**“The Spirit of Antichrist. No. 11” The Signs of the Times, 14, 9.**

E. J. Waggoner

Even now the restraints of God’s law are being thrown off, and the flood-gates of iniquity are being opened. In the summer of 1887, Professor John Fiske, of Harvard University, delivered a lecture in Oakland, Cal., of which the following is a portion of the synopsis given in the Oakland *Enquirer* of June 27:- {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.1}

“Mr. Fiske took as the text for his remarks the fifth verse of the third chapter of Genesis, ‘For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.’ The legend from which this sentence is taken, Professor Fiske said, is borrowed from one of the books of the Zorastrian Scriptures. All the evidences indicate that it was incorporated in the book of Genesis at a late date, after the Babylonish captivity. None of the earlier prophets or the writers of the historical books of the Bible have left a record that they knew the story of the garden of Eden. It is a real Persian myth. In intention it is one of the attempts which theologians have made from the earliest times to reconcile the existence of evil in the world with the theory of the goodness of God. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.2}

“Mr. Fiske then went into a discussion of considerable length to establish the relativity of all knowledge. We know nothing, he said, except by contrast with or relation to something else. If there were only one color in the world, we would be unable to conceive the idea of color at all. If everything were as sweet as sugar, we would not know what taste means. In the same way, evil exists only by contrast-the contrast of a lesser good with a greater. Evil may be defined as a low stage of existence looked at from a higher one. There is ground for the hope that evil may be evanescent in the universe, but it now exists as a necessary condition of the development of man, like the relation of the shadow to the light. Were there no evil in the world, there could be no morality-no man in the highest sense; human beings would be so many puppets, but such a thing as character would be impossible.” {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.3}

Just think of it! A professor in one of the leading universities in America,-an institution that moulds the thought and character of thousands of the young men of our country,-openly teaching that sin is a necessity! that evil is only undeveloped good! And for this he is not rebuked, but rather applauded. Let no one say that it is impossible that the world should ever again become as it was in the days of Noah and Lot. The time will come when in “Christian” America vice will be counted virtue. With such teaching as the above, from so high a source, it would seem that that day is not far distant. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” Jeremiah 17:9. We have known of such a thing as an adulterer quoting the seventh commandment to his paramour, in justification of their crime. In the days of Jeremiah the professed people of God would steal, and murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and would then go to the temple and stand before the Lord, and say, “We are delivered to do all these abominations.” Jeremiah 7:9, 10. The man who knows the human heart, will not be surprised at any wickedness that any man may do. It is not strange that men fall; but it is a miracle of saving grace that any walk uprightly. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.4}

It may be said that the teaching concerning evil, which we last quoted, is from a Unitarian source, and therefore cannot strictly be charged to “orthodoxy.” That really makes no difference, since “culture” is fast becoming the religion of the day; but take the following from Dr. Lyman Abbott, editor of the *Christian Union:—* {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.5}

*“Each disciple of Christ is to judge for himself how far the law is thus fulfilled in his own character; and is at liberty to cease to regard any provision of the law which has ceased to be useful in the development of character.”-Christian Union, August 11, 1887.* {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.6}

The italics are Dr. Abbott’s. Again he says in the same article:- {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.7}

“If any man is living in sympathetic fellowship with God, if his impulses, his desires, his aspirations, are divine in their origin and character, he is no longer under rules and regulations.” {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.8}

That agrees exactly with what we have quoted from Spiritualist writers. They simply claim that there is “a continuous divine inspiration” in all men, and consequently that every man is a law unto himself. To the same intent Dr. Abbott further says:- {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.9}

“Just in the measure in which he is at one with God in character he is free from all laws external to himself. The law is not destroyed; but when it has accomplished its purpose in him it is fulfilled.” {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.10}

When such teaching appears in such a paper as the *Christian Union*, and from such a man as Dr. Lyman Abbott, it may be taken for granted that it is quite popular. Unfortunately we do not have to take it for granted. The idea that the law of God is abolished, or, what is the same in effect, that each disciple is to be his own judge as to how much of the law he will keep, and what provisions he may cease to regard, has been openly taught for years from many professedly Christian pulpits, and in many professedly religious journals. W. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.11}

**“Praying in Public” The Signs of the Times, 14, 9.**

E. J. Waggoner

We have received a letter from a subscriber in the East, who challenges the custom of praying in public. We have not space for the entire letter, but will state his points. He claims that there is not only no command for any such practice, but that it is a positive violation of our Saviour’s directions in Matthew 6:6; that it is a custom of man’s devising, because it is in harmony with the whole world, and that therefore the one who prays in public is the friend of the world, and the enemy of God. We do not think there are many who hold such views, but the few who do are quite active in talking them to others; and while they may not make many converts to their theory, they may cause many timid souls to rest all the more easily when they deprive themselves of the blessings of the prayer-meeting. So we think it worth while to give the matter a little attention. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.12}

In the first place, it is not true that the habit of public prayer is “in harmony with the world,” for it is not the custom of the world to pray. Neither is it true that the custom is one of man’s devising, as anyone must know who has read the Bible, and as we shall show. When we find that the apostles, and our Lord himself, prayed in public, we know without any question that public prayer is not in opposition to our Saviour’s words in Matthew 6:6. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.13}

In the eighth chapter of 1 Kings we have not only the recorded fact that Solomon prayed at the dedication of the temple, but we have the prayer repeated in full. Read verses 22-54. Now turn to 2 Chronicles 6:13-42, where you find the same account, and then read this additional statement: “Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house.” 2 Chronicles 7:1. Here we find that God heard and accepted that prayer. This he would not have done if Solomon had been a hypocrite; for the Lord does not pay any attention to the prayers of hypocrites. See John 9:31; Job 27:8, 9. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.14}

In this prayer we find the following petition: “And if thy people Israel be put to the worse before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee; and shall return and confess thy name, and pray and make supplication before thee in this house; then hear thou from the heavens, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest to them and to their fathers.” 2 Chronicles 6:24, 25. Here Solomon showed that he expected the people to make united prayer in the temple, in any time of trouble. But this prayer is a part of inspiration, and therefore it teaches us that public prayer is right. Moreover the Lord made a specific answer to this request, as we learn from the following:- {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.15}

“And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice. If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; if my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.” 2 Chronicles 7:12-15. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.16}

This is in harmony with the words of God through the prophet: “For mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.” Isaiah 56:7. The temple was built for this very purpose, and there were set times for prayer in the temple. Acts 3:1. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.17}

What we have already given is sufficient to settle the question, but we will bring more evidence. In the seventeenth chapter of John we have a wonderful prayer of our Lord, which was uttered in the presence of the eleven. If this was not a public prayer, we should like to know how many persons must be present, in order that a prayer uttered in their presence may be public. In this prayer, too, there are all the elements of prayer,-supplication, thanksgiving, and praise. But if it is thought that there were too few present for this to be called a public prayer, then turn to our Saviour’s prayer at the grave of Lazarus, recorded in John 11:41, 42. On this occasion not only the disciples, but a great company of Jews, were present. Now if Jesus had designed by his words in Matthew 6:6 to condemn public prayer, it is certain that he himself would not have prayed in public. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.18}

Take the occasion of the transfiguration. Jesus “took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.” Luke 9:28. It is certain that he prayed at that time in the presence of those three disciples, for it was “as he prayed” (Luke 6:29) that “he was transfigured before them.” Mark 9:2. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.19}

When we take the record concerning the disciples and the apostles of Christ, we find numerous instances of public prayer. After Jesus had ascended, the eleven returned to the upper room where they dwelt, and “these all continued *with one accord* in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus.” Acts 1:14. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.20}

It was while they were thus daily joining in prayer, that Peter stood up in the midst of them (and there were a hundred and twenty gathered together, Acts 1:15) and laid before them the necessity of having another apostle chosen; and after appointing two men, they prayed and asked the Lord to show which one he had chosen; and their prayer was answered. Acts 1:24-26. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.21}

After Peter and John had been released from the imprisonment which followed the healing of the lame man, they returned to their own company and reported what had been done. When the company had heard that, they lifted up their voices in thanksgiving to God; “and when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.” Acts 4:31. Thus God again showed his acceptance of united prayer. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.22}

Another instance of availing public prayer is found in the twelfth chapter of Acts. Herod had put James to death, “and because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also.” “Peter therefore was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.” Acts 12:5. If the narrative ended here, it might be claimed that the prayers for Peter’s deliverance were offered by individual members of the church at their homes; and no doubt many prayers were offered in secret. But in verse 12 we read that after Peter had been miraculously delivered from the prison, “he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.” Here was united prayer by the church, and the prayer was answered. It was not hypocritical prayer, nor prayer offered for the applause of men; it was such prayer as the Lord delights in. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 134.23}

Again when Paul was on his way to Jerusalem, he stopped at Miletus, to hold a meeting with the elders of the church at Ephesus. After an affecting discourse, “he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.” Acts 20:36. This may mean simply that Paul alone prayed, although it seems more likely that they all prayed; but whichever way it was it is another instance of public prayer. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.1}

Once more, while Paul was on this same journey, we find him praying in public. At Tyre, where the ship discharged her cargo, the travelers found disciples, with whom they tarried seven days. “And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city; and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed.” Acts 21:5. Whoever can say that the prayers in either of these instances were offered in a hypocritical spirit, or with a desire for the praise of men, must be entirely ignorant of Christian love and fellowship. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.2}

Other instances of public prayer might be given, but we proceed to notice some directions concerning public prayer, and some direct commands therefore, which we find in the Bible. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.3}

In 1 Corinthians 11:4-13 the apostle Paul gives directions concerning the fitness of things in prayer, stating that a woman ought not to pray with her head uncovered, nor a man with his head covered. This was a direction for the public assembly. And in 1 Corinthians 14:14-16 the apostle argues as follows concerning praying in an unknown tongue:- {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.4}

“For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?” {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.5}

Now when a man prays in secret, it does not make any difference what language he uses, so long as he himself knows what he is saying; for the Lord can understand any language. And it makes no difference in how low a tone he speaks. But this will not do in the kind of prayer that Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 14:14-16. In that the person must pray so as to be understood, so that those who listen may say, Amen. This inspired direction concerning prayer is another proof that public prayer is not displeasing to God. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.6}

In Hebrews 10:24, 25 we read: “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.7}

Now when the same apostle says: “I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting” (1 Timothy 2:8), we must conclude that he intends that when the brethren assemble themselves together to exhort one another, they shall also pray together. And that this is what they should do, we learn from our Saviour’s words in Matthew 18:19, 20:- {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.8}

“Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.9}

In these texts we have the authority for a prayer-meeting. But now read a direct command for public prayer: “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” James 5:14-16. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.10}

Does anybody believe that James intended that the elders of the church should come to the sick man’s house, and then each retire to a room by himself to pray? No; for it is expressly stated that they are to “pray over him.” The next verse provides for mutual confession and united prayer; and no one who has experienced the blessedness of praying with the afflicted and needy, would wish to be forever debarred from the privilege. He who would not be convinced by this array of Scripture testimony that public prayer is not a sin, but is required by the Lord, would not be persuaded “though one rose from the dead.” But while we have thus pleaded the case of public prayer, we would not be understood as depreciating secret prayer in the least. The man who does not pray in secret, cannot offer an acceptable prayer in public. For in every true prayer the soul must enter into the holy of holies and there hold communion with God, and it is in the closet that the intimate acquaintance with God is gained which enables one to do this. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.11}

There are some petitions which one can make only in secret; they cannot be expressed before men. All matters of a strictly personal character are for the closet alone. Our Lord reproved the spirit of parading one’s secret wants, or his piety, before the world; but while he emphasized the necessity of secret prayer, he did not thereby condemn public prayer. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.12}

It is true that public prayer may be perverted, and may become a mere form, or may be engaged in merely for display. The same may be said of secret prayer. We have known people who were careful that people should know their hours for secret devotion, and others who did not need to tell people when they prayed, as everybody in the immediate neighborhood could hear. Such prayers, although uttered in the closet, are as much condemned by our Lord as are the street-corner prayers. And as for form, there are few who will not have to confess that, even when by themselves, they have sometimes engaged in prayer in a listless, perfunctory manner, and have literally “said their prayers.” {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.13}

But some will urge, as a last resort, that they “can’t possibly pray in public.” We don’t believe any such thing. We have heard people make such an excuse for not taking part in prayer-meeting, and in some cases they were the most talkative people in the meeting, and would, if allowed, monopolize all the time of the social meeting. Peter was not afraid to pray in public when he felt the waters of the Sea of Galilee giving way beneath his feet. Perhaps when these people feel their foundation giving way beneath them, and see nothing between them and destruction, they will not stop to consider who may hear, when they cry, “Lord, save me.” W. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 135.14}

**“Unnecessary Difficulty” The Signs of the Times, 14, 9.**

E. J. Waggoner

A correspondent of the *Christian Union* asks that paper: “Will you please tell me what you regard as the meaning of the passage of Scripture which reads, ‘Every knee shall bow,’ etc.? I hear it quoted frequently as proof of the final restoration of all men.” {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 136.1}

To this the following is given:- {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 136.2}

“The passage in Ephesians is one of those in Scripture which seem to indicate that at the last all living and existence will be reconciled to God, and will live in allegiance to him. How these passages are to be reconciled with others which seem to imply hopeless and irremediable sin and spiritual death, from which there is no resurrection, is one of the most difficult problems in Biblical interpretation.” {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 136.3}

The editor of the *Christian Union* has evidently mislaid his concordance. In Romans 14:11 we read: “As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God;” and in Philippians 2:10 we find a similar statement, but there is no such passage in Ephesians. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 136.4}

But the error in the reference, which might have been accidental, is by far less noteworthy than the theological slough into which the *Union* confesses that it has fallen. Is there anything difficult about the text? Not that we can see. We *know* that the text does not teach the final restoration of all men to the favor of God, because Paul plainly says that there are some “whose *end* is *destruction*” (not spiritual death). He says further that they shall be “punished with everlasting destruction;” and further, of the “man of sin,” he says that the Lord shall consume it with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy it with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy it with the brightness of his coming. And Isaiah, by whom the statement was originally made, says that the Lord is coming “to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity;” and that “the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed.” {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 136.5}

These men were inspired of God, and therefore did not write contradictory statements. Now notice, they do not say that all men shall bow to Christ and receive pardon, but simply that every knee shall bow, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. There are thousands who do this now, and who will forever have a place in the kingdom of God, to praise him to a degree that is impossible now. But there are many more thousands who do not now acknowledge God as Christ, and who will persist in their refusal until their eternal destruction is measured out to them. And yet God will be honored by every man who has ever lived. There will not be a soul that will not at some time confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father. All, however, will not make their acknowledgment in the same way. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 136.6}

When the opening heavens shall reveal the King in his beauty, sitting in royal state upon the throne of his glory, accompanied by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels, the righteous will look up and say, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” Isaiah 25:9. What a glorious time that will be! {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 136.7}

But there will be those who have despised him here, saying, either by words or by actions, or both, “We will not have this man to reign over us.” To them the coming of Christ will bring no joy, no peace. Terror will fill their hearts, and freeze their blood, as they look upon him whom they have pierced. From all the wicked will arise the despairing cry to the mountains and to the rocks, “Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” Revelation 6:16, 17. Who would want to be of the company who confess Christ under such circumstances? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 136.8}

Once more, at the close of the thousand years, when all the wicked dead are raised, including the millions that will be in their graves when Christ comes to raise the righteous, and who consequently did not see him, all will be gathered around the holy city with the insane idea of taking it. But when they gather around it and see its glittering, impregnable walls,-the walls of salvation,-and see Christ himself sitting upon his own throne, clothed with all the power and glory of God, they will realize how terribly they have been deceived, and in the terrible wail of despair that will go up from the doomed host, not a note of derision will be heard. All will be forced to acknowledge that Christ is indeed king. That will be the time of their humiliation, while those who have abased themselves in this life, will then be exalted to God’s right hand. How much better for people to humble themselves than to wait for God to humble them. W. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 136.9}

**“Abraham and Melchizedek” The Signs of the Times, 14, 9.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON 10.—SABBATH, MARCH 10**

1. Where did Abraham dwell when Lot was taken captive? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.1}

“And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner; and these were confederate with Abram.” Genesis 14:13. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.2}

2. When he heard of Lot’s misfortune, what did he do? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.3}

“And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.” Verse 14. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.4}

3. What success did he have? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.5}

“And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.” Verses 15, 16. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.6}

4. Who went out to meet Abraham on his return with the spoils? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.7}

“And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king’s dale.” Verse 17. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.8}

