**“Jurisdiction of the Law. Why the Law Was Spoken Only to the Jews. (Concluded.)” The Signs of the Times, 17, 36.**

E. J. Waggoner

Now why was it that only the Jews had the written law? Did the giving of the law to them indicate partiality on the part of God?—Not by any means; “for there is no respect of persons with God.” Before the exode, all the world was on a level, so far as written revelation was concerned. When sin separated man from God so that he could no longer talk with him face to face, then God supplemented the light which men had in their own hearts by communicating with them in visions and dreams given to his prophets (Numbers 12:6), and by sending angels to them (Genesis 22:15). Had all men hearkened to the voice of conscience, the communication thus opened between God and man would have been sufficient to bring them at last to the state where the law would be perfectly restored in their hearts. This is that which God is still striving to accomplish. Hebrews 8:10. {SITI September 7, 1891, p. 259.27}

But men did not care to follow even that portion of the law which they retained in their hearts, and consequently God could not send them more light through his prophets. Thus, “as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a mind void of judgment.” Romans 1:28. In process of time, only one family retained the knowledge of God, and all the rest of the world were destroyed for their abominable wickedness. {SITI September 7, 1891, p. 259.28}

Within four hundred years after the flood, men had again corrupted their way on the earth, and only Abraham remained loyal to God. He kept God’s commandments (Genesis 26:5), and had the determination to command his children and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment (Genesis 18:19). In order that the descendants of Abraham might retain the knowledge of God, God called Abraham away from his corrupt associates, and gave him the rite of circumcision, in order that the separation might be complete. This rite was not designed to be a mark of birth or nationality, but simply as a means of keeping the observers of God’s law from the contaminating influence of those who did not regard it; for whenever one of any other nation became willing to separate from his people and keep the law, he also became circumcised. Genesis 17:12. {SITI September 7, 1891, p. 259.29}

This precaution served to keep the descendants of Abraham a distinct people through all their wanderings, and to preserve among them the knowledge of the true God. Some from other tribes, getting the light from them, would occasionally turn to the Lord, to keep his commandments, and, becoming circumcised, would be counted as the descendants of righteous Abraham; but the great mass of the world chose to remain in the darkness of heathenism. Thus it happened that when the Lord brought his people from Egyptian bondage, they alone of all the people in the world had a knowledge of God. All the rest could say with Pharaoh, “I know not the Lord.” At that time the Lord chose to give mankind his law in a manner so plain that it could not possibly be mistaken, and so that they could always meditate in it in its perfection, even though no prophet were at hand. By this means the Spirit could make greater progress, so to speak, in writing the law in their hearts. But to whom could he speak the law? Only to those who knew him, and would accept the law as coming from him. Therefore he was compelled to give the written law to the Jews, and make them light bearers to the world. The law, when it entered, came to the Jews, not because it was designed for them alone, but because they alone would receive it. {SITI September 7, 1891, p. 259.30}

As a further evidence that God was not moved by race considerations, and did not give the law exclusively to the Jews as a nation, we may notice the fact that when the Jews left Egypt, “a mixed multitude went up also with them.” Exodus 12:38; Numbers 11:4. This “mixed multitude” was composed to Egyptians, and, no doubt, of people of other nationalities. These went along with the Jews, and with them received the law from God at Mount Sinai. {SITI September 7, 1891, p. 259.31}

We cannot close this portion of our subject without giving, from the pen of another, the following graphic portrayal of the condition of a people who should have no regard for the law of God:— {SITI September 7, 1891, p. 259.32}

