**“The Spirit of Antichrist. No. 16” The Signs of the Times, 14, 14.**

E. J. Waggoner

Thus far we have quoted only those passages which directly state that the Virgin Mary is entitled to more honor than Christ; that to her men must look for salvation, rather than to Christ; and that if they depend upon Christ, and not upon the Virgin Mary, they will surely be lost. We shall now give a few sample quotations showing that this Mariolatry directly fosters and encourages the most outrageous wickedness. On pages 36 and 37 of “The Glories of Mary,” we find the following:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.1}

“We read in the life of Sister Catherine, an Augustinian nun, that in the place where that servant of God lived, there lived also a woman named Mary, who, in her youth was a sinner, and obstinately persevered in her evil course even to extreme old age. For this, she was banished by her fellow-citizens, forced to live in a cave beyond the limits of the place, and died in a state of loathsome corruption, abandoned by all, and without the sacraments, and on this account was buried in a field like a beast. Now Sister Catherine, who was accustomed to recommend very affectionately to God the souls of those who had departed this life, after learning the miserable death of this poor old woman, did not think of praying for her, as she and everyone else believed her already among the damned. Four years having passed, a soul from purgatory appeared to her, and said: ‘Sister Catherine, how unhappy is my fate! You commend to God the souls of all those who die, and for my soul alone you have no pity.’ ‘And who are you,’ said the servant of God. ‘I am,’ answered she, ‘that poor Mary, who died in the cave.’ ‘How! are you saved,’ she said, ‘by the mercy of the Virgin Mary.’ ‘And how?’ ‘When I saw death drawing near, finding myself laden with sins, and abandoned by all, I turned to the mother of God, and said to her, “Lady, thou art the refuge of the abandoned, behold me at this hour deserted by all; thou art my only hope, thou alone canst help me; have pity on me.” The holy Virgin obtained for me the grace of making an act of contrition. I died and am saved, and my queen has also obtained for me the grace that my pain should be abridged, and that I should, by suffering intensely for a short time, pass through that purification which otherwise would have lasted many years. A few masses only are needed to obtain my release from purgatory. I pray thee cause them to be offered for me, and I promise to pray God and Mary for thee.’ Sister Catherine immediately caused those masses to be said for her, and that soul, after a few days, appeared to her again, more brilliant than the sun, and said to her, ‘I thank thee, Sister Catherine; behold I am now going to Paradise to sing the mercy of God, and pray for you.’” {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.2}

This is very much in the same line as the preceding quotations. It teaches that people may live profligate lives up to the very moment of death, and then be saved by a single “act of contrition.” Thus it tends to cause men to put off repentance, and to rob God of all the service that is his due. But that is not the worst. It is true that Christ is able “to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him,” and that it is *possible* that even in the last hour of life the sinner may heartily repent and find acceptance with God; for one such case is recorded in the New Testament. But the Catholic Church, in the quotation just made, teaches that men may come unrepentant to the last moment of life, and even then be saved without Christ. Christ is utterly ignored even in that extremity. The essential wickedness of such a scheme of religion ought to be apparent to everyone who has any knowledge of divine things. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.3}

Again, on page 687 we read:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.4}

“In the mountains of Trent lived a notorious robber, who when he was admonished by a religious to change his course of life, answered that for him there was no remedy. ‘Do not say,’ said the religious; ‘do what I tell you; fast on Saturday in honor of Mary, and on that day do no harm to anyone, and she will obtain for you the grace of not dying under the displeasure of God.’ The obedient robber followed this advice, and made a vow to continue to do so. That he might not break his oath, he from that time went unarmed on Saturdays. It happened that on a Saturday he was found by the officers of justice, and that he might not break his oath, he allowed himself to be taken without resistance. The judge, when he saw that he was a gray-haired old men, wished to pardon him; but through the grace of compunction which he had received from Mary, he said that he wished to die in punishment of his sins. He also made a public confession of all the sins of his life in that same judgment-hall, weeping so bitterly that all present wept with him. He was beheaded, and buried with little ceremony, in a grave dug near by. But afterwards the mother of God appeared, with four holy virgins, who took the dead body from that place, wrapped it in a rich cloth embroidered with gold, and bore it themselves to the gate of the city.There the blessed Virgin said to the guards: ‘Tell the bishop from me to give an honorable burial, in such a church, to this dead person, for he was my faithful servant.’ And this was done.” {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.5}

By such stories as this, Catholicism identifies itself with paganism, which taught its devotees to depend on charms and incantations, and also with Spiritualism, the great feature of which is that man is his own saviour. All three systems are alike in that they exalt man to the level of God. This, as has before been shown, necessarily follows wherever the doctrine of man’s natural immortality is held, because that very doctrine claims for man the attribute of Deity. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.6}

Similar to the above quotation, is the following, found on page 689:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.7}

“In the country of Normandy, a certain robber was beheaded, and his head was thrown into a trench, but afterwards it was heard, crying: ‘Mary, give me confession.’ A certain priest went to him and heard his confession; and questioning him as to his practices of devotion, the robber answered that he had no other than fasting one day of the week in honor of the holy Virgin, and that for this our Lady had obtained the grace to be delivered from hell by that confession.” {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.8}

Surely that was an easy way of getting saved, considering the amount that a person is allowed to eat during a Catholic “fast.” But the worst of all is the following, found on pages 301, and 302, with which we will end these extracts:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.9}

“Father Charles Bovins relates that in Domans, in France, lived a married man who had held a criminal connection with another woman. Now the wife being unable to endure this, continually besought God to punish the guilty parties, and one day in particular, went to an altar of the blessed Virgin, which was in a certain church, to implore vengeance upon the woman who had alienated her husband from her, and this very woman went also every day to the same altar to repeat a Hail Mary. One night the divine mother appeared in a dream to the wife, who, on seeing her, began her accustomed petition: ‘Justice, mother of God, justice.’ But the blessed lady answered: ‘Justice! do you seek justice from me? Go and find others to execute justice for you. It belongs not to me to do it for you. Be it known to you,’ she added, ‘that this very sinner offers every day a devotion in my honor, and that I cannot allow any sinner who does this to suffer and be punished for his sins.” {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.10}

It is impossible to conceive of anything that could be written under the pretense of being religious, that would tend more directly to lead people to the commission of crime, than this does. In this instance which, like all the rest, is of course fictitious, we have the case of a woman living in open sin, yet the Virgin Mary, who is set forth as the only hope of sinners, severely rebukes the one who has been so grossly wronged, saying that the guilty woman shall not be punished, because she, every day, repeats a form of prayer. Thus the Catholic Church teaches that no matter how wicked a person may be, he is safe if he only remembers, in the midst of his debauchery, to “say a prayer” to the Virgin Mary. Is it not rightly named the “MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH”? Surely Paul could not have given a more accurate description of it than by calling it “that wicked.” {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.11}

The apostle John says that antichrist is he that denieth that Jesus is come in the flesh. It has been shown that Spiritualism is antichrist, because it openly and emphatically denies the divine mission and character of Christ. Catholicism is no less antichrist, because, although it makes much of the *name* and the *image* of Christ, it sets another above him in the plan of salvation. And both of these systems of error arise from the pagan notion that the soul of man is a part of God, and therefore cannot by any possibility die, which idea was first promulgated by Satan, the arch-enemy of Christ. Therefore we say, as before, that the spirit of antichrist is the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.12}

The only difference between paganism and Christianity is Christ. Take Christ out of Christianity, and all of its professors would soon sink into paganism. There is no power in man to elevate himself, this can be done only by some power outside of himself, and that power is the Saviour. But the salvation which Christ brings is not simply a present uplifting, but “an everlasting salvation.” He came to give eternal life to as many as should believe on him. The sum of all the blessings which Christ has to bestow is comprised in the gift of eternal life. Now when people, no matter what their profession, teach that men are not dependent on Christ for life, they virtually deny him entirely. And when Christ is set aside, immorality must come in. There cannot by any possibility be any righteousness in this world except “the righteousness which is by the faith of Jesus Christ.” And since the doctrine of man’s natural immortality takes away the incentive to believe in Christ, the Life-giver, we once more emphatically repeat that that doctrine is the very spirit of antichrist. W. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 214.13}

**“The Call of Abraham” The Signs of the Times, 14, 14.**

E. J. Waggoner

Having learned that this earth was designed to be Adam’s kingdom, and that he forfeited it, and that Christ has bought the title to it, and will one day call his own to share it with him, we shall now trace the chain of evidence from paradise lost to paradise restored. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.1}

When God pronounced the curse upon our first parents, and upon the earth, he also made known the way of escape from that curse. Christ, the deliverer, was immediately promised. To Satan, the Lord said: “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” Genesis 3:15. These words contain the promise of the Messiah, who, although he should be allowed to be bruised by Satan, should thereby gain the right to destroy Satan and all his works. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.2}

Time passed, and Satan seemed to get a still firmer hold upon the earth, for “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” “And God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.” Genesis 6:5, 12. In all the earth there was but one family who acknowledged and served God; all the rest of mankind were totally given up to the service of the devil. “And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” Genesis 6:13. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.3}

