

Nailed to the Cross but Raised in Glory

Description

Nailed to the Cross but Raised in Glory

TEN COMMANDMENTS
TWICE REMOVED

THE TRUTH
TWICE REJECTED

1888
A PAST FAILURE CAUSES A PRESENT CRISIS

by [Doug Mitchell](#)

KEY TEXTS:

“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, **nauling it to His cross.**” Col. 2:13, 14.

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 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.**” Matt. 5:17-20

“For the priesthood being **changed**, there is made of necessity **a change also of the law.**” Heb. 7:12.

MEMORY GEM:

“Speaking of the law, Jesus said, “I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” [Mt 5:17] He here used the word ‘fulfill’ in the same sense as when He declared to John the Baptist His purpose to ‘fulfill all righteousness’ (Mt 3:15); that is, to fill up the measure of the law’s requirement, to give an example of perfect conformity to the will of God.

“His mission was to ‘magnify the law, and make it honorable.’ Isa 42:21. He was to

show **the spiritual nature of the law**, to present its far-reaching principles, and to make plain its eternal obligation....

“Till heaven and earth pass,” said Jesus, “one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” [Mt 5:18] By His own obedience to the law, Christ testified to its immutable character and proved that through His grace it could be perfectly obeyed by every son and daughter of Adam. On the mount He declared that not the smallest iota should pass from the law **till all things should be accomplished—all things that concern the human race, all that relates to the plan of redemption**. He does not teach that the law is ever to be abrogated, but He fixes the eye upon the utmost verge of man’s horizon and assures us that until this point is reached **the law will retain its authority so that none may suppose it was His mission to abolish the precepts of the law**. So long as heaven and earth continue, the holy principles of God’s law will remain. His righteousness, “like the great mountains” (Ps 36:6), will continue, a source of blessing, sending forth streams to refresh the earth.” *Thoughts From The Mount Of Blessing*, p. 48-49.

STUDY AIMS:

To show:

That Jesus did not fulfill “all” things at His first coming, but is still in the process of doing so.

That it was not any part of the Law of God that was nailed to the cross;

That it was our sins, which Paul calls “the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us,” that were nailed to the cross, and taken away thereby;

That the “curse” which Christ bore in our stead was the testimony (the written record) and the pains and penalties of the sins we have committed;

That the types and ceremonies of the ceremonial law of Moses, the literal performance of which were to be discontinued because of the death of Christ, were not then actually abolished, but, rather, were at that time *changed*. This is because some of them had then received their antitypical fulfillment, while others are even now receiving their antitypical fulfillment in the ministration of Christ in the heavenly Sanctuary, and that of the Holy Spirit here on earth, and others are yet to receive their antitypical fulfillment in the future;

in only one sense can it be properly said that the law was nailed to the cross, and that is when we take into consideration that Christ was both the Lawgiver, and the Embodiment of the law, for ~~That~~ the very transcript of God's character. In such context, alone, not only was the law nailed to the cross, but it was also raised in excellent glory with Christ. The curses of the law (those things which were written against those who transgressed the law), though, were not resurrected with Him because the penalties they exacted were paid in full by Him when He bore them for us unto the second death;

That the basics of these truths were rejected when they first came to the Seventh Day Adventist church in 1888, and caused a major setback in the Lord's work of bringing His people unto perfection, bringing forth a harvest in righteousness, and restoring all things.

INTRODUCTION

On May 7, 2006, there began a major effort made by many of the Sunday-keeping churches and others to extol the virtues of the Ten Commandments. It is the position of many in the Seventh Day Adventist church that their efforts will be used to strengthen the claims of the Catholic Church regarding their purported authority to change the Sabbath from the 7th day of the week (Saturday) to the 1st day (Sunday). This is a bit ironic considering that the two men who started the drive are Sabbath-keepers, but not Adventists.

It has been the historic teaching of the SDAs that when such major moves are being made many of those taking part in the pursuit will not really be aware of the real issues underlying it, nor would they approve of them were they truly informed of them. In an attempt to enlighten people as to the truth of the 4th Commandment (the Sabbath Commandment), one of the SDA's independent ministries (the Three Angels Broadcasting Network), is engaged in a crusade to make a massive distribution of a book titled *Ten Commandments, Twice Removed*, written by Danny Shelton and Shelley Quinn.

One of the book's main points is that God's law consists of two parts, one of which has been "nailed to the cross," and one of which is still binding upon all mankind. The authors proceed to define that part of the law which was "nailed to the cross" as the "Law of Moses" which was written in a book by Moses at God's command, and which was kept on the outside of the Ark of the Covenant. This part of the law contained the ceremonial ordinances of the sacrificial system, along with statutes and judgments of civil government, health rules, and other laws which more fully expressed the principles of the Ten Commandments. The other part, which they say is still binding on all, is the Ten Commandments which were written on the two tablets of stone and kept within the Ark.

In order to sustain their theory that the whole of the "law of Moses" was "nailed to the cross", they quote Colossians 2:14 –

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to

us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”

What is notable about this is the fact that many in the Protestant churches apply that verse and those which follow after it to refute the Adventists stand on the Sabbath, saying that the 7th day Sabbath is no longer in force for Christians, for it was a part of the whole law of God which they say has been nailed to the cross. To support their claims they quote the verses which follow:

“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of **the sabbath days**: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.” Col. 2:15-17.

In order to counter that falsehood, the authors of *Ten Commandments, Twice Removed* repeatedly promote the idea that those verses apply only to the Law of Moses which was “contrary to us,” and thus nailed to the cross. They say,

“The Law of Moses prescribed sacrifices, festivals, and ceremonial ordinances that were symbolic of Jesus. Paul emphatically states that the law of ceremonies ended when it was nailed to the cross –

“‘And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.’ Col. 2:13, 14.

“Be sure to note here that the Bible says the *handwriting of ordinances* (the Law of Moses) was nailed to the cross – not the Ten Commandment Law of God.” *Ten Commandments, Twice Removed*, p. 48, 49.

It is quite evident that they are equating “the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us” with the Law of Moses, but is that what Paul was really saying? It is notable that the written law of Moses contained much more than just the “sacrifices, festivals, and ceremonial ordinances,” as they are seemingly limiting it to. It also contained many moral laws, statutes, and judgments which were amplifications of the principles of the Ten Commandments. Yet they seem to ignore this fact. They even go so far as to say,

“All of the ceremonial laws contained in the Book of Moses pointed to Jesus. It was only temporary – a law to serve until Jesus (the Seed of God) came to bring a time of reformation (Heb. 9:10).

“‘The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul ...’ (Ps 19:17). It is God’s Ten Commandments that is perfect! The handwritings in Moses’ Law could not ‘convert the soul.’ God’s law is perfect because it reflects His perfect nature of love.” *Ibid.*, p. 55.

This is truly odd. They say that the ceremonial law “pointed to Jesus,” but that such could not “convert the soul” because only the Ten Commandments (“God’s law”) “reflects His perfect nature of love.” Are they really saying that that which pointed to Jesus was not an expression of God’s

“perfect nature of love,” and was unable to convert the soul? That is truly strange, for where else was one to see the plan of redemption but in the ceremonial law? There is nothing in the Ten Commandments that teaches of God’s great love in giving His Son as the means of forgiving those who broke the law. How could God’s “perfect nature of love” be fully seen without a depiction of Christ’s sacrifice and intercession?

There are many other similar inconsistencies and contradictions regarding this matter in their book. But it is not our intention here to question the authors’ sincerity, instead, it is to set forth the true relationship between all of the Law and the Gospel by examining the Bible texts which they and so many others misuse to sustain their position in this matter.

To their credit, in one place they do very briefly explain that the reason that they see the Law of Moses as being “contrary to us” was that it contains “curses” which are pronounced upon those who violated any of God’s law which were a part of His covenant with them. Yet they elsewhere maintain that all of the Law of Moses was “against us.” This is indeed remarkable because the S.D.A. church teaches that tithing (which is a part of the Law of Moses), is still required. The same is true in regards to their stand on clean and unclean meats. The church’s general teaching in regards to tithing is that it was in existence before Moses was given the law on Mt. Sinai, even from Abraham’s day (Gen. 14:20), so it wasn’t nailed to the cross. Here is what Ellen White says on this:

“The tithing system did not originate with the Hebrews. From the earliest times the Lord claimed a tithe as His, and this claim was recognized and honored. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. Ge 14:20. Jacob, when at Bethel, an exile and a wanderer, promised the Lord, “Of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.” Ge 28:22. As the Israelites were about to be established as a nation, the law of tithing was reaffirmed as one of the divinely ordained statutes upon obedience to which their prosperity depended.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 525.

As we shall see, not only did tithing pre-date the covenant made with Israel, but so did the very things which the authors say were “against us, which was contrary to us,” – that being the sacrificial system.

The question then is, was it all of the Law that God gave to Israel (the Ten Commandments and the Law of Moses); only the whole of the Law of Moses; only the sacrificial part of the Law of Moses; or only the “curses” thereof which were “against us?” What we will address herein is what exactly it is that “was contrary to us,” and what was nailed to the cross, and why?

Therefore, let us proceed with humble hearts and minds, looking first into who exactly were the curses of the law (the handwriting of ordinances) against. That is,

WHO WAS UNDER THE CURSE OF THE LAW – WAS IT THE JEWS, ALONE, OR THE WHOLE WORLD?

If the words, “the handwriting of ordinances that was against us,” refers to the Law of Moses which contained the ceremonial law of sacrifice, then it was only the Jews it could have been “against”

because its requirements were not enjoined upon the other nations (Gentiles).

In order to bolster the idea that the law spoken of there in Colossians is the Law of Moses (which included the ceremonial laws), many (including Adventists) quote passages from the book of Galatians, such as –

“But before faith came, we were kept **under the law**, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made **under the law**,

“To redeem them that were **under the law**, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Gal. 3:23; 4:4, 5.

They say that being “under the law” means being “under” the law of Moses (i.e., the ceremonial law, e.). But if that were true, then Christ only came to save the Jews, for in that mistaken idea of being “under the law” no Gentiles would be included, for they were not *under* the law of Moses in that respect. That would then mean that the Gentiles did not need to be “redeemed” for they were not “under the law” of Moses. But ever since the gospel went to the Gentiles, countless numbers of them have rejoiced in their own deliverance from the “curse of the law.”

It is written,

“Christ hath redeemed us [Jews and Gentiles] from the **curse of the law.**” Gal. 3:13.

Sadly, there are many professed Christians today who wish to evade the law of the Gospel which can be summed up in the words,

“**Repent:** for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matt. 4:17.

“Repent” of what? Repenting implies a turning away from one thing to something else. It is written,

“Whosoever committeth sin **transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.**” 1 John 3:4.

For those words to be true there must be some law in force by which men are judged if they transgress it.

“for **where no law is, there is no transgression.**” Rom. 4:15.

If we say that it was the whole law of God (the Ten Commandments, and the written law of Moses) that was done away with (i.e., nailed to the cross and abolished) then there is no standard of right or wrong anymore in anything. That would mean that we can have all of the false gods we would want before us (for there would be no 1st Commandment against such), and we could lie, steal, murder, and covet at will, without regard of any consequences. Of course, this sounds good to many, because they have pleasure in doing those things (though they don't really

like it too much when those things are done to them). If this, then, is the truth of what Christ's death accomplished, then any government which maintains laws against murder, theft, perjury (especially governments which are professedly Christian in character) are actually anti-Christian. But thank God, such is not true.