5. Who else met him and brought refreshments? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.9}

“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine.” Verse 18, first part. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.10}

6. Who was Melchizedek? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.11}

“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.” Verse 18. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.12}

“For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace.” Hebrews 7:1, 2. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.13}

7. What besides giving him refreshments did Melchizedek do for Abraham? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.14}

“And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth.” Genesis 14:19. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.15}

8. Which was the greater man, Abraham or Melchizedek? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.16}

“Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.” “And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.” Hebrews 7:4, 7. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.17}

9. What did Abraham give to Melchizedek? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.18}

“And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.” Genesis 14:20. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.19}

“Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.” Hebrews 7:4. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.20}

10. What did the king of Sodom say to Abraham? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.21}

“And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.” Genesis 14:21. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.22}

11. What reply did Abraham make? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.23}

“And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich.” Verses 22, 23. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 137.24}

12. What only did Abraham reserve of the spoils? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.1}

“Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.” Verse 24. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.2}

13. What had he taken out before he reserved the portion for the young men who went with him? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.3}

“And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.” Genesis 14:20. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.4}

14. Since Abraham said that he would not take so much as a shoe latchet that belonged to the king of Sodom, whose property must he have regarded the tithe which he gave to the priest of the Lord? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.5}

“And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s; it is holy unto the Lord.” Leviticus 27:30. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.6}

15. Who is our priest? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.7}

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.” Hebrews 4:14. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.8}

16. Of what order is he the priest? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.9}

“Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” Hebrews 6:20. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.10}

17. Then ought we not to pay tithes as well as Abraham? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.11}

18. What words of the apostle Paul indicate that our great High Priest should receive tithes of us? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.12}

“And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.” Hebrews 7:8. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.13}

19. What did Jesus himself say concerning men’s duty to pay tithes? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.14}

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” Matthew 23:23. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.15}

**NOTES**

Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom, because he had much cattle, and the country furnished rich pasture. He grew exceedingly rich. But then Chedorlaomer and the allied kings made war upon Sodom, and took both Lot and all that he had. Abraham remained in the plain of Mamre, dwelling in tents, and God gave him peace with all mankind. Surely it was better to be Abraham in the country than Lot in the city. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.16}

But although Abraham was a man of peace, he could fight when it was necessary. Taking three hundred and eighteen of his servants he pursued the enemy, and brought back Lot and his family, and everything that had been taken from Sodom. We must not understand that Abraham’s servants comprised the whole of the army, for we learn that Amer and Eshcol were confederate with him, and accompanied him on the expedition. Doubtless each of these had a large number of followers. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.17}

It was not a small thing for Abraham to conquer Chedorlaomer and his confederate kings. The seat of Chedorlaomer’s kingdom was beyond the Euphrates; and a glance at the map will show how extensive his kingdom was when the city of Sodom was subject to him. Rawlinson says of his defeat by Abraham: “The actual slaughter can scarcely have been great, but the prisoners and the booty taken had to be surrendered; the prestige of victory was lost; and the result seems to have been that the Mesopotamian monarch relinquished his projects, and, contenting himself with the fame acquired by such distant expeditions, made no further attempt to carry his empire beyond the Euphrates.”-*Seven Great Monarchies, First Mon,* chap. 8. This event, which stopped the course of an empire, is passed by in the Scripture narrative with a word. Rawlinson says that the word “slaughter” (Genesis 14:17) is too strong a rendering of the original. The Hebrew does not mean more than “defeat” or “overthrow.” {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.18}

When we read that “Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold,” we cannot form any estimate of his greatness. But when we think that on an expedition of this kind he was able to arm three hundred and eighteen servants that were born in his own house, we know that he was not an ordinarily rich man. This one item, more than any other, gives us an idea of how God had prospered Abraham. In his case we have a comment on the words of our Saviour: “Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek); for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:31-33. Abraham’s first desire was to have the righteousness of God; he looked for a heavenly country, and God gave him the wealth of this. We must not expect to see such wealth given to everyone who seeks God and his righteousness; he has not promised more than food and raiment, and, having that, the Christian will be content. But that is sure to be given. Says David: “I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” So “godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” 1 Timothy 4:8. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.19}

The first recorded instance of tithing is this one, where Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. Abraham had a right to all the property that he recovered from the Chaldeans, and this right the king of Sodom acknowledged when he said, “Give me the persons, and take the goods thyself.” But Abraham answered: “I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich.” Abraham would not be under obligations to a wicked man. The wealth that he had he had received through the blessing of God; and now he would not give anybody a chance to say anything that would detract from the glory of God. So Abraham returned the goods to him, with the exception of a share for the young men who went with him. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.20}

But before Abraham had this talk with the king of Sodom, he had taken out a tithe of all, and had given it to Melchizedek. “And he gave him tithes of all.” This was before the young men took out their portion. From this, then, we learn how we should pay tithe. The tithe should be the first-fruits. It should come out before we take out of our earnings that which is necessary for our support. “The tithe is the Lord’s.” When we pay it to him, we are simply giving to him his own. For this reason Abraham could say that he would not keep back anything that belonged to the king of Sodom. One-tenth of all the wealth of Sodom belonged to the Lord, and ought to have been given to him. But the king was an unfaithful steward, and had kept the Lord’s money. But when it came into Abraham’s hands, he promptly gave the Lord that which belonged to him. “Will a man rob God?” Alas! too many do. How is it with you, reader? Have you stolen property in your possession? {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.21}

Many will ask the question, “Who was Melchizedek?” The best answer that we can give is that he was “king of Salem,” and “priest of the most high God.” Our information does not go beyond this. That he was a type of Christ is stated in Psalms and in Hebrews. Christ is a high priest “after the order of Melchizedek.” He combines the kingly and the priestly office in one person. And since Abraham paid tithe to Melchizedek, the type of Christ, surely the children of Abraham ought to pay tithe to Christ, the great high priest after the order of Melchizedek. W. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 138.22}

**“Peace Prospects in Europe” The Signs of the Times, 14, 9.**

E. J. Waggoner

Just at the present moment a very pacific state of public mind in regard to European matters has been produced by the mutual assurances of Bismarck and the Czar, that neither of them has any thought of war, and each of them are sure the other has not. It is interesting to consider the basis upon which these assurances are made. Professor Garlanda, writing from Rome to the New York *Independent*, it gives the figures of Europe’s military standing at the opening of 1888. Italy’s available forces number 871,299 men, and 255 ships of war. France keeps under arms 500,000 men, and can call out 2,000,000, and her navy consists of 400 vessels. England has 218,557 armed men and a navy consisting of 700 ships. The Russian forces consist of 2,001,379 men under arms or immediately available. The Turkish standing army numbers 180,000 men. Germany presents in her enemies the view of an army of 487,673 officers and men under arms; and in case of war her standing army numbers at once 1,753,000, and 993,000 men of the *Landarche*. The *Landsturm*, the last contingent, contains 3,955,000 men. Her navy consists of 183 vessels, a new and containing all the latest improvements. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 144.1}

These immense figures represent armies equipped with the most effective weapons of destruction. In them we have the source of this feeling of confidence. But if peace were to result from these great preparations for war, it will have been bought at the expense of calamity and oppression such as lead the philanthropist to feel that the luxury of being governed is dearly paid for by the oppressed people. Should war result, the consequences of the clash of such armaments no one can forecast. History furnishes no parallel. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 144.2}

Bismarck’s prophecies of peace rest upon the fact that the consequences of war are made so terrible. It is certain that they are not suggested by any peaceful attitude which the jealous nations have suddenly taken. Men are not engaged in turning swords into plowshares, but every sinew of the people is strained to create and maintain the grandest military demonstration the world has ever seen; and armament which will soon take an active part in the great closing struggles for human glory, which are the immediate premonitions of the coming of the Prince of Peace. {SITI March 2, 1888, p. 144.3}

**“The Spirit of Antichrist. No. 12” The Signs of the Times, 14, 10.**

E. J. Waggoner

One point more remains to be noticed in the work of antichrist. In the remarkable discourse concerning the signs of his second coming, our Saviour first said: “Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” Matthew 24:4, 5. This was given in answer to the question. “What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” The Saviour’s language plainly indicates that attempts would be made to counterfeit his second coming, and so successfully made as to deceive many. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.1}

Again he says, speaking of the time following the great persecution: “Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Verses 23, 24. This shows that the counterfeit will be very close. From these statements and warnings, we can come to no other conclusion than that just before the coming of Christ, his great adversary, Satan, will, as far as is possible, counterfeit all the wonderful signs that Christ has said would attend his coming. This conclusion is stated in express terms, in 2 Thessalonians 2:7-10. The apostle Paul says:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.2}

“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.3}

The sum of the apostle’s argument is very clear. The whole chapter is devoted to the time of the coming of the Lord. Some unscrupulous person had written a letter to the Thessalonian brethren, telling them that the Lord’s coming was close at hand, and had signed Paul’s name. See verses 1-3. Compare also chap. 3:17. Paul wrote to them that that day could not come until after the great apostasy, and the setting up of the Papacy, and reminded them that when he was with them he had told them so. Paganism then hindered the complete establishment of the Papacy, but soon that would be taken out of the way, and when that was done, then should the Papacy be fully revealed, to be destroyed by the brightness of the coming of Christ. And the coming of Christ to destroy the Papacy, would be, he said, just after the working of Satan with *all power* and *signs* and *lying wonders.* {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.4}

We inquire, Is there any present prospect that these predictions of Jesus and Paul, concerning Satan’s counterfeiting Christ’s second advent, will be fulfilled? Our answer must be, There is. Spiritualism is even now planning such a campaign, one that is calculated to turn the attention of people away from Christ’s literal coming. In the *World’s Advance Thought* (published at Salem, Oregon) of April 5, 1886, there was the following editorial utterance upon the subject of “A Coming Messiah“:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.5}

“In a recent Harmony Hall lecture on ‘The Messianic Idea,’ the necessity for a new messiah, and the certainty of his early advent, were philosophically considered, as well as *prophetically proclaimed*. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.6}

“The messianic idea is involved in the theory that all the phenomena of spiritual manifestations, however diverse and widely separated, may be referred to a single mediumistic source of distribution.... The time has already come for logically arranging the authenticated facts which shall *demonstrate* it.... {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.7}

“There are regular cycles of spiritual progress, of truth unfoldments; and we are now passing from one into another. Another ‘Sun of righteousness’ is called for on earth, and *the messenger cannot be far off* whose life mission it shall be to practically illustrate the new truths that will be vouchsafed. He will not be a mere racial messiah, to which class belonged Buddha, Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Mahomet; nor a half-world messiah, as was the great Nazarene; but steam locomotion and lightning communication, and the harmonizing influences of commercial intercourse, have made a *whole world messiah* possible, and such the next one shall be. Though themselves ignorant of the fact, *as a body*, the great and multiplying army of mediums are his *accomplices*.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.8}

In the same paper a lecture delivered in Harmony Hall, Salem, Oregon, by Judge H. A. Maguire, is reported thus:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.9}

“I say, ‘as one having authority,’ Spiritualists, and all, may see a hope, that shall be a realization *to this very generation*, of the higher spiritual forces getting control over and governing all the institutions of earth. Silently and invisibly to the worldly-wise, these forces have been, and are being, under the direction of a divine intelligence, extended into every department and station of human life, and the culmination is near at hand,-the ushering in of a *new messiah* and a new spiritual dispensation.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.10}

The editor of the *Golden Gate*, of April 2, 1887, in an article entitled, “Significance of Prophecy,” speaks as follows concerning the second advent:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.11}

“It is not thought by all who believe in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures-except a small portion who adhere to the literal but strained and illogical interpretations thereof-that the prophecies pointing to a second coming of Christ, do not contemplate a personal return to earth of the gentle Nazarene whom the Jews crucified; but rather the advent of the Christ spirit to the world-the unfoldment of a new spiritual dispensation. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.12}

“Now these prophecies, by several lines of computation, were demonstrated by Miller and his coadjutors to point to the year 1843 as the time when the great cataclysm, the destruction of the world, was to take place. By a revision of their data the time was afterward brought down to 1848, the year when direct and positive communication was opened up between the two worlds-the advent of modern Spiritualism. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.13}

“From that time to the present, the believers in a literal second coming of Christ have been daily and hourly looking for his appearance in the heavens, accompanied by a mighty host of angels. The mighty host are here, and the Christ spirit comes with their teachings; hence, may it not be that the prophecies have been fulfilled.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.14}

The well-informed reader knows full well that by no “revision of their data” was the time for the coming of the Lord ever brought down to 1848; but that does not invalidate the fact that Spiritualists expect that all the prophecies concerning the second advent are to be fulfilled by Spiritualism. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.15}

But one Ben Franklin French, of Los Angeles, Cal., is still more positive, and in an article entitled, “Who Are the Real Adventists?” written March 18, 1887, he claims that Spiritualists alone are the true Adventists, and that those who are looking for Jesus from Heaven have no right to the name. He says that he was a ‘44 Adventist, that he did not give up his faith when the time passed, but waited, believing that the prophecy would be fulfilled, although it might tarry, and that the introduction of Spiritualism in 1848, was the fulfillment of Daniel’s vision. So the promises of the coming of Christ are all to be fulfilled only by Spiritualism! And professed Protestants, by claiming that the coming of Christ is to be a spiritual coming, are preparing themselves for Satan’s deception on this point. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.16}

We believe that the Scriptures most plainly teach that Satan will appear in glory surpassing anything that men have seen, and that he will have a host of his followers with him, and that this will be claimed as a fulfillment of the prophecy that “the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels.” Then the warning, “If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not,” will apply. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.17}

But will Satan find any who will acknowledge his claims to be Christ? Yes; all who have not received the love of the truth, will follow him. Those who are looking for Christ to take the reins of this Government, will flock to the standard of this usurper. To show how ready people are to follow anything that offers them *present* happiness, we quote the utterance of the editor of the National City (Cal.) *Record*, in commenting upon a sermon in which the preacher had declared Spiritualism to be real, but of the devil:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.18}

“We have not yet been allowed the privilege of witnessing a materialization of the dead; have not been so fortunate as the Elder in that respect; but whether they are agents of the devil or not, so the spirits had the appearance of being good spirits, it would matter not, we would go a long way to see the same, and forever after worship the devil.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.19}

We have in our possession a letter from an infidel, touching the attitude of infidels toward the National Reform movement. Says he:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.20}

“If Jesus will come and sit visibly on the throne where we can see him, and talk to him, there will be no unbelievers, and all will obey.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.21}

Thus the way is preparing for Satan’s last, over-mastering deception. W. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.22}

**“Christmas and Sunday” The Signs of the Times, 14, 10.**

E. J. Waggoner

Soon after the holidays, the following item entitled “Christmas,” appeared in *Messiah’s Advocate*, a journal published in Oakland:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.23}

“We have paid no attention to this day in the *Advocate*. We have no idea that the 25th of December is the anniversary of our Saviour’s birth, but that Christmas is purely a Popish festival, and we think the sooner Protestants cease to adopt Papal customs, the wiser and better they will be.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 150.24}

We heartily agree with our contemporary: we believe that Christmas is purely a Popish festival, and we think that Protestants ought to have nothing to do with Papal customs. Yet we are sorry to know that the greater portion of professed Protestants, do follow the customs of Rome. Since our neighbor professes such a dislike for Popish customs, we have thought that a little comparison of Christmas and Sunday might not be amiss. We shall show that both are Papal institutions, having been borrowed, like all other customs of the Romish Church, from paganism. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.1}

Concerning the origin of Christmas, McClintock and Strong’s Encyclopedia says:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.2}

“The observance of Christmas is not of divine appointment, nor is it of New Testament origin. The day of Christ’s birth cannot be ascertained from the New Testament, or, indeed, from any other source. The Fathers of the first three centuries do not speak of any special observance of the nativity.... ‘The institution may be sufficiently explained by the circumstance that it was the taste of the age to multiply festivals, and that the analogy of other events in our Saviour’s history, which had already been marked by a distinct celebration, may naturally have pointed out the propriety of marking his nativity with the same honorable distinction. It was celebrated with all the marks of respect usually bestowed on high festivals, and distinguished also by the custom, derived probably from heathen antiquity, of interchanging presents and making entertainments.’ At the same time, the heathen winter holidays (*Saturnalia, Juernalia, Brumalia*) were undoubtedly transformed, and, so to speak, sanctified by the establishment of the Christmas cycle of holidays; and the heathen customs, so far as they were harmless (*e.g.*, the giving of presents, lighting of tapers, etc.), were brought over into Christian use.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.3}

Chambers’ Encyclopedia says:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.4}