So the earth, with all its inhabitants, was destroyed by the flood. Noah and his family alone were saved; and when they came out of the ark, God said to them, as he had said to Adam and Eve, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” Genesis 9:1. He did not, as to our first parents, give them dominion over all the earth, for it was impossible; but in order that men might not be exterminated by the beasts, that had become savage by passing under the dominion of Satan, he said: “And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.” Genesis 9:2. Thus did God interpose to limit Satan’s power, giving men a chance for life, that they might prepare for the complete possession of the earth when it should be restored. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.4}

But as men began again to multiply upon the earth, they again forsook the Lord, and gave themselves fully over to the service of Satan. Soon after the flood, we find them so filled with rebellious pride that they began to build a city and a tower, thinking that thereby they could protect themselves against any judgments that God might bring upon them. Genesis 2:1-9. This impious attempt was brought to nothing, and the people were scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth, yet they did not forsake the service of Satan. Within about four hundred years after the flood, the people of the earth were once more sunken in idolatry and superstition. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.5}

At that time the Lord came to Abraham, one of the descendants of Shem, and said to him:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.6}

“Get thee out of thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” Genesis 12:1-3. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.7}

The Lord saw in Abraham a willingness to serve him, although all his people were idolaters (Joshua 24:2), and he separated him from them, so that he might not become contaminated by them, but might become the father of a people who should be fitted to inherit the earth. If we closely examine this promise, we shall find that it comprehends a great deal. “In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” means nothing less than the possession of the whole earth by the descendants of Abraham. But this will appear more clearly as we pass on. In Genesis 13:14-17, we find the promise renewed more in detail in these words:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.8}

“And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.” {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.9}

Here we have strong proof that the promise to Abraham included nothing less than the whole earth, for his seed were to be multiplied as the dust of the earth. The length and the breadth of the land was to be theirs. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.10}

At that time Abraham had no child, and in all human probability could never have one. “And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.” Genesis 17:1-5. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.11}

Again, when God was about to destroy Sodom, he said:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.12}

“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? 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.” Genesis 18:17-19. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.13}

This give us to understand that the promise was made to Abraham with so much positiveness, because the Lord knew that he would keep his commandments, and that he would command his children and his household after him to do likewise. From this also we may learn that the promise to his seed was only to those who should serve the Lord. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.14}

Once more we find the promise renewed, when Abraham had showed his faith in God by proceeding to offer up his only son, through whom the promise was to be fulfilled. The Lord then called to Abraham, and said:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.15}

“By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, 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 seashore; 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.” Genesis 22:16-18. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.16}

In the expression “thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies,” we have the promise of conquest. Bear this in mind, while we consider a few other points. In Galatians 3:15-17, we have a scripture that has an intimate connection with the subject under consideration. It reads thus:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.17}

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; ... that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed no man disannuleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law... cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.18}

From the above scripture we learn that the seed to whom the promise was made, is Christ,-the same that was promised at the time of the fall. Now in connection with the promise to Abraham, that his seed should possess the gate of his enemies, read the following words of God the Father to his Son Jesus Christ:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.19}

“Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” Psalm 2:7-9. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.20}

When this shall have been accomplished, then “the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace;” for the meek are they who have come to Christ and have learned of him, yielding themselves to him to be his servants; and Paul says: “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:29. From this, together with the statement that “they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed” (Galatians 3:7, 8), we may conclude, even at this stage of our study, that the promise to Abraham, and to his seed, was nothing less than the promise of the earth to all who, through faith in Christ, should gain the victory over sin. And this is further confirmed by Paul’s statement that “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. But we shall come to this point again, as we proceed in this investigation. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.21}

In the twenty-sixth chapter of Genesis we find the promise once more repeated, this time to Isaac. Abraham was dead, and there was a famine in the land, and the Lord appeared to Isaac, and said:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.22}

“Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.” Genesis 26:2-5. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.23}

Notice here that God made the very same promise to Isaac that he had made to Abraham; and he also said that he would perform the oath that he sware unto Abraham. He gave no hint of any delay having occurred in the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham, but spoke of it as something that he would do just as he had promised. Yet Abraham was at that time dead. Therefore we must conclude that the Lord never designed to fulfill the promise in Abraham’s life-time; and we shall find that Abraham did not expect that it would be then fulfilled. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 215.24}

Passing on, we come to the time when Jacob had his dream of the ladder which reached from earth to Heaven, upon which the angels of God were ascending and descending. “And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Genesis 28:13, 14. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 216.1}

Now it is certain that neither Abraham, Isaac, nor Jacob, ever had any share in the inheritance promised to them. When Stephen was before the Jewish Sanhedrim, on trial for his life, he referred to God’s call for Abraham to go into the land of Canaan, and said, “And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.” Acts 7:5. And this Stephen used as part of his argument that the promise to Israel was yet to be fulfilled. As proof of Stephen’s statement that Abraham had no inheritance in the land, we cite the fact that when Sarah his wife died, he had to buy a place in which to bury her. W. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 216.2}

**“Jacob’s Vow” The Signs of the Times, 14, 14.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Lesson 16.—Sabbath, April 21**

1. Relate the means by which Jacob secured the blessing. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.1}

2. Was this honorable on the part of Jacob? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.2}

“And he said, Thy brother came with subtlety, and hath taken away thy blessing.” Genesis 27:35. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.3}

3. What is the meaning of the name “Jacob”? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.4}

“And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times; he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?” Verse 26, and margin. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.5}

4. How did Esau regard Jacob for his course in securing the birthright? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.6}

“And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him.” Verse 41, first part. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.7}

5. What did he purpose to do? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.8}

“And Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.” Verse 41, last part. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.9}

6. What did Jacob’s mother advise him to do? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.10}

“And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran; and tarry with him a few days, until thy brother’s fury turn away; until thy brother’s anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence; why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?” Verses 42-45. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.11}

7. Into how many years did the “few days” expand?-*More than twenty*. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.12}

8. What sort of a sleeping-place did Jacob have one night on his journey? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.13}

“And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.” Genesis 28:10, 11. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.14}

9. What dream did he have there? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.15}

“And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.” Verse 12 {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.16}

10. Who stood at the head of the ladder? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.17}

“And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.” Verse 13. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.18}

11. What promise did the Lord make to him? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.19}

“And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.” Verses 14, 15. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.20}

12. What did Jacob say when he awoke? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.21}

“And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.” Verse 16. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.22}

13. What did he say of that place? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.23}

“And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” Verse 17. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.24}

14. When the Lord appeared to certain of his servants what did he say to them? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.25}

“And he said, Draw not night hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” Exodus 3:5. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.26}

“And the captain of the Lord’s host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.” Joshua 5:15. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.27}

15. What may we learn from this?-*That the presence of God in any place makes that place holy.* {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.28}

16. Where has the Lord promised always to be? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.29}

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matthew 18:20. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.30}

17. What lesson should this teach us?-*That places dedicated to the worship of God are sacred, and should always be entered with reverence*. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.31}

18. What did Jacob do in the morning? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.32}

“And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.” Genesis 28:18, 19. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.33}

19. What vow did he make? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.34}

“And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, So that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God; and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house; and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.” Verses 20-22. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.35}

20. What was the extent of Jacob’s desire from the Lord? Verse 20. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.36}

21. Could he have asked for less? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.37}

22. Yet what did he purpose to do? Verse 22. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.38}

23. Is it right to make vows or pledges to the Lord? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.39}

“Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God; let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.” Psalm 76:11. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.40}

24. When a person makes a vow, what should he be careful to do? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.41}

“When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.” Ecclesiastes 5:4, 5. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.42}

25. Why should we be so careful to pay our vows? {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.43}

“When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it; for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.” Deuteronomy 23:21. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.44}

**NOTES**

Sometimes the question is asked, “How could Jacob pay tithe, if he received only food to eat and raiment to put on?” It is very evident that he could not, if he received only necessary clothing ready made, and had his food furnished him just at meal-time. His idea was not that the Lord would put into his mouth just enough to sustain life; for the Lord doesn’t feed us in that way. The Lord gives us richly all things to enjoy, but he leaves to us the preparation of it, and he expects us to make an exertion to get it. Jacob’s idea was that if the Lord would prosper him, even though he should give him what would seem barely sufficient for a livelihood, he would pay a tithe of it, and live on the remainder. The lesson to be learned is, that nineteenths of what we think would support us, is better, with the blessing of God, than the entire amount that might seem necessary, without God’s blessing. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.45}

God is able to make a small quantity equal to the largest amount. When the widow had only a handful of meal, and a small cruse of oil, the Lord made that small amount sufficient support for a family of three for a full year. 1 Kings 17:8-16. With only five loaves and two small fishes, the Lord fed more than five thousand people. It may be said that these were miracles. So they were; and he who does not see a miracle in his being kept alive and provided with daily food, “knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.” “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning.” Lamentations 3:22, 23. Surely since God gives us everything that we have, working miracles daily for our support, and is able to multiply a handful of meal into many barrels, he may well be depended on to make a little go a great ways for one of his servants. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.46}