If we say, as so many do, that it was the Law of Moses (which included the typical ceremonial law – the law of sacrifices), apart from the Ten Commandments, that “was contrary to us,” then we have a couple of problems. That is, the Ten Commandments only set forth a standard of right-doing, but they do not say what will happen to one who breaks any of them. What would be the value of a law if one had no knowledge of the penalties which one would incur for their violation?

We know that God pronounced a death sentence upon Adam and Eve if they disregarded the command to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17). From that, we see that God doesn't take lightly violations of His expressed will. But within the Ten Commandments, themselves, there is nothing which informs us of the penalties – those are to be found only in the Law of Moses.

Neither do the Ten Commandments provide a remedy for one who has broken them. There is nothing in them which gives anyone any hope of reconciliation and restoration (forgiveness) if they break them. **There is no plan of salvation seen in the Ten Commandments.** The plan of salvation was only known through the ceremonial law.

To the Jews, the only place where they were to find the remedy for their violations of the moral law of the Ten Commandments, was in the ceremonial law of sacrifice. Therein they could find hope for redemption and release from the **penalties** of their sins – the **curses** of the Law which they had broken. It was all of faith, because the one who did not exercise faith in it, did not receive the forgiveness offered through it.

But people say that those very things were nailed to the cross because they were “against us,” and “contrary to us.” So how would they have been “against” anyone when they were in force, seeing that they were the only means of salvation given them? As we shall see later, the plan of salvation, as revealed in the types of the ceremonial law, was, and is, against some, being contrary to that which was most dear to them – themselves, that is, their carnal natures.

If those “handwritings” were, indeed, the feast days, Sabbaths, e, of the law of Moses, how does nailing them to the cross forgive anyone of their trespasses? That would be like saying that a murderer was forgiven because they did away with the law against murder. If what he did was murder when the law was in force, how does the very nature of the act change if the law which defined it could be changed? Yet that is the very attitude some have – that is, they say let's do away with the law which defines sin so that there will no longer be any sins, and thus no need for a Savior.

“In setting aside the law of God, men know not what they are doing. God's law is the transcript of His character. It embodies the principles of His kingdom. He who refuses to accept these principles is placing himself outside the channel where God's blessings flow.” *Christ's Object Lessons*

, p. 305.

“The law is the transcript of God’s character. It presents his righteousness in contrast with unrighteousness. By the law is the knowledge of sin. The law makes sin appear exceeding sinful. It condemns the transgressor, but it has no power to save and restore him. Its province is not to pardon. Pardon comes through Christ, who lived the law in humanity. Man’s only hope is in the substitute provided by God, who gave his Son, that he might reconcile the world to himself. ‘He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.’” *Review and Herald*, July 25, 1899.

“God’s character is revealed in the precepts of His law. This is the reason why Satan wishes this law to be made of none effect. But notwithstanding all his efforts, the law stands forth holy and unchanged. It is a transcript of God’s character. It can not be impeached or altered.” *Signs of the Times*, November 30, 1904.

“To abrogate the law of God is as impossible as it would be for God to abolish Himself. The law of God’s kingdom is a transcript of His character.” *12 Manuscript Release*, 146.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

“Thou shalt have **no other gods** before me.” Ex. 20:3.

“For I am the LORD, I **change not**; therefore ye sons of Jacob are **not** consumed.” Mal 3:6.

When Moses was in the very presence of God on the mount, God revealed to him His character, as we read,

“And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.” Ex. 34:6, 7.

Therein is God’s character truly revealed. That is, because God is merciful, we are not “consumed.” But where is that aspect of God’s love seen in the Ten Commandments alone? Is it not seen in the plan of salvation as revealed in the ceremonial law alone?

To not behold God’s true character as seen in the plan of salvation as it is revealed in the typical ceremonial law is the same as having a false God before us for the mercy of God is truly revealed therein as in no other place. The Ten Commandments reveal God’s aspect of Lawgiver, but not as Redeemer. Therefore, to truly keep God before us in obedience to the first and greatest commandment we must behold Him and His love in all of the law.

THE CEREMONIAL LAW AT THE GATES OF EDEN

**“Added because of transgressions”
Gal. 3:19**

“And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof.” Gen 4:3, 4.

“The principles of the ten commandments existed before the fall, and were of a character suited to the condition of a holy order of beings. After the fall, the principles of those precepts were not changed, but **additional precepts were given to meet man in his fallen state.**

“A system was then established requiring the sacrificing of beasts, to keep before fallen man that which the serpent made Eve disbelieve, that the penalty of disobedience is death. The transgression of God’s law made it necessary for Christ to die a sacrifice, and thus make a way possible for man to escape the penalty, and yet the honor of God’s law be preserved. **The system of sacrifices was to teach man humility, in view of his fallen condition, and lead him to repentance, and to trust in God alone, through the promised Redeemer, for pardon for past transgression of his law.** If the law of God had not been transgressed, there never would have been death, and there would have been no need of **additional precepts** to suit man’s fallen condition.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 1, p. 261, 262.

Previously we saw that the authors of *Ten Commandments, Twice Removed* said,

“The handwritings in Moses’ Law could not ‘convert the soul.’ “

But Ellen White doesn’t seem to hold that opinion, for she said,

“The **system of sacrifices was to teach man humility**, in view of his fallen condition, and **lead him to repentance**, and **to trust in God alone**, through the promised Redeemer, for pardon for past transgression of his law.”

Exactly how would one describe the means by which one learns “humility,” comes to “repentance,” and is led to trust in “God alone,” as provided by the “system of sacrifice,” except as it being that which works to “convert the soul?” The Ten Commandments do not work to “*convert* the soul” if they are not broken, for the soul that does not break them does not need *conversion*. But they do contribute in part to the conversion of the soul of those who break them, for the person is thereby reminded to the standard of righteousness. Yet they are incomplete in converting the soul because they do not point out the means of redemption, as does the system of sacrifice – both in its types, and its antitypes.

“The very system of sacrifices was devised by Christ, and given to Adam as typifying a Saviour to come, who would bear the sins of the world, and die for its redemption.”
Signs of the Times

, July 15, 1880.

“The sacrificial system, committed to Adam, was ... perverted by his descendants. Superstition, idolatry, cruelty, and licentiousness corrupted the simple and significant service that God had appointed. Through long intercourse with idolaters the people of Israel had mingled many heathen customs with their worship; therefore the Lord gave them at Sinai definite instruction concerning the sacrificial service.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 364.

“The sacrificial offerings, and the priesthood of the Jewish system, **were instituted to represent the death and mediatorial work of Christ**. All those ceremonies had no meaning, and no virtue, only as they related to Christ **who was himself the foundation of, and who brought into existence, the entire system**. The Lord has made known to Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and the ancient worthies, especially Moses, that the ceremonial system of sacrifices and the priesthood, of themselves, were not sufficient to secure the salvation of one soul.

“The system of sacrificial offerings pointed to Christ. Through these, the ancient worthies saw Christ, and believed in him. These were ordained of Heaven to keep before the people the fearful separation which sin had made between God and man, requiring a mediating ministry. Through Christ, the communication which was cut off because of Adam’s transgression was opened between God and the ruined sinner. But the infinite sacrifice that Christ voluntarily made for man remains a mystery that angels cannot fully fathom.

“The Jewish system was symbolical, and was to continue until the perfect Offering should take the place of the figurative. The Mediator, **in his office and work**, would greatly exceed in dignity and glory the earthly, typical priesthood. The people of God, from Adam’s day down to the time when the Jewish nation became a separate and distinct people from the world, had been instructed in regard to the Redeemer to come, which their sacrificial offerings represented. This Saviour was to be a mediator, to stand between the Most High and his people. Through this provision, a way was opened whereby the guilty sinner might find access to God through the mediation of another.” *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Vol. 2, p. 10, 11.

“All who did service in connection with the sanctuary were being educated constantly in regard to the intervention of Christ in behalf of the human race. This service was designed to create in every heart a love for the law of God, which is the law of His kingdom. The sacrificial offering was to be an object lesson of the love of God revealed in Christ—in the suffering, dying victim, who took upon Himself the sin of which man was guilty, the innocent being made sin for us.” *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, p. 233.

While in Galatians 3:19 Paul is speaking of the *adding* of the law at Mt. Sinai, it was truly first “added” right after the fall of Adam and Eve. It is notable that the Greek word that is translated as “added” in Gal. 3:19 is the same word that is translated as “spoken” in Heb. 12:19 – “they that heard entreated that the word should not be **spoken** to them any more.” It also occurs in the Greek version of the Old Testament (the Septuagint) in Deut. 5:22 where we read that after God spoke the Ten Commandments it is said that “He **added** no more.” We are to understand this to

mean that He “spoke” no more to the people Himself because although He did not **speak directly** to the people at that time, He **added** much more privately through Moses – the Law written in the book.

By these things we see that the sacrificial law was “added” right after the fall and that it was later “spoken” at Mt. Sinai because of transgression – because “through long intercourse with idolaters the people of Israel had mingled many heathen customs with their worship.” But as we know from Deut. 5:22, it was the whole of the law of God (that which was written on the tablets of stone, and that which was written in the book), that was given afresh at Mt. Sinai.

“The whole system of types and symbols was a **compacted prophecy of the gospel**, a presentation in which were bound up the promises of redemption.” *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 14.

Now that we have learned that the ceremonial law in types that was established right after the fall was a “compacted prophecy” of the intercession of Christ, and that, as such, it never could have been “against,” nor “contrary,” to those who treasured the salvation provided by an active faith in its provisions, we are better prepared to understand what is meant in the saying,

THE “CURSE” OF THE LAW WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS

So if it was not the law, itself, that was “against us,” “contrary to us,” what then was actually nailed to the cross, and was taken away thereby?

We know that, first and foremost, it was Christ who was nailed to the cross. So it cannot be He who was “against” nor “contrary” to us, for He was nothing less than all *for us* in every way. But there was something there with him which was “against” and “contrary” to us – a curse which we were all under due to our transgressing the law, as we read –

“Christ hath redeemed us **from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.**” Gal. 3:13.

“For **He hath made Him to be sin for us**, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Cor. 5:21.

He became “**sin** for us,” but what is **sin**? It is written,

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for **sin is the transgression of the law.**” 1 John 3:4.

Did He become “sin” for us merely because He was born a Jew, and under the Law of God? Or was it because He willingly took upon Himself the guilt which we all have borne because of our transgressions?

Though our sins which He bore were our “transgression[s] of the law,” there is nothing in the Ten

Commandments which indicates that there is a “curse” upon those who break them. So, where did that “**curse** of the law” come from?

Again, looking only at those commandments there is no explanation of what would happen to one who broke those commandments. Furthermore, in only one of them do we find the pronouncement of a **blessing** upon the doer of it – that being the 5th Commandment, “Honour thy father and thy mother: **that thy days may be long** upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.” Ex 20:12.