“It does not appear that there was any uniformity in the period of observing the nativity among the early churches; some held the festival in the month of May or April, others in January. It is, nevertheless, almost certain that the 25th of December cannot be the nativity of the Saviour, for it is then the height of the rainy season in Judea, and shepherds could hardly be watching their flocks by night in the plains.... {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.5}

“Not casually or arbitrarily was the festival of the nativity celebrated on the 25th of December. Among the causes that co-operated in fixing this period as the proper one, perhaps the most powerful was, that almost all the heathen nations regarded the winter solstice as a most important point of the year, as the beginning of the renewed life and activity of the powers of nature, and of the gods, who were originally merely the symbolical personifications of these. In more northerly countries this fact must have made itself peculiarly palpable, hence the Celts and Germans, from the oldest times, celebrated the season with the greatest festivities. At the winter solstice the Germans held their great Yule-feast, in commemoration of the return of the fiery sun-wheel; and believed that from the twelve nights reaching from the 25th of December to the 6th of January, they could trace the personal movements and interferences on earth of their great deities, Odin, Berehta, etc. Many of the beliefs and usages of the old Germans, and also of the Romans, relating to this matter, passed over from heathenism to Christianity, and have partly survived to the present day.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.6}

Prof. J. G. Müller, the author of the article on the worship of the sun, in the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, after mentioning that the sun was worshiped by the Persians, under the form of Mithras, which finally became the *Sol Deus Invictus* of the Romans, says:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.7}

“The Mithras-worship even exercised its influence upon the fixing of the Christian Christmas-festival in December. As the new birth of the sun-god was celebrated at the end of December, so, likewise, in Christ, the new Sun, in the field of spiritual life was adored.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.8}

The Encyclopedia Britannica, after mentioning the obscurity in which the origin of the Christmas festival rests, says:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.9}

“By the fifth century, however, whether from the influence of some tradition, or from the desire to supplant heathen festivals of that period of the year, such as the *Saturnalia*, the 25th of December had been generally agreed upon.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.10}

Another item pointing to the heathen origin of Christmas is the fact that the mistletoe, which was regarded by the ancient Druids with the highest veneration, has always been, especially in England, a favorite Christmas decoration. McClintock and Strong’s Encyclopedia (article Christmas) says that the dressing of houses with mistletoe on Christmas day is “a custom probably as old as the Druidical worship.” Druidism, it may be remarked, was the worship of the ancient Britons; it was allied to the Baal or sun worship of the Phoenicians, and, like it, was accompanied by human sacrifices. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.11}

Bingham, in his “Antiquities of the Christian Church” (book 20, chapter 4), gives the following account of the status of Christmas in the ancient church:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.12}

“As to the manner of keeping this festival, we may observe that they did it with the greatest veneration. For they always speak of it in the highest terms, as the principal festival of Christians, from which all others took their original. Chrysostom styles it the most venerable and tremendous of all festivals, and the metropolis and mother of all festivals.... and we may observe that the day was kept with the same veneration and religious solemnity as the Lord’s day. For they had always sermons on this day, of which there are many instances of Chrysostom, Nazianzen, Basil, Ambrose, Austin, Leo, Chrysologus, and many others. Neither did they let this day ever pass without a solemn communion. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.13}

“Finally, to show all possible honor to this day, the church obliged all persons to frequent religious assemblies in the city churches, and not go to any of the lesser churches in the country, except some necessity of sickness of infirmity compelled them to do so. And the laws of the State prohibited all public games and shows on this day, as on the Lord’s day.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.14}

If it be asked how the Christmas festival came to be adopted by the church, we can answer only in the following words of Dr. Killen’s in the preface to his “Ancient Church“:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.15}

“In the interval between the days of the apostles and the conversion of Constantine, the Christian commonwealth changed its aspect. The bishop of Rome, a personage unknown to the writers of the New Testament, meanwhile rose into prominence, and at length took precedence of all other churchmen, rites and ceremonies of which neither Peter nor Paul ever heard, crept silently into use, and then claimed the rank of divine institutions.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.16}

That is undoubtedly the way in which it was introduced. If it be asked *why* this was allowed, we shall let Mosheim answer in the following words:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.17}

“It is certain that to religious worship, both public and private, many rites were added, without necessity and to the great offense of sober and good men. The principal cause of this I readily look for in the perverseness of mankind, who are more delighted with the pomp and splendor of external forms and pageantry, than with the true devotion of the heart, and who despise whatever does not gratify their eyes and ears. But other and additional causes may be mentioned, which, though they suppose no bad design, yet clearly betray indiscretion. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.18}

“*First*, there is good reason to suppose that the Christian bishops purposely multiplied sacred rites for the sake of rendering the Jews and the pagans more friendly to them. For both these classes had been accustomed to numerous and splendid ceremonies from their infancy, and had made no question of their constituting an essential part of religion. And hence, when they saw the new religion to be destitute of such ceremonies, they thought it too simple, and therefore despised it. To obviate this objection, the rulers of the Christian churches deemed it proper for them to be more formal and splendid in their public worship. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.19}

“*Secondly*, the simplicity of the worship which Christians offered to the Deity, had given occasion to certain calumnies, maintained both by Jews and the pagan priests. The Christians were pronounced atheists, because they were destitute of temples, altars, victims, priests, and all that pomp, in which the vulgar suppose the essence of religion to consist. For unenlightened persons are prone to estimate religion by what meets their eyes. To silence this accusation, the Christian doctors thought they must introduce some external rites, which would strike the senses of people, so that they could maintain that they really *had* all those things of which Christians were charged with being destitute, though under different forms.... {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.20}

“*Fourthly*, among the Greeks and the people of the East, nothing was held more sacred than what were called the mysteries. This circumstance led the Christians, in order to impart dignity to their religion, to say that they also had similar mysteries, or certain holy rites concealed from the vulgar; and they not only applied the *terms* used in the pagan mysteries to the Christian institutions, particularly baptism and the Lord’s Supper, but they gradually introduced also the *rites* which were designated by those terms. This practice originated in the Eastern provinces; and thence, after the times of Adrian, (who first introduced the Grecian mysteries among the Latins), it spread among the Christians of the West. A large part, therefore, of the Christian observances and institutions, even in this century, had the aspect of pagan mysteries.”-*Eccl. History, Book I, col. 1, part 2, chapter 4, sections 1-5*. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.21}

The object was, in short, to gain converts from among the pagans. The same thing also applies to the Sunday festival, the heathen origin of which we shall now proceed to show. W. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.22}

(*Concluded next week*.)

**“The Oracles of God” The Signs of the Times, 14, 10.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the article by Dr. Spear, quoted in another part of this paper, it is stated that “the oracles of God,” which Paul says were committed to the Jews, mean the entire Old Testament Scriptures. While it is true that the entire Old Testament Scriptures are the oracles of God, we do not think that the term primarily refers to them. The word “oracle” is from the Latin word meaning to speak, to utter. Now the ten commandments are the one portion of the Scriptures that God uttered with his own voice; and we think that there is sufficient evidence to show that the term “the oracles of God” refers particularly to the ten commandments. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.23}

In Acts 7:38 Stephen says of Moses that he “was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai and with our fathers; who received the lively oracles to give unto us.” Here the reference to the ten commandments is unmistakable. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.24}

It is well known that the ten commandments were kept in the ark in the most holy place of the tabernacle. This is all that was in that apartment. The presence of God was manifested between the cherubim that were upon the mercy-seat above the ark; “and there,” said the Lord to Moses, “I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.” Exodus 25:22. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.25}

The mercy-seat, with the cherubim above, over-shadowing the glory of God, and the tables of the law underneath, represented the throne of God, which has justice and judgment for its foundation. The ten commandments are a transcript of God’s character, they are his will, and consequently are the principles and rule of his Government. God does or says nothing except what is in harmony with them. This being the case, the most holy place of the tabernacle is called “the oracle,” as being the place that contained the oracles of God. See 1 Kings 6:5, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23; 8:8. And so, when David prayed to God upon his throne he said: “Hear the voice of my supplications when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle.” Psalm 28:2. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.26}

Remembering that the ten commandments are “the oracles of God,” we can understand what a powerful exhortation the apostle makes when he says, “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.” 1 Peter 4:11. That is, whatever a man says, and especially if he speaks as a teacher, should be in harmony with the law of God. In other words, it should be as true as if God himself had spoken it. So when God speaks of the model for his ministers, he says: “The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.” Malachi 2:6, 7. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.27}

If all who profess to acknowledge God would remember to speak on every occasion as the oracles of God, there would be a revival such as has never been known. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.28}

But while the ten commandments are primarily the oracles of God, it is also true that the term may properly be applied to the entire Old Testament; for the Old Testament is but a commentary on the ten commandments; in which, both by precept and example, we are shown how the law should be kept, and by example and judgment are shown the consequences of sin. The same thing may also be said of the New Testament, which is an expansion of the Old. So while the ten commandments were issued directly from the lips of God, the entire Bible is properly called the word of God. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.29}

And this suggests another thought. Christ is the Word. John 1:1; Revelation 19:11-13. He is so called because it is through him that all of God’s will is revealed to man. He it was that spoke the law from Mount Sinai. It was the Spirit of Christ that was in the holy prophets, speaking through them. As he declared the law of God, so he makes known to us the love of God, and will finally execute the divine judgment. Moreover, he is the Word of God, in that in him we have the law,-the oracles of God,-personified. And so all stand together,-the law, the Old Testament, and Christ. Whoever or whatever casts discredit upon one, dishonors the other to exactly the same extent. W. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 151.30}

**“Abraham’s Plea for Sodom” The Signs of the Times, 14, 10.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON 11.—SABBATH, MARCH 17**

1. Who came to Abraham while he lived in Mamre? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.1}

“And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre; and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; and he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him; and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground.” Genesis 18:1, 2. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.2}

2. Who were these men? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.3}

“And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom; but Abraham stood yet before the Lord.” Verse 22. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.4}

“And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.” Chapter 19:1. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.5}

3. Did Abraham recognize the Lord as one of the three men? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.6}

4. How did Abraham show his hospitality? Chapter 18:3-8. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.7}

5. What exhortation based upon this occurrence is given to us? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.8}

“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” Hebrews 13:2. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.9}

6. When the men rose to go, what did Abraham do? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.10}

“And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom; and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.” Genesis 18:16. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.11}

7. What did the Lord say? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.12}

“And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?” Verses 17, 18. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.13}

8. Why did the Lord honor Abraham in this manner? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.14}

“For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” Verse 19. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.15}

9. What did the Lord say of Sodom and Gomorrah? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.16}

“And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous.” Verse 20. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.17}

10. What did Abraham say to the Lord? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.18}

“I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom; but Abraham stood yet before the Lord. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city; wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee; shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Verses 23-25. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.19}

11. What reply did the Lord make? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.20}

“And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.” Verse 26. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.21}

12. In what spirit did Abraham continue his plea? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.22}

“And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.” Verse 27. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.23}

13. What was the second request, and the reply? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.24}

“Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.” Verse 28. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.25}

14. What concession did the Lord still further make in answer to Abraham’s earnest prayer? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.26}

“And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty’s sake.” Verse 29. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.27}

15. How did Abraham still further pray, and what was the result? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.28}

“And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.” Verse 30. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.29}

16. For what still smaller number did the Lord say he would spare Sodom? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.30}

“And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty’s sake.” Verse 31. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.31}

17. Finally, how many righteous persons did the Lord say would save Sodom? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.32}

“And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten’s sake.” Verse 32. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.33}

18. In this simple narrative, what scripture do we see fulfilled? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.34}

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James 5:16, last clause. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.35}

19. Cite some notable instances where wicked men’s lives were spared on account of a righteous man. Acts 27:21-25; Job 42:7-9. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.36}

20. What relation do the righteous sustain to the people of the earth? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.37}

“Ye are the salt of the earth.” Matthew 5:13, first clause. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.38}

21. Will the presence of righteous men always be sufficient to save the wicked from merited punishment? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.39}

“Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast; though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.” Ezekiel 14:19, 20. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.40}

22. What is the only safe place for people to occupy? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.41}

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust; his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.” Psalm 91:1-4. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.42}

**NOTES**

The first thing noticeable in this lesson is Abraham’s hospitality. As soon as he saw the men he ran to them and begged as a personal favor that they would stop with him. “If now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant.” This is the true spirit of hospitality; it is the very essence of hospitality. The truly hospitable man loves to care for others, and instead of making them feel that he is conferring a favor on them, he makes them feel they are doing him a favor by accepting his hospitality. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.43}

We cannot always judge people by their appearance. In fact, judging from the appearance is about the most unsafe thing a person can do. Those three men who came to Abraham were no doubt very ordinary looking. Very likely they looked heated and dusty. Nevertheless two of them were angels, and one was the Lord himself. What a lesson for us, and how forcible are the words of the apostle: “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” Hebrews 13:2. How many people are there who would invite the Saviour into their houses if he passed by just as he used to walk along the dusty roads of Judea and Galilee? Isaiah said that there was no beauty in him that he should be desired. When we think of all the circumstances of the case, we shall be less likely to justify ourselves by condemning the ancient Jews for not accepting Christ. Their conduct was inexcusable; but would we have done any better? {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.44}

It may not be amiss in connection with this incident in Abraham’s life, to speak of the ancient practice of feet washing. Many people claim that in washing his disciples’ feet, as recorded in John 13:1-17, the Lord was simply impressing on them the importance of hospitality, and that he did a thing that was very common in those times. Christ’s own statement to Peter, “What I do thou knowest not now,” and also the simple fact that it was a thing absolutely unknown for a host to wash the feet of a guest, ought to be sufficient to disprove this; Abraham was the prince of hospitable men; but he said to the men: “Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.” They were to wash their own feet, just as they were to rest themselves. No principle of hospitality or courtesy required one man to wash another’s feet; but Christian fellowship does require just that, and not only that, but all the service one for another that may be implied by it. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.45}

Another lesson that ought not to be lost sight of may be learned from Abraham’s prayer for Sodom. First, Abraham asked for just what he wanted, and second, he was importunate. He gained confidence as he proceeded. There is altogether too much formality in prayer. By this we do not wish to be understood as favoring in the slightest degree that familiar style of speech that is becoming common, with a certain class, and which cannot fail to shock a reverent person. Prayer should be uttered just as one cannot help uttering it if he realizes the greatness of the One whom he is addressing; but still the petitions should be such as would be made to a father. A great deal of the formality in prayer is due to the fact that people don’t expect to have their prayers answered. In fact, all the formality in prayers comes from that source. The people who have the most faith will be the most careful in their petitions. W. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 154.46}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 10.**

E. J. Waggoner

We are requested to state that Mrs. E. G. White will spend Sabbath and Sunday, March 10 and 11, with the church at Lemoore; and the following Sabbath and Sunday with the church at Fresno. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.1}

The Seventh-day Adventist Year Book for 1888 is a pamphlet of one hundred and sixty pages full of important and interesting matter relating to the cause and its workings. Every friend of the cause should have one. Much pains and careful work have been expended on this book, and we think that it is the best Year Book ever published. For sale at the office of Pacific Press for ten cents. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.2}

An elder in the Presbyterian Church having suggested that if congregations would adopt a plain, inexpensive uniform, it would remove much of the reluctance of the poor to come to church, the *Interior* says that “the best uniform any church can adopt is the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.” Very true; but the trouble with it is, that it does not attract enough attention to warrant its general adoption. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.3}

The demand of popular churches is for preachers that will “draw.” How to meet the demand is the question with many preachers. One thing that never fails is sensation; and the way some ministers pander to the popular appetite is a disgrace to the gospel. A San Francisco clergyman lately secured a congregation by advertising as his theme “Get Up and Get.” He applied it to the call of Abraham. He ought to apply it to himself. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.4}

The *Presbyterian Banner* says that the friends of the Sunday, in Louisiana, are demanding a more rigid Sunday-law, and a stricter enforcement, and that this will be the test question in the election of the members of the new Legislature in April. It is thought that the Sunday party will be successful. The *Banner* says that “the ministers of all the Protestant denominations are laboring earnestly to secure the victory which seems almost in sight. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.5}

We have been requested to invest in a book bearing the pretentious title, “History of the Origin of All Things.” We have no inclination to purchase, for we already have several copies of an old book that to our mind gives the exact truth on the subject. It is called the Bible. If anybody would like to study the subject, and has not the book, we would refer him to the Pacific Press Publishing Company, Oakland, Cal., as a place where he can find a full assortment. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.6}

