**“Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 8:8-13” The Signs of the Times, 16, 1.**

E. J. Waggoner

**(Lesson 16, January 15, 1890.)**

1. What was the old covenant that was made with Israel? Exodus 19:5-8; 24:3-8. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.1}

2. How does the second covenant compare with the first? Hebrews 8:6. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.2}

3. What was the necessity for the second covenant? Verse 7. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.3}

4. Since the second covenant is better than the first, in that it is founded upon better promises, wherein must the first have been faulty? Ans.-In the promises. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.4}

5. What were the promises of the first covenant? Exodus 19:8; 24:3, 7. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.5}

6. What was God’s covenant which the people promised to perform? {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.6}

7. What is said of the nature of those commandments? Psalm 19:7; 119:172. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.7}

8. What of those who do them? Psalm 119:1-3; Ecclesiastes 12:13. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.8}

9. Then could the children of Israel have promised anything better than to keep God’s commandments? {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.9}

10. Wherein, then, was the fault? Hebrews 8:8, first part. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.10}

11. What did the people really promise to do? Exodus 19:5, 6, 8. See note. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.11}

12. What cannot the law do? Romans 3:20. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.12}

13. What renders the law thus powerless? Romans 8:3. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.13}

14. What is all human righteousness? Isaiah 64:6. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.14}

15. What is the only true righteousness? Philippians 3:9. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.15}

16. In the terms of the first covenant do we find any mention of faith, or of divine assistance? {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.16}

**NOTES**

Let the student note that the promises in the old covenant were really all on the part of the people. God said, “If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant [the ten commandments], then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.... and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” God did not say that he would make them such, but that they would be such a people if they obeyed his commandments. It could not be otherwise. The keeping of God’s holy law would constitute them a holy people; and as such they would indeed be a peculiar treasure, even as are all who are zealous of good works. All that was set before them was simply what would result from obedience to the law, and that covenant contained no promises of help in doing that. Therefore the first covenant was a promise on the part of the people that they would make themselves holy. But this they could not do. The promise was a good one; with it alone there could be no fault; the fault lay with the people. The promise was faulty, through the weakness of the people who made it; just as we read in Romans 8:3 that the law was weak through the flesh. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.17}

The first thought in the minds of many, on learning that in the first covenant the people made a promise which they could not possibly fulfill, is that God was unjust to require such a promise. And since they know that God is not unjust, they conclude that the first covenant must have contained pardon and promise of divine assistance, although it contained no hint of it. If the student will wait until the subject of the covenants is concluded, he will see the justice and the mercy of God’s plan. But right here let us fasten these two thoughts: First, if the first covenant had contained pardon, and promise of divine assistance, there would have been no necessity of any other covenant. Pardon and divine aid are all that any soul can get, and if the first covenant had had these, it would not have been faulty. But, second, let it not be forgotten that the fact that there was no pardon, and no Holy Spirit’s aid, in that covenant does not imply that there was no salvation for the people who lived under it. There was ample provision for them, but not in the first covenant. What the provision was, and why the first covenant was given, will be learned later. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.18}

**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

The preliminary steps of the old covenant are recorded in Exodus 19:5-8. We have (1) the words of the Lord to the people setting forth the conditions on which the people would be his peculiar treasure above all other nations; (2) the conditions, obedience to God’s voice, or covenant; and (3) the promise of the people that they would do this. The Lord then utters his voice in the “ten words,” and the covenant is afterward ratified, as recorded in Exodus 24:3-8. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.19}

God’s covenant which he commanded the people to perform is expressly stated to be the ten commandments. Deuteronomy 4:12, 16. They are spoken of as “covenant” because they are the basis of every covenant which God ever made with man or concerning man. They are God’s will, the reflect of his character. They were not, however, the covenant made at Horeb, for that was made concerning the ten commandments, or God’s voice. Israel promised to obey God’s voice before that voice was heard, and when it spoke it uttered the ten commandments and no more. Deuteronomy 5:22. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.20}

The old covenant was broken when Israel disobeyed God. They then forfeited their blessings and privileges, and the covenant became null and void. But their disobedience did not affect the holy law of God. The transgression of a law could not change it; and the proof that Israel transgressed God’s law and thereby forfeited, or lost, their covenant blessings, proves the binding obligation of the law. If the transgression of a law would abolish it, no government would stand, and all authority and rule would be at an end; for it is true that from time immemorial men have transgressed law, and will transgress as long as the heart of man remains unregenerate. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.21}

The covenant made at Horeb is called the “old covenant” because it was first ratified, while in point of fact what is called the “new covenant” was made first, even in the beginning, with the race immediately after the fall. Its blessings and light were embraced through faith by righteous Abel. In fact, it was through faith in all the covenant implies that Abel became righteous. The same covenant was confirmed by the promise and oath of God unto Abraham. It was believed in by patriarch and prophet on the promise of God of what was to be. The covenant was at last ratified by the death of Christ upon the cross, when “the blood of the everlasting covenant” was shed. Hebrews 13:20; Luke 22:20. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.22}