Some people there are who refuse ever to make a pledge for the Lord’s cause. They profess to believe that it is wrong to do so. How they can think so in the face of the Scripture record is a mystery. Not only does the Scripture contain instances of vows that have been made, but it expressly commands us to make vows. The man who refuses to make a reasonable pledge to the Lord’s cause, for fear that when the time comes he may be unable to pay, is in the same condition as one who refuses to make a profession of religion, for fear he will not be able to hold out. Such ones show a total lack of confidence in God, indicating that they expect to have to do in their own strength all that is done. Their action is equivalent to saying, “I am afraid that the Lord will fail me; I dare not run the risk.” And yet those very persons who are afraid to promise to do what they know to be their duty, have no hesitancy in giving a note to a man, promising to pay him a certain sum of money at some future time. The sincerity of any who profess to think it wrong to pledge, may well be doubted. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.47}

The Lord has said, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matthew 18:20. Yet how many who go to the prayer-meeting, where there undoubtedly are more than two who have come in the name of Jesus, could say, “The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not”? The Lord was at Bethel before Jacob had his dream; so the presence of the Lord in any place does not depend upon our recognition of it. We do not have to wait until the prayer-meeting is over, in order to be able to say that the Lord was present. Those who do so, lose a great deal of the blessing of his presence. But we should begin the meeting knowing that he is there because he has promised to be there; in that case we shall be prepared to receive the fullness of his blessing. W. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 219.48}

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

E. J. Waggoner

All lovers of peace and good order will be glad to learn that Kaiser Frederick is improving in health. For some time there has been a steady gain, with no adverse symptoms. It is well known that he is for preserving peace; and although his malady may be incurable, it is sincerely to be hoped that the end will not come very soon. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.1}

Somebody has sent us some questions concerning church trustees, Sabbath-school superintendents, the leasing of churches, etc., but has given no name or address. If these are furnished us, together with stamp, we will reply by letter. The questions are not of sufficient general interest to be answered in the SIGNS, and we cannot answer anonymous communications. No person ought to be ashamed of his name. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.2}

An “All Fools’ Club” has been started in San Francisco. We wouldn’t dare deny the right of the club to such a name, but we greatly fear that it hasn’t got all of them yet. The worst of the class are those who deceive their neighbors, and say, “Am not I in sport?” The report states that the club was started with an unlimited capital stock of folly. That is a sort of capital against which we have not heard of any organized opposition on the part of laboring men, or others. If there were such a movement, we should hear less about strikes and boycotts. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.3}

We have received several letters, calling our attention to a little item that appeared in Number 11 of the SIGNS, to the effect that the month of February, 1886, had no full moon. It seems that the almanac says that there was one, and our correspondents want to know whether the error is in the almanac or in the SIGNS. No doubt we shall have to confess to being in error, for it wouldn’t do to impeach the almanac. The error on our part consisted in republishing and item that was going the rounds, without verifying it. McCarty’s “Annual Statistician” says that it was the month of February, 1866. The substitution of an “S” for a “6” is a very easy matter. If this is not correct we hope to be informed of it. We are glad that the SIGNS has such close readers. We hope that they will scan the Bible arguments as closely, and take the trouble to verify them. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.4}

The *Interior* has been asked to give some information with regard to the order of the “White Cross,” and answers in the following language, which expresses our sentiments exactly:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.5}

“It is part of the work of the W. C. T. U. In our opinion the true White Cross origination is that original one, the Christian church. We do not have much faith in pledges or personal moral reforms not based upon sanctification by the Holy Spirit.” {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.6}

We will say, in this connection, that whatever cannot be done by the church of Christ in the way of moral reform, cannot be done at all. Outside agencies may accomplish a little seeming good, but it is only a gloss on the surface. Only the Spirit of God can work an entire reformation in a man, cleansing the fountain whence all his actions spring. We think, also, that the modern custom of having societies formed within the church, composed only of those members who will pledge themselves to abstain from certain bad habits, or to do certain good and necessary work, is reprehensible, and productive of much evil, in that it tends to give people a low standard of church obligation. It produces the impression that a church-member need not necessarily be a temperance man or a missionary worker, unless he has joined a society having that specific name, whereas the fact is that every church-member must be, by virtue of the church covenant, “temperate in all things,” and a missionary worker. The church that is not a temperance society, and a missionary society, is not a true Christian church. That is, those members who are not temperance reformers and missionary workers, are not fulfilling the obligations that necessarily rest upon every professed follower of Christ. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.7}

In a recent address before the Young Women’s Christian Temperance Union in Oakland, Rev. Dr. Horton stated that he had been credibly informed that during this Lentus season there were many families which gave their children wine in the place of meat, and said that teachers in certain schools complained that those children became utterly unmanageable in consequence. Was there ever a worse exhibition of straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel? We believe Lent is a period of time devoted to the mortification of the flesh? “The church” forbids the use of meat during that time, so that the body may be kept under; and these people, who would think it almost a mortal sin to disobey the church in this regard, give their children (and undoubtedly themselves also), wine, which is ten times worse than meat could be. This is a fair sample of the working of a religion that is fixed by law. Formalism at the expense of piety always results. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.8}

It is stated that Colorado has great hopes of becoming to tobacco-producing district of this country, careful experiments having determined that many varieties of tobacco will yield enormous crops upon its soil. The Oakland *Times* says:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.9}

“If Colorado cannot produce the requisite soil and climate, it could certainly be found in California. With our vast domain it is ridiculous that we should still be spending eight to ten millions of dollars per year in buying the weed from Cuba and Sumatra.” {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.10}

We should say that if Californians must use eight or ten million dollars’ worth of tobacco every year, it will be vastly cheaper to import it than to provide good land in producing it. It is well known that there is nothing that grows that exhausts the soil so much as tobacco. Much good land in Connecticut and Virginia has been rendered unfit for use, because it has been devoted to tobacco-raising. Tobacco has only one mission, and that is, to kill, and it does that effectually, whether applied to the land, to men, or to pestiferous vermin. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.11}

The *Review and Herald* contains a brief review of an article published in the *Free Methodist,* by C. E. Harroun, Jr., entitled “Seventh-day Adventistism Not Orthodox.” We can well imagine what the article in question is, for we once listened for two hours, with all the patience we could muster, and our full stock was required, to a sermon by this man. The title of the sermon, which had been extensively advertised, was “Adventism against, or Adventism Essentially Infidel.” We mentioned one of his arguments as a sample: He said that Adventist didn’t live up to their profession, because he knew some who labored every Saturday. He had honesty enough, however, to state a few moments afterward that those Adventists were First-day Adventists, who didn’t profess to keep Sabbath. As for the rest of his sermon it was merely a statement of what he believed, and a contrast of that with the belief of Adventist. Of course he could very easily show that we didn’t believe the vagaries that found ready acceptance with him, and therefore he was sure that we were infidel. The Bible was not once referred to as the standard of belief. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.12}

The *Christian Union’s* Chicago correspondent, commenting on the fact that Dr. Fulton was not allowed by the city authorities to fill his appointment to lecture on the topic, “Is Popery in the Way?” because they feared a riot, thinks that such refusal was unnecessary, and adds: “It surely is a dishonor to the Catholic Church if it is supposed the bloodshed would result if ever so violent addresses were made against it.” Indeed it is a dishonor to that church and a dishonor which it has brought upon itself many times. The Catholic Church has had about fourteen centuries of such dishonor, for everybody who knows anything about that church knows that when it has had the power it has never hesitated to shed the blood of those who spoke against it. No man’s life would be safe if he should go into any community in the United States, where the Catholics are numerous, and should openly tell the truth concerning that church. A false religion has no other argument at its command but violence. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.13}

The following item from the *Michigan Christian Advocate*, which came to our notice just after the above was written, is a very good comment on the *Christian Union’s* statement that the Catholic Church is too good to cause blood to flow in consequence of addresses made against it:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.14}

“Michael Welch was telling a Glad... why he left the Catholic Church, when a ... men entered the room, and informing him that they were after blood, began throwing bottles at him.” {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.15}

On another page of this issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES we have made the statement that those who apologize for the Papacy now, would have condemned Luther if they had lived in the days of the Reformation, and that therefore they are not Protestants in any sense of the word. Since that article was written, we have received from the editor of *Herold der Warheit* a translation of a part of the remarks of the prosecuting attorney of the city of Cassel, Germany, in the case of the Rev. Thummel who was indicted for attacking the Papacy and of calling the Pope antichrist. In moving for nine months imprisonment for Thummel, and two months’ imprisonment for the publisher of the article, the prosecuting attorney said among other things:- {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.16}

“The defendant refers (or appeals) to Dr. M. Luther. First, it must be considered that Luther lived three hundred years ago, and that meanwhile the customs, the tone, and taste, etc., have changed. If Luther lived to-day and should say and write the same things that he did then, he would undoubtedly by reason of section 166 of the Penal Code, be condemned.” {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.17}

Undoubtedly, and this is in a city where the majority of the churches to-day are Lutheran. If a man should be condemned now for using language similar to that which Luther used three hundred years ago, then he ought to have been condemned then, for it is Rome’s boast that she never changes. If Luther were alive to-day he would undoubtedly say the same things about the Catholic Church that he said in the days of Leo X., and would include many professed Protestants in his remarks. Innately there are some still who are animated by the same spirit that Luther was, and who do not laud the Pope simply because his power is increasing. {SITI April 6, 1888, p. 224.18}

