**“Under the Law. (Concluded.)” The Signs of the Times, 12, 21.**

E. J. Waggoner

*(Concluded.)*

We have now learned the danger which threatened the Galatian brethren, and can understand Paul’s fear for them, and his statement that they desired to be “under the law,”-in bondage to the elements of the world. It will therefore be a short task to examine the remaining portion of this fourth chapter of Galatians, and note what bearing it has on the law. The apostle continues:- {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.1}

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” Galatians 4:21-26. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.2}

It will be seen at once that in these verses three things are placed in contrast with three other things: Hagar, ancient Jerusalem, and the old covenant are placed in opposition to Sarah, the new Jerusalem, and the new covenant. Ishmael and Isaac stand respectively as representatives of those under the old covenant, and those under the new. It will also be noticed that those who are free are the children of the New Jerusalem, the new covenant, while those in bondage, “under the law,” are children of the old Jerusalem, the old covenant. The explanation of this chapter, then, involves an explanation of the two covenants. This we can do only in the briefest manner. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.3}

The first covenant was made with the children of Israel when they left Egypt. See Hebrews 8:8, 9. The terms of that covenant are found in Exodus 19:3-8; 24:3-8. They were simply as follows: God promised to make of the Israelites a great nation, a kingdom of priests, if they, in turn, would obey his law. This they promised to do. Thus the covenant, or agreement, was made. The law of God was the basis of the covenant, or that concerning which the covenant was made. See Exodus 24:8. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.4}

Now notice what this covenant required of the people. The Lord had first promised to do certain things for them if they would obey his voice. Then they heard his voice speaking the law in thunder tones from Sinai, and after that they renewed their promise of obedience, saying, “All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.” Exodus 24:7. This was nothing less than an agreement to yield perfect obedience to the law. Those who “hear the law,” know that it covers every act or thought of man’s entire life. Therefore, if the Jews had fulfilled their promise, they would have merited all the blessings which God promised them; but, unfortunately, they did not, neither could they. They had already broken the law many times, and were sinful by nature, so that it was utterly impossible for them, in their own strength, to yield perfect obedience to it. See Romans 8:7, 8; Galatians 5:17. Now in this covenant there was no provision for the forgiveness of sins either past or future,-no hint of Christ, through whom alone forgiveness and power to keep the law can come. They had virtually made a promise to make themselves righteous before God. But every one who attempts to do this must fail, and therefore it is truly said that that covenant gendered to bondage. Let no one imagine that we mean that that covenant made them under obligation to keep the law. The obligation to keep the law existed before any covenant was made; but we mean that that covenant left them just where it found them,-in condemnation because of violated law. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.5}

Had there never been any other covenant than this, the whole world must have been lost. (Romans 3:19.) Some will ask if God did not know that they could not of themselves keep the law perfectly, and if it was not trifling with them to make such a covenant with them. God did indeed know that they had no power to do as they agreed, but in making the covenant he was not trifling with them. The making of such an agreement was the most forcible way that could be devised to bring home to their minds a sense of their condition. In their vain endeavors to keep the whole law in their own strength, they would learn their need, and that would turn their attention to that other covenant, called the new covenant, but which in reality had been in existence ever since the fall. Here it is:- {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.6}

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after these days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jeremiah 31:31-34. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.7}

In what respect does this covenant differ from the other? Is it in regard to the keeping of the law? No; for that is required in both. But in this there is forgiveness of sins, and the blotting out of transgressions. More than this, the law is to be written in the hearts of the people, and that means that they will be enabled to keep it perfectly. See Psalm 40:8. This work is done by Christ. Through him pardon is secured, and he enables us to be made the righteousness of God. It will readily be seen that, whereas the other covenant found and left the people in bondage to sin, and under condemnation of death, this covenant enabled them to become free from sin and condemnation. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:1. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.8}

Now the application of Paul’s words is easy. Hagar was a bondwoman, and Ishmael, her son, was begotten according to the flesh. Sarah was a freewoman, and her son, Isaac, was a child of promise, born not according to the flesh, but when humanly speaking, such a thing as the birth of a child was impossible. Since Ishmael “was born after the flesh,” he is a fit type of those who are “in the flesh;” and in this condition are all careless sinners, as well as all who attempt to secure salvation by their own unaided efforts. When men have once sinned, it is contrary to anything in nature that they should ever be made to appear perfectly righteous,-as though they had never sinned. But God, by a miracle of grace, which is manifested through Jesus Christ, causes this to be done, so that the sinner may stand before the law uncondemned. And so those who have obtained this freedom may be fitly represented by Isaac, who was born contrary to the order of nature, solely because of the promise of God. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.9}