It is to the “new covenant” that the term “everlasting covenant” refers. This is spoken of as the covenant made with David, but it in that case refers to David’s seed, Christ, through whom the covenant was to be established, around whom all the blessings of the covenant clustered, through whom they all came. See 2 Samuel 23:5; Psalm 50:5; 89:28; Isaiah 24:5; 55:3; 61:8; Jeremiah 32:40; Ezekiel 16:60, et al. It is called the “everlasting covenant,” because it is the only means through which the blessings of God have come to fallen man from the beginning to the close of probation. It is synchronous with the “everlasting gospel.” Revelation 14:6. The everlasting gospel is the glad tidings, or good news, of the everlasting covenant. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.23}

True righteousness embraces true motives. God judges acts by motives. If the act is to be worthy, the motive, and the heart which prompts the motive, must be pure and right. But man’s heart is by nature dominated by evil, is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Mark 7:21-23; Jeremiah 17:9. As the fountain is therefore corrupt, the deeds must be. In order that man do righteous acts the heart must be made right. This God cleanses by his wondrous grace and mighty power through faith. He gives us a new heart. He imputes to us the righteousness of God. That righteousness covers all past sins, it issues through the life in present good works. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.24}

The old covenant, or the covenant at Horeb, knew no forgiveness. It gendered to bondage. Galatians 4:24. Bondage came from it. If man could have perfectly obeyed God’s law, and had been released from all past sins, he would have had liberty under the old covenant. But that covenant could not forgive sin, neither could it change the heart. It gendered to bondage. But in the new covenant there is forgiveness, change of heart, light and knowledge of God, and a sinless life forevermore. {SITI January 6, 1890, p. 10.25}

**“Relation of Civil Governments to the Moral Law” The Signs of the Times, 16, 2.**

E. J. Waggoner

Among right-minded persons there can be no question as to the right of earthly governments to exist. There is a class of persons known as “Anarchists,” who deny that there is any necessity for government or law, or that one person has a right for exercise authority over another; but these persons, true to their name, believe in nothing; had they the power, they would cast God down from the throne of the universe as readily as they would the earth monarch from his limited dominion. With such persons we have nothing to do. It is useless to argue with those who will not admit self-evident propositions. The only argument that that can effectually reach them is the strong arm of the law, which they hate. Our argument shall be addressed to those who acknowledge God as the Creator and the supreme Ruler of the universe, and the Bible as the complete and perfect revelation of his will concerning his creatures on this earth. With such, the declaration of the prophet, that “the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Daniel 4:25), and the statement of the apostle, that “the powers that be are ordained of God” (Romans 13:1), together with many other Scripture references to earthly governments, are sufficient evidence that nations have a right to exist. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.26}

Admitting that earthly governments are in the divine order of things, the next question is, For what purpose? The word itself indicates the answer: Governments exist for the purpose of governing, or, in other words, for the purpose of enforcing laws by which justice and harmony may be maintained. The apostle Peter says that governments are sent by the Lord “for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.” 1 Peter 2:13, 14. Paul says also that the ruler if God’s minister to execute wrath upon them that do evil. Romans 13:4. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.27}

The next step in the investigation would naturally be to find out what laws earthly rulers are to execute. This is plainly indicated in the text first referred to. If the ruler is a minister of God, then the laws against which he is to execute *wrath*, need be such laws as God can approve-they must be in perfect harmony with the laws of God. Indeed, it could not be otherwise; for since God’s law is *perfect* (Psalm 19:7), covering in its range every act and thought (see Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14; Hebrews 4:12; Matthew 5:20-22, 27, 28), even, human law must be embraced with its limits. No one can dissent from this proposition. It is one of the fundamental principles of human law, as will be seen by the following extract from Blackstone’s commentaries:- {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.28}

“Upon these two foundations, the law of nature and the law of revelation, depend all human laws; that is to say, that no human laws should be suffered to contradict these. There are, it is true, a great number of indifferent points in which both the divine law and the natural leave a man at his own liberty, but which are found necessary, for the benefit of society, to be restrained within certain limits. And beside it is that human laws have their greatest force and efficacy, for with regard for such points as are not indifferent, human laws are only declaratory of, and act in subordination to the former. To instance in the case of murder: This is expressly forbidden by the divine, and demonstrably by the natural law; and from these prohibitions arises the true unlawfulness of this crime. These human laws that assess a punishment to it, do not at all increase its guilt, or superadd any fresh obligation, *in fora conscientia* [in the court of conscience], to abstain from its perpetration. Nay, if any human law should allow or enjoin as to commit it, we are bound to transgress that human law, or else we must offend both the natural and the divine.”—*Blackstone, vol. 1, p. 36.* {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.29}

The State, then, according to both sacred and secular testimony, has no power to contravene the law of God, it cannot declare an act to be right or wrong unless God’s law so declares it, and in that case the innocence or guilt arising from the performance of the act is due solely to the enactments of God’s moral law, and not to the human enactment, the latter being subordinate to the former. The indifferent points, in which, as Blackstone says, human laws have their only inherent force, are such as regulate commerce, the tariff upon imported goods, etc. These are simply matters of convenience or expediency. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.30}