So we have to look elsewhere than the Ten Commandments, themselves, to find the “curse of the law” which was “against” and “contrary” to us.” That place is in the written Law of Moses which contains both the **blessings** for those who keep God’s laws and the **curses** for those who do not keep them. See Deuteronomy 28. Without these blessings and curses (judgments), the Ten Commandments would have little weight in the hearts and minds of men.

That is, they would be relegated to mere suggestions of what to do, for no judgment would be attached to them – favorable, or unfavorable. And, if there were no judgment attached to them, then that would indicate that God doesn’t care about things being right or wrong, and there are no such things as sin and righteousness. But, as such a concept is foreign to the teachings of the Bible, and would undermine the very need for the Gospel of salvation, it holds no weight as being the truth.

Thus it is within the law of Moses where we find the **curses** of the law – that is, those parts of that law which can be said to be the “handwriting of ordinances that was **against us.**” So it takes the whole of the Law (that which was written on stone, and that which was written in the book), to define sin and its penalties.

The words “handwriting of ordinances” are a translation of the Greek words *cheirographon tois dogmasin*. Discoveries in recent years have revealed that the word *cheirographon* was used in New Testament times to refer to a signed bill of *indebtedness*. Such liabilities were handwritten on stones and papers so that they would stand as evidence in legal disputes. They were testimonies of the existence of a contract (a covenant) between two or more parties, and their relationship to each other by said contract. Thus the “handwriting of ordinances that was against us” was only that part of God’s Law which bore witness “against us” and which was “contrary to us.” No other part of God’s Law can be said to be such.

The Ten Commandments are the standard of righteousness. They cannot be said to be “against” nor “contrary to us,” unless, of course, we have pleasure in unrighteousness, and do not wish to be reminded of the standard. But that would truly only be our *attitude* towards those laws, and not necessarily our standing in regards to them. That is, though people may *feel* that the standard of the law is not to their liking, they are not condemned by them unless they break them.

But while there are curses in God’s Law as he delivered it to Moses, that which is called the Law of Moses contained not only the “blessings” of the law, and the minute details of God’s law which amplified the principles of the Ten Commandments, but also the ceremonial types and symbols which were a “shadow” of the plan of salvation. There was nothing in the ceremonial, sacrificial, portion of the Law of Moses (the typical plan of salvation) which pronounced a **curse** upon the transgressors of the Ten Commandments. As those things pointed to Christ who was and is all **for**

us, then there was nothing in them (the sacrifices and the feast days) which could rightly be said to be “contrary to us,” unless, of course, we would be offended by the plan of salvation because we don’t want to be reminded that it takes the shedding of blood to remit sins (Heb 9:22). But even then, such is only an emotional response.

When Abel brought his sacrifice and slew it, we can’t assume that he thought of the ceremony as being fun, nor pleasurable in a worldly sense. That is, it was against his nature to kill an innocent lamb, for it doesn’t appear that he was one who enjoyed killing for the sake of being cruel. But he, nonetheless, took the hard road of showing forth the plan of salvation through the slaying of the lamb, rather than taking Cain’s path which required no shedding of blood, and thus no humbling of his senses.

How then did Christ become a “curse for us?” By taking upon Himself our sins, **the evidences** of the law which we had broken, **the record** of our evil deeds, the “**handwriting of ordinances**,” and nothing more. But he did not do this merely for Israel with whom He had made that specific covenant (contract), as we read,

“And He is the propitiation for our sins: and **not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.**” 1 John 2:2.

Considering this truth, it cannot be rightly said that Christ’s salvation reached only to those who were “under” the law of Moses, unless the “curses” in the law of Moses (the law that God gave to Israel for the whole world) extended also to those not a part of bloodline Israel.

In speaking of the Law of God extending to all of the world, the apostle Paul says,

“For not the hearers of the law are just before God, **but the doers of the law shall be justified.**

“**For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:** Which shew **the work of the law written in their hearts**, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.” Romans 2:13-15.

So the “curse” which Christ bore was not limited to those under the Law of Moses – the Israelites.

THE SPOILING OF THE MIGHTY

Now that we have the true of understanding of what Paul meant when he used the words “handwriting of ordinances that was against us,” let us continue to look at what was accomplished by having those curses nailed to the cross in Christ’s crucifixion. Paul thus continues –

“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” Col. 2:15.

Who or what were those “principalities and powers” which Christ’s sacrifice spoiled?

“We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against **principalities**, against **powers**, against **the rulers of the darkness of this world**, against **spiritual wickedness in high places**.” Eph 6:12.

“And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for **the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night**.” Rev. 12:10.

Of those “principalities and powers” and Christ’s triumph over them, the Spirit says,

“**The principalities and powers of darkness** were assembled around the cross, casting the hellish shadow of unbelief into the hearts of men. When the Lord created **these beings** to stand before His throne, they were beautiful and glorious. Their loveliness and holiness were in accordance with their exalted station. They were enriched with the wisdom of God, and girded with the panoply of heaven. **They were Jehovah’s ministers**. But who could recognize in the fallen angels the glorious seraphim that once ministered in the heavenly courts?

“**Satanic agencies confederated with evil men** in leading the people to believe Christ the chief of sinners, and to make Him the object of detestation. Those who mocked Christ as He hung upon the cross were imbued with the spirit of the first great rebel. He filled them with vile and loathsome speeches. He inspired their taunts. But by all this he gained nothing.

“Could one sin have been found in Christ, had He in one particular yielded to Satan to escape the terrible torture, the enemy of God and man would have triumphed. Christ bowed His head and died, but He held fast His faith and His submission to God. “And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for **the accuser of our brethren is cast down**, which accused them before our God day and night.” Re 12:10.

“Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe. He had revealed himself as a murderer. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted. Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them **accuse Christ’s brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin**. The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world **was broken**.” *The Desire of Ages*, p. 760-761.

Christ had taken away the fallen angels’ and evil men’s power to accuse repentant sinners before God, and demand their punishment (their death) as called for in the law, for their indebtedness to the law (the curses which were upon them for breaking the law – the “handwriting of ordinances”) had been nailed to the cross in Christ.

The Traditions of Men – Works in the Place of Faith

As we now understand who and what was spoiled, how does that relate to the problem Paul was addressing in his counsel to the Colossians? Previously in that letter, Paul wrote –

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Col. 2:8, 9.

From this we see that some men were attempting to bring upon the Colossians “traditions of men,” and were using “philosophy and vain deceit” to bring upon them the “rudiments” (principles) of the world. What were those principles (rudiments) of the world? – that one could **earn** salvation by their **works**. This was and is common to every soul who has not **faith** in the mercies of God. They seek to be justified by what they consider to be their own goodness, their own righteousness, not considering that whatever goodness they may attain to is a gift they have received from God. That is, none can do good unless they are inspired to do so by God – it is not in man’s fallen nature to do good. The whole of the Gospel is that without God man cannot even order his steps, but with God, he can not help but do good.

“We are all as an unclean thing, and all **our righteousnesses[our good deeds]** are as filthy rags.” Isa 64:6.

“O LORD, I know that **the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.**” Jer. 10:23.

“**Order my steps in thy word:** and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.” Ps. 119:133.

Paul addressed this same problem of people trying to replace faith with works (the principles of the world) in His letter to the Galatians, but in a different context*, where he says,

“Knowing that a man **is not justified by the works of the law**, but by the **faith** of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be **justified by the faith** of Christ, and **not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**” Gal. 2:16.

*[As we shall see, though the Galatians were already backsliding from faith to works, and Paul was addressing that fact, and trying to restore them, in Colossians Paul is trying to head off the corrupting influence as it was entering the congregation. More on this later.]

Paul then asks the Galatians two key questions:

“This only would I learn of you, **Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith**

?” Gal. 3:2.

“He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, **doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?**” Gal. 3:5.

He goes on to say that they are in trouble if they are trusting in their own ability to do good – to keep the standard the law requires – because he knows from personal experience that not even he could do good without the help of Christ (Rom. 7:5-8:4) –

“For as many as are of the **works** of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Gal. 3:10.

Paul, who, in his words, was “blameless” “touching the righteousness which is in the law” (Phil. 3:6) [in the “religion of the Jews” (Gal. 1:14), which was at that time all of works], in speaking of the condition of both the Galatians, and of himself, says,

“Even so **we**, when **we** were children, **were in bondage** under **the elements of the world.**” Gal. 4:3.

The word “elements” therein is the same Greek word as “rudiments” in Colossians. So how was Paul, a “blameless” Pharisee, “in bondage under the elements **of the world,**” seeing that he was a Jew? By the fact that he, like those of the world, had been trusting in his own ability to do right, and earn God’s favor, not realizing that whatever righteousness he had actually attained to was not his own, but had been a gift from God through Christ, and that even the righteousness he had done was polluted with self.

In addressing the Galatians’ backslidden condition he writes,

“Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. ...

“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the **weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?**

“**Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.**” Gal. 3:8; 4:9, 10.

The following explains what type of bondage Paul was referring to. Please keep in mind, that if those “days, and months, and times, and years” were the Bible feast days (as many tend to think they were), then it was God, Himself, who had brought the Israelites under that “bondage,” for He had ordained those feasts. As such a notion is absurd, there must be another meaning to Paul’s words.

“Heathen Bondage

“The apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, said, ‘Ye know that ye were Gentiles,

carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.' 1Cor.12:2. Even so it was with the Galatians. To them he wrote, 'Not knowing God, ye were in bondage to them which by nature are no gods.' **If this fact is borne in mind, it will save the reader from falling into some very common errors in opinion concerning this Epistle.**

"The Galatians had been heathen, worshipping idols, and in bondage to the most degrading superstitions. Bear in mind that this bondage is the same as that which is spoken of in the preceding chapter,—they were 'shut up' under the law. It was the very same bondage in which all unconverted persons are, for in the second and third chapters of Romans we are told that 'there is no difference; for all have sinned.'

"The Jews themselves, who did not know the Lord by personal experience, were in the same bondage,—the bondage of sin. 'Every one that committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin.' John 8:34, R.V. And 'he that committeth sin is of the devil.' 1 Joh.3:8. 'The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God.' 1Cor.10:20. If a man is not a Christian, he is a heathen; there is no middle ground. If the Christian apostatizes, he immediately becomes a heathen.

"We ourselves once walked 'according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience' (Eph.2:2), and we 'were aforetime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another' (Titus 3:3, R.V.). So we also were 'in bondage to them which by nature are no gods.' The meaner the master, the worse the bondage. What language can depict the horror of being in bondage to corruption itself?

"In Love with Bondage

"Now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known of God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments, whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again?' Is it not strange that men should be in love with chains? Christ has proclaimed 'liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound' (Is.61:1), saying to the prisoners, 'Go forth,' and to them that are in darkness, 'Show yourselves' (Is.49:9); yet men who have heard these words, and have come forth, and have seen the light of 'the Sun of Righteousness,' and have tasted the sweets of liberty, actually turn round and go back into their prison, submit to be bound with their old chains, even fondling them, and labor away at the hard treadmill of sin.

"Who has not had something of that experience? It is no fancy picture. It is a fact that men can come to love the most revolting things, even death itself; for Wisdom says, 'All they that hate Me love death.' Prov.8:36. In the Epistle to the Galatians we have a vivid picture of human experience.