So likewise, the old Jerusalem, which was rejected of God because it had killed the prophets, and stoned them which were sent to it, and had rejected Christ, is very aptly termed the mother of those who are in bondage because of sin. The New Jerusalem, however, is called the Bride, the Lamb’s wife (See Revelation 21:2, 9, 10, and onward); and since Christ is the Everlasting Father (Isaiah 9:6), and it is he alone that gives freedom (Romans 8:1; John 8:33-36), the city is very properly called the mother of all those who are saved from sin. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.10}

“But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.” Galatians 4:20. This is only another form of what we find in Galatians 5:17: “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.11}

“Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” Galatians 4:30. Exactly; the works of the flesh must be put away, for “they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” Galatians 5:24. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.12}

The apostle, having shown the bondage in which all sinners are held, and how Christ alone can set men free, and enable them to do the requirements of the law, says: “So, then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.” Galatians 5:1. Compare this with Galatians 4:8, 9. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.13}

Here we might leave this portion of Scripture, since we have fully explained verse 21, which is all that we set out to do; but the one who has read thus far will scarcely fail to read the verses immediately following the one last quoted, and will doubtless be puzzled over one or two expressions which are there found. A few words will suffice to explain them. We quote:- {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.14}

“Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.” Galatians 5:2-5. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 326.15}

The reader will recall what has before been said concerning circumcision and other ceremonies. It is evident that Paul did not mean that circumcision was in itself so terrible a thing that the receiving of it would cause a person to fall from grace; for the apostle himself circumcised Timothy as an act of expediency. See Acts 16:1-3. It must be, then, that he refers to circumcision as taught by the men who came down from Judea, and who were trying to turn away Paul’s converts from the faith. They urged it as the means of justification. They said: “Except ye be circumcised, ... ye cannot be saved.” Acts 15:1. But since pardon and justification can be secured through Christ alone, those who adopted circumcision for that purpose, necessarily rejected Christ; and if they had previously accepted Christianity, of course their rejection of Christ was a fall from grace. Christ was of no effect in any one who expected to be justified by his own works. But we, on the contrary, says Paul, “wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.” This shows that the mode of justification from sin is the subject still under discussion. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 327.1}

But how about the expression, “I testify to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law”? Does that mean that if a man is circumcised he must keep the law, but that if he is not circumcised he may disregard the law? Not by any means. The law is of universal obligation; all men, whatever their condition, are in duty bound to keep it. It is because this duty rests upon every individual, that all the world are guilty before God; for all have transgressed the law. Since all have transgressed the law, they are condemned. Now “the doers of the law shall be justified.” None others can be. But “a doer of the law” is one who can present a record of obedience unbroken by a single sin. Thus it follows that, after all have sinned, by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 327.2}

Now suppose a man starts out with the determination to secure righteousness without the aid of Christ. What must he do? Why he must do the whole law. Very well; suppose that it is possible for him to keep the law perfectly for the remainder of his life, will he be lacking in anything? Certainly; for the law demands obedience for that part of his life which he spent in sin, before he attempted to do right. Perfect obedience is required of him who would stand as a doer of the law. So Paul virtually says: If you set out to be justified by circumcision, or by any other work, it will be necessary for you to show a perfectly clean record: you must your own self take away those past sins, so that the law will witness to your perfect righteousness,-so that it may appear that you have never sinned. But this he cannot do, and therefore he is in the fullest sense “a debtor,”-eternally a debtor. He is in the condition of the man who owed his lord ten thousand talents, and had nothing with which to pay, and who was cast into prison till he should pay it all. For him there was no hope. To all eternity he must remain a debtor to his lord. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 327.3}

So with the man who seeks to stand justified before God by any works of his own. There is a depth of meaning to the words, “he is a debtor to do the whole law,” which the casual reader does not catch. The hopelessness of the bondage into which the man is cast who goes about to establish his own righteousness can scarcely be conceived. In this bondage we all are, or have been. Let us ever rejoice that “with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption” (Psalm 130:7); and that the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin. W. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 327.4}

**“A Little Confused” The Signs of the Times, 12, 21.**

E. J. Waggoner

The editor of the *Tennessee Baptist*, having received a copy of Professor Pettengell’s book, “The Unspeakable Gift,” feels moved to do something to stay the tide of “heresy,” and gives the following notice:- {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 327.5}

“A RICH TREAT FOR OUR SUBSCRIBERS.-We have engaged our stated contributor, A. J. Frost, D. D., of Sacramento, Cal., to review thoroughly the prevailing theory of Conditional Immortality, or Annihilationism. This is a modern phase of old Universalism and Restorationism, which is extensively prevailing in many parts of the North and West, and is destined, at an early date, to be the most popular delusion of this age.” {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 327.6}