A friend has sent us a copy of the *Anglican Church Chronicle*, published in Honolulu, from the leading editorial of which we take the following:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.7}

“We are not quite sure that it is altogether correct to be always using entreaty go get people who are pledged to the performance of certain duties, to carry out their pledges. There ought to be some recognized judicial means of compelling erring church-members to a sense of their delinquencies.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.8}

Well there was once some recognized judicial means of compelling church people, and others too, to conform to the customs of the church, and that was the Inquisition. It was quite an effective means, so far as it went; but we never heard that it succeeded in making people conscientious. But then, the *Church Chronicle* no doubt thinks that conscientiousness in the performance of church duties is a minor affair, so long as the duties are performed, and in this it is by no means singular. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.9}

An anonymous correspondent says: “I have always supposed that the root of ‘Deuteronomy’ was *Deus*, and that the book had reference to intercourse with the Deity.” This explanation certainly has the merit of originality and novelty. We very much doubt if anybody else in the world ever thought of such a derivation; but there are no doubt very many who do not know the origin of the name of the fifth book in the Bible, and so we give it. The word “Deuteronomy” is formed of two Greek words, *deuteros*, second, and *nomos*, law, and means the second giving of the law. The law was first given by the Lord upon Mr. Sinai, but Moses rehearsed it to the people, and all the events connected with the giving of it, just before his death. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.10}

Reports from the European are of a nature to cheer and encourage the heart of every one who loves the cause of present truth. Elder Conradi writes through the *Review and Herald* a very interesting account of the work, from which we gather the following notes: In Central Europe a large printing establishment is publishing in different languages while half a dozen ministers and a score of colporters are scattering the seeds of truth. There are over seven hundred Sabbath-keepers, and they are found from Piedmont to the Netherlands. New ones are constantly embracing the truth in Russia. Two brethren living beyond the Volga have been on a missionary tour; at one place six joined the church, and Russian Baptists were found who were much interested. The church in the Caucasus now numbers seventy. Several churches have lately been organized in France. Brethren Vuilleumier and Geymet are laboring in the Piedmont valleys, and have an attendance of one hundred. In Switzerland both German and French canvassers have good success. The book sales in four months amounted to nearly $3,000. Six more have embraced the truth at Zurich under the labors of Brother Ertzenberger. Brother Conradi has visited Holland, where he finds a very favorable field. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.11}

Elder Matteson, writing from Stockholm says that their mission school has just closed, and that thirty more colporters have now gone out to the Scandinavian field. During the time of the school, in ten weeks there were sold in Stockholm books and papers for $1,508. At the celebration of the ordinance is over ninety believers took part, and many others are interested. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.12}

There are plenty of people calling themselves Christians, who profess great faith in Christ and the New Testament teachings, but believe in the Old Testament only as it concurs with their sense of propriety. Accordingly they reject the Bible account of the creation and fall, ridicule the stories of Samson and Jonah, and in many cases rend the word of God asunder and repudiate the former part as obsolete, and unreliable. The inconsistency of this course while holding up Christ and the apostles who appealed so strongly to these ancient Scriptures and held such faith in their truthfulness and substance, is shown in the article by Dr. Speak in this paper. The selection is an unusually long one, but none too long since it is all good. We bespeak for its careful reading. And henceforth let us be ... ent; for the Bible and all its characters and factors stand together. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.13}

We have just received from the publishers, Harper & Brothers, New York, a copy of “The First Book in Physiology and Hygiene,” by J. H. Kellogg, M.D., who is at the head of the Medical Sanitarium at Battle Creek, Mich. The book is designed as a primary text-book on physiology, for children from six to twelve years of age. It contains twenty-six lessons, with a summary at the close of each lesson, and questions for review at the close of the book. The wide experience of the author as a physician, and his skill as a teacher, have enabled him to get up a book that is thoroughly scientific, and at the same time adapted to the comprehension of children. Moreover, the book is eminently practical. With this book in hand as a guide, we cannot see how any teacher who has a fair knowledge of physiology can fail to make the subject interesting. Of course it is expected that the teacher will have charts and models, and will add many illustrations to that given in the book; but, even if this is lacking, we think that the book is better able to teach itself than any other book we have ever seen, and better, in fact, than many persons to presume to teach physiology and hygiene. We hope to see this book generally adopted in the public schools, and whether or not, parents would do well to procure it for their children to study at home. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.14}

**“A Question of Figures” The Signs of the Times, 14, 10.**

E. J. Waggoner

A brother in Philadelphia sends the following three questions on one of the Sabbath-school lessons, which he wishes answered through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES:- {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.15}

“1. How do you prove that Adam lived 233 years with Methuselah? Smith’s Dictionary says it was 243 years.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.16}

So does the Bible. By an error in copying, the lesson came short just ten years. This was better than to have had the number too large. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.17}

“2. How do you count to get 352 years in the 20th question? The genealogy of Shem, in Genesis 31:16-25 counts only 262 years from the flood to Abram.” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.18}

The brother’s difficulty arises from the fact that he supposes Abram to have been born when Terah was seventy years old. The fact is that Abram was not born till Terah was one hundred and thirty years old. We learn this as follows: Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran (Genesis 13:4); he did not go out of Haran until his father was dead (Acts 7:4); and Terah, his father, was two hundred and five years old when he died (Genesis 11:32). Now a very slight mathematical calculation will enable anybody to see that Abram was born when Terah was one hundred and thirty years old; 206-75=120. With this in mind, the brother will have no difficulty in finding that from the flood to the birth of Abraham was 352 years. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.19}

“3. If Noah was five hundred years old when Shem was born (Genesis 5:32), and Shem was one hundred years old when Arphaxad was born (Genesis 11:10); *two years after the flood*, how could Noah have been six hundred years old when the flood came? (Genesis 7:11).” {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.20}

The brother has fallen into the same difficulty here as in the case of Abram; he evidently thinks that Abram, Nahor and Haran were all born at the same time, and that Shem, Ham and Japheth were also born at one time. But the Bible does not say so. Terah was seventy years old when his first son was born, but Abram was not born until sixty years later, so we have seen. So Genesis 5:32 tells how old Noah was when his eldest son was born; but that oldest son was not Shem. From Genesis 10:21 and Genesis 9:22, 23 we learn that Japheth was the oldest son of Noah, and that Ham was the youngest, and that consequently Shem was the second son. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.21}

Although Abram was undoubtedly the youngest of the sons of Terah, he is mentioned first because he is the only one of importance. Shem was the second son of Noah, yet he is always mentioned first because he is the one from whom the genealogy of Christ is reckoned. {SITI March 9, 1888, p. 160.22}

**“The Spirit of Antichrist. No. 13” The Signs of the Times, 14, 11.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the preceding articles of this series, it has been shown that Spiritualism is essentially antichrist, because it is wholly of the devil, and directly opposed to Christianity. It has been shown by positive testimony that Spiritualism is based upon the theory that man is naturally immortal, and that death does not end his existence. This idea is, in fact, the whole of Spiritualism. But this, we have seen, naturally leads to a denial of God and his moral Government, and makes every man his own judge; in short, it assumes for every man the attributes and prerogatives that belong to God; and since human nature is fallen, and its tendency, when unrestrained by some power outside of itself, is downward, the doctrine of the natural immortality of man is the germ out of which has grown all the evil that has cursed this earth. The claim has been made that no person who holds to that doctrine has any warrant against becoming an avowed Spiritualist, and that however much a person may think himself opposed to Spiritualism, he is essentially a Spiritualist if he believes in the conscious existence of the dead. This claim has been substantiated by many Spiritualistic quotations taken from professedly evangelical publications. The argument, in short, is this: The doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul inevitably leads to Spiritualism, and Spiritualism is from its very nature opposed to God and every vital principle of morality. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.1}

But Spiritualism as a distinct system is not the only exhibition of antichrist. By the expressions “that man of sin,” and “the son of perdition” in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, the apostle makes undoubted reference to the Papacy. Now of that “man of sin” he says that it “opposeth and exalteth itself above all that is called God or that is worshiped.” Then of course Roman Catholicism must also be a manifestation of the spirit of antichrist. It has already been shown that Catholicism is essentially Spiritualism, in that it teaches that the dead are conscious, and that the living can communicate with them, and that the living and the dead may render assistance to each other; therefore we shall notice only two points that are peculiar to Catholicism, which show it to be antichrist. Both of these points depend wholly on the doctrine of the conscious state of the dead. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.2}

The first dogma to be noticed is that of purgatory. In the “Catholic Christian Instructed,” pages 150, 151, that doctrine is thus briefly stated:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.3}

“Some there are, though I fear but few, that have before their death so fully cleared their accounts with the Divine Majesty, and washed away all their stains in the blood of the Lamb, as to go straight to Heaven after death; and such as those stand in no need of our prayers. Others there are, and their numbers are very great, who die in the guilt of deadly sin, and such as these go straight to hell, like the rich glutton in the gospel (St. Luke 16), and therefore cannot be bettered by our prayers. But, besides these two kinds, there are many Christians, who, when they die, are neither so perfectly pure and clean as to exempt them from the least spot or stain, nor yet so unhappy as to die under the spot of unrepented deadly sin. Now such as these the church believes to be, for a time, in a middle state, which we call purgatory, and these are they who are capable of receiving benefit by our prayers. For though we pray for all that die in the communion of the church, because we do not certainly know the particular state in which each one dies, yet we are sensible that our prayers are available for those only that are in this middle state.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.4}

This is a simple statement of the Catholic Church concerning purgatory. That it is antichristian may be seen from the fact that it is diametrically opposed to the Bible doctrine that the dead are totally unconscious. But the greatest point against it is that it leads directly to a depreciation of the sacrifice of Christ. Dr. Challoner, the author of the “Catholic Christian Instructed,” states the following question and answer:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.5}

“*Q*. What grounds have you for the belief of a purgatory from reason? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.6}

“*A*. Because reason teaches these two things: 1. That every sin, be it ever so small, is an offense of God; and consequently deserves punishment from the justice of God; and therefore that every person that dies under the guilt of any such offense unrepented, must expect to be punished by the justice of God. 2. That there are small sins, in which a person may happen to die, that are so small, either through the levity of the matter, or for want of a full deliberation in the act, as not to deserve everlasting punishments. From whence it plainly follows that, besides the place of everlasting punishments, which we call hell, there must be also a place of temporal punishment for such as die in those lesser offenses, and this we call purgatory.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.7}

Now mark the following:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.8}

“*Q*. But does not the blood of Christ sufficiently purify us from all our sins, without any other purgatory? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.9}

“*A*. The blood of Christ purifies none that are once come to the use of reason, from any sin without repentance, and therefore such sins as have not been here recalled by repentance, must be punished hereafter, according to their gravity, by the divine justice, either in hell, if the sins be mortal, or if venial, in purgatory.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.10}

David prayed to be cleansed from secret faults. Psalm 19:2. By secret faults he meant those of which he had no knowledge. This is evident from the verse itself: “Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.” He prayed to be cleansed from sins which he committed in ignorance, and which had never come to his knowledge. He knew that he must be cleansed from every sin, if he would be saved. Now Peter testifies that besides the name of Christ there is none other name under Heaven whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12. Therefore to say that any person must work out, through punishment in a purgatory, some sins that Christ has not atoned for, and that afterwards he may enter Heaven, is to deny, to that extent, the virtue of Christ’s sacrifice. Thus the doctrine of purgatory is directly opposed to Christ. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.11}

But read further what Dr. Challoner says of those who, having died in venial sin, are consigned to purgatory:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.12}

“*Q*. Are they not, then, capable of relief in that state? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.13}

“*A*. Yes, they are, but not from anything that they can do for themselves, but from the prayers, alms, and other suffrages offered to God for them by the faithful upon earth.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.14}

Thus it appears that the doctrine of purgatory, depending upon conscious existence in death, leads to prayer for the dead, and not only to that, but to indulgences, and the payment of money for the release of souls confined in purgatory. Thus: as the above quotation states, a man in purgatory may be released, and, of course, admitted to Heaven, if some of his friends give money to the church. Who cannot see that this is antichrist? It is allowing that money and good works will buy one’s way into Heaven; it is teaching men to put their trust in Mammon, at least in part, instead of wholly in Christ. Read the scorching words of the apostle Peter, in Acts 8:20-23, to one who thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.15}

The doctrine of purgatory leads directly, as has been said, to the doctrine of indulgences. We have no space for lengthy quotations, and so present as a concise statement of this doctrine, the following quotation made in “McClintock and Strong’s Cyclopedia” from the “Treasury of the Church,” by Alexander de Hales:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.16}

“The sufferings and death of Christ not only made a sufficient satisfaction for the sins of men, but also acquired a superabundance of merit. The superfluous merit of Christ is conjoined with that of the martyrs and saints, which is similar in kind, though smaller in degree, for they likewise perform more than the divine law required of them. The sum of these supererogatory merits and good works forms a vast treasure, which is disjoined from the persons who won or performed them, exists objectively, and, having been accumulated by the head members of the church, and intended by them for its use, belongs to the church, and is necessarily placed under the administration of its representatives, especially the Pope, who is supreme. It is therefore competent for the Pope, according to the measure of his insight at the time, to draw from this treasure, and bestow upon those who have no merit of their own, such supplies of it as they require. Indulgences and remissions are made from the supererogatory merits of Christ’s members, but most of all from the superabundance of Christ’s own, the two constituting the church’s spiritual treasure.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.17}

This is the doctrine of indulgences in its best form. Primarily it probably does not contemplate such a thing as granting license for future sin, although this has always naturally followed. If men know that by doing penance, or by almsgiving, they can atone for certain sins, they will not be so careful to guard against those sins. So the doctrine of indulgences does lead directly to looseness of life. No matter what claims may be made, as a matter of fact no real humility is required by indulgences and penance, as there is in accepting Christ as the only Saviour. The individual trusts in himself and his own good works, and not in Christ. But without humility and self-abasement there can be no true godliness; for “his soul that is lifted up is not upright within him.” Habakkuk 2:4. And the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul is responsible for this doctrine which leads to trust in self instead of trust in Christ, and so it appears again as the doctrine of antichrist. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.18}

The first cry of the awakened sinner is, “What shall I do to be saved?” When he has been convinced of sin, and feels his utter helplessness, he instinctively looks for something to lean upon. The true minister of the gospel will point him to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. Trusting wholly in him, the sinner can find both pardon and holiness,-cleansing from the guilt of sin, and from the love of it. But right there at that critical moment, the Catholic Church meets him and turns his attention to some “saint” who has accomplished the impossible feat of being better than the Lord wanted him to be, whose extra good works he may get if he will pray or pay for them. Thus men are elevated to a level with Christ, and all in consequence of the theory that death is not an enemy, but a friend. W. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.19}

**“Christmas and Sunday” The Signs of the Times, 14, 11.**

E. J. Waggoner

(*Concluded.*)

In one of its issues in 1884, the *Christian at Work* said:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.20}

“It is now seen, as it is admitted, that we must go to later than apostolic times for the establishment of Sunday observance.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.21}

This classes it among the institutions of which Killen says that Peter and Paul knew nothing; and Dr. Scott in his comments on Acts 20:7 admits that it was one of the institutions which, Killen says, “crept silently into use, and then claimed the rank of divine institutions.” He says:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.22}

“The change from the seventh to the first day of the week appears to have been gradually and silently introduced, by example rather than by precept.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.23}

As Christmas, though under a different name, was observed as a festival by the heathen long before its adoption by the Christian church, so Sunday was from the earliest ages a heathen festival day. Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary says of Sunday:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.24}

“So called because this day was anciently dedicated to the sun, or to its worship.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.25}

The “Encyclopedia Britannica” (Art. “Egypt”), says:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.26}

“Sun worship was the primitive form of Egyptian religion; perhaps even pre-Egyptian.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.27}

The “Scaff-Herzob Encyclopedia” (art. “Sun”) says:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.28}

“The worship of the sun as the most prominent and powerful agent in the kingdom of nature, was widely diffused throughout the countries adjacent to Palestine. This worship was either direct, wither the intervention of any statue or symbol, or indirect. Among the Egyptians the sun was worshiped under the title of Ra.... Among the Phoenicians the sun was worshiped under the title of Baal. At Tyre, Gaza, and Carthage human sacrifices were offered to him. Among the Chaldeans the sun was worshiped under the title of Tammuz; and that the Arabians worshiped the sun, we know from Theophrastus. Still more propagated was the worship of the sun among the Syrians (Aramaeans). Famous temples were at Heliopolis, Emesa, Palmyra, Hierapolis. Sun worship there was very old, and direct from the beginning; and even in later times sun and moon were worshiped at Hierapolis without the intervention of any image. Among the pure Semites or Aryans, direct worship to the sun was paid from the beginning, and still later. Thus among the Assyrians, and afterwards among the Persians under the form of Mithras, which finally became the *Sol Deus invictus* [the invincible sun god] throughout the West, especially through the Romans.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 166.29}