"Observing Heathen Customs

"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.' This was an evidence of their bondage. 'Ah,' says some one, 'they had gone back to the old Jewish Sabbath; that was the bondage against which Paul would warn us!' **How strange it is that men have such an insane hatred of the Sabbath, which the Lord Himself gave to the Jews, in common with all other people on the earth, that they will seize upon every word that they think they can turn against it, although in order to do so**

they must shut their eyes to all the words that are around it!

“Anybody who reads the Epistle to the Galatians, and thinks as he reads, must know that **the Galatians were not Jews. They had been converted from heathenism. Therefore, previous to their conversion they had never had anything to do with any religious custom that was practiced by the Jews. They had nothing whatever in common with the Jews.**

“Consequently, when they turned again to the weak and beggarly elements’ to which they were willing again to be in bondage, **it is evident that they were not going back to any Jewish practice. They were going back to their old heathen customs.** ‘But were not the men who were perverting them Jews?’—Yes, they were. But remember this one thing, when you seek to turn a man away from Christ to some substitute for Christ, you can not tell where he will end. You can not make him stop just where you want him to. If a converted drunkard loses faith in Christ, he will take up his drinking habits as surely as he lives, even though the Lord may have taken the appetite away from him. So when these “false brethren”—Jewish opposers of ‘the truth of the Gospel’ as it is in Christ—succeeded in seducing the Galatians from Christ, **they could not get them to stop with Jewish ceremonies. No; they inevitably drifted back to their old heathen superstitions.**

“Forbidden Practices

“Read the tenth verse again, and then read Deut.18:10: ‘There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a wih.’ Now read what the Lord says to the heathen who would shield themselves from just judgment that is about to come upon them: ‘Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee.’ Is.47:13.

“Here we see that the very things to which the Galatians were returning, were forbidden by the Lord when He brought Israel out of Egypt. **Now we might as well say that when God forbade these things He was warning the Israelites against keeping the Sabbath, as to say that Paul was upbraiding the Galatians for keeping it, or that he had any reference to it whatever.** God forbade these things at the very time when He gave the commandment concerning Sabbath-keeping. **So far back into their old ways had the Galatians gone that Paul was afraid lest all his labor on them had been in vain.** They were forsaking God and returning to ‘the weak and beggarly elements of the world,’ which no reverent person can think of as ever having had any connection with God. They were changing their glory for ‘that which doth not profit’ (Jer.2:11); for ‘the customs of the heathen are vain.” *The Glad Tidings*, (as originally published in 1900), by E. J. Waggoner.

Though that study has been republished by the Adventists, and they called it “An Adventist Classic,” they edited out this section in their republication as they were still clinging to the mistaken idea that the Law of Moses was that which was “against” us, and thus nailed to the cross.

Now that we understand that Paul was seeking to recover the Galatians from the backslidden

state they were already under, let us go back to the letter to the Colossians wherein he is trying to keep them from backsliding, and look at the means whereby those men were trying to displace Christ and the effectiveness of His atonement for the believers. This is revealed in a few different verses.

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.” Col. 2:16.

Evidently the subverters were trying to judge the Colossians in the way that they were eating and drinking and keeping the Lord’s feast days. Take particular note that the text reads, “...**in respect** of an holyday,” e., and not “in your **not respecting** of an holyday...”

That is, those who were judging them were not trying to judge them for **not** doing those things at all, but for not doing them **by their standards**, which Paul calls “**the tradition of men**” (verse 8). Paul, having been a Pharisee, and since his conversion to Christ having well learned the difference between the true requirements of God’s law and the traditions of the elders which had been brought into Judaism and which had displaced those of God, and had become a wall of partition between the Jews and God, and between the Jews and the Gentiles (Eph 2:14), would never have called any of God’s laws “the tradition of **men**.” Paul had become painfully aware of the truth revealed in Eze. 43 –

“And he said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, *neither* they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places.

“In their setting of **their threshold by my thresholds**, and **their post by my posts**, and **the wall between me and them**, they have even defiled my holy name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger.” Eze. 43:7, 8.

This was an issue Paul had to deal with in many places. We must also keep in mind that there were different Judaizing elements the early church had to contend with. There were some from the persuasion of the Pharisees, some from the Sadducees, and some from the Essenes, who embraced Gnostic philosophies. Each had their own standards of righteousness, and philosophies which they sought to impose upon the fledgling church. Though each had their own philosophies and traditions, they did have a few points in common. One of them was regarding circumcision. Certain men were going around to the churches saying, “**Except ye be circumcised** after the manner of Moses, **ye cannot be saved**” (Acts 15:1).

“While the apostles united with the ministers and lay members at Antioch in an earnest effort to win many souls to Christ, certain Jewish believers from Judea “of the sect of the Pharisees” [Acts 15:5] succeeded in introducing a question that soon led to widespread controversy in the church and brought consternation to the believing Gentiles. With great assurance these Judaizing teachers asserted that **in order to be saved, one must be circumcised and must keep the entire ceremonial law**.

“Paul and Barnabas met this false doctrine with promptness and opposed the introduction of the subject to the Gentiles. On the other hand, many of the believing Jews of Antioch favored the position of the brethren recently come from Judea.

“The Jewish converts generally were not inclined to move as rapidly as the providence of God opened the way. From the result of the apostles’ labors among the Gentiles it was evident that the converts among the latter people would far exceed the Jewish converts in number. **The Jews feared that if the restrictions and ceremonies of their law were not made obligatory upon the Gentiles as a condition of church fellowship, the national peculiarities of the Jews, which had hitherto kept them distinct from all other people, would finally disappear from among those who received the gospel message.**

“The Jews had always prided themselves upon their divinely appointed services, and many of those who had been converted to the faith of Christ still felt **that since God had once clearly outlined the Hebrew manner of worship, it was improbable that He would ever authorize a change in any of its specifications. They insisted that the Jewish laws and ceremonies should be incorporated into the rites of the Christian religion.** They were slow to discern that all the sacrificial offerings had but prefigured the death of the Son of God, in which type met antitype, and **after which the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic dispensation were no longer binding.**

“Before his conversion Paul had regarded himself as blameless “touching the righteousness which is in the law.” Php 3:6. But since his change of heart he had gained a clear conception of the mission of the Saviour as the Redeemer of the entire race, Gentile as well as Jew, and had learned the difference between a living faith and a dead formalism. **In the light of the gospel the ancient rites and ceremonies committed to Israel had gained a new and deeper significance.** That which they shadowed forth had come to pass, and **those who were living under the gospel dispensation had been freed from their observance.** God’s unchangeable law of Ten Commandments, however, Paul still kept in spirit as well as in letter.

“In the church at Antioch the consideration of the question of circumcision resulted in much discussion and contention. Finally, the members of the church, fearing that a division among them would be the outcome of continued discussion, decided to send Paul and Barnabas, with some responsible men from the church, to Jerusalem to lay the matter before the apostles and elders. There they were to meet delegates from the different churches and those who had come to Jerusalem to attend the approaching festivals. Meanwhile all controversy was to cease until a final decision should be given in general council. This decision was then to be universally accepted by the different churches throughout the country.” *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 188-190.

Though it is clear from Col. 2:9-13 that Paul was contending with those who were telling the Colossians that they had to be circumcised in order to be complete in Christ and to participate in the memorial ordinances, the contention was not limited to the matter of circumcision, as he notes that the troublemakers were also trying to judge them “in meat” and “in drink.” These things were also points of controversy between the Jewish and Gentiles believers. In regards to flesh foods, the Jews’ diets were restricted to “clean” meats, fish, and fowls. Such was not the case with the Gentiles. It is evident that there was also a decision made on what standard to hold the Gentiles to in regard to eating, as we learn from the following –

“Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.” Acts 15:19, 20.

While abstaining from “pollutions of idols” is prohibited under the 2nd commandment, and abstaining from “fornication” is prohibited under the 7th commandment, the other two prohibitions have their roots elsewhere. The prohibition against eating blood dates from right after the flood, as we read,

“Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh **with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.**” Gen. 9:3, 4.

The command to abstain from things strangled has its roots in the same basic health reform as does the not eating of blood. When something is strangled the blood is forced into the flesh, and does not completely drain from it. So the same corruption which ensues from eating blood directly comes also by eating the flesh of a strangled animal.

The question then is, does this give Christians the right to eat all forms of flesh foods (clean and unclean)? Is that what the apostles were seeking to teach the Gentiles and their fellow Jews? In Acts 15:21, James’ next statement following the one quoted above sheds light on this –

“For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.” Acts 15:21.

What does he mean by this? Is he not saying that the standard of righteousness which Moses laid down for the Israelites still has significance, and that the Gentiles have the ability to grow in their understand of the higher ways as Moses was “read in the synagogues every sabbath day?”

Christ, Himself, said,

“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.” Matt. 5:20.

So we see that the apostles were not lowering the standard, but were placing first things first. That is, they were more concerned with the brethren (both Jew and Gentile) taking hold of God's grace by faith as the only means of salvation, rather than trusting in works or personal righteousness for salvation. There were certainly scribes and Pharisees who kept all of the dietary laws of Moses, and probably the basics of the Ten Commandments, but they trusted in their own strength to do such, and patted themselves on the back (so to speak) for doing so. But those still remained outside of Christ. Yet the Gentiles who had no such righteousness had been accepted by God into the fellowship of the saints, and the Holy Spirit had been given to them in that state to confirm their acceptance. So how then could the Jewish believers deny them fellowship or say that they were not saved unless they were observing all of the law of Moses when it was quite obvious that God had already accepted them as they were, and had brought them into the fold of the faithful?

We don't know what Abram was doing when he was called and was himself justified by faith. That is, was he eating pork or other unclean meats? It is written of him,

“Abraham obeyed my voice, and **kept** my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.” Gen. 26:5.

But what were those things? Circumcision was not a known commandment at the time of his calling, for he only received it after he had been called. There was, seemingly, no law known to him which specifically prohibited the eating of unclean animals, (as there was later under the law of Moses) for not too long before God had said to Noah,

“Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.” Gen. 9:3.

We know from the record that he was not a strict vegetarian, yet he was accepted of God in whatever state he was then in. Even after he had been called, he felt that it was alright to have a child (Ishmael) by a woman (Hagar) who was not his wife. Though the results of his unfaithfulness in doing so were painful to Hagar, Ishmael, Sarah, and his descendants, we have no record of God calling it “adultery.” That is, we are not told that he did what he had done with Hagar because he lusted after her. So what are we to think of these things? It is written,

“And the times of this ignorance God **winked** at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.” Acts 17:30.

Regarding marital relationships, we find the following conversation between Jesus and the Pharisees –

“And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.

“And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

“And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, **For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.**

But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

“What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” Mark 10:2-9.

So we see that even the Law of Moses was not the perfect standard of righteousness. Regarding bishops and deacons, Paul said that they should not have more than one wife (1Tim. 3:2, 12). But nowhere did he tell those who had more than wife that they could not have fellowship with the saints, nor that they were not saved because of their situation. Evidently, they had enough problems already because of their situations. There is no doubt that some Jewish men had more than one wife because they had been compelled by the Law of Moses to take a deceased brother’s wife unto himself and raise seed unto him (Deut. 25:5).