These questions being settled, the last and most important one is this: How far in morals have human laws jurisdiction? or, For how much of the violation of the moral law has God ordained that earthly rulers shall be his ministers to execute wrath? The Bible, which settles every important question concerning man’s duty, must also divide this. We shall find the answer in the thirteenth chapter of Romans, a portion of which must be briefly examined:- {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.31}

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good.” Romans 13:1-4. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.32}

The “high powers” do not include the *highest* power. While every soul is to be subject to earthly powers, some are absolved from allegiance to God. The service of the two will not be incompatible, so long as the earthly powers fulfill the object for which they are ordained, viz., to act as ministers for *good*. When they forget this, their subjects are bound to follow the example of the apostles under similar circumstances, and say, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 2:28. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.33}

The verses above quoted from the thirteenth of Romans show plainly that earthly governments alone are the subject of consideration in that chapter. The following verses show, with equal clearness, the extent of their jurisdiction:- {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.34}

“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” Romans 13:8-10. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.35}

“He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law,” and “love is the fulfilling of the law.” What law?-Why, the law concerning which earthly rulers are the ministers. The law of God is summed up in the two great commandments: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,” and, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” See Matthew 22:36-40. The second great commandment, defining our duty to our fellow-men, is expanded into the last six precepts of the decalogue, showing to what law he refers when he says, “He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.” To make this still *more* emphatic, he closes his enumeration of the commandments composing the last table of the decalogue, with the statement that “love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is *the fulfilling* of the law.” Now since the apostle is speaking only of earthly governments, and the duty of their subjects, we know that he who does no ill to his neighbor-loves his neighbor as himself-has fulfilled all the law of which these earthly governments are empowered to take notice. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.36}

Thus it is seen that Paul’s argument concerning the office of civil government is confined to the last six commandments of the decalogue. But let it not be supposed that human governments can recognize all violations of even these last six commandments. Earthly governments are solely for the purpose of securing to their subjects mutual rights. So long as a man does no ill to his neighbor, the law cannot molest him. But any violation of the law of God affects the individual himself first of all. For example: Christ said that the seventh commandment may be violated by a single lustful look and evil desire; but such look and desire do not injure anyone except the individual indulging in them; it is only when they result in the commission of the open act of adultery, thus injuring others besides the adulterer himself, that human governments can interfere. To God alone belongs the power to punish sins of the mind. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.37}

Of the sixth commandment we are told that whosoever hates another has violated it; but the State cannot prevent a man from hating another, nor take any notice of hatred until it culminates in open crime. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.38}

There are innumerable ways in which the fifth commandment may be violated, for which the civil government has neither the right nor the power to punish. Only in extreme cases can the State interfere. A man may be covetous, and yet he is not liable to punishment until his covetousness results in open theft or swindling. Yet before the *act* is accomplished, of which the State can take notice, a man’s covetousness or lying or hatred may work great annoyance to his neighbors. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.39}

We see, then, how imperfect are human governments even within the sphere allotted to them. God alone has the power to read the heart, and he alone has the right to “bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.” With matters of purely a religious nature-those which rest solely upon our relation to God, and not to our neighbor-human governments have no right to interfere. Concerning them, each individual is answerable to God alone. E. J. W. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.40}

**“Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 8:8-13” The Signs of the Times, 16, 2.**

E. J. Waggoner

**(Lesson 17, January 22, 1890)**

1. With whom was the old covenant made? Jeremiah 31:31, 32. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.41}

2. With whom did the Lord say he would make a new covenant? Hebrews 8:8. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.42}

3. Have Gentiles any part in the covenants? Ephesians 2:11, 12. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.43}

4. What were the promises of the old covenant? {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.44}

5. What did the people really bind themselves to do? {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.45}

6. Wherein was that covenant faulty? {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.46}

7. What made the promises faulty? {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.47}

8. In what was the second covenant better than the first? Hebrews 8:6. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.48}

9. Repeat the promises of the new covenant. Verses 10-12; Jeremiah 31:33, 34. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.49}

10. Who makes these promises? {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.50}

11. What is the order of their fulfillment? See note. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.51}

12. What is meant by putting the law into the minds of the people? Ans.-So impressing it upon their minds that they would not forget it, and causing them to delight in it, and acknowledge its holiness. Romans 7:12, 22. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.52}

13. What is meant by writing it in their hearts? Ans.-Making it the rule of their lives, the spring of all their actions. In other words, making it a part of them. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.53}

14. What is said of those in whose hearts the law of God is? Psalm 119:11; 37:31. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.54}

15. Whom will such a one be like? Psalm 40:7, 8. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.55}

16. What will be the characteristic of those who have the law written in their hearts? Titus 2:14. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.56}

17. Is not this the object set before the people in the first covenant? Exodus 19:5, 6. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.57}

18. Then wherein is the great difference between the first covenant and the second? Ans.-In the first covenant the people promised to make themselves holy; in the second, God says that he will do the work for them. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.58}

19. In order that this work may be done, what must men do? James 4:7, first clause; 1 Peter 5:6; Romans 6:13. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.59}

20. What is the reason why man who profess to desire righteousness do not obtain it? Romans 10:3. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.60}

21. If they would humble themselves and submit to God, what would he do for them? Isaiah 61:10. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.61}

22. Through whom alone can this righteousness be obtained? Romans 5:17, 19. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.62}