**“Fulfilling the Law” The Signs of the Times, 14, 15.**

E. J. Waggoner

A friend has sent us a copy of the *Church News*, a religious newspaper published in Duluth, Minn., by what denomination does not appear. The paper which we received contains several notices of Seventh-day Adventists and their work, and among them is a short article entitled, “Food for Seventh-day Followers,” which we quote below entire:- {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.1}

“In Matthew 9th chapter, from the 17th to 20th verses, we read the explicit declaration of Christ:- {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.2}

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.3}

“They had been accusing Jesus of breaking the law. He did not deny it, but claimed to fulfill it, and showed that those who had rightly kept the letter of the law broke the law themselves, pointing to their long prayers, their tithes, neglecting the weightier matters of God’s word. The Saviour then kept the law in fact, and they were such slaves to the letter of the word, that they could not see it. It is the *spirit* of a command that must be observed. ‘The letter killeth but the spirit maketh alive,’ says the Bible.” {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.4}

In another part of his paper the editor compliments Seventh-day Adventists upon their loyalty to the Bible, but the above exhibition of his own ignorance of it prevents us from being puffed up by the compliment. Anyone who has a Bible can readily prove the truth of our statement that the ninth chapter of Matthew contains not a single reference to the law or the Sabbath. The text quoted is found in Matthew 5:17-20, and is one of the strongest testimonies to the perpetuity of the law, and to the absolute necessity that it should be kept by everyone who wishes to enter Heaven, that our Saviour ever gave. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.5}

The article says: “They had been accusing Jesus of breaking the law. He did not deny it, but claimed to fulfill it,” etc. The idea evidently designed to be conveyed is that Jesus did break the law, and that breaking the law is perfectly consistent with fulfilling it. But the idea is overthrown by the editor’s own admission further on, that the Saviour “kept the law in fact.” This is the truth, the other is not. A promise cannot be fulfilled by breaking it, neither can a law. The following texts show most clearly what is meant by fulfilling the law:- {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.6}

James 2:8-11: “If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well; but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill.Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.” {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.7}

In this text fulfilling the law is put in direct antithesis to transgressing the law. Those who fulfill the law, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” do well; but those who do not love their neighbors, as themselves, are transgressors. They do not fulfill the law. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.8}

Romans 2:25-27: “For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfill the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?” {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.9}

Here the antithesis between fulfilling the law and transgressing the law is made even more emphatic than in the other case. The apostle is showing, as is evident from verses 28 and 29, taken in connection with those quoted, that the keeping of the law is the only true circumcision. Outward circumcision profits nothing, if the man breaks the law; while the outwardly uncircumcised man who keeps the law, is counted as circumcised. But verse 27 contains the special point, because the terms “fulfill the law” and “transgress the law” are there used, as being directly opposite in meaning. The one who keeps the law fulfills the law. Christ says that he fulfilled the law. If he had not fulfilled the law it could not be said of him that he “did no sin.” {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.10}

This settles the whole question. It is indeed good food for seventh-day people, as it is good food for whoever will take it and live by it. We are told that we must live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Christ here showed that not one particle of the letter of the law could be changed, and that he came to keep it thus perfectly, “leaving us an example, that ye should follow in his steps.” {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.11}

The latter part of the article above quoted seeks to convey the idea that the Jews kept the letter of the law, and that Christ reproved them for this; and the threadbare idea is put forth that the spirit of the law must be kept, but that the letter ought to be disregarded. But the writer’s statement that Christ “kept the law *in fact*” again knocks over his own attempted argument. To keep the law *in fact*, is to keep in *deed*, that is, in act, or, in other words, to keep the very letter of the law. The letter of the law is the very thing which it commands. This Christ kept. Without keeping the letter of the law none can keep its spirit. For instance, it is evident that no one can obey the letter of the commandment, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor,” while he is guilty of slandering his neighbor. If a soldier is ordered to report for duty at the military headquarters in San Francisco, he cannot obey the letter of that command by going to Chicago; and no matter how strenuously he might assert that his intention was all right, and that his was the higher obedience of the spirit, instead of the slavish adherence to the letter, any court martial would speedily convict him of insubordination. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.12}

Now for what did Christ condemn the Jews? For pretending to keep the law while they did not. See Matthew 23:27, 28, where he says: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” They pretended to keep the law, and many of them did comply with its letter, but they did not really keep it. A person may outwardly comply with the requirement of the law, and not keep its spirit, but a person cannot keep the spirit of the law, and not conform to the letter. This we have already shown, and indeed, it ought not to need any argument. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.13}

In view of the lax morality and the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus said to his hearers, and to all men: “For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven.” Following is the definition of “exceed;” “To pass or go beyond; to proceed beyond the given or supposed limit or measure of; as, one man *exceeds* another in bulk, stature, or weight; one offender *exceeds* another in villainy.”-*Webster*. The man who *exceeds* another in weight weighs just as much as that other, and more. The man who *exceeds* another in villainy, is just as wicked as that other, and more. So the man who *exceeds* the scribes and Pharisees in righteousness, must be just as righteous as they were, and more. He must do all the good deeds that they did, and many more, and to a greater degree. If they kept the law in letter only, he must keep it in letter and in spirit too. The man who does not do this, says Christ, cannot enter Heaven. This, and this alone, is fulfilling the law. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.14}

But how can we fulfill the law? Paul answers in these words: “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in or by us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:3, 4. Christ is “the way, the truth, and the life.” Outside of Christ there is bondage, and only bondage-the bondage of sin-no matter how zealously the individual may endeavor to fulfill the righteousness of the law. We are weak, and of ourselves can do nothing. But the spotless Lamb of God, our sacrifice, can cleanse from sin. In him we may be strong enough to overcome. Through faith in his blood we may be cleansed not only from the guilt of sin-the remission of the sins that are past-but also from the love of sin-thus fulfilling the law, for “the just shall live by faith.” Christ alone can give true freedom, the freedom which comes alone through conformity to the law of God. Psalm 119:45. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.15}

In this way alone can our righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. They rejected Christ, and consequently could not attain unto the righteousness of God, namely, perfect conformity to his law. But suppose we professedly accept Christ as our righteousness, and then reject and refuse to obey the law which alone is righteousness, and which, shining forth in every act of his life, showed him to be “the way and the truth;” how much better off shall we be than they? Not one particle; like them we should in reality be rejecters both of Christ and the law. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.16}

This brief statement of Scripture truth concerning the law will serve also to disprove the slandering assertion that we would lead men into bondage to the law. We would have them come to Christ for pardon for the sins which now hold them in bondage, and then to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, “walking,” through faith in him, “in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless.” We would have them lifted out from under the law, and have their feet set in “the way of peace,” that they may be the undefiled “who walk *in the law* of the Lord.” Psalm 119:1. We would have them “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” W. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 230.17}

**“The Hope of the Promise” The Signs of the Times, 14, 15.**

E. J. Waggoner

Not only did Abraham have no inheritance in the land, but Isaac and Jacob were in a like condition. The apostle says:- {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 231.1}

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” Hebrews 11:8-10. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 231.2}

Then, after telling how, through faith, Abraham had a numerous posterity, the apostle continues:- {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 231.3}

“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.” Hebrews 11:13-16. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 231.4}

They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth, which had been promised to them for an inheritance; they died without having received the promised inheritance, or any part of it; yet their faith was as strong when they died as when the promise was first made. Therefore we know beyond all question, that none of the patriarchs expected that the inheritance would be given to them in their life-time. They plainly declared, says Paul, that they looked for a country, and we have already learned that that country was the whole earth; and since they were not disappointed because the country was not given to them in their life-time, it is evident that they understood the promise to embrace the resurrection from the dead. This was plainly declared to be the case by Paul when he testified of his faith before Agrippa. Said he:- {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 231.5}

“And now I stand and am judged *for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers*; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope’s sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?” Acts 26:6-8. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 231.6}

All who have read the book of Acts know that Paul was persecuted by the Jews because he preached Christ. This was the cause of all the Jewish persecution of Christians. After Peter and John had healed the lame man, at the gate of the temple, and had declared to the Jews that it was done through the power of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified, and who had risen from the dead, “the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.” Acts 4:1, 2. This was the burden of all the apostle’s. Paul said that in Corinth he knew nothing else but “Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2), and we may be sure that he did not preach a different gospel to the Corinthians from what he did to other people. Indeed, at the time when Paul stood before Agrippa, and uttered the words quoted in the preceding paragraph, he said that he had continued unto that day, “saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come; that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.” Acts 26:22, 23. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 231.7}

Now put these facts with Paul’s statement that he stood and was judged for the hope of the promise made of God to the fathers, and it is as plain as language can make it that the promise to the fathers that through Christ they should have a resurrection from the dead, and should by that means enter upon their inheritance. Paul looked forward to the fulfillment of the promise with as ardent hope and as steadfast faith as did Abraham, and it was this that he had in mind when he said that, “denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Titus 2:12, 13. W. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 231.8}

**“Jacob and the Angel” The Signs of the Times, 14, 15.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON 17.—SABBATH, APRIL 28**

1. How long was Jacob with his uncle Laban? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.1}

“This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.” Genesis 31:38. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.2}

2. Was his service an easy one? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.3}

“That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night. Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times.” Verses 39-41. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.4}