Regarding foods, Paul said,

“... every one of us shall give account **of himself** to God.

“Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, **that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way.**

“I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

“But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

“Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but **righteousness**, and **peace**, and **joy in the Holy Ghost**. For he that **in these things** serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

“Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.” Rom. 14:12-20.

This was the same principle which Paul was seeking to impress on the Colossians and those whom were troubling them. Ellen White expresses this principle thusly –

“In the kingdoms of the world, position meant self-aggrandizement. The people were supposed to exist for the benefit of the ruling classes. Influence, wealth, education, were so many means of gaining control of the masses for the use of the leaders. The higher classes were to think, decide, enjoy, and rule; the lower were to obey and serve. **Religion, like all things else, was a matter of authority.** The people were expected to believe and practice as their superiors directed. **The right of man as man, to think and act for himself, was wholly unrecognized.**

“**Christ was establishing a kingdom on different principles.** He called men, not to authority, but to service, the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak. Power, position, talent, education, placed their possessor under the greater obligation **to serve his fellows**. To even the lowliest of Christ’s disciples it is said, ‘All things are for your sakes.’ 2 Cor. 4:15.

“The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a

ransom for many.' [Mt 20:28; Mr 10:45] Among His disciples Christ was in every sense a caretaker, a burden bearer. He shared their poverty, **He practiced self-denial on their account**, He went before them to smooth the more difficult places, and soon He would consummate His work on earth by laying down His life. **The principle on which Christ acted is to actuate the members of the church which is His body. The plan and ground of salvation is love.** In the kingdom of Christ those are greatest who follow the example He has given, and act as shepherds of His flock.

"The words of Paul reveal the true dignity and honor of the Christian life: 'Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all,' 'not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.' 1 Cor. 9:19; 10:33.

"In matters of conscience the soul must be left untrammelled. No one is to control another's mind, to judge for another, or to prescribe his duty. God gives to every soul freedom to think, and **to follow his own convictions.** 'Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.' No one has a right to merge his own individuality in that of another. **In all matters where principle is involved, 'let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.'** Rom. 14:12,5. In Christ's kingdom there is **no lordly oppression, no compulsion of manner.** The angels of heaven do not come to the earth to rule, and to exact homage, but as messengers of mercy, to cooperate with men in uplifting humanity.

"The principles and the very words of the Saviour's teaching, in their divine beauty, dwelt in the memory of the beloved disciple. To his latest days the burden of John's testimony to the churches was, 'This is the message that ye heard from the beginning, **that we should love one another.**' 'Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.' 1 John 3:11,16.

"This was the spirit that pervaded the early church. After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, 'the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own.' 'Neither was there any among them that lacked.' 'And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.' Ac 4:32,34,33." *The Desire of Ages*, p. 549-551.

What then say we who are of the remnant church who are preparing for the setting up of Christ's kingdom of glory and for translation at Christ's second coming? We not only teach that our members should abstain from unclean meats as prescribed in the Law of Moses, but that they should also reach for the higher standard which prevailed within the gates of Eden – vegetarianism.

"Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Mt 5:20.

"The scribes and Pharisees had accused not only Christ but His disciples as sinners because of their disregard of the **rabbinical** rites and observances. Often the disciples had been perplexed and troubled by censure and accusation from those whom they had been accustomed to revere as religious teachers. Jesus unveiled the deception. He declared that the righteousness upon which the Pharisees set so great value was

worthless. The Jewish nation had claimed to be the special, loyal people who were favored of God; but Christ represented their religion as devoid of **saving faith**. **All their pretensions of piety, their human inventions and ceremonies, and even their boasted performance of the outward requirements of the law, could not avail to make them holy.** They were not pure in **heart** or noble and Christlike in **character**.

“A legal religion is insufficient to bring the soul into harmony with God. The hard, rigid orthodoxy of the Pharisees, **destitute of contrition, tenderness, or love**, was only a stumbling block to sinners. They were like the salt that had lost its savor; for their influence had no power to preserve the world from corruption. The only true faith is that which **“worketh by love”** (Gal. 5:6) to purify the soul. It is as leaven that transforms the character.

“All this the Jews should have learned from the teachings of the prophets. Centuries before, the cry of the soul for justification with God had found voice and answer in the words of the prophet Micah: “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? ... He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Mic. 6:6-8.

“The prophet Hosea had pointed out what constitutes the very essence of Pharisaism, in the words, “Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself.” Hos. 10:1. In their professed service to God, the Jews were really working for self. Their righteousness was the fruit of their own efforts to keep the law according to their own ideas and for their own selfish benefit. Hence it could be no better than they were. In their endeavor to make themselves holy, they were trying to bring a clean thing out of an unclean. The law of God is as holy as He is holy, as perfect as He is perfect. It presents to men the righteousness of God. It is impossible for man, of himself, to keep this law; for the nature of man is depraved, deformed, and wholly unlike the character of God. The works of the selfish heart are “as an unclean thing,” and “all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” Isa. 64:6.

“While the law is holy, the Jews could not attain righteousness by their own efforts to keep the law. The disciples of Christ must obtain righteousness of a different character from that of the Pharisees, if they would enter the kingdom of heaven. God offered them, in His Son, the perfect righteousness of the law. If they would open their hearts fully to receive Christ, then the very life of God, His love, would dwell in them, transforming them into His own likeness; and **thus through God’s free gift they would possess the righteousness which the law requires.** But the Pharisees rejected Christ; “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness” (Rom. 10:3), they would not submit themselves unto the righteousness of God.

“Jesus proceeded to show His hearers what it means to keep the commandments of God—that it is a reproduction in themselves of the character of Christ. For in Him, God was daily made manifest before them.” *Thoughts From The Mount Of Blessing*, p. 53-55.

“The rabbis counted their righteousness a passport to heaven; but Jesus declared it to

be insufficient and unworthy. External ceremonies and a theoretical knowledge of truth constituted Pharisaical righteousness. The rabbis claimed to be holy through their own efforts in keeping the law; but their works had divorced righteousness from religion. While they were punctilious in ritual observances, their lives were immoral and debased. Their so-called righteousness could never enter the kingdom of heaven.

“The greatest deception of the human mind in Christ’s day was that a mere assent to the truth constitutes righteousness. In all human experience a theoretical knowledge of the truth has been proved to be insufficient for the saving of the soul. It does not bring forth the fruits of righteousness. **A jealous regard for what is termed theological truth often accompanies a hatred of genuine truth as made manifest in life.** The darkest chapters of history are burdened with the record of crimes committed by bigoted religionists. The Pharisees claimed to be children of Abraham, and boasted of their possession of the oracles of God; yet these advantages did not preserve them from selfishness, malignity, greed for gain, and the basest hypocrisy. They thought themselves the greatest religionists of the world, but their so-called orthodoxy led them to crucify the Lord of glory.

“The same danger still exists. Many take it for granted that they are Christians, simply because they subscribe to certain theological tenets. But they have not brought the truth into practical life. They have not believed and loved it, therefore they have not received the power and grace that come through sanctification of the truth. Men may profess faith in the truth; but if it does not make them sincere, kind, patient, forbearing, heavenly-minded, it is a curse to its possessors, and through their influence it is a curse to the world.

“The righteousness which Christ taught is conformity of heart and life to the revealed will of God. Sinful men can become righteous only as they have faith in God and maintain a vital connection with Him. **Then** true godliness will elevate the thoughts and ennoble the life. **Then the external forms of religion accord with the Christian’s internal purity. Then the ceremonies required in the service of God are not meaningless rites, like those of the hypocritical Pharisees.**” *The Desire of Ages*, p. 309, 310.

There, again, we see an explanation of what Paul was meaning when he used the “shadow” and “body” analogy. That is, that the ceremonies (shadows – feasts, etc.), of themselves, were secondary to Christ (the Body – the Substance). But, with Christ in them, those things which were a “shadow” held a significant place in their true religion, and were not “meaningless rites,” as we shall see further on.

We know that Paul’s righteousness exceeded that of the scribes and Pharisees, in general, in regards to food and drink for he said,

“Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, **I will eat no flesh while the world standeth**, lest I make my brother to offend.” 1 Cor. 8:13.

He even encouraged the Romans to seek a higher path, as we read –

“It is good **neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing** whereby thy brother

stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.” Rom. 14:21.

But he did not *compel* his hearers to follow his example, but sought by a great love and expressions of truth to motivate them to a higher way. This we see from his own testimony –

“Be ye **followers of me**, even as I also am of Christ.” 1 Cor. 11:1.

“Paul carried with him the atmosphere of heaven. All who associated with him felt the influence of his union with Christ. The fact that his own life exemplified the truth he proclaimed, gave convincing power to his preaching. Here lies the power of truth. The unstudied, unconscious influence of a holy life is the most convincing sermon that can be given in favor of Christianity. Argument, even when unanswerable, may provoke only opposition; but a godly example has a power that it is impossible wholly to resist.”
Acts of the Apostles, p. 510-511.

We see that he set an *example* for others to follow, but did not restrict his fellowship to only those who had come up to the standard he had attained to. This is what he was trying to teach the Colossians and those whom were troubling them. It wasn't the keeping of the Bible feasts he was condemning, but rather those who, without warrant, were trying to compel the consciences of others by saying to them that they were not saved if they were not keeping those feasts according to the narrow prescriptions of men. But neither was he giving them license to bring in all manner of unsanctified customs and theories.

OLD TYPES RECEIVE NEW PROPHETIC MEANINGS

Though the rites and ceremonies of the typical service were to end when they met their antitype, it is also true that “**the ancient rites and ceremonies** committed to Israel **had gained a new and deeper significance.**” To the Jewish believers, all of the old feasts had taken on new meaning as they beheld their future, antitypical, fulfillment in the final outworking of the plan of salvation. We know that Paul understood that the feast days had taken on a new significance by the fact that he was not telling the Colossians that those feast days were nailed to the cross, for he says of them,

“Which **are** [Greek – *esti*, present tense] a shadow of things to come...” (verse 17), not “which **were** [past tense] a shadow of things to come...”

Passover

If the feast days were not still in force as a “shadow of things to come” in Paul's day, why did he say to the Corinthians,

“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our **passover** is sacrificed for us: **Therefore let us keep the feast**, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” 1 Cor. 5:7, 8.

“The Passover was to be **both commemorative and typical, not only pointing back** to the deliverance from Egypt, **but forward** to the greater deliverance which Christ was to accomplish in freeing His people from the bondage of sin.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 277.

“When the Saviour yielded up His life on Calvary, the significance of **the Passover ceased**, and **the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper was instituted as a memorial of the same event of which the Passover had been a type.**” *Ibid.*, p. 539.

So while the Passover had received an antitypical fulfillment at Christ’s first advent, and the Lord’s Supper became a “memorial” of that antitype, that “memorial,” itself, became a **new type** (shadow) also, as we shall see.

“As He ate the Passover with His disciples, He instituted in its place the service that was to be the memorial of His great sacrifice. **The national festival of the Jews was to pass away forever.** The service which Christ established was to be observed by His followers in all lands and through all ages.