23. What is the condition on which it is given? Romans 3:22. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.63}

**NOTES**

The first of the blessings of the gospel is the forgiveness of sins. The term for this in the quotation in Hebrews is. “I will be merciful to their unrighteousness.” The next is the writing of the law in the hearts of the people. Then comes the final blotting out of sins: “Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” And then comes the close of probation, and the eternal inheritance, when “they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.” Jeremiah 31:34. Then all the people will be taught of the Lord. Isaiah 54:13. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.64}

Israel were indeed be called the people of God; but his dealings with them abundantly prove, what the New Testament plainly declares, that only the faithful are really Israel, and no others were truly his people. The Lord sent word to Pharaoh, saying, “Let my people go, that they may serve me.” Again he said, “Israel is my son, even my firstborn.” He also said he had seen the affliction of his people, and had come to deliver them, and to bring them into the land of Canaan. He did indeed deliver them out of Egypt, but of all the host that went out, only two were brought into the land of Canaan. The rest fell in the desert because of their unbelief. When they rebelled against God, they cut themselves off from being his people. And as he said in the prophecy, and in the text we have been considering, when they refused to continue in his covenant, he regarded them not. To be the people of God in truth, we must have his law in our hearts. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.65}

**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

The old covenant was made with Israel, at Horeb; the new covenant was ratified with the house of Israel when Jesus died upon the cross. To Israel belonged “the covenants,” both the old and new. Romans 9:4. The Gentiles have no promise in that covenant whatever, only as they become a part of Israel. Paul says in Ephesians 2:12 that the Gentiles were “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise.” It is sometimes said that the Sabbath is “Jewish,” but those who say this hardly realize the import of their words. If the Sabbath is Jewish, so also is the new covenant, through which all the blessings and promises come, so also is our Lord. “Salvation is of the Jews.” John 4:22. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.66}

But God has not rejected the Gentiles nor barred the way to their salvation. Those who were aliens may become citizens with the saints. A way has been opened, a “new and living way,” even the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for all, and brings the Gentiles nigh by his blood. If we accept of his gracious provisions of this new covenant, if we through faith lay hold on this divine Redeemer, we become a part of Israel. Ephesians 2:13-20. We are “Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:29. Becoming through faith in Christ a part of the Israel of God, we will not only heed the precepts to Israel, but will share the promises. We will not reject God’s moral law as Jewish, but will rejoice that that law in its entirety and fullness may all be written upon our very hearts. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.67}

He who has an abiding affection for the law of God, will not fail of His kingdom. He will not sin against God (Psalm 119:11); none of his steps shall slide (Psalm 37:31); he will have no stumblingblock (Psalm 119:165, margin). Men’s failures are our stumbling-blocks. Those who fail generally lay the blame to that or those over which or whose acts they stumble. But that over which they stumble is not the cause of stumbling, it is only the occasion; it is simply used for an excuse. They would stumble over something else if not that. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.68}

Many stumble over come act of a brother or sister which they do not consider right. They have had some deal with their brethren, have not gotten a good bargain, and they say, “If such a man is a Christian, we will have no more to do with religion,” and off they go, their steps slide. The brother with whom they dealt may have done wrong. Others may have upheld him in that wrong, but is all this and a thousand times more, a reason why anyone should turn from the Lord? We are not called to serve man, but God. Revelation 14:6, 7. All men are frail and erring. God never fails. If we are serving him, if we love his law, none of these things will move us. It may lead to less confidence in man; it should not shake confidence in God. “Great peace have they which have thy law, and they have none occasion of stumbling.” Psalm 119:165, margin. Revised Version. There is not only no cause, but they will take nothing for an occasion or excuse. Let us always remember that whenever we make anyone else’s failure to do right an occasion of doing wrong ourselves, our heart is not right, the law of God is not written on the heart. God will not fail us; he cannot fail. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 10.69}

Submission from the heart is most precious in God’s sight. It implies humility, meekness, and faith. We would not submit to God unless we believed him. We would not submit unless we were willing to learn his way in the spirit of meekness. We would not submit unless we realized our own nothingness and God’s greatness. Therefore it is only the humble, meek, trusting heart that truly submits to God. Such God will clothe with his righteousness and will keep from evil. {SITI January 13, 1890, p. 27.1}

 **“What and Where Is Paradise?” The Signs of the Times, 16, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee to-day, shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Luke 23:42, 43. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 27.2}

This language will be recognized at once as the request of the penitent thief who was crucified with Jesus, and the reply of our Lord. It has been the subject of an unlimited amount of controversy, and doubtless will be as long as men choose to interpret the Bible according to their system of theology, instead of deriving their system of theology wholly from the Bible. We do not design at this time to give a detailed exposition of the text, but simply to note a few points concerning paradise. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 27.3}

From Christ’s language to Mary, recorded in John 20:17, three days after the crucifixion, it is very evident that he did not go to heaven on the day when he gave the thief the solemn assurance that they should meet in paradise. On account of this text, many who cling tenaciously to the idea that Jesus did not actually die, argue that Christ did go to paradise that day, but that paradise is not in heaven. Then they connect this text with their erroneous reading of 1 Peter 3:18-20, and conclude that paradise is a sort of half-way house-an intermediate place between earth and heaven-where all souls, both good and bad, are retained until the judgment. In short, paradise is made identical with hades. A very few texts will suffice to show that this is a most erroneous conclusion. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 27.4}