If Mr. Frost knows no more about the doctrine of conditional immortality than the editor of the *Tennessee Baptist* seems to, his review will indeed be “a rich treat.” To say that conditional immortality is a modern phase of Universalism and Restorationism is about as true as it would be to say that Presbyterianism is a modern form of Catholicism or that Luther was special emissary of Pope Leo X. or that Christianity, is a modern form of paganism. Conditional immortality is as much different from Universalism as daylight is from darkness. Indeed it is the only doctrine that can successfully combat Universalism. Universalism teaches that when.... their belief and practice; the doctrine of conditional immortality teaches just what the Bible teaches that, “He that believeth on the Son hath life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life.” The one robs Christ of all his glory, making his sacrifice a useless thing, while the other crowns him “Lord of all.” No man can be a Universalist or a Spiritualist so long as he holds to the doctrine of conditional immortality; but the one who believes in natural immortality has no safeguard against either delusion. W. {SITI June 3, 1886, p. 327.7}

**“The Real Point Involved” The Signs of the Times, 12, 22.**

E. J. Waggoner

There is one strange thing about this Sunday-sabbath, and that is that an argument which is universally used by its advocates, and is relied on as conclusive, is not considered of any force whatever when used in favor of the Sabbath. For instance, an extended Sunday argument is scarcely ever made without reference to the number of times that Christ met with his disciples on Sunday, and the number of religious meetings held on that day. Now the facts are these: We have a record of just one meeting of Christ and his disciples on the first day of the week, and of but one meeting of people for worship. The first meeting was while the disciples sat at supper in which they were joined by Christ, and the second was an evening meeting just before Paul was to take leave of the brethren at Troas after a week of labor among them. {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.1}

Concerning Sabbath worship we have the following: It was the “custom’ of Jesus to worship in the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Luke 4:16. He also told his disciples that because it was made *for* man, not against him, they would now be violating it by doing a charitable action that day. We also find Sabbath meetings spoken of in Acts 13:11, 42, 44; 17:2, and 18:4. We find also that it was Paul’s “manner” to hold meetings on the Sabbath. Now if custom is to be taken as evidence, in favor of the day, certainly the verdict must be in favor of the seventh day. {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.2}

But this is not all, nor is it the main point at all. The mere fact that meetings were held on a certain day proves nothing, because the disciples were accustomed to meet every day, and Christ and the apostles preached every day. Here is a point: The first day of the week is invariably spoken of as “the first day of the week.’ No sacred title is ever applied to it. There is absolutely nothing in connection with the mention of it to indicate that any sacredness was attached to it. On the contrary it is spoken of as being devoted to secular employments, and is designated, the same as the other working days, only by its number. The seventh day, however, the Sabbath, is always spoken of as “the Sabbath”-the rest day. This is wherein we find evidence in favor of the seventh-day Sabbath in the New Testament. Christian men, moved by the Spirit of God to write for Christians, writing at periods varying from five to thirty years after Christ’s ascension, invariably referred to the particular day enjoined in the fourth commandment as “the Sabbath.” Surely, then, there can be no doubt as to what day is the only Sabbath for Christians to keep. The Spirit of God has set its seal on the seventh day, and has declared that is the Sabbath day. {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.3}

Still further, the inspired apostles have left on record the statement that *only* the seventh day is the Sabbath. There is no question but that the day on which the Jews met for worship was the seventh day of the week. Now Paul, when he was at Antioch, in Pisidia, showed, in the following words, how inconsistent the Jews were in rejecting Christ: “For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.” Acts 13:27. If the Scriptures were read in the Jewish synagogues on the seventh day, which no one will think of denying, then, according to Paul, they were read *every* Sabbath day, which effectually shuts Sunday out of the claim to be called Sabbath. {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.4}

The apostle James, also, in an assembly of the apostles and elders, which is generally spoken of as “the first Christian council,” and where the Holy Ghost was present to direct, said, “For Moses of old time hath in every city then that preach him, being *read in the synagogues of every Sabbath day*.” Acts 15:21. Here we have, in an assembly of Christians twenty years after the crucifixion, an unmistakably Christian declaration to the fact that the day on which the Jews read the books of Moses in their synagogues,-the seventh day,-is the Sabbath to the exclusion of every other day. {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.5}

We cannot see how Christians can ignore such facts these. If the Holy Spirit declares that the seventh day is the Sabbath, and the only Sabbath, why should we not say so too? How can we be Christians if we walk not as Christ and the apostles walked, and talk not as they talked? If holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, why should not their words be an end of all strife? For our part we will maintain before the world that the seventh day of the week is the only Sabbath, and the day which God and Christ demand shall be kept by Christians; and we know that this position cannot be contradicted by the Scriptures. W. {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.6}

**“A Feature of Catholicism” The Signs of the Times, 12, 22.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the “decrees” of the Plenary Council held in Baltimore, the following is found:- {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.7}