3. How did God prosper him? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.5}

“And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me. If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstreaked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstreaked. Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me.” “Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.” {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.6}

4. When Jacob fled from Laban, how did the Lord interpose to protect him from Laban’s wrath? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.7}

“It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.” Verse 29. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.8}

5. As Jacob went on his way, who met him? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.9}

“And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.” Genesis 32:1. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.10}

6. What did Jacob say, and what did he call the place? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.11}

“And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God’s host; and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.” Verse 2. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.12}

7. For what purpose are angels sent to earth? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.13}

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Hebrews 1:14. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.14}

8. What message did Jacob send to Esau? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.15}

“And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now; and I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.” Genesis 32:3-5. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.16}

9. What news did the messengers bring back? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.17}

“And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.” Verse 6. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.18}

10. How was Jacob affected by this news? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.19}

“Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands. Verse 7. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.20}

11. What good reason had Jacob for fearing Esau? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.21}

12. What prayer for deliverance did he make? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.22}

“And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee; I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.” Verses 9-12. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.23}

13. What precautions did he take for safety? Verses 7, 8, 13-21. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.24}

14. When Jacob was left alone who encountered him? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.25}

“And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.” Verse 24. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.26}

15. How long did he wrestle with the stranger?-*Ib.* {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.27}

16. Who was it that was wrestling with him? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.28}

“Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us; even the Lord God of hosts; the Lord is his memorial.” Hosea 12:4, 5. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.29}

17. What act opened Jacob’s eyes as to the real nature of his antagonist? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.30}

“And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.” Genesis 32:25. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.31}

18. What did the Lord then say? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.32}

“And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh.” Verse 26, first part. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.33}

19. What may we conclude from this?-*That as soon as Jacob found out who it was that he was wrestling with, he ceased wrestling, and threw his arms about the Lord*. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.34}

20. What reply did Jacob make to the Lord’s request? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.35}

“I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.” Verse 26, last part. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.36}

21. How urgent was Jacob’s plea? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.37}

“Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto him; he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us.” Hosea 12:4. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.38}

22. Why was Jacob so urgent at this time? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.39}

23. What evidence did he finally receive that his prayer was successful? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.40}

“And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” Genesis 32:27, 28. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.41}

24. What was involved in this blessing?-*The pardon of all the sins of his past life.* {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.42}

25. Into what condition do sinners usually come before obtaining pardon? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.43}

“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” Romans 7:24, 25. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.44}

26. What further evidence did he have that he had prevailed with God and with man? Genesis 33:1-16. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.45}

27. What exhortation is given us from this case? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.46}

“Therefore turn thou to thy God; keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.” Hosea 12:6. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.47}

28. Of what time in the history of the people of God was this experience of Jacob a figure? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.48}

“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Daniel 12:1. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.49}

“Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.” Jeremiah 30:7. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.50}

29. What will be granted to all those who finally prevail? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.51}

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” Revelation 3:21. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.52}

**NOTE**

The reason why Jacob was so urgent when he found out with whom he had been wrestling, was that he felt that he had come to a crisis in his life; he had no earthly friends who could help him, his own brother was his sworn enemy; and he knew that if God did not interpose to help him he was lost. He knew also that this calamity had come upon him because of his own wicked course. And since sin separates from God, he knew that if Esau met him before he made his peace with God, he would be eternally lost. For this reason he had sought that retired place to pray. We can imagine the agony of mind which he suffered while he was wrestling with one whom he doubtless supposed was a robber; he had retired to seek the Lord in this emergency, and precious time was rapidly passing while he was being kept from his purpose by this stranger. And it requires no stretch of imagination to believe that as soon as he found that his antagonist was the Lord, whom he had come to seek, he ceased wrestling, and threw his arms about the Lord, while he declared, “I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.” This holding onto the Lord was indicative of his importunity and the strength of his faith, and is an example for all who seek special blessings from the Lord. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 235.53}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 15.**

E. J. Waggoner

The General Conference Committee recently in session, has arranged the following program for early camp-meeting. Probably few, if any, changes will copy made from the dates here given; and the places of meeting will be announced as soon as the officers of the various Conferences decide upon them, and notify us:- {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.1}

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Kansas | May 22-29 |
| Iowa | May 29 to June 5 |
| Upper Columbia | “30 to 5” |
| Minnesota | June 5-12 |
| Pennsylvania | “6-12” |
| North Pacific | “6-13” |
| Wisconsin | “12-19” |
| Dakota | “19-26” |
| Kanada | June 28 to July 3 |

We have seen several so-called “spirit pictures,” and have wondered whether they really resembled anybody who ever lived. The *Golden Gate* explains the matter by saying that “their recognition must come mainly from the interior consciousness.” And yet Spiritualists have a great deal to say about people believing things with no reason therefor. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.2}

If any of those who are coming to the annual meeting in Oakland, have extra copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, or other papers, which are unsoiled, and which they are not able to use to good advantage, they will confer a favor on the Oakland missionary society if they will bring them when they come. This society is short of material for distributor work, and can use all the unsoiled papers it can get. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.3}

A note of explanation is due our readers concerning the article entitled “The Promises to Israel,” which appeared three weeks ago, and was marked “to be continued.” The subject is being continued, and will be for several weeks yet, but under different heads. We did not wish to run the entire subject under one head, so we concluded to give different heads to the different branches of the subject, and run them as separate articles, although they form one connected argument. We make this explanation so that those who have been looking for something upon that subject may look for the articles as they appear each week. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.4}

A “plaintive plea” for papers and tracts on the Sunday question comes up from Reno, Nev., correspondent of one of our California religious papers. They are wanted to meet the literature which is being scattered abroad by Seventh-day Adventists. The writer is wrought up to such a pitch over the matter that he offers to pay for *one copy* of the *Advocate* ($1.25) for this purpose, if a person can be found to act as a distributor. He says: “There are whole communities in the surrounding country which have been converted to Adventistism, first, by sending the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, month after month, into the families.” This is good news. We can thank God and take courage, for that is just our object in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.5}

In a sermon entitled “The Chosen People,” delivered March 11, in San Francisco, before the Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, a Rabbi Joseph Kranskopf said: “I am not troubled with harassing doubts whether the distinguished title, ‘The Chosen People,’ justly belong to our fathers or not. I know they have claimed that distinction, and I see every reason why they should have done so. Whether we of to-day may justly claim so proud a distinction, it is this question which troubles me sore. The distinction our father’s claimed, they toiled and suffered for, they justly merited. But the merits of the father are not necessarily the merits of the son.” He urged less race exclusiveness, and dependence upon forms and names, and more real religion. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.6}

Life is existence. Eternal life is eternal existence, that is, it is existence without any end. The beloved disciple says: “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” 1 John 5:11. We have eternal life then, only by promise. Since this life is in Christ, we must conclude that we must have Christ, in order to keep eternal life. And that is just the case, for the apostle continues: “He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” That is, only those who are in Christ can have eternal existence. Says Christ, to those who are his followers, “Because I live, ye shall live also.” Those who abide in Christ, must receive whatever he has and “death hath no more dominion over him.” But he who has not Christ, cannot have eternal existence. His existence will be cut off. “He that believeth not the Son shall not see life.” Such ones shall be as though they had not been. Who then loves Christ can refuse to accept a doctrine that gives to him all the glory for redeeming our life from destruction? {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.7}

The Prohibitionists of California held their State Convention last week, and one of the planks of the platform which they adopted is the following:- {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.8}

“We declare that Sunday is an institution so intimately woven into our laws, our customs, our civilization, and the very structure of our government, so intricately and innocently connected with our social, business, and moral life that we cannot dispense with it without sacrificing the very best interests of this country, and the highest welfare of the whole people. And so believing, we demand the enactment and enforcement of an intelligent and rational Sunday law.” {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.9}

There was considerable discussion over this plank, some wanting it omitted, and others wanting the word “Sabbath” substituted for “Sunday.” It passed, however, as it stands, by a large majority. We think, as one of the delegates suggested, that they will have to spend half their time explaining to people that they do not contemplate religious legislation. And the worst of it is that all their “explaining” will not do away with the fact that the plan contemplates religious legislation and nothing else. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.10}

The *Pacific Printer* says that the Woodland *Democrat* is being boycotted by the liquor dealers of the place, on account of a communication in opposition to the saloon, which appeared in its columns. The *Democrat* is highly favored. If it can get the disfavor of the liquor traffic, it must be worthy of the patronage of respectable people, which we believe are still in the majority in that section. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.11}

**“Read Carefully” The Signs of the Times, 14, 15.**

E. J. Waggoner

There are three articles under the heading of “General” in this week’s paper into which we wish to call special attention. We enumerate them, as follows:- {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.12}

1. “Before and After the Prayer-meeting,” beginning on the second page. There is some excellent advice in this article, but we wish to make one amendment. Certain ones, as the stingy, the mean, and the one who is impure in his language, are advised to keep still in the prayer-meeting. We agree that exhortations from such are not edifying, but our advice would be for them to confess their faults and to bear such a part in the meeting as will show the brethren and sisters that they wish to overcome these faults, and thus secure their help. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.13}

