was in the mount with God forty days, receiving instruction for the people; and the fact that the people received instruction through Moses, besides that which the Lord spoke to them directly, is thus noted in Nehemiah’s prayer: “Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments; and madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant.” Nehemiah 9:13, 14. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 231.5}

Those things which were given by the hand of Moses are recorded chiefly in Exodus, chapters 25-30, and in Leviticus. Among them were many burdensome ceremonies,-the requirement that every male should go up to Jerusalem three times in every year, circumcision, “diverse washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.” Hebrews 9:10. We say that these ceremonies were burdensome, for Peter himself said that they were a yoke, “which neither *our* fathers nor we were able to bear.” Acts 15:10. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.1}

Moreover, some of them, at least, were an “enmity,” or a cause of enmity, between the Jews and Gentiles. The ceremony of circumcision, which was designed to serve as a line of demarcation between the Jews and the Gentiles, was especially the cause of much enmity. The Jews regarded it as a sure proof of their superior sanctity, and therefore looked with contempt upon the uncircumcised Gentiles; while the Gentiles in turn hated the Jews, and despised their circumcision, looking upon it as little different from a badge of slavery. Acts 11:2, 3 indicates how the Jews regarded those who were uncircumcised. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.2}

This rite of circumcision was done away in Christ. It was given to Abraham as a sign or “seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.” Romans 4:11. Thus we see it was designed to mark a *real* separation, the separation which always exists between the righteous and the wicked. But when a Jew departed from God, his circumcision and separation from the Gentiles was only an outward form, a mockery. Paul assures us that real circumcision is “of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Romans 2:20.God looks upon the heart, and demands that righteousness shall be from within, and not merely from without, as an outward sign. The man who is pure in heart is really separated from the world more completely than he could possibly be by any mere outward mark. And so “in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” Galatians 6:15. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.3}

Thus this source of enmity, which really served as a barrier to the Gentiles, was taken away. We say it served as a barrier to the Gentiles, because, being uncircumcised, they were held to be rejected of God, and would naturally make less effort to become his followers. The Jews, also, in their sectional pride and vain confidence, were really separated from the true Israel. But when this cause of enmity was removed, both could be united in one body by the cross, and so find peace. But after circumcision as an outward sign lost its force, the keeping of God’s holy law still remained as a primary obligation. Said Paul: “Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.” 1 Corinthians 7:19. And the keeping of the commandments from the heart constitutes the true circumcision, whose praise is of God. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.4}

Among the “ordinances” there were also various sacrifices. In the fourth chapter of Leviticus we find an account of the sin-offerings. We cannot take time to go over the ground in detail, but simply refer the reader to that chapter, also Leviticus 6:25-30; 10:16-18, and chapter 16. In the service for sin, an innocent animal was substituted for the sinner, whose sins were confessed over it, and it was slain. Either the flesh or the blood was carried within the sanctuary, and the sinner was forgiven. On the last day of the year, a goat was slain as a sin-offering for all the people; its blood was taken within the sanctuary, and its body was burned. In every sacrifice for sin, the sin was considered as laid upon the substitute as a whole, and it was entirely consumed. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.5}

But these sacrifices did not atone for a single sin: “for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” Hebrews 10:4. The only one who can remove sin is the Lamb of God. John 1:29. He “appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Hebrews 9:26. On him was laid “the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6), and he “bare our sins *in his own body* on the tree.” 1 Peter 2:24. After Christ’s sacrifice, those typical sacrifices that could not take away sin, were no longer required, as we read: “Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.” Hebrews 10:5. And so it is literally true that “in his flesh” Christ abolished “the law of commandments contained in ordinances.” So it is that we are required to eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, if we would have eternal life. John 6:53-56. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.6}

One thought more. Where these ordinances were abolished “in the flesh,” it was “to make in himself of twain one new man, *so making peace*.” And what alone can make peace? Let inspiration answer: “Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them.” Psalm 119:165. “O that thou hadst hearkened unto my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” Isaiah 48:18. Paul, also, speaking of those who have sinned (*i.e.*, transgressed the law), says, “And the way of peace have they not known.” Romans 3:17. Therefore we see that instead of the ten commandments of God being abolished “in his flesh,” they “stand fast forever and ever,” and are the bond of union of the “one new man;” they are the basis of the peace which both Jews and Gentiles who believe may have with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.7}

And so both those who are near, and those who were afar off, become together members of “the household of God,” not settled on a new basis, but “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone.” Ephesians 2:20. E. J. W. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.8}