In the *Old Testament Student* of January, 1886, Dr. Talbot W. Chambers has an article entitled, “Sun Images and the Sun of Righteousness,” from which we make the following extracts concerning the prevalence of sun worship:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 167.1}

“The universality of this form of idolatry is something remarkable. It seems to have prevailed everywhere. The chief object of worship among the Syrians was Baal-the sun, considered as the giver of light and life, the most active agent in all the operations of nature. But as he sometimes revealed himself as a destroyer, drying up the earth with summer heats, and turning gardens into deserts, he was in that view regarded with terror, and appeased with human sacrifices.... In Egypt the sun was the kernel of the State religion. In various forms he stood at the head of each hierarchy. At Memphis he was worshiped as Phtah, at Heliopolis as Tum, at Thebes as Aman Ra. Personified by Osiris, he became the foundation of the Egyptian metempsychosis.... In Babylon the same thing is observed as in Egypt. Men were struck by the various stages of the daily and yearly course of the sun, in which they saw the most imposing manifestation of Deity. But they soon came to confound the creature with the Creator, and the host of heaven became objects of worship, with the sun as chief.... In Persia the worship of Mithras or the sun is known to have been common from an early period. No idols were made, but the inscriptions show ever-recurring symbolic representations, usually a disk or orb with outstretched wings, with the addition sometimes of a human figure. The leading feature of the Magian rites, derived from ancient Media, was the worship of fire, performed on altars erected upon high mountains, where a perpetual flame, supposed to have been originally kindled from Heaven, was constantly watched, and where solemn services were daily rendered. The remnant of the ancient Persians who escaped subjugation by Islam, now known as Parsees, unite with their reverence for holy fire equal reverence for the sun as the emblem of Ormnzl.... Under the Roman emperors the Oriental solar worship was introduced with great pomp.... This god was proclaimed the chief deity in Rome, while all other gods were his servants. Of course this predominance of the sun worship did not continue, but the worship itself survived. For we find fifty years later, when Aurelian (274 A.D.) celebrated his triumph over the queen of the East, the temple of the sun received the gift of fifteen thousand pounds of gold.... So at the end of the second century, when Diocletian would take a very solemn oath in the face of the army, it was by the ‘all-seeing deity of the sun.’ He was still the universal object of worship, to the philosophic as an emblem, to the people at large as the deity himself. And curiously enough, this cult is found in an important sect of the ancient Christian heretics, the Manichaeans. They sang hymns to the great principle of light, and addressed prayers to the sun, or at least, when praying, turned their faces to that tabernacle in which, as they supposed, Christ dwelt.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 167.2}

The *North British Review* (Vol. 18, p. 408), in an article defending Sunday observance, called Sunday “the wild solar holiday of all pagan times.” This is in harmony with the statement by Webster, that Sunday is so called because it “was anciently dedicated to the sun, or to its worship.” Remembering this, and also what has been said of the readiness with which the early church adopted heathen customs, the reader will be able, by the following quotations, to see how the Sunday festival became a “Christian” institution. Immediately following the statement concerning sun worship which we quoted from the “Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia,” we find the following under the article “Sunday:”- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 167.3}

“Sunday (*Dies Solis* of the Roman calendar, day of the sun, because dedicated to the sun), the first day of the week, was adopted by the early Christians as a day of worship. The sun of Latin adoration they interpreted as the Sun of Righteousness.... No regulations for its observance are laid down in the New Testament, nor, indeed, is its observance even enjoined.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 167.4}

Of course no regulations for its observance are laid down in the New Testament, because it is a heathen institution. But from the above we can readily see how the heathen world so readily became nominally Christian. They did not have to give up anything; they simply worshiped the same thing under a different name. To the same effect is the following from Dr. T. W. Chambers, in the *Old Testament Student*, from which we have before quoted:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 167.5}

“The Emperor Constantine, before his conversion, reverenced all the gods as mysterious powers, especially Apollo, the god of the sun, to whom, in the year 308, he presented munificent gifts; and when he became a monotheist, the god whom he worshiped was, as Uhlborn says, rather the ‘Unconquered Sun,’ than the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And indeed, when he enjoined the observance of the Lord’s day, it was not under the name of *Sabbatum* or *Dies Domini*, but under its old astronomical and heathen title, *Dies Solis*, so that the law was as applicable to the worshipers of Apollo and Mithras as to the Christians.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 167.6}

With this evidence we do not see how anybody can accept Sunday as a Christian institution, and reject Christmas as a heathen festival. The evidence that Sunday was adopted into the Christian church direct from heathenism is more positive and more abundant than the evidence showing that Christmas is a relic of paganism. At some future time we shall present evidence connecting Sunday directly with the Papacy; but that is unnecessary at present. We have shown that it comes from heathenism, and everybody knows that there is not a heathen custom or doctrine in the church to-day that did not come through the great apostasy that resulted in the Roman Catholic Church. The simple fact is that Sunday stands for Baal, and all heathen worship, just as the Sabbath is the sign of Jehovah. And so to all we would say, “If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.” W. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 167.7}

**“Destruction of Sodom” The Signs of the Times, 14, 11.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON 12.—SABBATH, MARCH 24**

1. While Abraham was pleading with the Lord for Sodom, what were the two angels who accompanied him doing? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.1}

“And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom; but Abraham stood yet before the Lord.” Genesis 18:22. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.2}

2. At what time did the angels reach Sodom?” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.3}

“And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom; and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.” Genesis 19:1. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.4}

3. How did Lot greet them? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.5}

“4. What trait had Lot in common with Abraham?-*Hospitality*. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.6}

5. How did he exhibit it? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.7}

“And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant’s house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.” Genesis 19:2, 3. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.8}

6. What place of honor did Lot occupy in the city of Sodom? Verse 4. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.9}

7. Cite other instances that indicate that those who sat in the gate occupied an office of public trust. Daniel 2:49; Esther 2:19, 21, 22; 3:2, 3; Proverbs 21:7; 31:23; Lamentations 5:14. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.10}

8. What words of the Sodomites corroborate this? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.11}

“And they said, Stand back.And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door.” Genesis 19:9. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.12}

9. Did Lot participate in the wickedness of the Sodomites? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.13}

“And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds.” 2 Peter 2:6-8. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.14}

10. What was the crying sin of Sodom and Gomorrah? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.15}

“Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” Jude 7. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.16}

11. What marked contrast was there between the hospitality of Lot and the actions of the men of Sodom? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.17}

“But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter; and they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, and said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.” Genesis 19:4-7, 9. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.18}

12. What did the angels say to Lot? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.19}

“And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place; for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.” Verses 12, 13. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.20}

13. What did Lot do? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.21}

“And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.” Verse 14. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.22}

14. How did his sons-in-law regard his appeal? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.23}

15. What did the angels say as soon as it was morning? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.24}

“And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.” Verse 15. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.25}

16. What steps did they take to hasten Lot and his family? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.26}

“And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.” Verse 16. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.27}

17. What earnest charge did the angels give them? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.28}

“And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.” Verse 17. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.29}

18. As soon as Lot had escaped, what did the Lord do? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.30}

“The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.” Verses 23-25. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.31}

19. What happened to his wife because she disregarded the command of the angels? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.32}

“But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.” Verse 26. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.33}

20. What warning is given to us, in view of such facts as this? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.34}

“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.” Hebrews 2:1-3. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.35}

21. What did Jesus say of the condition of the world just before his second coming? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.36}

“Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.” Luke 17:28-20. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.37}

22. What will he do when he is revealed? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.38}

“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” 2 Thessalonians 2:7-9. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.39}

23. Of what was the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah an example? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.40}

“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under. Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” Jude 6, 7. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.41}

24. What charge is given to us who are living in these last days? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.42}

“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” Luke 21:34-36. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.43}

25. What warning is given us? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.44}

“In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away; and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot’s wife.” Luke 17:31, 32. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 170.45}

**NOTES**

In the destruction of Sodom we have an example of divine justice, and a sample of what will be the future of all the ungodly. The apostle Peter says that the Lord made the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah “an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.” 2 Peter 2:6. This should serve to silence those who deny that God will ever actually burn up wicked men, and who claim that the fire that is spoken of for the wicked is simply the fire of remorse. They gloried in their wickedness, until God rained fire and brimstone upon them. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 171.1}

The student may also notice that the fire which doomed the cities of the plain is called “eternal fire.” Jude 7. Yet it is not now burning. Then when the wicked, at the last day, shall be driven away into “everlasting fire” (Matthew 25:11), we need not conclude that the fire will never cease to burn. But must it not continue to burn forever, if it is not quenched? Not by any means. The fire that consumed Sodom and Gomorrah was not quenched, and as a consequence it turned them into ashes. If it had been quenched, they would not have been turned completely to ashes, but some ruins would have been left standing. Well, we read that the wicked shall be burned up root and branch, and that “they shall be ashes.” Malachi 4:1, 3. Now when a thing has been reduced to ashes what becomes of the fire that did the work? It goes out for lack of combustible material to feed upon. So it was with the “eternal fire” that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah: so it will be with the “everlasting fire” that shall destroy those who are found wicked at the last day; and from that fire will come forth the renewed earth, purified from the curse, and restored to its Eden beauty. W. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 171.2}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 11.**

E. J. Waggoner

We are forcibly reminded of the permanency of the question, “What is in a name?” by reading that “Mrs. Bible” was one of the prominent speakers at the late meeting of the State Spiritualist Association of Michigan. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.1}

We are in receipt of the *Cape Times*, of February 1, published at Cape Town, S. Africa, which contains the advertisement of the tent meetings then being conducted by Elders Robinson and Loyd. It contains also a very favorable editorial notice of the work. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.2}

It is hoped that everybody who attends prayer-meeting will ponder well the following words by the editor of the *Sunday School Times:*- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.3}

“If, indeed, a man really believes it to be his duty to bring a chill into a prayer-meeting, he could hardly do that duty more effectively than by taking a back seat, and sticking to it persistently.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.4}

The same thing applies to a woman also. Reader, are you a back seat church-member? {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.5}

In one of the best equipped first-class theaters in New York City, a play was recently introduced that was so filthy that even hardened theater-goers were constrained to protest and some of the most obscene portions of the play have been cut out. Of course the whole drift of the play is vile, but with the most obscene portions eliminated, it will be allowed to run. And yet people talk about the elevating character of the stage, and many clergymen are found among its defenders. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.6}

Kaiser Wilhelm, emperor of Germany, died in Berlin at 8:30 A.M., March 9, at the advanced age of ninety-one. He was crowned King of Prussia in 1861; and was proclaimed Emperor of all the Germanic States in January, 1871. His great prowess as a ruler has been ably seconded by the abilities and energies of the “Iron Prince,” Bismarck. His private life was simple, and his genial character endeared him to his people. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.7}

The Crown Prince, Frederick William, succeeds him under the title of Frederick III. But his health is in such a precarious state as to render the succession of his son William, a young prince of twenty-nine years, an event very likely to occur within a few days. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.8}

The following question has been handed to us for immediate answer through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES: {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.9}

“Is it right, in hauling freight to the stores, to haul liquors and tobacco? When we haul our hay to town, we generally get back loads. We have hauled some whisky and beer to-, and the other night there was a man beaten to death with a club while under the influence of liquor. What shall we do when we get an order for a load of groceries, and in it there is liquor?” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.10}

We imagine that when the writer of the above sees his question in plain, cold print, he will be able to answer it for himself. We can give only one answer. Any argument which would justify him in selling it. the responsibility cannot be evaded by saying that men might injure themselves or others with anything that they might haul. People might kill themselves on flour and potatoes, but they don’t do it very often, and the object of those things is to maintain life. But the sole object of liquor is to injure men, and to put them in a condition where they will injure others. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.11}

We don’t usually give direct answers to questions that are asked on matters of conscience, as we prefer to let people be conscience for themselves; but we have no hesitation in saying that the proper thing to do with whisky is, to let it alone. “But then we should not get any freight to haul.” Well, if so, then live on the profits of your hay, and go home without any back loads. You will not starve to death. If you do no matter. Remember that the martyrs might have lived a greal deal longer than they did, if they had been willing to do wrong in order to live. When it is absolutely impossible for a man to get a living without committing crime, or aiding others to do so, that is an evidence that he has lived as long as the Lord wants him to. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.12}

Passing by a cigar stand the other day, we saw in bold letters the following free advice: “Smoke Sanitary Cigars!” and straightway we began to wonder what kind of cigars Sanitary cigars could be. We could not think of anything that could make cigars healthful, except the absence of tobacco, and that evidently was not what the enterprising cigar vendor meant to suggest. Finally we concluded that Sanitary cigars are just the ordinary vile compounds that we meet on the cars and the ferry-boats, and that their sanitary property is the same as that of certain “disinfectants,”-they smell so bad that people are forced to open the windows, and so they get a little fresh air. Even with that view, we think that “Sanitary cigars” are a failure, for they usually smell bad enough to vitiate all the air in the neighborhood. Ordinary air stands no show in the presence of a dozen men with cigars. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.13}

It is reported in the religious press tat a great revival is progressing in Tokio, Japan, with no fewer than five hundred conversions in a single month. One religious journal, in noting the wonderful revival, and how recently the country was wholly pagan says: “Everybody is interested in Christianity, and nobody speaks against it.” Well, then, we fear that Christianity is in a bad condition in Japan. Christ said: “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.” When the Christians were only ‘a sect” that was everywhere spoken against, Christianity was pure and undefiled; but when Constantine elevated Christianity to the throne of the world, and nobody spoke against it, but men found that they gained popularity by accepting it, then real Christianity fled, and “that wicked” took its place. We do not believe Christ’s words have any less application to-day than they had eighteen hundred years ago. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.14}

The *Independent*, in its latest issue, has a short editorial on “Fraudulent or Disgusting Advertisements,” in which it severely scores those religious newspapers “which lack the carnal wit to see that any advertiser who takes the public into his confidence and tells how $100 a month is likely to be paid on an investment of $350 is simply lying.” It says:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.15}

“We have heard of several cases in which women have been attracted by this advertisement, and have money either sent, or been dissuaded from sending, their money to this fraudulent concern. We know a church in this neighborhood in which there were distributed three hundred copies of a religious paper in which the advertisement appeared. When no satisfaction was received to a protest against the appearance of the advertisement, that church canceled the whole subscription at once.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.16}

Good! Hundreds of people are disgusted by the nauseating patent medicine advertisements which many papers mix up with their religious items, and if they would express their disapproval in as decided a way as in the above-mentioned instance, that disgrace to the cause of religion might be stopped. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.17}

Not long ago the religious journals of New York were very active in working for the Saturday half-holiday. Now the Bank Superintendent of the State, in his report to the Legislature, has recommended that the law be so amended as to be limited in its operations to July and August, during which months business in the cities is usually suspended on Saturday afternoons; and the *Independent* says that “a better recommendations would have been a total repeal of the law altogether.” It thoughtfully adds:- {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.18}

“The truth is, that the law is really of no service to anybody. The design of the Legislature in passing it, was simple to *humbug* the working people, *by seeming* to do something for them, when in fact doing nothing except to their injury.” {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.19}

And that is just the case with all Sunday legislation. If the workingmen allow the Sunday law advocates to humbug them into thinking that the object of Sunday laws is to benefit them, they will find to the contrary to their sorrow when it is too late to remedy the matter. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.20}

**“Is It Sin?” The Signs of the Times, 14, 11.**

E. J. Waggoner

An esteemed brother presents, in behalf of a friend, the following problem for solution: By the fourth commandment, we are required to rest upon the seventh day and are permitted, but not commanded, to work on the other six days; we may use them as we choose. In the event of a law requiring all to keep Sunday and permitting us to keep the Sabbath too, would it be sin in us to observe the day? The friend claims it would not be, and that we would incur sin only by keeping Sunday instead of the Sabbath. And so by keeping both days the commandments may be kept and persecution avoided. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.21}

This is such an apparent two-faced policy that its advocates are not satisfied with it, but its opponents do not always understand how to meet it. One way in which it is met is to hold that the expression “Six days shalt thou labor,” is a positive command as much so as the requirement to rest upon the seventh day; so that resting on any of the six days becomes a sin. But that is not, in the minds of many a tenable position. Confirmed laziness and lawlessness is a sin, doubtless; but the resting upon a secular day, or its employment for diversion, or religious purposes, or relaxation from care, is nowhere so considered. And yet it would be sin under such an interpretation of the fourth commandment. It is, however, evident that the privilege of working six days in the week is a God-given right, of which the State should not deprive any citizen. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.22}