2. “Bible Interpretation,” beginning on the third page. This is a good article in itself, but it derives additional interest from the fact that it was the leading editorial in a recent issue of the *Christian Leader* a Campbellites (Disciple) paper published at Cincinnati, Ohio. It is well known that that denomination as a body rejects the Old Testament, and many leading men among them reject everything that Christ said before his crucifixion, including the Lord’s prayer. We are glad to see one man, at least, who clings to the “old paths.” May he induce many to walk therein. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.14}

3. “A Horrible Doctrine,” on the fifth page. This is the way the *Michigan Christian Advocate* justly characterizes the doctrine that the law of God is abolished. The article has the ring of one of Wesley’s sermons on the law. We are especially glad to republish this article, because many Methodists are swinging loose from the old moorings, and are floating down the stream of antinomianism, which will surely land them in infidelity of the worst kind. The *Advocate* itself has given not a little aid and comfort to the enemies of the law of God, and we could wish that its conversion to all whole law might be complete. At any rate every word of this article is sound doctrine, and we commend it to everybody. It will be a good article to save against the time when the *Advocate* may forget that it has once acknowledged the whole law to be binding to every man. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.15}

**“Ministerial and Church Institute” The Signs of the Times, 14, 15.**

E. J. Waggoner

In connection with the general meeting of the stockholders of the Pacific Press Publishing Association, to be held in this city April 23, as already noticed, it is purposed to hold meetings of importance and general interest. The meetings will open Friday evening, April 20. Preaching and devotional services will be held during the Sabbath and first-day, in connection with which the new church will be appropriately dedicated. The business meetings of the Association will be held on Monday and Tuesday. And during this time the California Tract and Missionary Society will hold its quarterly meeting. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.16}

Wednesday, the meeting will resolve itself into an institute for council on the best methods of work in the various branches of labor represented in our cause. Especial attention will be given to instruction an improvement in ministerial labor, missionary work, Sabbath school work, and in fulfilling the duties of church and Tract and Missionary officers. This line of instruction will continue until Wednesday, evening, May 2. It is expected that Sister E. G. White will be present to aid in the meeting by the experience and light which God has given her for his people. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.17}

Entertainment for the first four days of camp-meeting will be furnished free to all who come. During the institute, the cost will be twenty cents per meal, furnished at the restaurant provided for the purpose. Rooms for free. Special circulars have been sent out, giving fuller particulars, and it is earnestly hoped that there will be a large general attendance of our people, and especially of those interested in the various lines of instruction to be presented. It is particularly requested that those who are coming will inform Brother C. H. Jones, Pacific Press, of that fact a few days before the meeting begins. {SITI April 13, 1888, p. 240.18}

**“Let Them Laugh” The Signs of the Times, 14, 16.**

E. J. Waggoner

From a Spiritualist we have received a series of questions, which he evidently thinks cannot be answered without scattering to the four winds our recent articles on Spiritualism. First, he wants to know how it is that in forty years Spiritualism has made so many converts, while comparatively few accept the doctrine of our Lord’s soon coming. This is easily answered. It is because the human heart naturally loves error. Ever since our first parents listened to Satan’s great lie, “Thou shalt not surely die,” error has been courted, while truth has had to fight its way to recognition. Says Bacon: “In general let every student of nature take this as a rule, that whatever his mind seizes and dwells upon with particular satisfaction is to be held in suspicion.” The heart of man is naturally the spring of evil thoughts, and of vice, and so he is predisposed to error; if he learns to love truth, it is because some influence or power outside of himself has been brought to bear upon him. The argument that we ought to do or believe a certain thing because others do, is well adapted to sheep, which go in flocks, the hindmost following blindly whichever way the current sets; but men should “not follow a multitude to do evil.” {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.1}

He asks, “Did you ever *investigate* Spiritualism? or are you too timid?” etc. Yes, we have fully investigated Spiritualism. We claim that we know more of its nature and tendency than any Spiritualist who lives. But we are too timid to venture into it. We submit that the man who stands at the mouth of a dark cave and views its interior by the aid of an electric light, whose bright rays he causes to be reflected into it, is in a position to know more of it than the one who stumbles into it without any light. Having examined Spiritualism by the light of God’s word, we are too timid to venture near it. The wolf may twit the lamb with cowardice for not coming to examine his teeth and nails; but all will agree that timidity in such a case is wisdom. We know the nature and effects of arsenic; we know that it is a deadly poison, although we were never poisoned with it. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.2}

Again, “If your Jesus is a delusion, where do you stand?” We reply, Nowhere. We are free to confess that without Jesus we are nothing. That is why we pity Spiritualists, who reject Christ. He will not fail us, and we have no fear. The implied idea that we should cast off our faith in Christ, simply because if he were not a reality our faith would be vain, and we should be lost, is most absurd. There is a man walking across the Brooklyn bridge. If that bridge should fall, what would become of him? Why, he would be killed. Suppose the bridge upon which he is walking were not a bridge at all, but were only a streak of fog, what then? Why, then of course he could not walk upon it. But because he couldn’t walk there if the bridge were not there, shall he refuse to walk on the solid bridge which is there? Shall he refuse to stand upon its firm structure, because he couldn’t stand upon it if it were not in existence? What nonsense! So we shall not be frightened from “the everlasting arms,” because someone cries that we should fall into perdition if they were not there. That is just why we stay in that secure place; it is the only place of safety. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.3}

Finally, we are told that if we would lay aside our opposition to Spiritualism, we “would not run any risk to become the laughing stock for over two millions of converts to Spiritualism.” No doubt. But we are perfectly content to be laughed at by Spiritualists, whether they be two million or two hundred million. “It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools. For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughing of the fool; this also is vanity.” Ecclesiastes 7:5, 6. We would rather have their laughter than their commendation. W. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.4}

**“The Rest that Remains” The Signs of the Times, 14, 16.**

E. J. Waggoner

We return once more to Abraham, and the promise to him and his seed. We have learned that the promise was confirmed to him in Christ; and certainly this was the case when a son was promised to him, for the record says, “And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.” Genesis 15:6. This counting his faith for righteousness was nothing else but the forgiveness of his sins, through Christ. This is plainly declared to be the case, in Romans 4:3-9. Now at the very time when the promise was thus confirmed to him, the Lord said to him: “Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance.” Genesis 15:13, 14. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.5}

In this text we have the sojourn in Egypt foretold; but we have more than that, for the children of Israel were not in Egypt four hundred years. It was only four hundred and thirty years from the time that the promise was made to Abraham until the giving of the law, immediately after the departure from Egypt. Galatians 3:17. We can easily make up this time thus: From the time that the promise was made, till the birth of Isaac, was twenty-five years. Compare Genesis 12:1-4 and Genesis 21:5. From the birth of Isaac till the birth of Jacob was sixty years. Genesis 25:26. From the birth of Jacob till the going down into Egypt was one hundred and thirty years. Genesis 47:8, 9. Therefore from the promise to Abraham, until the going down into Egypt was (25 + 60 + 130) 215 years. And Josephus says (“Antiquities,” chap. 15, par. 2) that the length of the sojourn in Egypt was two hundred and fifteen years, thus making the four hundred and thirty years of Galatians 3:17. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.6}

But how about the four hundred years of affliction, which the Lord said that the posterity of Abraham should suffer? It is evident from the text, and also from Acts 7:6, 7, that the four hundred years ended at the exode, the same time when the four hundred and thirty years ended. Thus they must have begun thirty years after the promise was first made to Abraham, or when Isaac was about five years old. Now in Galatians 4:29 Paul says that “he that was born after the flesh,” namely, Ishmael, persecuted Isaac, who was “born after the Spirit;” and this cannot refer to any other time than that when Ishmael “mocked” Isaac, which resulted in the expulsion of Ishmael and his mother. Genesis 21:9, 10. This is the only recorded instance of the persecution of Isaac by Ishmael, and was, as nearly as can be calculated, about thirty years after the promise, and four hundred years before the deliverance from Egypt. So there were one hundred and eighty-five of the four hundred years’ affliction, that were endured in the land of Canaan, and in adjoining countries. Yet all this time they were sojourning in a country that was not theirs. Compare Genesis 15:13 and Hebrews 11:9. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.7}

We pass over the bondage in Egypt, and come to the time of the exode. When Moses was sent down into Egypt to deliver the people, the Lord gave him the following message: “Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments; and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage; I am the Lord.” Exodus 6:6-8. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.8}

Here the promise to Abraham, which was renewed to Isaac and to Jacob, was renewed again to their descendants. And in pursuance of that same promise, the Lord said to them when they had gone out of Egypt: “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.” Exodus 19:4-6. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.9}

Now that this was the same promise that was made to Abraham, we have an explicit statement in the following words, found in Deuteronomy 7:6-8: “For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you, and *because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers*, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.” {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.10}

When we read the promise recorded in Genesis 22:17 we noted that in the words, “Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies,” it included rest from oppression. So likewise the promise to the Israelites included not only possession of land, but rest. Thus when Moses allowed two tribes and a half to settle in the country across the Jordan, he said to them:- {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.11}

“For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you, and *because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers*, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.” {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.12}

When we read the promise recorded in Genesis 22:6, we noted that in the words, “Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies,” it included rest from oppression. So likewise the promise to the Israelites included not only possession of the land, but rest. Then when Moses allowed two tribes and a half to settle in the country across the Jordan, he said to them:- {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.13}