“The Passover was ordained as a commemoration of the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage. God had directed that, year by year, as the children should ask the meaning of this ordinance, the history should be repeated. Thus the wonderful deliverance was to be kept fresh in the minds of all. The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper was given to commemorate the great deliverance wrought out as the result of the death of Christ. Till He shall come the second time in power and glory, **this ordinance is to be celebrated.** It is the means by which His great work for us is to be kept fresh in our minds.” *The Desire of Ages*, p. 652, 653.

As Passover’s significance as a memorial of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt had been replaced by the greater memorial of the deliverance made by Christ’s sacrifice, what could Paul have meant by saying that the feasts “are” (present tense) “a **shadow** of things to come?” That is, did the Passover and the other feasts still have the relevance of being types (shadows) of things still yet to come? Regarding the wine which had been given at the Passover to represent His blood Christ said,

“This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

“Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, **until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.**” Mark 14:24, 25.

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do **shew the Lord’s death till he come.**” 1 Cor. 11:26.

Therefore, the Passover, and the keeping of the Lord's Supper at that time, had become a **new type** of not only Christ's shed blood, but also of His second coming when He will drink it anew in His kingdom. It was this significance that the early church embraced when they kept the Passover in antitype as an annual memorial service as Paul was counseling the church to do (1 Cor. 5:8). The Spirit must have led him to represent the matter in a light similar to this –

“Christ is still at the table on which the paschal supper has been spread. The unleavened cakes used at the Passover season are before Him. The Passover wine, untouched by fermentation, is on the table. These emblems Christ employs to represent His own unblemished sacrifice.” *The Desire of Ages*, p. 653.

New Moons and the Sabbath

Even the New Moons and Sabbaths still have a shadow (typical) significance. That is, they point forward to the time when we will be worshipping in the new heaven and earth, as we read,

“And it shall come to pass, that from **one new moon to another**, and from **one sabbath to another**, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.”
Isa 66:23.

Thus the Sabbath now points backwards as a memorial of creation, and forward as a type (a shadow) to the time of rest from the curse of sin in the new heaven and earth. It calls us to enter into that perfect rest of a finished creation, and a finished re-creation.

But, as the testimony of the Scriptures reveal, some considered that the Sabbaths and New Moons were apparently “against” and “contrary to” the liking of some in the Old Testament times, as they, likewise, are to many today, as we read,

“Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, **When will the new moon be gone**, that we may sell corn? **and the sabbath**, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?” Amos 8:4, 5.

After the crucifixion, all of the typical feast days took on a new significance as many of them were to only thereafter receive their antitypical fulfillment which they hadn't prior to, or at, the crucifixion because they had pointed to events which were only to be fulfilled after the cross. As we shall see, not only did their typical, prophetic import continue after the cross, but they also took on a new bearing which could not have been had they been abolished and were to be forgotten after the cross.

“The types which relate to the second advent must be fulfilled at the time pointed out in the symbolic service.” *The Great Controversy*, p. 399.

The Offering of the Wave Sheaf

The first of the typical ceremonies which was to receive its antitypical fulfillment after the cross, and also become a prototype of still other things was the wave sheaf offering which took place during the Passover week.

“The sheaf of first-fruits, which at the time of the Passover was waved before the Lord, **was typical of the resurrection of Christ**. Paul says, in speaking of the resurrection of the Lord, and of all his people, “Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.” [1 COR. 15:23.] Like the wave-sheaf, which was the first ripe grain gathered before the harvest, Christ is the first-fruits of that immortal harvest of redeemed ones that at the future resurrection shall be gathered into the garner of God.” *The Great Controversy*, 1888 edition, pg. 399.

“These types were fulfilled, not only as to the event, but as to the time. ... [A]s the antitype of the wave-sheaf, our Lord was raised from the dead on the third day, ‘the first-fruits of them that slept,’ **a sample of all the resurrected just**, whose ‘vile body’ shall be changed, and ‘fashioned like unto his glorious body.’ [PHIL. 3:21.]” *Ibid*.

“After His resurrection, Christ did not show Himself to any save His followers; but testimony in regard to His resurrection was not wanting. Those who were raised with Christ ‘appeared unto many’ (Matt. 27:53), declaring, Christ has risen from the dead, and we are risen with Him. They bore testimony in the city to the fulfillment of the scripture, ‘Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead’ (Isa. 26:19). ...

“So those who had been raised were to be presented to the universe **as a pledge** of the resurrection of all who believe in Christ as their personal Saviour.” *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, pg. 305.

By these statements we see that the wave sheaf offering was not only a type of Christ’s resurrection, but also that His resurrection points forward to the resurrection of the just, and served as a “sample” and a “pledge” of **future** glories. The wave sheaf offering also is to receive another antitypical fulfillment relative to the final harvest in the end of the world.

The Feast of Pentecost

The feast of Pentecost was also still to be a shadow of things to come after the cross. Not only was it to find its antitypical fulfillment fifty days after the crucifixion when on it the Holy Spirit was poured upon the united disciples, but it still points forward to the latter-day day of Pentecost when the united 144,000 will receive another, greater, outpouring of the Spirit.

“These scenes [those of Pentecost] **are to be repeated**, and with greater power. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the former rain, but the latter rain will be more abundant. The Spirit awaits our demand and reception. Christ is

again to be revealed in His fulness by the Holy Spirit's power. Men will discern the value of the precious pearl, and with the apostle Paul they will say, 'What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.' Phil. 3:7, 8." *Christ's Object Lessons*, pg. 121.

"It is with an earnest longing that I look forward to the time when the events of the day of Pentecost **shall be repeated** with even greater power than on that occasion. John says, 'I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.' **Then, as at the Pentecostal season**, the people will hear the truth spoken to them, every man in his own tongue. God can breathe new life into every soul that sincerely desires to serve him, and can touch the lips with a live coal from off the altar, and cause them to become eloquent with his praise. Thousands of voices will be imbued with the power to speak forth the wonderful truths of God's word. The stammering tongue will be unloosed, and the timid will be made strong to bear courageous testimony to the truth. May the Lord help his people to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement, and to maintain such a close connection with him that they may be partakers of the latter rain when it shall be poured out." *Review & Herald*, July 20, 1886.

The very fact that the day of Pentecost was specifically chosen by God to be the day on which to pour out the Holy Spirit upon the disciples 50 days after the crucifixion clearly shows that its significance and typology had not met their fulfillment at Calvary, and thus had not been nailed to the cross and taken away. And as "the types which relate to the second advent must be fulfilled **at the time pointed out in the symbolic service**," (*The Great Controversy*, p. 399) then the latter day outpouring of the Spirit must also come on the day of Pentecost.

The Day of Atonement

Even the Day of Atonement remained a shadow of future events after the cross. Not only did it point to the opening of the great day of Atonement when the judgment was to open in 1844 at the end of the 2300 days (Dan. 8:14), but as all of its typical events have not yet been fulfilled in antitype, it still remains a shadow of things to come.

As Adventists, we are given to understand that in 1844 Jesus entered the Most Holy Place of the heavenly Sanctuary on the Day of Atonement to perform the final cleansing of the Sanctuary. We also understand that when He finishes His work there He will come out and transfer the sins which were stored there upon Satan, who will bear them himself. This, also, is to take place on the Day of Atonement. But there is something else which is to take place on that day which Adventists have overlooked, and have failed to understand.

That is, that the High Priest **goes into the Sanctuary twice, and comes out twice**, as we see from Leviticus 16. Therein we find that the ceremonies and offerings on the Day of Atonement are divided into two parts (though in certain phases they are intermingled) – one for the High priest and "his house" (verses 3, 6, 11-14), and the second "for the people" (verse 5, 7-10, 15, 16). The first one is for the ministry (the priesthood), the second one is for the rest of the congregation. The High Priest **first goes in** with the blood of a bullock, then **comes out** to get the blood of a goat, then **goes back in again**, and then **comes out again**. This aspect of the work on the antitypical

day of Atonement is grossly overlooked by the Adventists, and even less acknowledged as having a specific antitypical fulfillment.

As on the typical day of Atonement we see an initial atonement for the firstfruits (the ministry – a relatively smaller segment, as compared to the whole congregation), and then one for the second fruits (the rest of the congregation – a large multitude), then we should expect to see the same in the antitypical day of Atonement. To be in harmony with the two phases of the intercessions on the Day of Atonement in the type, the latter day ministry (a relatively smaller number) must receive the benefits of Christ's final atonement before the rest of the congregation. (a great multitude). And the evidence of that *first phase* of the final atonement must take place on the Day of Atonement, as pointed out in the type.

The Feast of Tabernacles

The Feast of Tabernacles, like the Day of Atonement, received no antitypical fulfillment at the cross, nor in the days of the Apostles, as its significance applies only to the end of the harvest period, not the beginning of it. Its is a long "shadow."

"The Feast of Tabernacles **was not only commemorative but typical. It not only pointed back** to the wilderness sojourn, **but**, as the feast of harvest, it celebrated the ingathering of the fruits of the earth, and **pointed forward to the great day of final ingathering, when the Lord of the harvest shall send forth His reapers to gather the tares together in bundles for the fire, and to gather the wheat into His garner.**" *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 541.

As all of the other types of the ceremonial law have been fulfilled at the very time of the year they had pointed to, then we must also expect the same with the Feast of Tabernacles.

THE SHADOW AND THE "BODY"

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; **but the body is of Christ.**" Col. 2:16, 17.

Here the apostle is contrasting the "shadow" with the "body" – those things (the "shadow") which testify to the fact that the "body" has real substance and that light is shining on it. It is the "body" which is the important part, as the shadow only goes where the body goes, and presents a likeness of what the body is doing. Were there no shadow present, either the body is in darkness, or is no longer there.

But thank God that Christ is standing in the glorious light which proceeds from the throne where He is pleading His blood on our behalf, and that we have His "shadow" as a witness, and a place of refuge from the heat of the day!

In these verses (16 & 17) Paul was expressing the same principle Jesus illuminated when He said,

“And he said unto them, **The sabbath was made for man, and *not* man for the sabbath.**” Mr 2:27.

It is clear from the context that Christ was saying that the “shadow,” the Sabbath, was not more important than the purpose of the Sabbath – the “body” – Christ with them, and in them.

“‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath,’ [Mr 2:27] Jesus said. **The institutions [all of them] that God has established are for the benefit of mankind. ‘All things are for your sakes.’**” *The Desire of Ages*, pg. 288.

“No other institution which was committed to the Jews tended so fully to distinguish them from surrounding nations as did the Sabbath. God designed that its observance should designate them as His worshipers. It was to be a token of their separation from idolatry, and their connection with the true God. **But in order to keep the Sabbath holy, men must themselves be holy. Through faith they must become partakers of the righteousness of Christ.** When the command was given to Israel, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,” the Lord said also to them, “Ye shall be holy men unto Me.” Ex 20:8; 22:31. **Only thus** could the Sabbath distinguish Israel as the worshipers of God.

“As the Jews departed from God, and failed to make the righteousness of Christ their own by faith, **the Sabbath lost its significance to them.** Satan was seeking to exalt himself and to draw men away from Christ, and he worked to pervert the Sabbath, because it is **the sign of the power of Christ.** The Jewish leaders accomplished the will of Satan by surrounding God’s rest day with burdensome requirements. In the days of Christ the Sabbath had become so perverted that **its observance reflected the character of selfish and arbitrary men rather than the character of the loving heavenly Father.** The rabbis virtually represented God as giving laws which it was impossible for men to obey. They led the people to look upon God as a tyrant, and to think that the observance of the Sabbath, as He required it, made men hard-hearted and cruel. **It was the work of Christ to clear away these misconceptions.** Although the rabbis followed Him with merciless hostility, He did not even appear to conform to their requirements, but went straight forward, keeping the Sabbath according to the law of God.” *Ibid.*, p. 283-284.