**“Is It a Whimsey?” The Signs of the Times, 12, 15.**

E. J. Waggoner

A noted California clergyman says that the keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath is “a whimsey,” and a prominent religious journal of the coast indorses the statement. A whimsey is, “a whim; a freak; a capricious notion.” Let us see about this. About four thousand years ago a mountain in Arabia “was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as a spoken of a furnace, and all whole mount quaked greatly.” Exodus 19:18. “He came with ten thousands of his holy ones; from his right hand went forth a fiery law for them.” Deuteronomy 33:2. This law was spoken by God himself “out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice (Deuteronomy 5:22); and was written upon tables of stone. “The tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.” Exodus 32:16. Of this law the psalmist says: “Thy word is true from the beginning; and *every one* of thy righteous judgments *endureth forever*.” Psalm 119:160. And again: “And his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.” Psalm 111:7, 8. Christ himself said that “one jot or one tittle” should in no wise pass from the law (Matthew 5:18), and that “it is it easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.” Luke 16:17. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.9}

And now we find that the commandments which were spoken by God’s own terrible voice, amid scenes of the most awful grandeur, and which were written with his own finger in the imperishable stone, to indicate that every letter was to be as enduring as his own eternity, the fourth one reads as follows:- {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.10}

“Remember the Sabbath day [literally, *the day of the Sabbath]*, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but *the seventh day is the Sabbath* of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days *the Lord* made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and *rested the seventh day*; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.11}

What do you say, frieend? Is the keeping of the seventh day a capricious notion, a whim? If so, do you know of any thing that is reasonable, and which rests on a solid foundation? Read the book of Malachi, and see what the prophet says of those who say, “It is vain to serve God.” E. J. W. {SITI April 15, 1886, p. 232.12}

**“The Handwriting of Ordinances” The Signs of the Times, 12, 16.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.” Colossians 2:13-17. {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 247.1}

The text, like Ephesians 2:15, 16, is often misapplied; it cannot, however, be applied to those things contained in the ten commandments, unless the texts which show the enduring nature of that law are either forgotten or ignored. The ten commandments were graven on tables of stone, by the finger of God. See Exodus 32:15, 16; Deuteronomy 4:12, 13. Now the Bible is a consistent book, and has respect to the fitness of things; but it is evident enough that there would be no fitness in speaking of “blotting out” something that was chiseled in the rock. Neither is it an appropriate figure to speak of nailing tables of stone to a cross. Therefore even if the Bible did not assure us that the commandments of God “stand fast forever and ever,” we should know that the apostle has in this text no reference whatever to the law of God. The things which God gave through Moses were written in a book, and only in a book; consequently it is perfectly appropriate to speak of blotting them out. If it be objected that the ten commandments were also written by Moses in a book, we reply that that makes no difference; since the ten commandments were engraved in stone, they could not be blotted out even though all the books in the world were destroyed. {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 247.2}

The fact that the thing here spoken of came to an end by the cross of Christ, should cause us to conclude that the same thing is here spoken of that is spoken of in Ephesians 2:15, 16 as having been abolished “in his flesh.” In this text it is said to have been “contrary;” in the other it is called “enmity;” and Peter called it a burdensome yoke. This, Paul says, was “against us.” But the law of God is holy, and just, and good in its requirements. We conclude, therefore, that the “handwriting of ordinances,” which was nailed to the cross of Christ, was the Levitical law. The ceremonies were typical of the sacrifice of Christ, and when that sacrifice was actually made on the cross, the types at the same time ceased. {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 247.3}

We notice that because these ordinances have been blotted out, therefore we are not to be judged concerning certain things. This indicates that those things were part of the ordinances. Paul enumerates them as meats and drinks, feast days, new moons, and sabbaths; “which are a shadow of things to come.” The very enumeration of these things shows us that the law of God is not here under discussion, for none of these things formed a part of it. It is true that the fourth commandment is concerning the Sabbath; but the Sabbath of the fourth commandment dates from creation (compare Exodus 20:8-11; Genesis 2:2, 3), before the fall of man made the coming of Christ a necessity; while the sabbaths mentioned in Colossians were shadows of things in the work of Christ. These sabbaths are given in Levi. 23, in the ceremonial law. They occurred only once a year, and were-the first and seventh days of unleavened bread (Leviticus 23:5-8); the day of Pentecost (verses 15-21); the first day of the seventh month, being the memorial of blowing of trumpets (verses 24, 25); the tenth day of the seventh month, or the day of atonement (verses 27-32); and the first and eighth days of the feast of tabernacles. Verses 34-36. {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 247.4}