“No error accepted by the Christian world strikes more boldly against the authority of Heaven, none is more directly opposed to the dictates of reason, none is more pernicious in its results, than the modern doctrine, so rapidly gaining ground, that God’s law is no longer binding upon men. Every nation has its laws, which command respect and obedience; no government could exist without them; and can it be conceived that the Creator of the heavens and the earth has no law to govern the beings he has made? Suppose that prominent ministers were publicly to teach that the statutes which govern their land and protect the rights of its citizens were not obligatory,—that they restricted the liberties of the people, and therefore ought not to be obeyed; how long would such men be tolerated in the pulpit? But is it a graver offense to disregard the laws of States and nations than to trample upon those divine precepts which are the foundation of all government? When the standard of righteousness is set aside, the way is open for the prince of evil to establish his rule in the earth. {SITI September 7, 1891, p. 259.33}

“Wherever the divine precepts are set aside, sin ceases to appear sinful, or righteousness desirable. Those who refuse to submit to the government of God are wholly unfitted to govern themselves. Through their pernicious teachings, the spirit of insubordination is implanted in the hearts of children and youth, who are naturally impatient of control; and a lawless, licentious state of society results. While scoffing at the credulity of those who obey the requirements of God, the multitudes eagerly accept the delusions of Satan. They give the rein to lust, and practice the sins which called down judgments upon the heathen. {SITI September 7, 1891, p. 259.34}

“Let the restraint imposed by the divine law be wholly removed, and human laws would soon be disregarded. Because God forbids dishonest practices,—coveting, lying, and defrauding,—men are ready to trample upon His statutes as a hindrance to their worldly prosperity; but the results of banishing these precepts would be such as they do not anticipate. If the law were not binding, why should any fear to transgress? Property would no longer be safe. Men would obtain their neighbors’ possessions by violence, and the strongest would become richest. Life itself would not be respected. Those who disregard the commandments of God sow disobedience to reap disobedience. The marriage vow would no longer stand as a sacred bulwark to protect the family. He who had the power, would, if he desired, take his neighbor’s wife by violence. The fifth commandment would be set aside with the fourth. Children would not shrink from taking the life of their parents, if by so doing they could obtain the desire of their corrupt hearts. The civilized world would become a horde of robbers and assassins; and peace, rest and happiness would be banished from the earth.”—*Mrs. E. G. White, in Great Controversy, vol. 4, chap. 31.* {SITI September 7, 1891, p. 259.35}

This is just the state of things that would exist, not only in this world, but in all the universe, if the ten commandments were not the universal rule of action. If there be any portion of the universe where the decalogue is not the recognized law, the above paragraphs accurately describe the condition of its society. E. J. W. {SITI September 7, 1891, p. 259.36}

**“The End Approaching” The Signs of the Times, 17, 37.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Matthew 24:14. This language occurs in the discourse which the Saviour delivered in answer to the question, “What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” The entire chapter in which these words occur is an answer to this question. The question as to whether or not the Lord will come again is not mooted. There was no uncertainty in the minds of the disciples on this point. They very well knew that the Lord would come to reign over his people; all that troubled them was to know the signs which should precede his coming. These the Saviour proceeded to give. Besides the physical signs in the sun, moon, and stars, which have all been fulfilled, he gave the one which heads this paragraph, and which is now in process of fulfillment. {SITI September 14, 1891, p. 259.37}

What is “this gospel of the kingdom”? It is that which our Saviour preached in all his earthly ministry. Matthew 4:23; Mark 1:14. “Gospel,” means “good news.” The gospel which is to be preached “in all the world,” “to all people,” is the good news of a Saviour, “which is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:10, 11. A Saviour must save people from something, and so we find that Jesus saves his people from their sins. Matthew 1:21. But the wrath of God (Romans 1:18; Ephesians 5:5, 6), resulting in death (Romans 6:23), is visited upon all sin; so that the salvation of people from sin must also be salvation from the wrath of God, and so it is (Romans 5:9). Being saved from sin may be equivalent to being justified by faith, but being saved from wrath is the final and complete salvation from sin and all its consequences. And this is the salvation of which Isaiah speaks when he says that “Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an *everlasting salvation.*” Isaiah 45:17. It is that salvation which the apostle Peter says shall be brought unto us “at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:9-13. {SITI September 14, 1891, p. 259.38}