First, however, we wish to call attention to the fact that if this definition of paradise were true, the Saviour’s promise to the thief would be made nonsense. If paradise were only a place where souls remain between death and the final judgment, then Christ’s promise to the penitent thief would amount simply to this: To-day shalt thou be with me in the place of the dead! There would certainly be nothing very comforting about that, and nothing that would require the exercise of much faith, seeing both Jesus and the thief were at that time hanging on the cross; but this is what Christ’s answer meant, if the theory be true that paradise and hades are identical. This fact alone should be sufficient to show the fallacy of such a view. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 27.5}

There are only three places in the Bible where the word “paradise” is used. One is in the text quoted at the beginning of this article. The second is in 2 Corinthians 12:2-4, which we quote:- {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 27.6}

“I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth); such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth); how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 27.7}

This text proves conclusively that paradise is not an intermediate place between earth and heaven, but that it is heaven itself. In the first place, Paul says that he (for he speaks of himself) was caught up into the third heaven, and then in repeating the statement for emphasis, he says that he was caught up into paradise. Then Christ’s promise to the thief on the cross involved nothing less than that the thief should be with him in the third heaven. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 27.8}

In Revelation 2:7 we find the following promise, given by the Spirit:- {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.1}

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.2}

From this text we learn that paradise contains the tree of life. Turn now to Revelation 22:1, 2, and read: “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it (that is of the city, see preceeding chapter), and on either side of the river, was there, the tree of life.” Here we learn that the tree of life is in the midst of the New Jerusalem, which contains the throne of God. But the tree of life is in the midst of the paradise of God (Revelation 2:7); therefore we must conclude that the paradise of God is in the midst of the city of God, and that whoever goes to paradise goes into the immediate presence of God. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.3}

“Paradise” is an Anglocised Greek word meaning a park or a beautiful garden. Earthly cities have parks and pleasure gardens, and the heavenly Jerusalem has one also, but as much more beautiful than earthly gardens as the city who builder and maker is God is grander than cities built by man. Now compare this with Ezekiel 28:13: “Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the ardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold.” Read with this the description of New Jerusalem, which contains the paradise of God, that “there shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” Revelation 21:27. This, together with Revelation 2:7 and 22:14, teaches us that entrance into paradise, and enjoyment of its delights, is to be the reward of them who shall overcome through faith in Christ. But the righteous are rewarded only at the coming of the Lord in his kingdom and the resurrection of the just (Matthew 16:27; 23:31; Luke 14:14); and that was just what the thief asked for in the words, “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.” E. J. W. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.4}

**“Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 8:6-13” The Signs of the Times, 16, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

**(Lesson 18, February 1, 1890)**

1. In what does the difference between the old covenant and the new consist? Hebrews 8:6. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.5}

2. What were the promises of the old covenant? {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.6}

3. What are those of the new? {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.7}

4. Was there any promise of pardon in the old covenant? See Exodus 19:3-8; 24:3-8. These scriptures contain the complete record of the making of the old covenant, but they contain no hint of pardon, or of any help through Christ. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.8}

5. Then how did people under the old covenant find salvation? Hebrews 9:14, 15. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.9}

6. Was there actual forgiveness for the people at the very time they sinned? or was forgiveness deferred until the death of Christ? Psalm 32:5; 78:38. Enoch and Elijah were taken to Heaven, which shows that they had received the same fullness of blessing that those will receive who live until the Lord comes. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.10}

7. Since there was present and complete salvation for men who lived under the old covenant, and forgiveness of the transgressions that were under the first covenant came only through the second, what must we conclude? Ans.-That the second covenant really existed at the same time as, and even before, the first covenant. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.11}

8. Tell again what is included in the blessings of the second covenant? {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.12}

9. What will be received by those whose transgressions are forgiven through the new covenant? Hebrews 9:15, last clause. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.13}

10. Whose children are all they who are heirs of the eternal inheritance? Galatians 3:29. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.14}

11. Of how many is Abraham the father? Romans 4:11, 12. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.15}

12. Did Abraham have righteousness? Genesis 26:5. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.16}

13. How did he obtain this righteousness? Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.17}

14. Through whom did Abraham receive this righteousness? Galatians 3:14, first part. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.18}

15. Then could the covenant with Abraham have lacked anything? Ans.-No; having Christ, it had all that can be desired-“all things that pertain to life and godliness.” {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.19}

16. Since all the blessings which people receive through the new covenant, they receive as children of Abraham, can there be any difference between the second covenant and the covenant with Abraham? {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.20}

17. How long before the old covenant was the covenant with Abraham made? Galatians 3:17. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.21}