All these days, as is seen at once in the case of the passover and the day of atonement, were feast days typifying certain parts of Christ’s mediatorial work for sinners. Of them the Lord said: “These are the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, everything upon his day.” Leviticus 23:37. Notice: The Lord said to Moses, “These are the feast days... which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations.” These are some of the things which God gave by the hand of Moses (Nehemiah 9:14); but the Sabbath of the fourth commandment was proclaimed by God’s own voice. This distinction is plainly marked, for after enumerating the ceremonial sabbaths which were to be observed by the people, the Lord added: “Beside the Sabbaths of the Lord.” Leviticus 23:38. This shows beyond all question that the sabbaths which ceased when the “handwriting of ordinances” was blotted out, were the ceremonial sabbaths, and consequently that it was not the moral law, but the ceremonial law, which constituted that “handwriting of ordinances.” {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 247.5}

In addition to these proofs, it may not be amiss to cite the following statements of learned commentators, to show that the same proofs were conclusive to their minds also. Says Dr. Clark:- {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 247.6}

“The apostle speaks here in reference to some particulars of the handwriting of ordinances, which had been taken away, viz., the distinction of meats and drinks, what was clean and what unclean, according to the law; and the necessity of observing certain holy days or festivals, such as the new moons and particular sabbaths, or those which should be observed with more than ordinary solemnity.... There is no intimation here that the Sabbath was done away, or that its moral use was suspended, by the introduction of Christianity. I have shown elsewhere that, ‘Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,’ is a command of perpetual obligation.” {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 247.7}

Dr. Barnes also says on the same point:- {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 247.8}

“There is no evidence, from this passage, that he would teach that there was no obligation to observe any holy time, for there is not the slightest reason to believe that he meant to declare that one of the ten commandments had ceased to be binding on mankind. If he had used the word in the singular number-‘the Sabbath,’ it would then, of course, have been clear that he meant to affirm that that commandment ceased to be binding, and that a Sabbath was no longer to be observed. But the use of the term in the plural number, and the connection, show that he had his eye on the great number of days which were observed by the Hebrews as festivals, as a part of their ceremonial and typical law, and not on the moral law, or the ten commandments. No part of the moral law, no one of the ten commandments, could be spoken of as ‘a shadow of things to come.’ These commandments are, from the nature of moral law, of perpetual and universal obligation.” {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 247.9}

A few words now concerning the different relations which the people sustained toward the moral law and toward the ceremonial law. The moral law was of primary obligation, and it was binding upon all men alike. The Gentile as well as the Jew was under obligation to worship God, to keep his Sabbath, and to abstain from murder, adultery, and theft. It was the moral law which convicted men of sin (Romans 7:7), and which showed all the world to be guilty before God. Romans 3:9. {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 247.10}

The ceremonial law, on the other hand, was not of primary obligation. Having reference only to the mediatorial work of Christ, it had no existence before man fell. Moreover it was not of universal obligation. It would have been thought sacrilegious for an uncircumcised person, an idolator, or an atheist, to attempt to engage in the Jewish ceremonies. Yet whenever a Gentile accepted the true religion, he was, through circumcision, admitted on an equal footing with the Jew. Where, then, in individual experience, did the ceremonial law come in? Read what Paul says of Abraham, in this connection: {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 247.11}

“We say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.” Romans 4:9-11. {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 248.1}

From this we learn, what none will deny, that circumcision and its kindred ceremonies, while they pointed forward to the real work of Christ, did not precede faith in Christ. They were the means by which the people signified that faith which was necessary before they could participate in them. To the man who had never heard of Christ, those ceremonies were meaningless; but to the one who had faith in Christ and his promised work for man, they were a beautiful means of expressing that faith. {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 248.2}

The moral law, being of primary and universal obligation, would be impressed by the Holy Spirit on the heart of a heathen. By it he would see himself to be a sinner. Earnestly seeking freedom from condemnation, he would find that the Messiah for whose coming the pious Jews looked with longing hearts, was the only one who could take away his sin. Joyfully seizing upon this hope, he would separate himself from his heathen associates; by circumcision he would signify the putting off of his own sinful habits; and henceforth, so long as he retained his faith in Christ, he would gladly manifest that faith, and with each manifestation thereof quicken it into renewed activity, by celebrating the ordinances which prefigured the promised sacrifice and atonement of Christ. {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 248.3}

But when the reality came, the types ceased. Not so the moral law, the ten commandments of God. Being the foundation of God’s Government, there was nothing in them of a fleeting or shadowy nature. They still remain of primary, universal, and eternal obligation. They still convict of sin; and he who by them is convinced of his need of One who can save from sin, may still come to a Saviour who has suffered for sin, and may obtain pardon. Through the ordinances of the Lord’s house,-baptism and the Lord’s Supper,-he may show his faith in a sacrifice already made, until his promised redemption is consummated by the return of his Lord; and then from Sabbath to Sabbath he may worship before the Lord, and see his face; and the law, which stands fast forever and ever, will witness to his loyalty to the Creator. E. J. W. {SITI April 22, 1886, p. 248.4}