“We earnestly appeal to all Catholics, without distinction, not only to take no part in any movement tending toward a relaxation of the observance of Sunday, but to use their influence and power as citizens to persist in the opposite direction. Let them make it not only a day of rest, but also a day of prayer.” {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.8}

The *Congregationalist* prints the above with simply the following comment: “Here is a feature of Catholicism which we most heartily endorse.” We doubt if the *Congregationalist* realized the full import of its comment. Sunday observance is indeed a “feature of Catholicism,” and is, in fact, its principal feature, as may be seen by the following: {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.9}

The apostle Paul gave as the chief characteristic of the papacy that he “opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” 2 Thessalonians 2:4. And the angel told Daniel how the papacy would fulfill the specifications of opposing and exalting himself above God, namely, by thinking to change the law of God. Daniel 7:25. In no other way could the Pope exalt himself above God. Of course no power on earth could really make a change in the law of God; but the papacy was to think itself able to do so. That the Catholic Church fills this specification, putting itself above God, by thinking it has power to change God’s law, is evident from its own testimony. {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.10}

“*Ques*.-How prove you that the church hath power to command feasts and holy days? {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.11}

“*Ans*.-By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow all of; and therefore they fondly contradict themselves by keeping Sunday strictly and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same church.”-*From “Abridgement of Christian Doctrine.”* {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.12}

“*Ques*.-Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept? {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.13}

“*Ans*.-Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her; she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority.”-*From the Doctrinal Catechism*. {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.14}

To the statement that “all modern religionists agree with her” in substituting Sunday for the Sabbath, we must take exceptions. We agree that she has done it, but we do not agree that she had any right to do it. But some one will say that there was no papacy until about the fifth or sixth century, and that as the Sabbath was changed before that time, it could not have been by the papal power. To this we reply that the “mystery of iniquity” was working even in Paul’s day, and that before Justinian’s decree making the bishop of Rome head over all the churches, the Catholic Church existed just as really as it did afterwards. All the difference lies in the fact that after that decree the papacy was firmly established, as we may say, on a legal basis. An act performed before the beginning of papal supremacy, was just as much an act of the Catholic Church as one performed afterwards. {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.15}

In writing of the Trinitarian controversies, which took place in the time of Constantine, Gibbon points to the two parties as the Arians and the Catholics. The party which finally became dominant, and which Constantine favored, is invariably termed the Catholic party. Thus we see that it is a recognized fact that the Catholic Church, so-called, had an existence in the time of Constantine. Although Constantine was not baptized till near his death, he favored the nominally Christian party from the year 313. He is called “the first Christian Emperor;” and as the influential “Christians” in her day were the Catholics, it follows that any decree issued by him concerning a matter of religion, would be a Catholic decree. It is well known that in the year 321 A.D. Constantine did issue a Sunday edict, and of that edict Chambers’s Encyclopedia, article “Sabbath,” says:- {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.16}

“Unquestionably the first law, either ecclesiastical or civil, by which the sabbatical observance of that day (Sunday) is known to have been ordained is the edict of Constantine, A.D. 321.” {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.17}

More testimony to the same effect might be given, but this is sufficient to show that the Catholic Church is responsible for the change that has been made in the Sabbath, a change which has no Scripture warrant, and that this change of the Sabbath is claimed by the Catholic Church as the mark of its authority. It is not simply *a* feature of the Catholic Church, but it is *the* feature of that church, as we would say before, the *Congregationalist* probably did not realize the import of its own words; but it is a fact, nevertheless, that in indorsing that “feature of Catholicism,” it is simply endorsing Catholicism itself. As a Catholic writer said in a book entitled, “A Plain Talk about the Protestantism of To-day.” “It is worth its while to remember that this observance of the Sabbath [Sunday]-in which, after all, the only Protestant *worship* consists-not only has no foundation in the Bible, but it is in flagrant contradiction with its letter, which commands rest on the Sabbath, which is Saturday.... Thus the observance of *Sunday* by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church.” {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.18}

What do you say, friends? Will you indorse this “feature of Catholicism,” and thus indorse Catholicism itself, with all its abominations and horrible deeds of blood? This is a question that will not down. The time has come when it must be answered by each person for himself. It may be passed by once or twice, or even more times, but it will surely come again and call more loudly for an answer. The Lord says, “with a loud voice,” “If any man worship the beast and his image... The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.” Would it not be better to serve God by doing just as he says? “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” W. {SITI June 10, 1886, p. 342.19}

**“Religion and Happiness” The Signs of the Times, 12, 23.**

E. J. Waggoner

“For a person to live and die happy, he must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.” These words we lately saw in a religious journal and have very often heard similar expressions. The utterance of such a sentiment gives evidence of very crude idea of religion and its object. We think that such a view of religion is injurious yes, for the following reasons:- {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 358.1}