“The Lord your God hath given you this land to possess it; ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all that are meet for the war... until the Lord have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you, and until they also possess the land which the Lord your God hath given them beyond Jordan.” Deuteronomy 3:18-20. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.14}

Again, just a little while before they refused the land of Canaan, Moses said to them:- {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.15}

“For ye are not as yet come *to the rest* and *to the inheritance*, which the Lord your God giveth you. But when ye go over Jordan, and *dwell* *in the land* which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit, and when *he giveth you rest* from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose the cause of his name to dwell there,” etc. Deuteronomy 12:9-11. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.16}

Thus we find that *rest from their enemies* was as much a part of the promise as was the inheritance of the land. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.17}

Joshua was the one to lead the people over Jordan into the land of promise; and the record expressly states that before he died the land was divided among the people, “and the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers; and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand.” Joshua 21:44. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 246.18}

Yet in the face of this record, the apostle declares that Joshua did not give them rest. For some reason we know not what, the translators of King James Version sometimes gave an incorrect translation in the body of the text, and placed the correct rendering in the margin. So it is in Hebrews 4:8. We quote with the correct marginal reading: “For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.” The “another day” of this text is the “to-day” of Psalm 95:7-11, when the Lord said through his servant:- {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 247.1}

“To-day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways; unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.” {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 247.2}

Now, although a very few of those who came out from Egypt did enter into the land of Canaan, and the Lord gave them rest, it is certain that that was not the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, because (1) Abraham had no part in it (Acts 7:5): “Neither did Isaac and Jacob, to whom the promise was made, as well as to Abraham; and (2) the apostle speaks of “Gideon, and of Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets” (Hebrews 11:32), all of whom lived after the days of Joshua; and of them he says:- {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 247.3}

“And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” Hebrews 11:39, 40. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 247.4}

Here we learn that the promise will not be fulfilled to them until we share it with them; and so the apostle says: “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.” Hebrews 4:9. At the same time, however, he utters a word of caution, saying: “Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.” Hebrews 4:1, 2. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 247.5}

From this we learn that the promise of rest was made known to the ancient Jews through the preaching of the gospel. We have already read the statement of Paul, that the gospel was preached to Abraham. Galatians 3:7, 8. But the Jews, as a nation, did not have faith and so they were debarred from the final rest which the Lord promised to Abraham. The same promise is left to us, but we, like them, shall come short of it, unless we have the faith of Abraham. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 247.6}

That the rest here referred to is the rest in the earth when it shall be freed from the curse, is manifest from verses 3-5 of Hebrews 4. The apostle says:- {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 247.7}

“For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, as I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter [that is, they shall not enter] into my rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, and God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.” {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 247.8}

The apostle is not making any argument here concerning the Sabbath. He simply refers to the record of Genesis 2:3, in proof of his statement that “the works were finished from the foundation of the world.” The earth was designed to be inhabited by man. Isaiah 45:18. The dominion of the earth, as it came pure and undefiled from the hand of the Creator, was given to man. Genesis 1:28. And so, on the seventh day, when God rested from all his works, his rest was prepared for his people. That rest, which was simply the possession of the whole earth kingdom, was lost through transgression; yet it is certain that some must enter in (Hebrews 4:6) and so the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2) is granted. This is the day that is spoken of in Psalm 95:7, the day secured to us through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, as spoken of in Psalm 118:29-24; the day which Abraham saw, and which caused him to rejoice. John 8:56. In this day of grace all who will may become enrolled as children of Abraham, through birth, becoming “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;” and to them that Lord will say when he comes, sitting upon the throne of his glory: “Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you *from the foundation* of the world.” Matthew 25:34. Compare Hebrews 4:3, and the comments upon it. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 247.9}

Thus we learn that “the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance;” and that “the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.” 2 Peter 3:9, 15. W. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 247.10}

**“The Victims of Strikes” The Signs of the Times, 14, 16.**

E. J. Waggoner

A recent number of a Philadelphia paper says that “the saddest results of the late strike on the Reading Road are now coming to light, and its victims are beginning to realize their own folly in obeying the orders of their malignant leaders.... They left their work wilfully and without just cause; others have taken their places; and now they have no work and no means of support. Their situation is pitiable indeed.” {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 248.1}

These misguided men have asked to be taken back into the employe of the Railroad Company, but President Corban has firmly but kindly told them that “he cannot break the promises made to the new men, and discharge them to make room for the old ones, who voluntarily left the service of the company when ordered to do so by the leaders of the Knights of Labor.” He was offered, however, to recommend for places elsewhere all old employés against whom there is no complained except that they went on strike. This is all, and more than these unfortunate men could reasonably expect of the Railway Company, whose business was damaged by the strike to the amount of hundreds of thousands of dollars. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 248.2}

The employés of that company had no just cause for the strike; they went out, not because they had grievances, but because they were ordered to do so by irresponsible leaders of the Knights of Labor, who had nothing at stake but there reputation, and very little of that. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 248.3}

Though a strike always entails heavy loss to a corporation against which it is directed, the most serious loss is that sustained by the strikers themselves; their violent dealings generally come down upon their own pates; or, as is too often the case upon the heads of their helpless families-they are its real victims. The Lutheran *Observer* pertinently says:- {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 248.4}

“Such folly and presumption have been so often repeated in the labor organizations of this country in recent years, that their sad and disastrous consequences should be held up as a warning to all others from pursuing a similar course.” {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 248.5}

**“Plotting Against the Just” The Signs of the Times, 14, 16.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON.—SABBATH, MAY 5**

1. Where did Jacob dwell? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.1}

“And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.” Genesis 37:1. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.2}

2. In what light did the patriarchs consider their residence in the land of Canaan? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.3}

“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” Hebrews 11:13. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.4}

3. To what did they look forward as a permanent residence? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.5}

“But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.” Hebrews 11:16. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.6}

4. How many sons had Jacob? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.7}

“Now the sons of Jacob were twelve.” Genesis 35:22, last clause. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.8}

5. Which one did Jacob love the most? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.9}

“Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colors.” Genesis 37:3. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.10}

6. How did Joseph’s brethren regard him? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.11}

“And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.” Verse 4. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.12}

7. What made them hate him still more? Verses 5-11. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.13}

8. Upon what errand did Jacob send Joseph? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.14}

“And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I. And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again.So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.” Verses 13, 14. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.15}

9. When his brethren saw him coming, what did they propose to do? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.16}

“And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.” Verses 18, 20. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.17}

10. What did they do with him when he came? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.18}

“And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him; and they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.” Verses 23, 24. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.19}

11. How did they afterwards dispose of him? Verses 25-27. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.20}

12. For how much did they sell him? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.21}

“Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they brought Joseph into Egypt.” Verse 28. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.22}

13. How do the wicked ever regard the just? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.23}

“The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.” Psalm 37:12. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.24}

14. What trait was it that moved Joseph’s brethren to sell him into Egypt? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.25}

“And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt; but God was with him.” Acts 7:9. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.26}

15. What scripture was verified in their case? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.27}

“For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” James 3:16. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.28}

16. In what class is envy placed? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.29}

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Galatians 5:19-21. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.30}

17. What is said of those who do such things? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.31}

18. What course did they take to deceive their father? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.32}

“And they took Joseph’s coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; and they sent the coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found; know now whether it be thy son’s coat or no.” Genesis 37:31, 32. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.33}

19. When Jacob saw the coat, what did he at once conclude? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.34}

“And he knew it, and said, It is my son’s coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.” Verse 33. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.35}

20. How did this affect Jacob? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.36}

“And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.” Verses 34, 35. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.37}

21. Can you recall any actions of Jacob that were of a similar character to this wicked deception? Relate them. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.38}

22. When had Jacob been forgiven for his wicked deeds? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.39}

23. What important lesson may we draw from this?-*That although a sin may be forgiven, the results of it may remain, and the one who committed it will often have it brought before him, and will suffer in consequence*. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.40}

24. What scripture is fulfilled even in this life? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.41}

“For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” Matthew 7:2. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.42}

**NOTES**

In this lesson we have an exemplification of the proverb of Solomon: “Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein; and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.” Proverbs 26:27. Jacob had greatly deceived his father, and his sons in turn deceived him. By Jacob’s deception, his parents were deprived of his society for long years; and he in turn suffered the same sorrow, only in a greater degree, by being deprived of his beloved son. It is true even in this life, that as we measure to others it will be measured to us again, and that without regard to our repentance of the evil. Another example is found in the case of David, who, although he bitterly repented of his great sin, had to suffer the same at the hands of others. It is nowhere claimed that this being forced to receive measure for measure is just but the fact cannot be gainsaid. It is unjust that a man’s sin should be remembered against him after he has repented of it, and God does not do so; but unregenerate men will remember a sin to a man’s injury, no matter how thorough his repentance may have been. And not only so, but from the very nature of things, certain results must follow certain causes. The man who gets in motion a train of circumstances that will result in evil, may repent of his rash act, but he cannot stop what he has begun. How much sorrow we might avoid if we could always remember to “leave off strife before it be meddled with,” and to do to others just as we would wish them to do to us. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.43}