18. Then why was that “first” covenant made? See notes. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.22}

**NOTES**

The question has often been asked, How could any be saved under the old covenant, if there was no pardon in that covenant? That there was no pardon in that covenant is readily seen: 1. There is no hint of pardon in the covenant itself, as recorded in Exodus 19:5-8, or in the reiteration and ratification of it in chap. 24:3-8, 2. In the sanctuary service there was no blood offered that could take away sin. Hebrews 10:4. There was therefore no chance for pardon in that covenant. But to say they were under that covenant settles nothing as to what was in the covenant. All were under that covenant who lived while it endured. But that was not all. They were “beloved for the Father’s sake.” As children of Abraham, they were also under the Abrahamic covenant, of which their circumcision was the token. John 7:22; Genesis 17:9-14. This was a covenant of faith, already confirmed by the word and oath of the Lord, in Christ, the Seed, and it was not disannulled by any future arrangement. Galatians 3:15-17. All who were of faith were blessed with faithful Abraham. Verses 6-9. Overlooking this plain fact, which indeed lies at the very foundation of gospel faith in the new covenant, which is but the development of the Abrahamic, some have ascribed salvation to the covenant at Horeb. But, according to both Scripture and reason, if salvation had been possible in that covenant, there was no need of the second. Hebrews 7:11; 10:1, etc. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.23}

Though much dissatisfaction is expressed by commentators with the received rendering of Hebrews 9:1, their suggestions do not make it very greatly different. The first covenant is said to have had ordinances of divine service and a sanctuary for this world. But these were superadditions, not at all necessary to the covenant, but quite necessary as types of the sacrifice and priesthood of the new covenant. They all recognized the existence of sin; but no sin was taken away by them. Hebrews 10:3, 4. As a sanctuary of this world, and offerings that could not take away sin, were connected to that covenant, these things themselves were but recognitions of the fact that there was no pardon in that covenant. By those things the people expressed faith in the mediation of the new covenant. If any pardon had been contained in that covenant, we must conclude that some means would have been devised to make that fact manifest. But there was not. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.24}

The word sanctuary means a holy place, or the dwelling-place of God. Indeed, the same word is often used in the Hebrew for sanctuary and holiness. All can see that it is derived from a verb which signifies to sanctify or make holy. The sanctuary being a holy dwelling, and being divided into two rooms each of course was a holy place. And each is called *the holy*. See Leviticus 16:2. Here the word “holy” is used, and we learn only by the description-within the veil before the mercy-seat, which is upon the ark-that the inner holy is meant. Inasmuch as in the second was placed the ark, containing the tables of stone on which were the commandments-the most sacred things committed to them,-it was called the most holy, or, properly, according to the Hebrew, the holy of the holies. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.25}

What was in the ark? Few subjects have occasioned more perplexity than this description of what was in the ark. The apostle specifies, as being in the holy place, only the candlestick and the table upon which was the bread; whereas it is certain that the golden altar of incense was also therein. Moses had direction to put the two tables of testimony in the ark. Exodus 26:16, 21. This order he obeyed. Exodus 40:29; Deuteronomy 10:5. But we do not read of his putting anything else in the ark, or of his being ordered to do so. In 1 Kings 8:9 it is distinctly said that “there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel.” This was spoken of the time when the vessels of the sanctuary were brought into their appropriate places in the temple built by Solomon. Dr. Clarke says:- {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.26}

“As Calmet remarks, in the temple which was afterwards built, there were many things added which were not in the tabernacle, and several things left out. The ark of the covenant and the two tables of the law were never found after the return from the Babylonish captivity. We have no proof that, even in the time of Solomon, the golden pot of manna, or the rod of Aaron, was either in or near the ark.... We need not trouble ourselves to reconcile the various scriptures which mention these subjects, some of which refer to the tabernacle, others to Solomon’s temple, and others to the temple built by Zorobabel, which places were very different from each other.” {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.27}

That changes took place is evident. If Paul wrote of the tabernacle in the days of Moses, then the rod of Aaron and the pot of manna had been removed from the ark before the time of Solomon, which some suggest might have occurred while the ark was in the hands of the Philistines. Or, otherwise, Paul was speaking of things as they existed some time after Solomon, of which we have no account in the Scriptures. Which is the case is not at all material. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.28}

None should allow themselves to be confused by the terms first covenant and second covenant. While the covenant made at Sinai was called “the first covenant,” it is by no means the first covenant that God ever made with man. Long before that he made a covenant with Abraham, and he also made a covenant with Noah, and with Adam. Neither must it be supposed that the first or old covenant existed for a period of time as the only covenant with the people before the promise of the second or new covenant could be shared. If that had been the case, then during that time there would have been no pardon for the people. What is called the “second covenant” virtually existed before the covenant was made at Sinai; for the covenant with Abraham was confirmed in Christ (Galatians 3:17); and it is only through Christ that there is any value to what is known as the second covenant. There is no blessing that can be gained by virtue of the second covenant that was not promised to Abraham. And we, with whom the second covenant is made, can share the inheritance which it promises only by being children of Abraham. To be Christ’s is the same as to be children of Abraham (Galatians 3:29); all who are of faith are the children of Abraham and share in his blessing (verses 7-9); and since no one can have anything except as children of Abraham, it follows that there is nothing in what is called the second covenant that was not in the covenant made with Abraham. The second covenant existed in every feature long before the first, even from the days of Adam. It is called “second” because both its ratification by blood and its more minute statement were after that of the covenant made at Sinai. More than this, it was the second covenant made with the Jewish people. The one from Sinai was the *first* made with that nation. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 42.29}