This final salvation is the end or object of our faith. 1 Peter 1:9. People may talk as much as they please about doing right for its own sake, but the fact remains that if there were to be no future life there would be no incentive to right living. Paul says, that “if in this we” only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable” (1 Corinthians 15:19), and in harmony with this he continues that if there is no resurrection we would do well to eat and drink, and get all the enjoyment we can from this life while it is passing (1 Corinthians 15:32). What comfort would it be to a sinner to assure him that his sins are all forgiven, but that there is nothing for him beyond this present life?—None at all. In such a case forgiveness of sins would profit him nothing. So then the preaching of the gospel comprehends not alone the announcement that Christ died for sinners, but that through his death he has brought immortality to light. We believe that no one who has ever professed to preach the gospel has omitted the fact that an eternal inheritance awaits the overcomers. {SITI September 14, 1891, p. 259.39}

But this eternal inheritance is “reserved in heaven,” and is to be revealed only “in the last time.” 1 Peter 1:4, 5. It is only when Christ comes “the second time” that salvation is brought to them that look for him. Christ himself told his disciples (John 14:1-3) that he would come again to receive them unto himself so that they might be with him, plainly indicating that they could be with him in no other way except by his second coming. Even though they should die they could not be with him unless he should return. Compare John 8:21 and 13:33. And in harmony with this Paul says, “by the word of the Lord,” that “the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so [that is, by this means] shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. {SITI September 14, 1891, p. 259.40}

Now what have we found?—Just this: That the gospel brings to view eternal redemption, and that any preaching of the gospel which should omit the future inheritance of the saints would be very incomplete, and that there is no future inheritance for the saints unless the Lord comes again. Therefore we are justified in saying that the preaching of the gospel necessarily includes the preaching of the second coming of Christ, and that those who ignore or deny the second coming of Christ do not preach the whole gospel. Still further; in the fourteenth of Revelation we read of three messages that immediately precede the second coming of Christ. Verses 6-14. The first of these messages announces the hour of God’s judgment come, and it and the two which follow give instruction how to prepare for that event. The Third Angel’s Message includes both the others, and contains the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus,—the sum of all the instruction necessary to make “the remnant of Israel” a pure people, prepared for the coming of the Lord. It is the gospel in its simplicity and purity, and is therefore the gospel just as it was preached by Christ and his apostles. It announces the second coming of Christ, and tells how to be ready for that event. Therefore we confidently affirm that our Saviour’s words in Matthew 24:14 may justly be paraphrased thus: “And the Third Angel’s Message shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” We think that no one who has carefully followed this brief exposition can dissent from this conclusion. {SITI September 14, 1891, p. 291.1}

This thing,—the preaching of the Third Angel’s Message in all the world, to all nations,—is all that remains to be done before the coming of the Lord; and this work will be cut short in righteousness; “because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.” Romans 9:28. And short indeed it must be, for we *know* from our Saviour’s own words that his coming is now so near that he is “even at the doors.” Matthew 24:33. The generation now living upon the earth will witness the coming of the Lord with all his holy angels. There is no conjecture about this, no assumption. It is just as true as that Christ is the Son of God. E. J. W. {SITI September 14, 1891, p. 291.2}

**“Carest Thou Not That We Perish?” The Signs of the Times, 17, 38.**

E. J. Waggoner

The disciples of Jesus were on the sea in a terrific storm. The winds sweeping down from various quarters into the valley of the lake had “lifted up the waves thereof” so that the boat was tossed about like a toy. The men were at their wits’ end, for neither sail nor oar could make any headway against the tempest. The waves dashed over the boat, and beat into it until it was full and in a sinking condition. Destruction seemed to be the only thing before them, when they thought of the Master. Where is he? In the midst of the tumult he is quietly sleeping in the hinder part of the boat. “And they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?” Mark 4:38-40. {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.3}