But while the occasional cessation from labor on the six days may not be a sin, the habitual observance of another day as a rest day beside and along with the one which God appointed would be a far different matter, and would be sin. It would be subversive of the principle upon which the Sabbath stands as a peculiar day. A man who would celebrate with equal zest the holidays of two opposed nations would not be regarded with favor by either. No man can have the sign of God’s peculiar people and wear it legitimately while wearing the badge of the enemy of God’s authority. It would be sin to place on an equality with the commands of high Heaven that which we know to be the mandate of antichristian power: “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” And yet this is just what he tries to do who from respect to God’s authority keeps the Sabbath day, and from fear of the law keeps the Papal Sunday. It is true he only keeps the latter for fear of consequences, but he who fears consequences should learn to commit them to the God of Peace. {SITI March 16, 1888, p. 176.23}

**“The Spirit of Antichrist. No. 14” The Signs of the Times, 14, 12.**

E. J. Waggoner

**MARIOLATRY**

The homage which the Catholic Church pays to the Virgin Mary is one of the most pernicious phases of the spirit of antichrist. It is true that in their catechisms they disclaim any intention of paying her divine honor, or of worshiping her as God; but those who are familiar with the facts know that the honor and worship which should be given to Christ alone are by them given the Virgin Mary, and Christ is virtually ignored. But this worship of the Virgin Mary, and of the saints and martyrs, which detracts from the honor due to Christ, springs solely from the doctrine of the natural immortality of man; for if they did not hold that human beings are by nature possessed of the immortality which actually belongs to God alone, they could not give to those human beings, after death, the worship which is due to God. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.1}

To show the pernicious effects of the Roman Catholic worship of the Virgin Mary and “saints” we shall make a few quotations from a Catholic publication entitled, “The Glories of Mary.” The work was first published in Venice, Italy, in 1784, and we copy from the first American edition of the translation from the Italian, which translation bears the approval of Archbishop John Hughes, of New York, dated Jan. 21, 1872. We quote the following statements concerning the author, Alphonsus Liguori, in order that the reader may know how he and his work are regarded by the Catholic Church:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.2}

“Nine years after his death [which occurred Aug. 1, 1787], he was pronounced venerable by Pius VI., was beatified by Pius VII., Sept. 15, 1816; and on May 26, 1839, was canonized by Gregory XVI. Pius IX. added, July 7, 1871, to these honors the dignity of Doctor of the Church; thus placing him beside Thomas Aquinas, Bernard of Clairvaux, etc. The decree was based upon the scholarly and devotional character of his works, and especially the circumstance that they teach in the most excellent manner the truths relating to the immaculate conception of the blessed mother of God, and the infallibility of the Roman bishop speaking from his throne.’ It ordained that ‘his works should be cited as of equal authority with those of the other doctors of the church, and should be used in schools, colleges, controversies, sermons, etc., as well as in private.’”-*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, act Liguori*. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.3}

The reader will know, therefore, that every quotation made from “The Glories of Mary,” is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. On page 19 we find the following:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.4}

“If the assertion is true and incontrovertible, as I believe it to be, and as I shall prove in the fifth chapter of this book, that all graces are dispensed by the hand of Mary alone, and that all those who are saved, are saved solely by the hand of this divine mother, it may be said as a necessary consequence, that the salvation of all depends upon preaching Mary, and confidence in her intercession.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.5}

If this is not antichrist, can anyone tell what would be? When the Catholic Church teaches that “all those who are saved, are saved solely by the hand of this divine mother,” what room is left for Christ? Further quotations will show that the Catholic Church openly gives to Mary a higher place than to Christ. On pages 27, 28 we find:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.6}

“The kingdom of God consisting of justice and mercy, the Lord has divided it; he has reserved the kingdom of justice for himself, and he has granted the kingdom of mercy to Mary, ordaining that all the mercies which are dispensed to men should pass through the hands of Mary, and should be bestowed according to her good pleasure.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.7}

And on page 29:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.8}

“Ernest, Archbishop of Prague, also says that the eternal Father has given to the Son the office of judging and punishing, and to the mother the office of compassionating and relieving the wretched.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.9}

Sometimes professed Protestants are guilty of setting the Father and the Son in antagonism with each other, representing the Father as desiring to wreak vengeance upon men, and the Son as restraining him. The natural result of such teaching is to cause men to regard God as unloveable. In like manner the Catholic Church represent Christ as the stern, unyielding judge, and Mary as the only one who can induce him to show mercy. Of course the result must be the neglect of Christ. In the following questions this is made more apparent:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.10}

“Every blessing, every help, every grace that men have received or will receive from God, to the end of the world, has come to them, and will come to them, through the intercession and by means of Mary.” *P. 119*. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.11}

Again on page 133 we read:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.12}

“St. Bonaventure remarks that Isaias in his day lamented, and said, ‘Behold, thou art angry, and we have sinned.... there is none that riseth up and taketh hold of thee;’ because Mary was not yet born into the world. But now, if God is offended with any sinner, and Mary undertakes to protect him, she restrains the Son from punishing him, and saves him.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.13}

But the following caps the climax:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.14}

“To increase our confidence, St. Anselm adds that when we have recourse to this divine mother, we may not only be sure of her protection, but that sometimes we shall be sooner heard and saved by invoking her holy name than that of Jesus our Saviour. And he gives this reason: Because it belongs to Christ as our judge to punish, but to Mary, as our advocate, to pity.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.15}

These statements are so clear that they need no comment to convince the reader that Christ is practically ignored in the Roman Catholic Church, and that that church is essentially pagan. It teaches men to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator. It matters not how much that church may profess to be Christian, nor how much prominence they may give to the *name* and image of Christ; the fact remains that it is not a Christian church, but is essentially antichrist. And this, let the reader not forget, is due wholly to its assumption of pagan doctrines, notably that of the inherent immortality of man. But for this, they could not thus exalt a creature to the place of God. W. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.16}

**“Promises to Israel” The Signs of the Times, 14, 12.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the Saviour’s sermon on the mount there is a prophecy which is familiar to everyone who has read the Bible at all, but which is very seldom thought of as a prophecy. It is this: “Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.” Matthew 5:5. This prophecy, which is at the same time a blessed promise, is only one link in a chain of promises that will find their fulfillment at the second coming of our Lord. The study of these promises in their connection with one another, serves to throw light on many passages of the Bible that are otherwise obscure, and to bring out in bold relief the Christian’s hope. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.17}

It should be evident at first thought, that the promise that the meek shall inherit the earth, does not refer to the earth in its present condition, and under the present order of things. A meek person is one who is “mild of temper; not easily provoked or irritated; given to forbearance under injuries; soft, gentle, yielding.” By a comparison of this definition with the description of charity, in 1 Corinthians 13:4, 5, we must conclude that meekness and charity must exist together, or, rather, that meekness is a part of that charity which is “the bond of perfectness;” for, “charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemingly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.” This was the character of Christ. “When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” 1 Peter 2:23. He “came not to be ministered unto, but to minister” (Matthew 20:28), and he said of himself, “I am meek and lowly in heart.” Matthew 11:29. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.18}

Now a person who possesses these qualities is so rarely found as to be peculiar; and in the struggle for place and power in this world he will invariably be left behind. The man who doesn’t look out for himself will have a very limited amount of this world’s goods; for, as a general thing, he will not find others to look out for him. With rare exceptions, those who have great worldly possessions, have acquired them by aggressively pushing their own claims. The most of the wealth of this world is in the hands of men who do not fear God, and who have but little regard for man. The following description of “the prosperity of the wicked” in ancient times, will apply equally well to-day:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.19}

“They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression; they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. Therefore his people return hither; and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High? Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.” Psalm 73:5-12. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.20}

At one time when there was a strife among the disciples of Jesus, as to “which of them should be accounted the greatest,” Jesus showed them the difference between those who now possess this world, and those to whom it is promised as a future inheritance, by saying:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.21}

“The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve... Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Luke 22:15-30. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.22}

The epistle of James was addressed to “the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad” (James 1:1), and in that we read: “Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?” James 2:5, 6. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.23}

From these texts we must conclude that the earth, which is to be inherited by the meek, is the kingdom of which those who are poor in this world’s goods, but rich in faith, are heirs. Those who learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart, and who follow him in his life of self-denial, being sharers in his sufferings, may now be oppressed and derided by the haughty who have more than heart can wish, but a time will come when they who hunger now shall be filled, and those who are full now, shall hunger; when those who weep now shall laugh, and those who laugh now shall mourn and lament. See Luke 6:2-25. The psalmist, in the following words, tells when the meek shall inherit the earth: “For evildoers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” Psalm 37:9-11. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.24}

Thus the subject is before us in brief outline. We learn that the inheritance is yet future; that the earth is the kingdom which the meek shall inherit, that the saints who inherit the earth will be none other than the twelve tribes of Israel; and that they will not enter into the possession of their inheritance until after the wicked have had their day of prosperity. The details of the promises and their fulfillment will next claim our attention. W. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 182.25}

(*To be continued.*)

**“The Logical Outcome” The Signs of the Times, 14, 12.**

E. J. Waggoner

The *Christian Union* of March 1 contains the following communication:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 183.1}

“I have in my congregation a number of young people who read your editorial in a recent number of the *Christian Union* on the subject of a possible probation after death, one of whom has asked me if I would write to you and ask you for the *scriptural* proof of your position; and I take the liberty of doing so. It will relieve me of a great deal of responsibility which I feel in connection with this subject, as your views are so utterly at variance with my own that I am not able to help her any, and the subject is troubling a good many.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 183.2}

To this perfectly reasonable request, the editor of the *Christian Union* undertakes to give “a categorical reply,” and does so as follows:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 183.3}

“If our correspondent, or any member of his flock, desires to know what are the intimations of Scripture upon this subject, so far as it makes any intimations, we recommend him to take his Bible and collate all the passages which refer to the final Judgment, beyond which there is no hope of redemption; then let him examine every one of these passages which gives any hint as to the time of such final Judgment. We think he will find that they all connect it with the end of the world; that not one of them connects it with death. He, therefore, who asserts that death is practically the final Judgment, or is coterminous with the final judgment of any soul, in so far makes a statement which, if not anti-scriptural, is at least unwarranted by Scripture. As we believe that all your knowledge respecting the world beyond death is derived from Scripture, we neither propose ourselves to make any statement which Scripture does not explicitly warrant, nor to allow, in so far as our effort can prevent it, any such statement unwarranted by Scripture to be imposed on the faith of the Christian church.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 183.4}

From the popular standpoint, the *Christian Union’s* position is impregnable. Whoever holds to the commonly-accepted theory of conscious existence in death, must, if consistent, accept the above conclusion. It is a fact that the Scriptures do not place the final Judgment at death. “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the Judgment.” Hebrews 9:27. How long after the death of any man the Judgment will take place is not stated; but the fact that all are to be judged at one time is evident from the statement that God has “appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world.” Acts 17:31. Paul tells us, also, that the Lord will “judge the quick [living] and the dead at his appearing and is kingdom.” 2 Timothy 4:1. And the coming of Christ is at “the end of the world.” Matthew 24:3. These Scriptures, which are but samples, show that the dead will not be judged before the living are judged, and that the judgment of all takes place at the end of the world. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 183.5}

Now this being the case, we do not see how anybody who holds to the theory that the dead are as conscious and as active as the living, and even more so, can deny the possibility of a probation after death. The *Christian Union* is perfectly consistent with itself. It does not say that all men will have a probation after death, for it does not claim that probation continues until death in the case of every man; but it is consistent in advocating that, aside from the cases of those who have willfully rejected the gospel, probation must continue for all living persons until the Judgment, no matter in what state or condition those persons may be living. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 183.6}

We say that the *Christian Union* is consistent with itself; but it is most positively out of harmony with the Scriptures, for they assure us that “the dead know not anything,” and that in the very day that a man’s breath goes forth, his thoughts perish. They teach us that we must make the most of present opportunities, because “there is no work, nor device, no knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave,” which waits all men. Therefore there cannot by any possibility be a probation after death. A person’s probation begins with his consciousness of right and wrong, and cannot possibly extend beyond the close of his consciousness, which is at death. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 183.7}

With one who believes what the Bible says as to the condition of man in death, there cannot be any question as to a probation after death. But, as before stated, everybody who holds the pagan theory that the dead are conscious, must of necessity, if consistent, hold to the theory of probation after death. Therefore the Roman Catholic purgatory is the logical outcome of the popular theory of the state of the dead. If, however, one believes that each individual is amenable to himself alone, then he must hold that after death each one is working out his own destiny, and so he lands in Spiritualism by a short cut. When one throws aside any Bible doctrine, the bars are down, and there is nothing to hinder him from accepting the most absurd and even wicked theories. W. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 183.8}

**“The Test of Faith” The Signs of the Times, 14, 12.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Lesson 14.—Sabbath, April 7**

1. What was the character of Abraham? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.1}

“Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.” Genesis 26:5. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.2}

2. Were his early associations favorable to the formation of such a character? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.3}

“And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor; and they served other gods.” Joshua 24:2. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.4}

3. For what reason was Abraham counted righteous? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.5}

“For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” Romans 4:3. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.6}

4. What will true faith do? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.7}

“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.” Galatians 5:6. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.8}

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcomth the world, even our faith.” 1 John 5:4. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.9}

5. What did the Lord do to test Abraham’s faith? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.10}

“And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham; and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” Genesis 22:1, 2. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.11}

6. How did Abraham obey? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.12}

“And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.” Verse 3. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.13}

7. How long did they travel before they came to the place? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.14}

“Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.” Verse 4. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.15}

8. What did Isaac say to his father as they were going together to the place of sacrifice? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.16}

“And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father; and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Verse 7. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.17}

9. What was Abraham’s reply? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.18}

“And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.” Verse 8. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.19}

10. When they came to the place what did Abraham do? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.20}

“And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.” Verse 9. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.21}

11. How far did he proceed toward slaying Isaac? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.22}

“And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.” Verse 10. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.23}

12. How was he prevented from completing the sacrifice? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.24}

“And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.” Verses 11, 12. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.25}

13. What did the angel of the Lord say was now proved? Verse 12. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.26}

14. How were Abraham’s words, that God would provide himself a lamb, fulfilled? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.27}

“And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.” Verse 13. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.28}

15. What promise did the Lord make because Abraham had done this? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.29}

“And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lore, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.” Verses 15-18. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.30}

16. What made this a peculiarly strong test of Abraham’s faith?-*Isaac was Abraham’s only son (Genesis 22:2); there was no earthly hope that he could ever have another; and more than all, God had promised that his numerous seed should come through Isaac.* Hebrews 11:17, 18. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.31}

17. What did Abraham believe that God was able to do? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.32}

“Accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.” Hebrews 11:19. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.33}

18. What did this act prove concerning Abraham’s faith? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.34}

“Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?” James 2:21, 22. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.35}

19. What wonderful title did Abraham thus gain? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.36}

“And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the Friend of God.” Verse 23. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.37}

20. Who may share this blessing? {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.38}

“So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.” Galatians 3:9. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.39}

**NOTES**

The relation of faith and works is fully illustrated in the case of Abraham. First came the promise of God that his seed should be as the stars of heaven. Abraham had no children at that time, but “he believed in the Lord; and he counted it [his belief] to him for righteousness.” Thus Abraham professed faith in God. Afterwards came the command: “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” This command Abraham obeyed to the letter; he did offer his son upon the altar, believing that God was able to fulfill his promise, by raising him from the dead. Thus his faith was shown to be perfect. So the apostle James, in showing how faith and works go together, says: “Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 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: and he was called the Friend of God.” James 2:21-23. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.40}

The question that troubles many people is, How can it be true that “a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” (Romans 3:28), and also that “by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” James 2:24. This question is answered in the case of Abraham, as cited above. In the first instance he was justified by simple faith, without works. Works could not have entered into that justification. Afterwards when he offered Isaac, he was justified by works, but, let it never be forgotten, that work was the outcome of his faith; it was the evidence of perfected faith. If it had not been for Abraham’s faith, he never would have performed that work. “Faith wrought with his works.” That is, faith made use of works, to show that it was not dead, but was in active existence. So faith is necessarily first. There cannot be works that will justify, without underlying faith. A man is justified by works, and not by faith only, simply because “faith without works is dead;” and so if he has “faith only,” unaccompanied by works, it is not real faith at all. Yet whatever good works are manifested in a man’s life, must be the result of faith; and thus it is true that “the just shall live by faith.” W. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 186.41}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 12.**