Joseph has been the subject of a great many moral lectures against tale-bearing. Well-meaning but ignorant persons have censured him as the cause of all the discord in Jacob’s family. Such censure is most unjust. Joseph’s brothers were envious of him; but their envy was only the outgrowth of their own wicked hearts, “For where envy and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” A corrupt heart is the only soil in which envy can grow. There is not a particle of evidence that Joseph did any wrong. He is one of the few Bible characters concerning whom no evil is recorded. His father loved him more than all the rest of his sons, because he was more worthy of his love than they were. The same thing moved his brothers to think of killing him, and afterward to sell him, that moved Cain to kill Abel; because their own works were evil, as his were righteous. We do not mean to intimate that Joseph was born without faults; but he certainly had the fear of God before his eyes. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 250.44}

It is worth while in passing, to note the features in which Joseph’s experience resembled that of Christ. Joseph was hated by his brethren; Christ came unto his own, and his own received him not, neither did his brethren believe in him. Joseph was sold into slavery; Christ was sold to his enemies. And both suffered thus, not on their own account, but that they might deliver others. Of course it is not designed to place Joseph on the same plane with Christ, but he may be considered as in some respects a type of Christ. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.1}

If it was wrong to allow envy and jealousy to control the heart in those days it is equally wrong now. Indeed, it would seem that in this age of gospel light and privileges, with the experience of men for ages past written out for our learning, it must be worst then to indulge in such feelings now than then. And, so, it is more dangerous now than then. The nearness of the coming of the Lord is given as a special reason why peace and love should prevail. Says the apostle: “Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold, the Judge standeth before the door.” James 5:9. What a terrible thing it would be if he should open the door and find us thus engaged. “Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:1-5. “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” W. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.2}

**“The Consequence of Pleasing God” The Signs of the Times, 14, 16.**

E. J. Waggoner

**LESSON XIX.—SABBATH, MAY 12**

1. To whom did Joseph’s brethren sell him? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.3}

“Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they brought Joseph into Egypt.” Genesis 37:28. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.4}

2. What did the Midianites do with him? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.5}

“And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh’s, and captain of the guard.” Verse 36. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.6}

3. Who was with Joseph in this strange hand? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.7}

“And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.” Genesis 39:2. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.8}

4. What was the consequence to Joseph of the Lord’s being with him? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.9}

“And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him; and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.” Genesis 39:3, 4. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.10}

“And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt; but God was with him, and delivered him out of all his affliction, and gave him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.” Acts 7:9, 10. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.11}

5. What was the result to Potiphar, from having a godly man in his house? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.12}

“And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian’s house for Joseph’s sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.” Genesis 39:5. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.13}

6. How much responsibility was placed upon Joseph? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.14}

“And he left all that he had in Joseph’s hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured.” Verse 6. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.15}

7. How old was Joseph when he was sold into Egypt? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.16}

“These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father’s wives; and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.” Genesis 37:2. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.17}

8. When he was strongly tempted in Potiphar’s house, what noble stand did he take? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.18}

“But he refused, and said unto his master’s wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife; how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” Genesis 39:8, 9. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.19}

9. Did he stand firm to this resolution? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.20}

“And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.” Verse 10. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.21}

10. What was the immediate result of his upright conduct? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.22}

“And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. And Joseph’s master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king’s prisoners were bound; and he was there in the prison.” Verses 19, 20. Read also verses 11-18. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.23}

11. Who was with Joseph still? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.24}

“But the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.” Verse 21. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.25}

12. What can always be said by one who has the Lord for a companion? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.26}

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.” Psalm 23. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.27}

13. How was this verified in Joseph’s case? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.28}

“But the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.” Genesis 39:21. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.29}

14. What trust was committed to Joseph in the prison? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.30}

“And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph’s hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.” Verse 22. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.31}

15. Why was this? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.32}

“The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper.” Verse 23. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.33}

16. What scripture was fulfilled in Joseph’s case? {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.34}

“When a man’s ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.” Proverbs 16:7. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.35}

**NOTES**

Said the Saviour to his disciples, “Ye are the salt of the earth.” Salt is a preservative; that which would soon decay, if left to itself, may be preserved indefinitely by the addition of a little salt. It is thus that the true followers of Jesus are the salt of the earth. A corrupt generation would soon become so offensive as to necessitate its removal from the earth; but the presence of a humble few who walk in the Spirit, checks the flood of iniquity, and stays the wrath of God. The presence of righteousness has often served to save the lives of wicked men. So God blessed Potiphar, and all that he had, for Joseph’s sake. And since God uses means, it is not presumptuous to suppose that part at least, of the blessing upon Potiphar’s house was because an honest man was administering his affairs. The wicked despise the righteous, yet they owe to them more than they can realize. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.36}

When David had committed the grievous sin of taking the wife of Uriah, and his sin had been brought home to his conscience, he cried out to the Lord: “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.” Psalm 51:4. He realized that his sin was primarily against God. So when Joseph was tempted to wrong his master, he recalled how his master had trusted him by putting everything into his hand, he said, “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” Every act which shows a lack of love for our neighbor, shows a lack of love for God; the wrong which one may do to his fellow-man is only secondary; the greater wrong is against God. Only conscientious souls realize this; those who have not the “fear of God” before their eyes, will not stop to consider the interest of their neighbor, when it comes in conflict with their own pleasure. W. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 251.37}

**“Back Page” The Signs of the Times, 14, 16.**

E. J. Waggoner

There will be no paper issued next week. The next number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, No. 17, will be dated May 4. For this reason we publish to Sabbath-school lessons in this number. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 256.1}

It is announced that Professor Huxley is making inquiries into the phenomena of Spiritualism, with a view to elucidate all there is in it. We shall await with interest the result of his investigations, not because we have any doubt as to the origin of those phenomena, but because Professor Huxley is doubtless an unbiased investigator, and his report will influence many people. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 256.2}

The Pacific Press has just issued a new sixteen-page, illustrated catalogue of Oxford Teachers’ and Reference Bibles, also of Apocraphas and helps to the study of the Bible. They have a large stock and a fine assortment of Oxford Bibles, ranging in price from one dollar to sixteen dollars, and no one can fail to find what will suit him. Send for catalogue. Address Pacific Press, Oakland, Cal. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 256.3}

Elder G. C. Tenney and family will sail on the *Zelandia* for Australia May 3. We are informed that fruit is exceedingly dear in that country; and if any of our brethren and sisters have dried fruit which they would be glad to donate to the mission for the benefit of the faithful laborers there, we are certain that it would be highly appreciated. Any such can bring the fruit with them when they come to the Oakland meeting. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 256.4}

Instances of the ascendancy of Catholicism in this country, are multiplying with startling rapidity. The latest thing is the news that the mayor of Boston ordered the public library to be closed on St. Patrick’s day, and the Chicago Board of Education ordered the public schools of that city to be closed on Good Friday. The *Advance* rightly says that in each case the action was a public impertinence; but if the people were not so generally imbued with the dread of appearing bigoted by opposing Catholic presumption, such impertinence could not be indulged in. Such servility is not only disgusting, but it is alarming. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 256.5}

There are few words more abused than the word “liberty.” Charlotte Conday exclaimed, when on the way to the guillotine, “Oh, liberty, how many crimes are committed in thy name!” In truth it is; for most of the so-called liberty of the present age, or of any age, is sin. Men think that the throwing off of restraint is liberty. They chafe against the restrictions of law, and think to find liberty by breaking through these restraints. But when they find themselves behind prison bars, they learn that liberty is found only in obedience. Said David: “I will walk at liberty; for I seek thy precepts.” Psalm 119:45. The law of God is the will of God. It is that by which the universe is governed. It is as pure as God himself, and as boundless as God’s infinity. Within its just and mild sanctions, there is room for the largest freedom of action. It comprises all the thought and actions of God. What larger scope could one what? It will eventually give the one who walks in it here, the freedom of the universe of God; while on the other hand, the transgressor is always in bondage here, and will at last be deprived not only of liberty, but of life itself. There never was a greater mistake than for a man to think that he could find liberty in having his own way in opposition to the law of God. Far better would it be to make God’s way our way. The grace of God can, if a man will allow it to, so transform him that his highest employment and pleasure will be found in keeping the commandments of God. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 256.6}

**“Liberty” The Signs of the Times, 14, 16.**

E. J. Waggoner

Says the apostle, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” This text is often given a narrow application. Almost everybody has heard the leader of a prayer-meeting urge the people to be free to take part, by saying that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, meaning ... pray or bear testimony. This is no doubt true, but only in the secondary sense. What the apostle meant is that where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom from sin. It is the same as in Galatians 5:18: “But if ye be led of the Spirit ye are not under the law.” There can be no condemnation to one who is walking in the Spirit, and in whose life its fruits are manifested. The law of God is spiritual, the one who transgresses it, grieves the Holy Spirit, and falls into condemnation; he is in bondage; but whoever repents and walks in the law, the peace of God abides in his heart, and the Spirit bears witness with his spirit that he is no more a servant, but a son, and if a son then an heir of God through Christ.... the natural result will be that the man’s heart shall be filled with praise, and that he should ... give utterance to it on every proper occasion. {SITI April 20, 1888, p. 256.7}