As we read the record we cannot help wondering at the reproachful question which they asked Jesus, “Carest thou not that we perish?” Are you so unmindful of us that you can calmly sleep while we are about to be swallowed up by the sea? Is this your care for those who have left all to follow you? Their thought was only of themselves, and they did not stop to consider that he was in the boat with them. In their faithless fright they did not think that if the boat went down with then, supposing that it were possible, it would take him down too. {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.4}

If they had but allowed this thought to come into their minds, it would not only have checked their selfish reproach of the Master, but it would have calmed their fears; for surely He who made the sea, and to whom it belongs, who “hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm,” could not perish in the stormy waves. The creature could not destroy the Creator. So the fact that Jesus was in the boat was the surest protection that they could have. It was safer in the storm with him than in the calm without him. {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.5}

Is there not in this a lesson for us? How often when people are in deep distress and affliction,—when the waters have almost overwhelmed them and the proud waters have actually gone over their souls,—they say, “Why do we suffer this? Has God forgotten us? Does not the Master care for our trouble?” Oh, how many, many times has the Master been pained by such words of selfish, faithless reproach from those who call themselves by his name! {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.6}

But, what are the facts in the case? The Master is actually in the same trouble with them, and, although to them he may seem to be sleeping, and indifferent to their fate, he is suffering as much as they. Listen to the words of eternal truth: “When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not; for I am with thee.” Isaiah 43:2-5. {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.7}

Do you say that this promise is for those who have perfect trust in God, but that you are too unworthy for it to apply in your case? Not so; remember the disciples in the boat; their fears had drowned their feeble faith, yet the Master was with them none the less. And his promise is that he will be with us; nay, he *is* with us. “If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself.” 2 Timothy 2:13. It is this knowledge of his faithfulness that begets faith in us. {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.8}

Read also the words concerning the Lord’s presence with his people in the past, and remember that he is “the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.” “In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old.” Isaiah 63:9. “There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.” Deuteronomy 33:26, 27. {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.9}

“Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding? He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength.” Isaiah 40:27-29. And yet feeble men, who cannot see one moment ahead of them, and who can see only the most insignificant portion of that which is present with them, dare to murmur against God, because they cannot understand his dealings with them. {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.10}

There is not a human ill but that Jesus knows it. “For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.” Psalm 103:14. Not only does he know, but he *cares*. “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” 1 Peter 5:7. Not only does he know our trouble, as something that he sees, but he actually shares it. He took on him our nature, being made in all things like unto his brethren. Thus he established a connection between us and him, so that whatever affects us affects him. {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.11}

How, then, can we murmur and complain? How can we fear and be troubled for the future? Is not the Master in the boat with us? Is he not sharing our danger? Do we believe the assurance of his word? Then how can we spend time pitying ourselves? To do so—to murmur at our hard lot, or to wonder why such trials are allowed to come upon *us*—is to disbelieve the Master’s words: “I am with thee;” “I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee.” {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.12}

And then it is not only that our selfish fears will be forgotten in the thought that Jesus shares our trouble, but we may rejoice in the midst of the storm, knowing that *he* cannot perish, and that therefore while he is with us *we* cannot perish. Though death itself may come, that need not shake our faith, for he died, and in that very act conquered death. Even in this we may triumph. For “who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:35-39. {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.13}

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.” Psalm 46:1, 2. Whatever the danger, however great the storm, we may be calm in the confidence that He who rules all things is with us, and so we may say, “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid.” Isaiah 12:2. E. J. W. {SITI September 21, 1891, p. 291.14}

**“An Important Question” The Signs of the Times, 17, 39.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.” Matthew 19:16-22. {SITI September 28, 1891, p. 291.15}