1. It fosters selfishness, which is directly opposed to true religion. To make happiness the sole or the principle incentive for gaining religion, is to direct the attention of the individual to himself rather than to God. Love should be the mainspring of every act of the Christian. The reward of the righteous, and the punishment of the ungodly are both set before us, to stimulate us both by hope and by fear; yet these are not the main incentives. “Perfect love casteth out fear.” It is certain that when one is imbued with the spirit of Christ, who said, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish His work,” he will not do his work through fear of the consequences if he should neglect it. At the birth of Christ the angels sang, “Glory to God and the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” Luke 2:14. And the first commandment is, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all my mind,” while the second is, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” In true religion there is no place for thoughts of self; the glory of God, and the welfare of our fellow-men comprise our whole duty. All the thought the Christian has to take of self is to keep himself unspotted from the world. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 358.2}

2. The idea is injurious because it tends to discouragement of those who hold it. If a man thinks that happiness is the sure and invariable result of belief in Christ, he will surely be discouraged when trouble comes, as it certainly will. When the Thessalonians were in distress, Paul wrote to them “that no man should be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that we are appointed there unto.” 1 Thessalonians 3:3. It is enough for the disciple if he as his Lord, and he was “a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief.” So he says to his followers: “If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.” “Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.” “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” True, the Christian will be “joyful in tribulation,” yet it will be tribulation still. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 358.3}

3. The idea that happiness is a constant accompaniment of believe in Christ, is injurious, because it tends to produce false hopes. The careless sinner and the professor who is “at ease in Zion,” having this idea, a fancy that they are in a good ease. They have no trouble, therefore they think the Lord must be pleased with them. They forget that “whom on the Lord loveth chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” Pious Job was afflicted almost beyond conception, while the wicked in whom David saw were not in trouble as other men, neither were they plagued like other men. They were in prosperity, and had more than heart could wish. And this was just because they were wicked. The devil can well afford to let his servants dwell in peace, but “all that will live God in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.1}

A happy death is not in itself any evidence of a person’s piety, nor an assurance that he is sure of final happiness. The psalmist says of the wicked, “There are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm.” Psalm 73:4. On the other hand, a good man may, like Hezekiah, be in sore distress at the thought that he is near death. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.2}

In a word, the honor and glory of God should be placed before our own happiness. Indeed, happiness should never be sought. If we seek for happiness, it will be sure to escape us, although we may be satisfied with a spurious article. If we glorify God, that is of itself true happiness or blessedness, for Christ declares that they that mourn *are* happy. And this should show the folly of trusting to *feeling* in any case. The basis of the Christian’s hope and trust is not feeling, but knowledge. In the midst of terrible trial he can say, “I *know* that my redeemer liveth;” and although he may feel that because of poverty and low station, he is despised by men, if he keeps “the commandments of God and faith of Jesus,” he may have, not the *feeling*, but the *assurance* that he pleases God. W. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.3}

**“Brief Comments on Romans 7” The Signs of the Times, 12, 23.**

E. J. Waggoner

The seventh chapter of Romans may be said to be Romans 6:14 expanded. It is a masterly argument for the holiness and perpetuity of the law, and is all the stronger because the nature of the perpetuity of the law is not the subject under discussion. The apostle showing, in the sixth and seventh chapters, what true Christian life is, and how one is brought to be a Christian. The reference to the law are, we may say, incidental, and show how impossible it is to ignore law when speaking of Christian experience. We should give this chapter a brief exposition, dwelling only on the portions that are often misunderstood by the casual reader. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.4}

We have already shown from Romans 6:14; Galatians 5:18-23; 4:4, 5; and 4:21-31, that “under the law” indicates a condition of condemnation on account of sin; and that persons are freed from the law, or redeemed from under the law, only through faith in Christ, by which they are thenceforth enabled to comply with its just demands. In this chapter the apostle carries out the figure of life and death, introduced in the sixth chapter, representing the one still under the condemnation of the law as alive, and the justified one has been dead. The relations of the man to his sins, to the law, and to Christ, are first indicated by an illustration, which we quote:- {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.5}

“Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.” Romans 7:1-3. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.6}

In this illustration we have four terms, namely, a woman, her first husband, and her second husband, and the law. The law says, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” and thus defines marriage as the union of one woman and one man. Such a union the law sanctions. Not only does the law sanction such a union, but it binds the parties during life. While her husband lives, the law binds the woman to him; but when the husband dies, then of course the union is at an end. Now, says the apostle, she may be married to another man, and she will be no adulteress, because she is freed from the law that bound her to her first husband. How was she freed from that law? By the death of her husband, which rendered further union impossible. But did the law itself change in any particular? Not in the least: It performs the same office that it did before. The law binds the woman to the second husband just the same as it did to the first; and if while her second husband lives she should be married to a third, the law will condemn her as an adulterous just the same as it would if she had married her second husband while the first husband was living. Thus we see that the law is the one thing that remains unchanged. Now read the application. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.7}