E. J. Waggoner

The dedication of the Oakland Seventh-day Adventist house of worship will take place Sunday, April 22. This will be at the time of the annual meeting, and a large attendance from abroad is expected. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.1}

The *Christian Union* having been asked for some work that will refute the Baptist theory of baptism, replies thus: “There used to be such works, but the world has moved, and they are antiquated. If the primitive mode of the sacrament is of unchangeable authority, the Baptist have the best of the argument.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.2}

It is said that a certain old colored Minister always introduces his sermons with the following: “Brethren, my sermon is *basted* on the following text.” That is more than many of his white, educated brethren would truthfully say, for many of their sermons are not even “basted” to the text. Too often there is not the slightest connection between the text and the sermon. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.3}

A word of explanation to those who are studying the Sabbath-school lessons. Last week we printed lesson twelve, and this week we print lesson fourteen. We do this because lesson thirteen is a review, and could be omitted as well as not, and we wish to put the lessons one week ahead, so that those in the most remote places may have the benefit of the notes in their preparation for Sabbath-school. We do this in response to requests that have been sent in by several subscribers. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.4}

C.C.-The reckoning of the 1260 years, to have ended in 1798, is correct, because the prophecy says that three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots to give place to the Papacy. These three kingdoms which fell before the rise of the Papacy, were the Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths. The Heruli were uprooted in 493; the Vandals in 534, and the Ostrogothic Kingdom was destroyed in 538. Now as the Papacy was to rise upon the fall of the three, and as the last of the three fell in 538, therefore the establishment of the Papacy must date, and the 1260 years begin, in A.D. 538. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.5}

A brother asked if it is safe to apply Job 20:12, 13 to tobacco-using. We say emphatically, No, it is not safe to apply it to tobacco-using, because such an application would be a false one. There are arguments enough against tobacco-using, without straining a point. The Bible has suffered fully as much from forced interpretations, a narrowing of the meaning, and attempts to make a sensation with a text, as it has from the assaults of its avowed enemies. If all who profess reverence for the Bible were consistent in their interpretation of it, and humble followers of its plain teaching, Christianity might laugh to scorn all the efforts of infidels. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.6}

During the week passed the papers have given extensive details of the snow-storm which prevailed in the Eastern States, beginning Sunday, March 11, and continuing for nearly three weeks. In the hands of the storm the great centers of business and traffic were utterly powerless. Railway and telegraph lines became inactive. Boston communicated with New York *via* Liverpool by cable, and Washington with New York *via* Chicago over two solitary wires remaining. Business men perished in New York City on their way to or from their offices. The price of provisions ran very high, and a temporary famine was threatened. Over 500 corpses in New York awaited burial. The loss of life and property by land and sea is very great. Dakota is foremost with words and gifts of comfort for the suffering. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.7}

The Rev. Alexander Jackson has an article in the *Independent*, on “The Relation of the Classes to the Church.” A census has just been taken of the Protestant Churches of Pittsburgh and Allegheny, Penn., and from that he takes his figures. Part of his conclusions are found in the following paragraph, which needs no comment:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.8}

“There are more males than females in Pittsburgh; but there are only 35.15 per cent. of Protestant church-members males, while 72.85 are females. Of the 47,838 members of evangelical churches in the two cities, 17,772 are males and 30,066 females. This unsatisfactory fact is more than offset by another: One Allegheny minister preaches to a congregation in which males are in the majority; he is chaplain of the penitentiary! More than nine-tenths of the prisoners in Pennsylvania are males. It is safe to say that if there were more men in our Protestant churches there would be fewer in our penitentiaries.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.9}

While vast sums of money are being expended in punishing crime, would it not be well to expend some of this solicitude and energy in removing the most active sources which produce crime and criminals? Some time since a den of young robbers was accidentally discovered under a sidewalk in Chicago. They were boys, fully organized and bound by terrible oath’s written in blood. They had excavated the cave by night work, and it was adorned with arms, pictures from the *Police Gazette*, and furnished with cheap novels, which revel in blood and glorify crime. In San Francisco lately a policemen halted a footpad, who answered the challenge with a shot which dangerously wounded the officer. The fire was returned with fatal effect. Upon investigation, the criminal proved to be a man of noble physique, a boarder in a respectable place, who spent his entire days reading such books as have been mentioned. There was no possible necessity for such a course only as his mind, being drawn in that direction so strongly, impelled his hands to do the work of robber and murderer. No words can adequately express the terrible Satanic nature of such reading. And it is everywhere. The minds of the young are becoming imbued with such views of life as render crime and impurity matters of heroic virtue. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.10}

Our cities are filling up and our police courts are crowded with young of both sexes, who have left the quiet homes of country or village life for the exciting world of the city, lured away from innocency by these pictures painted by demons, to deeds of crime. The publication of this vile flood might be stopped, and would be were not the moral sense of this generation steeped in these very things. But while the name of Anthony Comstock and the few of his associates are held as a by-word and a hissing, and every impediment is thrown in their way by municipal authorities, public sentiment, and newspapers, and the vilest men are exalted, we but hasten to the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.11}

“Helps to Bible Study” or “Bible-Readings in Present Truth,” in the German language, a pamphlet of 64 pages, has been issued by the *Review and Herald* Press. It contains twenty-five readings on important topics connected with our work, which are prefaced with several pages of hints and instruction for Bible-workers. The book will be of great benefit to those were interested in the work among people speaking the German language. Price, 50 cents. Orders will be filled from the office of Pacific Press. {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.12}

**“The Old Testament” The Signs of the Times, 14, 12.**

E. J. Waggoner

Joseph Cook, in a recent Monday lecture in Boston, took as his subject, “Christ’s Testimony to the Inspiration of the Old Testament.” A correspondent of the *Congregationalist* says of it:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.13}

“The lecturer opened with a remark of Columbus on first seeing the Orinoco River. ‘This stream,’ said he, ‘cannot come from an island; it is too large; it must proceed from a continent.’ In like manner the sermon on the mount is a stream from the Old Testament, and the preaching of John a ripple from the stream of Jewish economy. So much has been said lately about the higher criticism, that some timid people are beginning to inquire if the Old Testament has not been overrated, and questioned if it really contains any messianic prophecies. But whatever the higher criticism may say, the fundamental principles of the kingdom of God, and the root idea of monotheism, underlie the Old Testament.The two great commandments, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself,’ are the law of Jehovah.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.14}

**“A Discussion on Immortality” The Signs of the Times, 14, 12.**

E. J. Waggoner

The following taken from the *Christian Union* is to show that the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul, which the professed Christian class has received from its heathen authors, is not satisfactory to all minds in the church. We gladly see this among other signs of an awakening to a ... the truth in this important matter:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.15}

“Considerable excitement has been caused in Neuchatel by the delivery there of a series of lectures ‘Conditional Immortality,’ by Dr. Petavel-Olliff, professor of theology, of Geneva. The course, which consisted of twelve lectures, was largely attended by the audience being composed of the professors and students of the two theological faculties, the ministers of the town, the heads of the numerous educational institutions, as well as by a large number of the general public. The learned doctor traversed the whole ground in an exhaustive manner, discoursing the subject in its relation to biblical exegesis, science, to philosophy, to the doctrines and ... of the primitive church, and to the patristic testimony. He argued that the traditional dogma rests on the platonic notion of the necessary immortality of the soul, which was entirely unscriptural, and unknown to the early Christians, and had been imported into the church by the Alexandrian school of Christian Fathers. He strongly urged that the placing the doctrine of a future life on a basis at once scientific and scriptural, there would be found the means of reconquering the ground lost to Christianity in France, and on the continent generally.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.16}

The newest Spiritualist idea is that of “re-incarnation.” That is, it is new in the sense that only recently has it been recognized by any great number of Spiritualists. The theory is based upon that of the pre-existence of souls. It is claimed that men now in the flesh have existed in the flesh in time past, and, having passed into the spirit-land for all time, have once more materialized, and that after their death they may again be born into the world. It is the old Platonic theory revived. According to that theory, the spirit was made to drink of the fleshy form, so that it forgot all that it had previously known. A recent writer in the *Golden Gate* thus explains how the re-incarnated spirit forgets its previous existence:- {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.17}

“It is a well-known fact that spiritual ... fer by contact with earthly elements. Often a materialized spirit will forget its very name, when appearing within the circle of sitters. As regards an ... having no recollection of events, I know of an intelligent child of seven years, who had been separated from its mother for ten years. At the ... that time the two were brought in contact, but the child had totally forgotten her parent and the former home life.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.18}

We don’t blame the child for “forgetting” its mother under such circumstances. In spite of the *Golden Gate’s* claim to the contrary, it will have the stand as the champion “funny paper.” {SITI March 23, 1888, p. 192.19}

**“The Spirit of Antichrist. No. 15” The Signs of the Times, 14, 13.**

E. J. Waggoner

It has before been shown that Catholicism is virtually one with Spiritualism, because it teaches that the living may and do have intercourse with the dead. This alone is sufficient to brand it as an antichristian system. But there are so many professed Protestants nowadays who regard Catholicism as an important branch of the Christian church, that it is necessary to present some very conclusive evidence to the contrary. The Scripture, speaking of the Papacy under the form of a beast, says that “all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Revelation 13:8. It also says of the unclean spirits that represent Spiritualism, that “they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of *the whole world*, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” Revelation 16:14. This shows that those who either directly or indirectly acknowledge the authority of the Papacy, will also be Spiritualists. When we remember that Spiritualism is paganism in its original form, and that Catholicism is paganism with some modifications, and that both depend mainly upon the heathen idea of the natural immortality of the man, we can see how Spiritualists might come to acknowledge the Papacy. As for Catholics, they are Spiritualists already. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.1}

Since this is so, it is as necessary to warn people against Catholicism as against Spiritualism. We therefore shall quote quite a number of additional statements from “The Glories of Mary,” to show the antichristian character and essential wickedness of the Roman Catholic system. Many of these statements are little else than repetitions of the same thing; but we wish the reader to know that we are not misrepresenting the Catholic Church by quoting a few isolated passages. Whoever will take the trouble to procure the book, will find stuff of the same kind on almost every page, until he will become nauseated. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.2}

The inspired apostle tells us that Christ, the mediator of the new covenant, died “for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament.” Hebrews 9:15. But this Catholic “saint” contradicts this statement thus:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.3}

“St. Bernardine of Sienna says that God did not destroy man after his fall, because of the peculiar love he bore his future child, Mary. And the saint adds, that he doubts not all the mercy and pardon which sinners received under the old law, was granted them solely for the sake of this blessed Virgin.”-*Glories of Mary, page 81.* {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.4}

This takes from Christ all the honor of the salvation of people for the first four thousand years of this earth’s history. Now when we find that sinners in this age are directed to look to Mary first, and afterwards, if at all, to Jesus, it is evident that Catholicism is emphatically antichrist. On pages 83, 84 we read:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.5}

“Justly, then, does St. Lawrence Justinian call her the hope of evil-doers, since she alone can obtain their pardon from God. St. Bernard rightly calls her the ladder of sinners, since she, this compassionate queen, offers her hand to poor, fallen mortals, leads them from the precipice of sin, and helps them to ascend to God. St. Augustine rightly calls her the only hope of us sinners, since by her means alone we hope for the remission of all our sins. And St. John Chrysostom repeats the same thing, namely, that sinners receive pardon only through the intercession of Mary.” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.6}

The last quotation speaks of Mary as the “ladder of sinners,” and therefore the following little story comes in very aptly right here:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.7}

“In the Franciscan chronicles it is related of Brother Leo, that he once saw a red ladder, upon which Jesus Christ was standing, and a white one, upon which stood his holy mother. He saw persons attempting to ascend the red ladder; they ascended a few steps and then fell; they ascended again, and again fell. Then they were exhorted to ascend the white ladder, and on that he saw them succeed, for the blessed Virgin offered them her hand, and they arrived in that manner safe in Paradise.”-*Page 279*. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.8}

Now add to this, the following:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.9}

“God has ordained that all graces should be dispensed by the prayers of Mary; where these are wanting, there is no hope of mercy, as our Lord signified to St. Bridget, saying to her: ‘Unless Mary interposes by her prayers, there is no hope of mercy.’”-*Page 293.* {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.10}

These quotations show, not that Mary divides with Christ the honor of man’s salvation, but that she is the only saviour. The Catholic Church actually teaches those who look to it for instruction, that they cannot be saved by the merits of Christ, and that if they do not seek the aid of the Virgin Mary, they must certainly be lost. And yet there are Protestants who think that it is an important part of the Christian church. On page 330 there is a prayer to be said to the Virgin Mary, from which we take the following extract:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.11}

“It is enough that thou wilt save us, for then we cannot but be saved. Who can restrain the bowels of thy compassion? If thou hast not compassion on us, thou who art the mother of mercy, what will become of us when thy Son shall come to judge us.” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.12}

Surely nothing more is needed to convince any person not wholly blinded that the Catholic Church robs Christ of honor as the divine Mediator for sinners, and gives it to a creature, who, though she was a good woman, could obtain salvation in no other way than through the merits of Christ, and who has been dead for not less than eighteen hundred years. Again we ask the reader to remember that Mariolatry could not have any existence it if were not for the pagan notion that death does not end a man’s existence. The thoughtful person will readily connect Mariolatry with the ancient heathen custom of deifying the dead. Ancient heathenism, modern Spiritualism, and Roman Catholicism, all spring from the same root, and are very closely related. W. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.13}

**“The First Dominion” The Signs of the Times, 14, 13.**

E. J. Waggoner

That this earth belongs to the Lord, no one will for a moment call in question. It is his, because he is the Creator. Says the Psalmist: “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.” Psalm 24:1, 2. When the prophet Daniel interpreted to King Nebuchadnezzar the dream which foretold his abasement, he told the king that he should be driven out from his kingdom, “till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.” Daniel 4:25. And in Psalm 115:16; we read: “The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord’s; but the earth hath he given to the children of men.” This means simply that the Heaven is God’s dwelling-place (Psalm 11:4), and that over it he has sole control, but that he has made man the tenant of the earth. When and how the dominion of the earth was given to man, are told in the following verses:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.14}

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” Genesis 1:26-28. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.15}

A dominion is a kingdom; to have dominion is to have kingly authority. Therefore since the earth was given to man for a dominion, the earth was designed for man’s kingdom. To this intent David speaks in the eighth psalm, where he says of man: “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.” Psalm 8:5-8. The apostle quotes this (Hebrews 2:7, 8), and makes the additional statement that “now we see not yet all things put under him.” This being the case, it must be because man has lost the dominion, for it was certainly given to him. In the words of the apostle, therefore, we have at once a statement of the loss of the dominion first given to man, and a promise of its restoration. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.16}

The details of the loss of the dominion which at the first was given to man, are given in the third chapter of Genesis. In the first part of the chapter we learn that the serpent beguiled Eve, and persuaded her to eat of the forbidden fruit, and that she in turn induced Adam to eat. Then God said to Adam, “Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Genesis 3:17-19. And afterwards when Cain had killed his brother, the Lord said: “When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength.” Genesis 4:12. From this we learn that it is because of man’s disobedience that we do not now see all things put under him. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.17}

But when man lost the dominion of the earth, who gained it? Evidently the one to whom he yielded obedience. Peter says that, “of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” 2 Peter 2:19. And Jesus said: “When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.” Luke 11:21, 22. Our first parents were overcome by the serpent, “which is the devil, and Satan” (Revelation 20:2), and therefore it was to Satan that they yielded up the dominion which had been committed to them. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.18}

That Satan is now the ruler of this earth, instead of man, is shown by the Scriptures. In 2 Corinthians 4:4, Satan is spoken of as “the god of this world.” Christ said that the wicked are children of Satan (John 8:44); and in Ephesians 2:2, “the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience,” is called “the prince of the power of the air.” Satan is “the accuser of the brethren,” the one whom the followers of Christ are to “resist steadfast in the faith” (1 Peter 5:8, 9), and Paul says that “we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world.” Ephesians 6:12. And none can doubt that it was to Satan that Christ referred, when he said, “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.” John 14:30. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.19}

In the account of the Lord’s temptation in the wilderness, we have the most positive evidence that Satan holds the dominion that was given to Adam. The last and greatest temptation is thus described: “Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto Him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” Matthew 4:8, 9. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.20}