When it is demonstrated that the first covenant-the Sinaitic covenant-contained no provisions for pardon of sins, some will at once say, “But they *did* have pardon under that covenant.” The trouble arises from a confusion of terms. It is not denied that *under* the old covenant, *i.e*., during the time when it was specially in force, there was pardon of sins, but that pardon was not offered in the old covenant, and could not be secured by virtue of it. The pardon was secured by virtue of something else, as shown by Hebrews 9:15. Not only was there the opportunity of finding free pardon of sins, and grace to help in time of need, during the time of the old covenant, but the same opportunity existed before that covenant was made, by virtue of God’s covenant with Abraham, which differs in no respect from that made with Adam and Eve, except that we have the particulars given more in detail. We see, then, that there was no necessity for provisions to be made in the Sinaitic covenant for forgiveness of sins. The plan of salvation was developed long before the gospel was preached to Abraham (Galatians 3:8), and was amply sufficient to save to the uttermost all who would accept it. The covenant at Sinai, was made for the purpose of making the people see the necessity of accepting the gospel. {SITI January 20, 1890, p. 43.1}

**“The Wickedness of Church and State Union” The Signs of the Times, 16, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the last number of the last volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in answer to a question, we showed how impossible it is that civil government should have anything to do with the moral law. The argument, in brief, was that the law is spiritual, and civil government cannot enforce spirituality, nor punish for the lack of this. In continuation of that line of thought, we wish to show the consequences that must necessarily result from carrying into practice the idea that it is the province of the civil government to enforce the divine law. We shall do this by making a few quotations. In the Senate document containing the hearing (December 13, 1889) before the Committee on Education and Labor, on the Sunday-Rest bill, we find on pages 65, and 66 certain statements made by Senator Blair, the chairman of the committee, and the author of the bill. He first asked Dr. Lewis the following questions:- {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.2}

“Suppose that human beings trying to live in accordance with the will of God, re-enact his law and write it in their statute-book; is it wrong for society to put in the public law the requirement of obedience to God and his law?” {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.3}

And then after a few words he proceeded to answer his own question in the following manner:- {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.4}

“The will of God exists. He requires the observance of the seventh day just as he prohibits murder; and so we re-enact his law, in making a law and enforcing it against murder, so all the States have enacted laws against the desecration of the Sabbath, going further or not so far, according to the various Legislatures.” {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.5}

Let the reader give particular attention to the idea advanced by Senator Blair, that human beings may re-enact the law of God. The same idea was advanced by Mr. Crafts in the *Christian Statements* of May 30, 1889. Said he:- {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.6}

“The laws of our statute-books that re-enact the seventh commandment are as distinctly biblical in their origin as the laws that re-enact a part of the fourth commandment.” {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.7}

In what position does this place civil government? The only answer that can be given is that it puts it in the place of God, and makes it at least equal with God. Nay, more, in putting it in the place of God, it puts it above God; for if the State re-enacts and enforces the law of God, supposing such a thing to be possible, it takes the law out of his hands, leaving him nothing to do, and requires men to give supreme allegiance to the State. This will be more apparent when we quote another statement made by Senator Blair, in the connection before referred to. Said he:- {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.8}

“Now the question comes right to this point: God having ordained the Sabbath, as you concede with all religious organizations, here is the national government, which alone can make that law of God operative in this sphere of national action. Why shall not the civil government, then, re-enact that conceded law of the Almighty and make it effective?” {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.9}

Do we not say truly that the National Reform idea, as voiced here by Senator Blair, puts the State in the place of God? He believes that national government alone can make the law of God effective. We say, with as much reverence as the subject will allow, that we cannot see what use those who hold such an idea can have for God. They have usurped his prerogative. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.10}

In the second chapter of 2 Thessalonians the apostle Paul describes a certain power, known as the “man of sin,” the result of the working of the “mystery of iniquity.” This power is described as opposing and exalting itself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, and claiming really to be God. It has generally been considered that this language is a description of the Papacy, and we believe that that interpretation is correct; but surely it describes nothing more accurately than a government which should attempt to do just what Senator Blair says this government ought to do. Therefore, everyone who believes this language of Paul to refer to the Papacy must admit that a government according to the National Reform idea would be nothing more than an image to the Papacy. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.11}

But there is another point to be noticed in this connection, and that is the inevitable result of putting such ideas into practice. If it were universally conceded that the civil government has the power and the right to re-enact and enforce the law of God, that would involve the conclusion that there is no more to the moral law than civil government can enforce. The result would be the universal prevalence of immorality, and immorality of the worst kind, insomuch as the individuals would suppose themselves to be acting in harmony with divine law. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.12}