Under the influence of the unsanctified rabbis the “shadow” (the Sabbath), being given greater importance than the “body” (Christ), “reflected” a character which God never intended it to have. This is the very thing which those who were troubling the Colossians were trying to do to them – make the “shadow” more important than the “body.” Their primary weapon in this warfare was circumcision, as we find in the preceding verses.

Paul’s defense was simple – he said that the Colossian believers were

-

“complete” in Christ (v. 10);

- already “circumcised ... by the circumcision of Christ (v. 11);”
- “buried ...in baptism ... risen with Him ... through ... the operation of God” (v 12);
- had their sins (“the handwriting of ordinances that was against” them) forgiven, by their being nailed to the cross, and were regenerated while they were yet uncircumcised in their flesh (vs.13 & 14);
- therefore, they were not to let the Judaizers judge them by saying that they cannot keep the feasts (which are but a shadow of the salvation they already had in Christ) because they were not circumcised in the flesh – that is, they already had the righteousness of the law which is by faith, and that was that which qualified them to keep the feasts.

This was the same thing he said to the Phillipians –

“Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision [the circumcision – the Judaizers].

“For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” Phil. 3:1-3. [brackets added]

Because of the continuing efforts of those Jews who professed a faith in Christ to substitute works before faith, and because of trouble the non-believing Jews were causing in the Roman Empire, and because of former prejudices held by Gentile converts, the idea that there should be a separation of everything “Jewish” (including the memorials of things past and future – the Bible feast days) began to creep into the church. This prepared the way for that power which was prophesied in Dan. 7:25 to

“speak great words against the most High, and ... wear out the saints of the most High, and

THINK TO CHANGE TIMES AND LAWS“

One of the greatest proofs that the early church kept the Passover in an antitypical manner (that is, as a memorial of Christ, His sufferings, death, resurrection, and second coming, rather than as a memorial of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt), is the fact that in the 4th century those leaders of the church who were in the process of forsaking the holy covenant (Dan. 11:30), and were thinking to change “times (plural) and laws (plural)” (Dan. 7:25), and were in the process of thinking to change the Sabbath from the 7th day (Saturday) to the 1st day (Sunday), were also attempting to change the annual date of the memorial of Christ’s sufferings, death, and resurrection in keeping of the Lord’s Supper at that time from its historic reckoning by the Biblical

method of reckoning which placed the beginning of the Passover on the 14th day of the first Hebrew month, to a reckoning according to the Roman calendar. The controversy which surround this is known as the Quatrodecimen (meaning, "14th") "heresy," and is well documented in church histories.

It would have been ridiculous for those leaders to try and change something which the body of the church was under the impression had been nailed to the cross, if such was the case. But history proves different. The church at that time, nor in any previous time, was teaching that the feasts, in their antitypical settings, had ceased because they had been nailed to the cross. How could they have changed "times and laws" if there were none to change?

To understand that the significance of the types and ceremonies of the law took on a broader character at the cross, we need only to understand that rather than being abolished, there was

A CHANGE IN THE LAW OF THE FRESH ATONEMENT

It is written,

"For the priesthood **being changed**, there is made of necessity **a change also of the law.**" Heb. 7:12.

That is the key to the whole matter – the law was **changed**, not nailed to the cross with the records of our sins, nor abolished by an ecclesiastical fiat. Though Christ's death brought an end to all of the sacrifices which typified His death and intercession, only His death had been fulfilled at that time, for the continual (daily) intercession of the typical ceremonial system was just then beginning in antitype. All things which were done in type in the earthly sanctuary were after His resurrection meeting their antitype in the heavenly Sanctuary, where

"by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb 9:12), where also "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth **to make intercession** for them." Heb 7:25.

The Catholic Church boasts that they changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. But they also boast of changing many other "times" and "laws."

"The new law has its own spirit, and its own sacrifices, and its own FEASTS, which have TAKEN THE PLACE OF THOSE APPOINTED IN THE LAW OF MOSES. If we would know the DAYS TO BE OBSERVED, or the regulations about them, of the spirit in which they are to be kept holy, WE MUST GO TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH,. NOT TO THE MOSAIC LAW." *Catholic Catechism*, quoted in *Signs of the Times*, Nov. 4, 1919.

Their boasts of having changed "times" and law" is especially true in regards to Christ's intercessory work in the heavenly Sanctuary where He pleads His blood from that "fountain" which

was opened at Calvary “for sin and for uncleanness” (Zech 13:1).

“The Scriptural Ordinance of The Lord’s Supper had been supplanted [taken away – Daniel 8:11] by the idolatrous sacrifice of the mass.” *The Story of Redemption*, p. 334

In the performance of the Mass, the priests are said to be making a fresh atonement. As Satan’s main business is in producing counterfeits, the “**sacrifice** of the mass” must be a counterfeit of Christ’s fresh atonement – a fresh application of His blood before the throne of mercy. It is written,

“In that day there shall be **a fountain opened** to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem **for sin and for uncleanness.**” Zech. 13:1.

That “fountain” is nothing less than Christ’s own blood. All of the types of the sacrificial law pointed to the time when that fountain would be opened and the cleansing stream would be flowing forth for the salvation of man.

“Moses made the earthly sanctuary, ‘according to the fashion that he had seen.’ Paul declares that ‘the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry,’ when completed, were ‘the patterns of things in the heavens.’ Acts 7:44; Hebrews 9:21, 23. And John says that he saw the sanctuary in heaven. That sanctuary, **in which Jesus ministers in our behalf**, is the great original, of which the sanctuary built by Moses was a copy.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 357.

“The heavenly temple, the abiding place of the King of kings, where ‘thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him,’ . . . no earthly structure could represent its vastness and its glory. **Yet important truths concerning the heavenly sanctuary and the great work there carried forward for man’s redemption were to be taught by the earthly sanctuary and its services.**” *Ibid.*

“Christ was the foundation of the Jewish economy. **The whole system of types and symbols was a compacted prophecy of the gospel**, a presentation in which were bound up the promises of redemption.” *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 14.

“And what was done **IN TYPE** in the ministration of the earthly sanctuary **IS DONE IN REALITY** in the ministration of the heavenly sanctuary.” *The Great Controversy*, p. 420.

“As anciently the sins of the people were by faith placed upon the sin offering and through its blood transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary, **so in the new covenant the sins of the repentant are by faith placed upon Christ and transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary.**” *Ibid.*, p. 421.

“After His ascension, our Saviour was **to begin His work as our High Priest**. Says Paul, ‘Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us’

Hebrews 9:24. As Christ's ministration was to consist of two great divisions, each occupying a period of time and having a distinctive place in the heavenly sanctuary, so the typical ministration consisted of two divisions, **the daily and the yearly service**, and to each a department of the tabernacle was devoted." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 357.

"As Christ at His ascension appeared in the presence of God **to plead His blood** in behalf of penitent believers, so the priest in the **daily ministration** sprinkled the blood of sacrifice in the holy place in the sinner's behalf." *Ibid.*, p. 357.

"Thus in the ministration of the tabernacle, and of the temple that afterward took its place, the people were taught each day the great truths relative to Christ's death **and ministration** . . ." *Ibid.*, p. 358.

Therein we see the picture of a daily work done by Christ, similar to the daily work of the Jewish priests in the type. This daily work (Christ's ministration in the heavenly Sanctuary) is the glorious Gospel and continuing passion of Christ which the Holy Ghost has chosen to reveal to the remnant church. Of this continuing ministration we read –

"The smitten rock [which followed the Israelites in their desert wanderings] was a figure of Christ, and through this symbol the most precious spiritual truths are taught. As the life-giving waters flowed from the smitten rock, **SO** from Christ, 'smitten of God,' 'wounded for our transgressions,' 'bruised for our iniquities' (Isaiah 53:4, 5), **the stream of salvation flows for a lost race**. As the rock had been **once smitten**, so Christ was to be 'once offered to bear the sins of many.' Hebrews 9:28. **Our Saviour was not to be sacrificed a second time**; and it is only necessary for those who seek the blessings of His grace to ASK in the name of Jesus, pouring forth the heart's desire in penitential prayer. **Such prayer will bring before the Lord of hosts the WOUNDS of Jesus, and THEN WILL FLOW FORTH AFRESH the life-giving BLOOD**, symbolized by the flowing of the living water for Israel." *Patriarch's and Prophets*, p. 411.

Thus we have not only the precious truth of Christ's daily intercession for us, but also the truth of which the Mass is a counterfeit – the true "fresh atonement." Not by an actor performing a mock similitude of His ongoing passion, offering something which is not his, but by Christ, Himself, offering that which is His alone – His cleansing blood. He will not be sacrificed again, for the "fountain" has been "opened" "for sin and for uncleanness." (Zechariah 13:1) at Calvary. The Rock has been smitten once, the fountain has been opened, awaiting only for the asking to pour forth His blessings. He will not be broken nor bruised again. Nor cut nor pierced. Nor will death come upon Him again. But the wounds in His hands are still tender, and He, as our true High Priest, intercedes for us daily by His blood – His fresh, living blood (Life).

But keep in mind, though He does this willingly, it is not a pleasant, painless, experience, in His mind at least. No one who has a fresh wound enjoys bleeding, watching their lifeblood pouring forth. Yet He does this in the hope of the ultimate reward – our salvation. Thus His passion continues. Consider also that it pains the Father also to see His Son bleeding. A full consciousness of these facts will enable us to fall on that Rock and be broken, and thus be

resurrected from spiritual death in continuing sins and trespasses.

God is not going to have any problem resurrecting the literal dead, for they (both saints and sinners) will not be able to resist the Voice which calls them forth from their graves. But the living must die to self before they can be resurrected from death in sins and trespasses. Such must be the experience of the last generation, as they will have to stand before the throne without an Intercessor after Jesus ends His work for fallen man, and they will be translated without tasting death. And that experience can only be had by beholding Christ's ongoing ministry in the heavenly Sanctuary, for therein the antitypical ceremonial law, in which is wrapped up the plan of salvation, is being performed on our behalf.

The early church knew of Christ's continuing ministry of His blood in the heavenly Sanctuary before the one who had "arms ... stand on his part" (the Roman government), who, in league "with them that forsake the holy covenant" (the Roman clergy, and like-minded church leaders), had taken away "the daily [sacrifice], ... and the place of His sanctuary was cast down" in the understanding of men, and before there was placed "the abomination that maketh desolate [the Mass]." (Daniel 8:11; 11:30, 31). What the early church knew was that Christ's sacrifice and intercession was two-fold.

The first part is summed up in Jude's statement which closes his letter,

"Now unto Him that **is able to keep you from falling**, and to present you **faultless** before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy ..." (Jude 1:24).

This was also the Good News (Gospel) which the apostle John preached when he wrote,

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye **sin not**." 1 John 2:1.