“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” Romans 7:4-6. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.8}

Here, as in the illustration, we have four parties, namely, the man, his sins, Christ, and the law. In the first place, the man is united to his sins. That is when he is “in the flesh,” under the law (Galatians 5:17, 18), and unable to please God. Romans 8:7. Here is a union in which the law holds him fast. “For when we were in the flesh, the motions of since, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit and to death.” The apostle says that the sins were “by the law.” This is the same as “where no law is there is no transgressions.” If no law existed, there could be no such thing as sin, and therefore Paul says that the motions of sin were by the law. “The strength of sin is the law.” Now we say that the law holds the man fast in this union with sin. That does not mean that the law delights to have the man a sinner; nothing of the kind. The law has no choice in the matter. By his own voluntary action the man has transgressed the law and thereby become a sinner, and now the law can do nothing else than declare him to be such. If the man, through fear of the consequences of his sins, or for any other reason, wishes to escape from this union, he cannot. The law still reiterates, “You are a sinner.” If the law could die, or could be made void, then the man at it once would be free; but that cannot be. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.9}

There is, however, a way by which the man may be freed from the galling bondage to sin, if he feels it to be a galling bondage, and that is through faith in the death and resurrection of Christ. He may be “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 passed, to the forbearance of God.” Romans 3:24, 25. When “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ,” has been imputed to the man, the law no longer calls him a sinner. He is justified, freed from the body of sin. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.10}

But this freedom from sin, and consequent deliverance from the condemnation of the law, has been accomplished only through Christ. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things have become new. And all things are of God.” 2 Corinthians 5:17, 18. Now the man is united to Christ, and by the same law which before held him to be a sinner. While he was in the flesh, the law could not for a moment allow that he was righteous; now that he is in Christ, the same law witnesses to his righteousness. The law remains the same; the man only has changed. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.11}

Notice the parallel between the illustration and the application. The law binds the woman to her husband. She cannot escape from that union, even though it be disagreeable to her. But the husband dies, and she is a free woman, and may legally be married to another man. So a man is united to sin, and the law, true to itself, holds him to that account. But by Christ the body of sin is destroyed; and now the man, being free from sin, is a united to Christ, and the law sanctions the union. As a woman cannot legally be united to two husbands at the same time, so no person can be united at the same time both to his sins and to Christ. “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” Matthew 16:24. Union with Christ while we are in sin is impossible; and if, while professing Christianity, a person still clings to sin, he is guilty of spiritual adultery. “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship with the world is enmity with God?” James 4:4. The law sanctions no such union as that. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.12}

The reader may, however, think that he detects a flaw in our reasoning, because in the application the apostle tells us that *we* have to die in order to become united to Christ. This, he will say, is not an exact parallel to the case of a woman whose husband dies that she may be joined to another. The difficulty is only apparent, not real. The parallel is as close as it is possible for any parallel to be. In the illustration the husband dies, and thus the woman may be united to another. Now if you should suppose a case in which the woman died with her first husband, and then have a resurrection, and was thus united to another, we have an exact parallel to the case of the sinner being freed from sin and united to Christ. The case is of sufficient importance to warrant a more detailed investigation. The following verses contain the whole argument: {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 359.13}

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.” {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 360.1}

“The wages of sin is death.” Romans 6:23. The law demands the death of every sinner. But “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. For Christ “bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.” 1 Peter 2:24. By baptism we show our belief in the death and resurrection of Christ, and our acceptance of him as a propitiation for our sins. Indeed, by baptism we are joined to Christ: “As many of you as have been baptized in the Christ hath put on Christ.” Galatians 3:27. But we are baptized into Christ, by being “baptized into his death.” “We are buried with him by baptism into death.” And thus it is that we receive the penalty of the law; not in person, but in figure. Christ has suffered for sin; and if we are “in him,” we also are accounted as having received the penalty. And since it is by baptism that we become united to him, we become dead to the law and united to Christ at the same time. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 360.2}