For example, take Mr. Blair’s statement to the effect that as we re-enact the law of God in making a law and enforcing it against murder, so all the States have enacted laws against the desecration of the Sabbath. Suppose the National Reform scheme has become triumphant, and it is understood that the government takes the place of God, and enforces the divine law against murder, the result would be that any individual who did not in his envy and hatred toward his fellows go to the extreme of depriving them of life, would consider himself a moral man, although he might be full of hatred, malice, and envy. Take Mr. Craft’s idea that the State re-enacts the seventh commandment. It needs no argument to show that the State cannot punish man for vicious thoughts, or evil desires, or for any grade of licentiousness short of the overt act of adultery. But ministers and law-makers teach that the State enforce the seventh commandment; therefore the conclusion which the libertine would be warranted in making would be that he is a moral man if he abstains from violence. And so, when this National Reform idea shall be carried into effect, we shall have the State actually teaching vice and immorality. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.13}

Such a condition of things would be a union of Church and State in its fullest extent. The Dark Ages stand as the great example of the effects of the union of Church and State, yet all that was done then was the enforcement by civil government of what the church claimed was the law of God. We think that our friends can readily see from this that when the United States, or any other government, legislates concerning any one or the whole of the commandments, it effects just to that extent a union of Church and State; and the argument already given shows how dangerous to morality and pure religion is such a union. The state of morality will be just as much below the true morality as the power that pressures to enforce the law of God is below God. Are there any of our Christian readers who wish to see such a condition of things in the United States, or who will lend their influence to bring it about? E. J. W. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.14}

**“Letter to the Hebrews. Chapter 9:1-7” The Signs of the Times, 16, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

**(Lesson 19, February 8, 1890)**

1. What does the apostle say that the first covenant had? Hebrews 9:1. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.15}

2. Were these a part of that covenant? See Exodus 19:3-6; 24:3-8. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.16}

3. What is meant by ordinances of divine service? Ans.-Ceremonies of divine appointment. There is no divine service without divine appointment. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.17}

4. What is meant by a worldly sanctuary? Ans.-A sanctuary of the world, in distinction from the one in heaven. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.18}

5. Where is the only real sanctuary? Hebrews 8:1, 2. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.19}

6. What relation did the worldly sanctuary and its services sustain to the heavenly? Verse 5. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.20}

7. How many apartments were in the tabernacle? Hebrews 9:2, 3. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.21}

8. What were the two apartments called?-*Ib*. See note. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.22}

9. What was in the holy? Verse 2; Exodus 40:23-27. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.23}

10. What was in the holiest of all? Hebrews 9:4. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.24}

11. What was in the ark? Compare Exodus 25:31; 1 Kings 8:9. See note. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.25}

12. What was the cover of the ark called? Hebrews 9:5; Exodus 25:21. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.26}

13. Why was it called the mercy-seat? Ans.-It was there that mercy was dispensed. The sanctuary was God’s dwelling-place; the ark represented his throne; and from his throne he dispenses grace, or favor, or mercy. See Hebrews 4:16. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.27}

14. How often did the priests go into the sanctuary? Hebrews 9:5. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.28}

15. How often was there service in the most holy? Verse 7. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.29}

16. Why was this service performed? {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.30}

17. What alone is sin? 1 John 3:4. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.31}

18. What was the basis of the old covenant? {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.32}

19. What, then, was it that made it necessary for that covenant to have ordinances of divine service connected with it? {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.33}

20. Does the new covenant have ordinances of divine service? Hebrews 9:1. The word “also” indicates that it had already been shown that the second covenant had ordinances of divine service. This was done in chapter 7 and 8. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.34}

21. Then what must be the basis of the second covenant? {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.35}

**NOTES**

Hebrews 9:1 is a text that hinders many from seeing that all of God’s blessings to man are gained by virtue of the second covenant, and not by the first. That text reads: “Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.” This, together with the fact that when men complied with these ordinances of divine service, they were forgiven (Leviticus 4), seems to some conclusive evidence that the old covenant contained the gospel and its blessings. But forgiveness of sins was not secured by virtue of those offerings; “for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” Hebrews 10:4. Forgiveness was obtained only by virtue of the promised sacrifice of Christ (Hebrews 9:15), the Mediator of the new covenant, their faith in whom was shown by their offerings. So it was by virtue of the second or new covenant that pardon was secured to those who offered the sacrifices provided for in the ordinances of divine service connected with the old or first covenant. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.36}

Moreover, those “ordinances of divine service” formed no part of the first covenant. If they had, they must have been mentioned in the making of that covenant; but they were not. They were connected with it, but not a part of it. They were simply the means by which the people acknowledged the justice of their condemnation to death for the violation of the law which they had covenanted to keep, and their faith in the Mediator of the new covenant. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.37}

In brief, then, God’s plan in the salvation of sinners, whether now or in the days of Moses, is: The law sent home emphatically to the individual, to produce conviction of sin, and thus to drive the sinner to seek freedom; then, the acceptance of Christ’s gracious invitation, which was extended long before, but which the sinner would not listen to; and lastly, having accepted Christ, and being justified by faith, the manifestation of the faith, through the ordinances of the gospel, and the living of a life of righteousness by faith in Christ. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.38}

The Bible, to one who is in the habit of devotedly reading it, begets in the soul a consciousness that excludes all doubt as to its truth. To that consciousness it comes with a self-evidencing power that is both sufficient and conclusive. That man spontaneously believes, and really has not time, or taste, or place in his soul for doubts. {SITI January 27, 1890, p. 43.39}