Some may think that Satan lied when he made this promise to Christ, and that he knew that he did not have the power to fulfill the promise, even if he could have induced the Lord to comply with the conditions. There is no doubt but that Satan lied, and that he had no intention of yielding up anything that he had; but if he did not possess the kingdom of the earth, Christ certainly knew it, and in that case the offer of them to him would not have been any temptation. When Satan said to Jesus: “If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread,” there was a real temptation, because Jesus was extremely hungry. When Satan placed Jesus on a pinnacle of the temple, and said, “If thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down,” there was a temptation to show his divine power. And so when Satan showed to Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, offering to give them to him in return for his homage, there was a temptation, because Satan was offering just what Christ came into the world to redeem. Jesus did not tell Satan that he had no right to offer to him the kingdoms of this world, but simply refused to accept them upon the conditions imposed, thus tacitly admitting that Satan was “the prince of this world.” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 198.21}

In Ezekiel 28:12-17, we have an unmistakable reference to Satan. No other being could merit the following description: “Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold.... Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee .... Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.” That is a description of Satan before his fall. But let the reader take particular notice that the being thus described is called “the King of Tyrus.” Verse 12. The wisdom and power of the man who sat upon the throne of Tyre are described in verses 2-11 of this same chapter (Ezekiel 28), and he is called the “*Prince* of Tyrus.” In this we have further inspired testimony to the fact that Satan is “god of this world,” working in the children of disobedience. Wicked rulers like the king of Tyre, are only nominally king; they are second in power to Satan, who rules through them, and is thus real king. But while Satan has usurped the dominion which God gave to Adam, he does not have unlimited control of this earth. God did not give unlimited and supreme authority over the earth even to man in his uprightness; and so when Satan overcame man, it was not possible for him to get control of the earth to an unlimited degree. This fact Satan acknowledged, when he said to the Lord concerning Job: “Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?” Job 1:10. It still remains true, that “the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 199.1}

It was stated in connection with the reference to the temptation of Jesus, that Satan offered him that which he came into the world to redeem,-the dominion of the earth, which Adam lost. This will presently be made to appear. When Adam lost the dominion, he also lost his right to live; he sold himself to Satan, at the same time that he forfeited the earth to him. So it is that Satan is “god of this world,” and has also “the power of death.” Hebrews 2:14. Now Christ came to redeem what Adam lost, and so when the apostle quotes the words of the Psalmist, when he says that God set man over the works of his hands, but that “now we see not yet all things put under Him,” he adds: “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Hebrews 2:9, 14, 15. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 199.2}

In order that Christ might redeem man from the curse of death which came upon him when he yielded to Satan, he had to suffer the same curse. Says Paul: “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” Galatians 3:13. And so, to redeem the earth, he bore its curse, when the crown of thorns was placed upon his head. Compare Genesis 3:13, 18 and Matthew 27:29. As Christ has, by death, gained the right to destroy the one who has power over death, that is, the devil, he has also won the right to the dominion which Satan usurped. And so the prophet addresses Christ in the following language:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 199.3}

“And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.” Micah 4:8. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 199.4}

In these words we have the promise of the restoration of the first dominion (see Genesis 1:28), and to Adam, who lost it, but to Christ the second Adam, who redeemed it. Those who through faith recover themselves out of the snare of the devil; who learn of Jesus to be meek and lowly in heart, will inherit the earth with Christ, when he shall take possession of it as his kingdom. W. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 199.5}

**“The Commentary” The Signs of the Times, 14, 13.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Lesson 18.—Sabbath, April 14**

1. How old was Isaac when he was married? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.1}

“And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.” Genesis 25:20. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.2}

2. How old was he when his two sons were born? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.3}

“And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau’s hell, and his name was called Jacob; and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.” Verse 26. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.4}

3. What were their names? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.5}

4. What difference was there between them? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.6}

“And the boys grew; and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.” Verse 27. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.7}

5. How did the parents regard them? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.8}

“And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison; but Rebekah loved Jacob.” Verse 28. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.9}

6. What did Jacob have as Esau came in one day from a hunting trip? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.10}

“And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was fain.” Verse 29. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.11}

7. What did Esau say to Jacob? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.12}

“And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint; therefore was his name called Edom.” Verse 30. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.13}

8. What did Jacob reply? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.14}

“And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.” Verse 31. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.15}

9. How did Esau reason concerning the birthright? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.16}

“And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?” Verse 32. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.17}

10. What transaction was thus made by the two brothers? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.18}

“And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way; thus Esau despised his birthright.” Verses 33, 34. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.19}

11. What was the birthright, and what was its importance to anyone? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.20}

12. How did Esau regard his birthright? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.21}

“Thus Esau despised his birthright.” Verse 34 last clause. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.22}

13. How highly did he value it?-*He considered it worth no more than a meal of victuals to satisfy present necessity.* {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.23}

14. What language is used concerning Esau for this proceeding? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 200.24}

“Lest there be any fornication, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.” Hebrews 12:16. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.1}

15. How did he afterward feel concerning the blessings of his birthright? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.2}

“For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.” Verse 17. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.3}

16. Relate, in brief, the circumstances. Genesis 27:1-40. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.4}

17. Was he able to get back the birthright? Hebrews 12:17. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.5}

18. Why not?-*Because he had deliberately sold it, and could not alter the trade.* {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.6}

19. What is the exhortation given to us in this connection? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.7}

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord; looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.” Verses 14-17. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.8}

20. If we are children of Abraham, what is our birthright? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.9}

“For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.” Romans 4:13. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.10}

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” Colossians 1:12. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.11}

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” 1 John 3:1, 2. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.12}

21. Through what are we made heirs of this inheritance? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.13}

“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” Colossians 1:13, 14. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.14}

22. What does the Spirit through Paul say of one who despises his heavenly birthright? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.15}

“He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” Hebrews 10:28, 29. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.16}

23. How may we do this? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.17}

“For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica.” 2 Timothy 4:10. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.18}

24. What can you say of the condition of one who deliberately barters his interest in the blood of Christ, and his hope of eternal life, for a little present enjoyment? {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.19}

“Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance [belongeth] unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Hebrews 10:29-31. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.20}

**NOTES**

The term “birthright” denotes the special privileges belonging to the first-born. Among these were, that he should have a double portion of the inheritance, and that he should succeed to whatever position was held by his father. Among the Jews the first-born was considered as especially devoted to God; and since the Jewish people were the chosen people of God, and the Jewish nation was the church of that time, it may justly be concluded that special spiritual blessings were considered as part of the birthright. When Esau sold his birthright, he deliberately sold all claim to the promises made to Abraham and Isaac, and afterwards Jacob. He had no trace of the faith of Abraham, and he despised the promises of God. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.21}

Esau might have had a share in the promise if he had wanted it. True, Paul says that before the birth of Jacob and Esau, it was said unto Rebekah, “The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated” (Romans 9:12, 13), but this was simply because God who “calleth those things which be not as though they were,” could foresee just what kind of character Esau would develop. God is no respecter of persons, and he does not bestow his favors arbitrarily. Esau was rejected, not simply because he deliberately sold his right to the promised inheritance, but because of the utter lack of faith, which led him to so lightly esteem the promises of God. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.22}

The objector will no doubt say that Jacob appears in a worse light than Esau does, and that if God is a respecter of character, and not of persons, Jacob was less entitled to regard than Esau was. But that is a very superficial view of the case. So far as character is concerned, there is no man that has by nature anything that is worthy of the approbation of God. Even the zealous Paul, whose great aim was to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward man,” and who could say before the Jewish council, “I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day,” said that he had suffered the loss of all things that he might win Christ, “and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” Philippians 3:8, 9. God respects an upright character, but since there can be no perfect character except “through the faith of Jesus Christ,” it is evident that his promises and favor must be extended to the one whose faith gives promise of a growth toward perfection. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.23}

So far as the record shows, at the time of which our lesson treats, Esau had naturally the advantage of Jacob; but Esau lacked faith, and Jacob possessed it, and from that time we see a growth for the worse in Esau, and for the better in Jacob. God never showed any approval of Jacob’s course in securing the blessing; on the contrary Jacob had to suffer grievously on account of his duplicity; but through the faith that Jacob had, although it was crude and uninstructed, God could work for his complete moral reformation. Peter shows the work of true faith, when he says to the people of God that they may suffer manifold temptations, “that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:7. And in that day this will be found to be the case with Jacob. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.24}

The case of Rahab may be taken as an illustration. James says that Rahab the harlot was justified by works when she had received the messengers and sent them out another way (James 2:25), and Paul says that “by faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.” Hebrews 11:31. Yet in concealing the spies, for which she received the promise that she should not perish, she deliberately lied. See Joshua 2. She was not saved because of her falsehood, but because of her faith that the God of the Israelites was the true God. She acted up to the best light that she had. Among the heathen it was esteemed a virtuous thing to lie, and she knew no better. But her faith brought her into relation with God’s people where she could learn the way of truth. Thus we see that “the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith,” for “the just shall live by faith.” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.25}

Esau is not the only one who has sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. An old pipe, a plug of tobacco, a jug of whisky, the pleasure party, the card table, and other “good things” of this life have been sufficient to cause many to turn their backs on their heavenly inheritance. Esau said, “Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me?” Thousands of others when brought face to face with some duty, the performance of which would interfere with their worldly interests, have virtually said the same thing. They have said, “I know that this is the truth of God, but if I should obey it I couldn’t make a living,” thus intimating that they did not believe the promises of God would be of any profit to one who should die for them. It is more than probable that many who have accepted the truth, are putting self and selfish pleasures above the service of God, and are thus bartering their birthright. Let such beware lest they complete the sale and then find it too late to repent. And “let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” W. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 201.26}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 13.**

E. J. Waggoner

One of the latest dispatches from Berlin states that there are hopes that the Emperor Frederick may recover. The next one may be that his death is expected at any moment, and the one following that he is on the high road to health. The dispatches concerning his health, and those concerning the war situation in Europe, are very similar. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.1}

It is stated in *Public Opinion* that “an early number of the *North American Review* will contain an article by Mr. Gladstone on the religious opinions of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll. “That is the first intimation we ever had that Ingersoll had any religious opinions. If he has any, he never gives utterance to any of them, for everything that he says is decided irreligiously. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.2}

A few days since an ex-pork-packer testified before the House Agricultural Committee at Washington, that to his personal knowledge cholera-infected hogs are cut up and put upon the market as good meat. Carcasses of animals that have died from cholera and other causes, he says, are used in the manufacture of “pure steam lard” for family use. The custom of selling diseased meat he claims is quite common, and says that packers cannot deny it. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.3}

A secular contemporary contains the following item:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.4}

The following choice bit of pulpit sensationalism is recently perpetuated by the pastor of a wealthy church in an Eastern city:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.5}

The pastor will preach on the following text and topics on Sunday evenings:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.6}

February 6........ “Ho” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.7}

February 13....... “As” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.8}

February 20....... “So” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.9}

February 27....... “But” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.10}

March 6........... “Only” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.11}

March 13.......... “Yes” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.12}

March 20.......... “No” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.13}

March 27.......... “By and by” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.14}

Come and bring your friends. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.15}

P.S. The pastor will sing a sacred solo each Sabbath evening. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.16}

We do not know just how many different words there are in the Bible, but there are several thousand, so that this fashionable pastor will not be in danger of running out of sermon topics as long as he lives. The paper from which we quote gives evidence of good taste by the remark: “Of such is [not] the kingdom Heaven.” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.17}

The following indictment of the saloon is by Dr. Lyman Abbott:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.18}

“As a deceiver and a liar it swindles the poor and rich; it creates the base and horrible appetite on which it lives; it is a breeder of crime and poverty beyond anything else; it corrupts juries and courts of justice; it fills an almshouses and idiot and insane asylums; it makes orphans of children, and widows of wives, breaks up homes innumerable, robs men of their mental and spiritual worth; slavery never so robbed the working man of his wages; Mormonism never so debauched womanhood, and struck so fatal blows at the home; it is a corrupter of the nation at the very source of its power.” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.19}

This is only a part of the charge which he brings against it, yet he advocates high license on the ground that “the saloon should be made to pay fully for the wrong it does.” Thereupon the *Voice* challenges the doctor as follows:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.20}

“Now, will Dr. Abbott take pencil and paper and figure out for us just how high the license should be for the saloons ‘to pay fully’ in dollars and cents for these wrongs which it inflicts on society? Come, doctor, try your hand at it.” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.21}

In civilized countries it is not considered that money is an adequate compensation for a murder. “Whoso man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.” The only way that the liquor traffic can do anything to atone for the wrong that it has done is to give up its life that the wrong may stop. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.22}

Someone sends the following from the *Pacific:*- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.23}

“A Methodist clergyman says he asked a seventh-day minister the following question: ‘Suppose you were a legislator; the question comes before you that without reference to any denomination, or even Christianity, you were convinced that one day in seven, for the good of the country, for the best physical, social, and moral development of those for whom you were elected to make the laws, the wheels of business, labor, and commerce should cease, what day would you select?’ We suppose that the Saturday man was not able to look at the question in that way.” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.24}

Very likely not, unless he was cross-eyed, for the question is too crooked to be taken in at a glance by a man with ordinary vision. But if we get the proper meaning of the mass of verbiage, we should answer it thus: If we were a legislator, and believed that on one day in seven all business ought to be stopped by law, we should no doubt endeavor to have it cease on the day on which we were convinced it ought to cease. If we were a National Reformer, we should not be a Seventh-day Adventist. Ask us something hard. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.25}

An Eastern religious paper instances the fact that “there are 60,000,000 people in the United States, one-half of whom never go to church;” and then adds: “Those 30,000,000 souls comprise the bulk of the restless, uneasy class whose manner of life is hostile to our civilization.” It then significantly asks: “What are we going to do about it?” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.26}

This question is by no means an easy one to answer. It is one thing to tell what *ought* to be done, and it is quite another thing to tell what *will* be done. Every minister *ought* to preach so plainly and earnestly the duty of all men to “fear God and keep his commandments” that evil-doers would, by “the terrors of the Lord,” be restrained from much of their wickedness. And professed Christians ought to live such humble and devout lives that all men would be constrained to acknowledge that there is a reality in the Christian religion. But it is not likely that this will be done, for the reason given in 2 Timothy 3:1-5. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.27}

What a backslidden church lacks in spiritual power, she will strive to gain in political and civil power. Already large and influential associations are clamoring for constitutional amendments, and for State and national legislation, which can be appealed to coerce all whose “manner of life is hostile” not only “to our civilization,” but to certain popular theological tenets. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.28}

The *Interior*, in an article entitled, “Does It Pay?” contrasts the present expensive churches and the fancy prices paid to the pastors of fashionable churches, with the churches and salaries in early days, and says:- {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.29}

“Many, contrasting the present with the past say that the churches are becoming proud and extravagant, and that they cost more than they are worth. It is easy for one who takes a superficial view of the facts to find fault. But a careful study of them will show that the Christian church has only followed in its development the leadings of Providence, and kept, as was its duty, abreast of the age. To-day, as in those early days, it pays liberally for all that is invested in it. It is a financial success.... Leaving out of our estimate for the time the higher interests for which churches are organized, considering them only as institutions for promoting the culture, the elevation, and the enjoyment of the people who sustain them, we see that they can safely challenge comparison with the other institutions of the age. As merely human organizations they are models of efficiency and economy. He who helps to sustain a church is not giving to a charity, but is making a first-class investment for himself and his family. The church will pay back to him in its elevating influences upon himself, his home, and his neighborhood, double compound interest for all that he puts into it. This view of the matter is commended to the attention of business men, to public-spirited patriots, and philanthropists. The church does not come to them as a beggar, but as offering them the best of all investments for the life that now is.” {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.30}

While we fully believe that “godliness is profitable for all things; having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,” and while there is no doubt that the church, when it does its duty, does exert a refining, elevating influence, we deprecate its being put forward as a paying institution. It is not true. The bulk of the world’s wealth is not in the church, but is held by non-professors. The result of attempting to make the church a paying institution will be to bring the customs of the world into the church. This tendency is already manifested to a large degree. When business men listen to such proposals as the *Interior* makes to them, one of two things will happen: Either they will become disgusted when they find the church does not pay them financially, and will give it up, or else they will make it pay, by applying the business methods which give them success in the world. We protest that their natural desire to succeed in whatever they undertake will lead them to the latter course. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.31}

How differently the Saviour represented his church. To the rich ruler he said: “If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come and follow me.” Matthew 19:21. And he showed that his church would not be a steppingstone to worldly wealth and honor, by saying: “If any [man] will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” Luke 9:23. “Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.” Mark 8:38. {SITI March 30, 1888, p. 208.32}