“Dead to the law.” What does the apostle mean by that expression? Simply that we have (in Christ) received the penalty of the law, and that it now regards us as dead. To illustrate: A man guilty of stealing is by the law sentenced to a term of years in the penitentiary. He serves his sentence, and then is set at liberty. Now he has no fear of the law. He may go boldly into the court-room, and even into the prison; for he knows that, having received the penalty for his crime, the law will not molest him. Now carry the illustration a little further: A man commits murder and is sentenced to death. When he has been executed, the law is satisfied. Suppose now that it were possible for the man to come to life again. Having received the full penalty of the law, he is, so far as his past offense is concerned, thenceforth considered by the law as a dead man. So with the sinner’s relation to the law of God. It condemned him to death. In Christ he received the death penalty, and now that he is raised to walk in newness of life, the law considers him to be a dead man. He is now a new man; the man who sinned is dead, and the man who takes his place shuns those things which the former man did, and therefore the law declares him to be righteous. In harmony with the above quotation and explanation are the following words:- {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 360.3}

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. *For ye are dead*, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Colossians 3:1-3. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 360.4}

Read also of the following statement by the same apostle: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 360.5}

Now why was it necessary for us to go through this process of dying and being raised to new life? Because we have upon us a burden of sin from which we could not otherwise be free. Did we get rid of this body of sin by that means? Yes; hear the apostle: “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.” The body of sin was the first husband. We became disgusted with that union, and desired to become united to Christ, but could not as long as the first husband was living; and in order for that husband to die, we ourselves have to die. For the moment, both are dead; then we are raised to be henceforth joined to Christ in a new life, because the first husband, the old man, the body of sin, remains dead. So long as that body of sin remains dead, we, although alive in Christ, are dead in the eyes of the law. But if at anytime the old man should come to life by our calling back going back to our old sins, that moment the law would condemn us as adulterers. W. {SITI June 17, 1886, p. 360.6}

(*To be continued*.)

**“Brief Comments on Romans 7. (Concluded.)” The Signs of the Times, 12, 24.**

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*(Concluded.)*

The remainder of the seventh chapter of Romans is a graphic account of the steps which lead the sinner to hate the sin in which he was bound, and to his freedom therefrom. It is not, as some have supposed, a Christian experience; it is simply an account of the experience of a man passing from a state of sin, through conviction, to a new creature in Christ. It will be worth our while to give it a little study, that we may learn more of the law’s dealings with the sinner. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.1}

The apostle first declares (verse 7) that the law is not sin; this is proved by the fact that it points out sin. But for the law he could not have known what sin is. “But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.” Verse 8. Here sin is regarded as a person, producing all manner of evil in the heart. And since without the law there would be no sin he says that sin took occasion by the commandment. In the next verse he embodies this idea and carries it farther. He says:- {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.2}

“For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” Verse 9. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.3}

The first clause of this verse presents to us a picture of carnal security. It is the confidence of the man who is insensible to danger. “Without the law” means that the law had not been driven by the Spirit into his heart. Many a man who has read the ten commandments scores of times, has never felt them searching his heart. Therefore his way is right in his own eyes, and he feels secure. An easy mind is by no means a sure test of acceptance with God. It was forgetfulness or ignorance of this fact that caused David so much trouble. Psalm 73. He saw the wicked wholly at ease, and that there were no bands even in their death. But when he learned their end, he found that such a condition is not an enviable one. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.4}

But as soon as a personal application of the law is made to one’s heart, the sin stands out in bold relief. “When the commandment came, sin revived.” The law did not create the sin; it simply brought to his view that which already existed. A room may be very dusty and dirty, yet if it is dark, the filth will not appear. But let a bright light be brought in, and the foulness becomes all too noticeable. So the law of God lights up the dark corners of the heart and reveals the depravity within. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.5}

When this had been done, says Paul, “I died.” He does not here mean death to sin; for the next verse says: “And the commnandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.” The law had shown him that he was a sinner, and “the wages of sin is death;” therefore he felt himself to be virtually a dead man. He did not actually die, but he speaks as though that which was inevitable had already come. In like manner the Lord said to Abimelech, who had taken Abraham’s wife, “Thou art but a dead man.” Exodus 20:3. “For sin taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.” Romans 7:11. Sin is deceitful; it arrays itself in a pleasing garb so that to the unsuspecting one it appears to be good. But underneath its pleasing exterior it carries a weapon that wounds to the death all who come in contact with it. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.6}

Notwithstanding all that the law had revealed to Paul, he could say, “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” Verse 12. He would uphold the dignity of the law, and shield it from all blame for his present deplorable condition. Although he had before said that the law, which was ordained to life, he found to be unto death, he insists that it was not the law,-“that which is good” (verse 13),-that was made death to him, but that it was sin that condemned him to death, and that the commandment had simply made sin “become exceeding sinful.” Happy is the awakened sinner who views the law in this light. Such a one is “not far from the kingdom of Heaven.” Unfortunately too many rail at the law, as though it were the cause of their lost condition, and then, as if they could avert the danger by shutting their eyes, they turn away from the law, and relapse into their old state of false security. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.7}

“For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.” Romans 7:14, 15. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.8}