The question asked by the young ruler is one that has been asked by thousands, and one that should interest every person. Life is a boon of inestimable value; men will spend the earnings of years, and travel to the utmost limits of the globe, in order to prolong their lives for a few years. How eagerly, then, should they grasp anything which will lengthen out their lives to all eternity! It is indeed wonderful that so few manifest an interest in that which pertains to their eternal welfare, while they are so zealous for life and happiness for a short time. In this the majority of mankind manifest only the wisdom of the infant who seizes the glittering toy, and rejects the infinitely more valuable bag of treasure. But there are some who are anxiously inquiring, “What must I do to be saved?” and to such the words of our Lord himself on this subject must be of all-absorbing interest. {SITI September 28, 1891, p. 291.16}

Having incidentally settled the point of his oneness with God, our Lord immediately answers the question, “What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” He did not say, “You must not do anything,” but said plainly, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” The young man, greatly surprised, asked, “Which?” being a ruler of the Jews, he had, of course, kept the law, and prided himself on the strictness with which he had heeded all its requirements. The strictness of the Pharisees, extending even to the minutest forms of ceremonies, is proverbial. The young man, doubtless, like Paul, lived after the “straitest sect” of the Jews’ religion. We can therefore imagine the astonishment and assurance with which he uttered the word, “Which?” as much as to say: “Why, are there any other commandments? Have you some new ones that are not written in the law? If so, tell me what they are.” Jesus calmly quotes a portion of the ten commandments, as showing the law to which he has reference. The fact that he did not quote all of them is no proof that he did not design that all should be kept. He did not quote the first nor the third, yet no one would argue from this that Christ meant to indicate to the young man that he could worship idols or indulge I profanity and still be saved. He simply quoted enough to show that he referred to that which was regarded by all as the law, and that he had no new commandment to offer. {SITI September 28, 1891, p. 291.17}

Before commenting further on the observance of the commandments as the condition of eternal life, or the truth of the young man’s reply in verse 20, we wish to briefly notice what this law is. In a matter of life and death it will not do to make a mistake. If the commandments are to be the test of our fitness for eternal life, we must have those commandments so clearly defined that there can be no doubt. Fortunately, this is not a difficult thing to do. In the third month after the children of Israel left Egypt, they came to the wilderness of Sinai. The Lord told them to make certain preparations, for within three days he would come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. Exodus 19:10, 11. Nehemiah tells us why he thus came down: “Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments.” Nehemiah 9:13. His object, then, in coming down was to give the people laws of truth, good statutes. Besides this, Nehemiah says, “And commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant.” Verse 14. If now we can distinguish between the statutes given by the Lord himself and those given through Moses, we shall have discovered that which we seek-the condition of eternal life. {SITI September 28, 1891, p. 291.18}

Returning to Exodus, we find that when the necessary preparations had been completed, the Lord did come down upon Mount Sinai, with fire and smoke, thunders and lightnings, and an earthquake. Exodus 19:16-18. In the twentieth chapter, verses 3-17, we find the words which the Lord spoke from the mount. In Deuteronomy 4:11-13 Moses rehearses the scenes of Sinai, and plainly says that the words which God spoke are the ten commandments. But may it not be that there is something besides these? Let us see. In the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses, in the course of his last charge to the people, repeated in substance these ten commandments as recorded in Exodus 20:3-17. When he had finished the recital, he said: “These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and *he added no more*. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them to me.” Deuteronomy 5:22. {SITI September 28, 1891, p. 291.19}

Of these commandments, Moses said: “Thou shalt teach them unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.” Deuteronomy 6:7, 8. That these are the commandments, the keeping of which is the condition of eternal life, is proved by verse 25: “And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us.” {SITI September 28, 1891, p. 291.20}

We have now found the commandments to which our Lord referred. We are not now concerned with the particulars of the laws given through Moses, since the keeping of them is not required. “What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” is the question in which we are now interested, and those things not pertaining to this may be passed by. We know what the law is. Next week we will consider the nature of the law, to see why the keeping of it should be able to confer immortality. E. J. W. {SITI September 28, 1891, p. 307.1}