Again we must caution the reader against supposing that in these verses Paul is relating a Christian experience. Up to this point he has shown how any a person is convicted of sin. He has related the experience of one who, when the law convicts him of sin, does not turn from the light, but honestly desires to obey. Now he proceeds to give the experience of one under conviction, until he is made a free man in Christ. He uses the first person and the present tense in order to make the narrative more vivid, as he portrays the sinner’s struggle for freedom. It was once a present matter with him, and is the experience that all pass through, though with various modifications, before they find peace with God. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.9}

“Sold under sin.” This idea is carried out in many places. Peter says that the sinner is “in bondage.” 2 Peter 2:19. Paul says that he is in bondage “to the weak and beggarly elements of the world.” Galatians 4:3, 9. He is a slave to sin. Romans 6:16, 17. In a future article we shall see the case stated in even stronger terms. The idea is that the sinner is helpless. He may “consent unto the law that it is good” (verse 16), and may with his mind serve the law of God (verse 25); that is, he may desire to obey it, yet sin has dominion over him, and he is forced to serve the law of sin, namely his natural, sinful habits. As Paul elsewhere says, “They that are in the flesh *cannot* do the things that ye would.” Galatians 5:17. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.10}

This is the condition of the awakened sinner. He would do good, but evil is present with him, so that he does the very thing that he has resolved not to do. The flesh is depraved, having no good thing in it, so that although he may determine to do good, he will not find any power in him to carry out his determination. The trouble is, sin *dwells* in him; it has never been killed. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.11}

Let the reader imagine a man bound with fetters and having a dead carcass fastened to him by a strong chain. He is fully conscious of the seriousness of the situation, and knows that death must be the inevitable result. Every day the load which hangs to him becomes more noxious, and the whole air becomes putrid. Imagine the terror of the man as he contemplates the steady and sure approach of a horrible death, and imagine his despair when he finds that all his frantic efforts to escape from the disgusting cause of that death are in vain. It would be impossible for the imagination to overdraw the feelings of horror and despair that would fill the soul of the unfortunate man. This was the condition in which Paul found himself. Sin was upon him as a terrible burden; he knew that unless he could get rid of it and lead a life of righteousness it would sink him into perdition; and he found that his most desperate efforts to get rid of it, and to do the good that he longed to do, were unavailing. It was the law that revealed his condition to him. As he continues to look into that holy law, his sin becomes more and more disgusting to him, and yet the more he looks, the larger and more revolting does the burden of sin become. What shall he do? Must he sink into perdition? In the agony of his despair he cries out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?” Even as he utters this wail for help, the help appears, and he immediately answers his own question, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” He has found peace and rest in Christ. His condition now is presented in the following words,-a Christian experience:- {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.12}

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 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 June 24, 1886, p. 374.13}

“No condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,” because they are new creatures. They are not the ones against whom the law had such a terrible indictment. The condemned ones have died, have been crucified with Christ, and now although they live, it is no more they, but Christ dwelling in them. Once sin dwelt in them; now Christ has taken its place. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.14}

Verse 2 is a parallel to Romans 3:21, 22. The righteousness of Christ being imputed to the sinner, frees him from sin and the fear of death. For a long time he may have tried to make himself righteous, but he found his best deeds so far below what the law requires that they alone would have been sufficient to ruin him. Even if he could have fulfilled the requirements of the law, that would not have removed past transgression. What the law cannot do is to make a sinner righteous. This is not on account of any defect of the law, but is solely owing to the weakness of the flesh. The law points out the disease and shows what a condition of health would be; then the man begins an ineffectual struggle to reach that high condition; the law goads him on until he finds that he has not power to accomplish his desire; and when he has lost all confidence in himself, he accepts Christ as the only source of help, and at once becomes free. Thus the law drives the sinner to Christ that Christ may free him from his past sins and enable him to keep the law. W. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.15}

**“Little Religion” The Signs of the Times, 12, 24.**

E. J. Waggoner

The word “sermon” seems to grate harshly on the ears of many people. Listening to a sermon is considered as sort of penance, which they are constrained to undergo once a week as an expiation for their “shortcomings;” for “shortcomings” also sounds less harsh than “sins.” And so the word “sermonizing” is used to characterize any talk which, being of a serious cast, is consequently disagreeable. This is doubtless why “sermonettes” have become so popular lately. They are ostensibly for children, but we learn that they are preferred by older people. A “sermonette” is supposed to be a diluted sermon-easier to take. And now they have the “churchette.” This, the *Sunday School Times* aptly defines as a place “where they have sermonettes, and prayerettes, and hymnettes, and creedettes, and commandmentettes, and all the other ‘ettes.’” All of this is in harmony with the mistaken idea that religion must be belittled in order to adapt it to children. {SITI June 24, 1886, p. 374.16}