They knew that

"by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14),
"having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself..." Colossians 1:20

Yet, they also understood that

"**if any man sin**, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 1, 2:2.

They understood that they also needed Christ as "an advocate with the Father,"

"an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens," (Hebrews 8:1), and that "every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man [Christ] have **somewhat also to offer**."

” Hebrews 8:3.

What is that “somewhat” which our High priest has to “offer?”

“Christ being come an high priest, ... by **His own blood** He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the **blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge [cleanse] your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Hebrews 9:11-14.

For

“... Without the **shedding of blood** is no remission.” (Hebrews 9:22).

John says that

“the **blood** of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (1 John 1:7).

Yet while he knew that Christ’s death on the cross paid the price for all sins, past and future, he also knew that “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (verse 8, 9). In the Revelation we also read that Jesus Christ has “washed us from our sins in his own blood...” Revelation 1:5.

The means of this washing, cleansing, is described by the apostle Peter as the

“sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:2.

This “sprinkling” indicates a priestly act in a *present* sense, not a *past* one. That is, this “sprinkling,” cleansing, takes place when we “confess our sins.” According to the type, the blood of the innocent sacrifice was to be sprinkled not only in and around the sanctuary and altar, but also, at times, upon the high priest and his sons (Exodus 29:21), and even upon the one for whom intercession was being made (Leviticus 14:7). In all of the actions (the works) of the priests which “serve[d] unto the example and shadow of heavenly things” (Hebrews 8:5), we see only a “fresh atonement,” with fresh blood.

“All who have received the light upon these subjects are to bear testimony of the great truths which God has committed to them. The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ’s work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects and be able to give an answer to everyone that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them.

“The intercession of Christ in man’s behalf in the sanctuary above *is as essential to the plan of salvation* as was His death upon the cross. By His death He *began* that work which *after* His resurrection He ascended to *complete* in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, ‘whither the forerunner is for us entered.’ Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption. The salvation of man is accomplished at an infinite expense to heaven; the sacrifice made is equal to the broadest demands of the broken law of God. Jesus has opened the way to the Father’s throne, and through His mediation the sincere desire of all who come to Him in faith may be presented before God.

“‘He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.’ Proverbs 28:13. If those who hide and excuse their faults could see how Satan exults over them, how he taunts Christ and holy angels with their course, they would make haste to confess their sins and to put them away. Through defects in the character, Satan works to gain control of the whole mind, and he knows that if these defects are cherished, he will succeed. Therefore he is constantly seeking to deceive the followers of Christ with his fatal sophistry that it is impossible for them to overcome. But Jesus pleads in their behalf His wounded hands, His bruised body; and He declares to all who would follow Him: ‘My grace is sufficient for thee.’ 2 Corinthians 12:9. ‘Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.’ Matthew 11:29, 30. Let none, then, regard their defects as incurable. God will give faith and grace to overcome them.” *The Great Controversy*, pg. 489.

Therefore, we are encouraged to have the

“boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus [by His fresh blood], by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.” Hebrews 10:19, 20.

All of this was known by the early church through their enlightened understanding of the typical service of the Law of Moses. But the authors of the book under review, and the multitudes who likewise hold the Law of Moses in contempt and under ridicule, are not only cheating themselves of the glories of God’s character revealed therein, but are depriving the world of the same. This is especially true in that they have accepted the substitution of Christmas, Easter, and their various versions of the “mass” which had supplanted the true Lord’s Supper, and the self-centered character which comes with them, for the true Bible feast days and a true keeping of “a Supper of the Lord,”* and their sanctifying character.

*For more on the true nature of “a Supper of the Lord,” please see our series of studies titled, The Lord’s Supper, From the Table to the Altar and Back, [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), and [Part 3](#).

It is written,

“If a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

“And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

“And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

“No man can enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

“Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.” Mark 3:24-29.

How can the Adventists bind the errors of Satan and set free those who are bound in Babylon with cords made out of flimsy cobwebs of theology? But what is even more important is, what kind of characters will their shaky theory produce in themselves? That is, what may it be in their characters which would lead them to find the law of Moses “against” or “contrary” to them? This we shall discover as we look at

A BLOODLESS SACRIFICE, AND ITS FIRST DISCIPLE

In presenting a sacrificial animal, the animal had to be without blemish – a choice animal, which was something to be prized, and not something one would want to readily part with. The presenter also had to slay the animal after placing their hand on the animal’s head and confessing their sins. This certainly would not be a pleasant experience. This is so contrary to the proud heart that we have a classic example of one who felt that the law of sacrifice was so obnoxious to him that he refused to partake in the required offering, but, instead, substituted his own idea of an offering which was not at all “contrary” to his feelings of self-complacency and self-sufficiency – that is, Cain. Of this we read,

“And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell...” Gen. 4:3-5.

Regarding this situation, the Spirit of Prophecy says,

“Christ was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy. The death of Abel was in consequence of Cain’s refusing to accept God’s plan in the school of obedience to be saved by the blood of Jesus Christ typified by the sacrificial offerings pointing to Christ. Cain refused the shedding of blood which symbolized the blood of Christ to be shed for the world. This whole ceremony was prepared by God, and Christ became the foundation of the whole system. This is the beginning of its work as the schoolmaster to bring sinful human agents to a consideration of Christ the Foundation of the whole Jewish economy.” *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, pg. 233.

Therein we see the beginning of the great schoolmaster’s work, and it was long before the law was given to the Jews at Sinai. Inspiration has provided us with clear picture of the motives of those who consider the shedding of blood under the typical ceremonial system to be “against” or “contrary” to them by further contrasting the works of Cain and Abel –

“These brothers were tested, as Adam had been tested before them, to prove whether they would believe and obey the word of God. They were acquainted with the provision made for the salvation of man, and understood the system of offerings which God had ordained. They knew that in these offerings they were to express faith in the Saviour whom the offerings typified, and at the same time to acknowledge their total dependence on Him for pardon; and they knew that by thus conforming to the divine plan for their redemption, they were giving proof of their obedience to the will of God. Without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sin; and they were to show their faith in the blood of Christ as the promised atonement by offering the firstlings of the flock in sacrifice. Besides this, the first fruits of the earth were to be presented before the Lord as a thank offering.

“The two brothers erected their altars alike, and each brought an offering. Abel presented a sacrifice from the flock, in accordance with the Lord’s directions. ‘And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.’ [Ge 4:4] Fire flashed from heaven and consumed the sacrifice. But Cain, disregarding the Lord’s direct and explicit command, presented only an offering of fruit. There was no token from heaven to show that it was accepted. Abel pleaded with his brother to approach God in the divinely prescribed way, but his entreaties only made Cain the more determined to follow his own will. As the eldest, he felt above being admonished by his brother, and despised his counsel.

“Cain came before God with murmuring and infidelity in his heart in regard to the promised sacrifice and the necessity of the sacrificial offerings.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 71, 72.

Therein we have the record of the first one who felt that law of sacrifice (the ceremonial law) was “against” him – “contrary” to him. That the “schoolmaster” (the whole of the law – the very transcript of God’s character) was his enemy. The testimony continues –

“His gift expressed no penitence for sin. He felt, as many now feel, that it would be an acknowledgment of weakness to follow the exact plan marked out by God, of trusting his salvation wholly to the atonement of the promised Saviour. He chose the course of self-dependence. He would come in his own merits. He would not bring the lamb, and mingle its blood with his offering, but would present *his* fruits, the products of *his* labor. He presented his offering as a favor done to God, through which he expected to secure the divine approval. Cain obeyed in building an altar, obeyed in bringing a sacrifice; but he rendered only a partial obedience. The essential part, the recognition of the need of a Redeemer, was left out.” *Ibid.* p. 72.

This, as we shall see, is exactly what those who say that it was the Law of Moses which was nailed to the cross are doing (though they may not be aware of this) – they are leaving out what their Redeemer has been doing since His resurrection. They do not see the need to look to the heavenly Sanctuary where Christ stands pleading His blood on behalf of the penitent sinners. Many of them look only to the cross, and the first time they fell on the Rock of salvation and were broken. Let us look at a little more of the Spirit’s contrasting of the characters of the first two brothers.

“So far as birth and religious instruction were concerned, these brothers were equal. Both were sinners, and both acknowledged the claims of God to reverence and worship. To outward appearance their religion was the same up to a certain point, but beyond this the difference between the two was great.

“‘By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.’ Heb 11:4. Abel grasped the great principles of redemption. He saw himself a sinner, and he saw sin and its penalty, death, standing between his soul and communion with God. He brought the slain victim, the sacrificed life, thus acknowledging the claims of the law that had been transgressed. Through the shed blood he looked to the future sacrifice, Christ dying on the cross of Calvary; and trusting in the atonement that was there to be made, he had the witness that he was righteous, and his offering accepted.

“Cain had the same opportunity of learning and accepting these truths as had Abel. He was not the victim of an arbitrary purpose. One brother was not elected to be accepted of God, and the other to be rejected. Abel chose faith and obedience; Cain, unbelief and rebellion. Here the whole matter rested.

“Cain and Abel represent two classes that will exist in the world till the close of time. One class avail themselves of the appointed sacrifice for sin; the other venture to depend upon their own merits; theirs is a sacrifice without the virtue of divine mediation, and thus it is not able to bring man into favor with God. It is only through the merits of Jesus that our transgressions can be pardoned. Those who feel no need of the blood of Christ, who feel that without divine grace they can by their own works secure the approval of God, are making the same mistake as did Cain. If they do not accept the cleansing blood, they are under condemnation. There is no other provision made whereby they can be released from the thralldom of sin.

“The class of worshipers who follow the example of Cain includes by far the greater portion of the world; for nearly every false religion has been based on the same principle—that man can depend upon his own efforts for salvation. It is claimed by some that the human race is in need, not of redemption, but of development—that it can refine, elevate, and regenerate itself. As Cain thought to secure the divine favor by an offering that lacked the blood of a sacrifice, so do these expect to exalt humanity to the divine standard, independent of the atonement. The history of Cain shows what must be the results. It shows what man will become apart from Christ. Humanity has no power to regenerate itself. It does not tend upward, toward the divine, but downward, toward the satanic. Christ is our only hope. ‘There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.’ ‘Neither is there salvation in any other.’ Acts 4:12.

“True faith, which relies wholly upon Christ, will be manifested by obedience to all the requirements of God. From Adam’s day to the present time the great controversy has been concerning obedience to God’s law. In all ages there have been those who claimed a right to the favor of God even while they were disregarding some of His commands. But the Scriptures declare that by works is ‘faith made perfect;’ and that, without the works of obedience, faith ‘is dead.’ Jas 2:22,17. He that professes to know God, ‘and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.’ 1Jo 2:4
“When Cain saw that his offering was rejected, he was angry with the Lord and with Abel; he was angry that God did not accept man’s substitute in place of the sacrifice

divinely ordained, and angry with his brother for choosing to obey God instead of joining in rebellion against Him.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pps. 71-74.

Thus we see that the bloody offering Cain was required to present to the Lord was, evidently, so “contrary” to his nature that he presented only the fruits of the ground. He could not humble himself to obey the Lord’s commandment. Abel’s offering, though, took great humility to present. Cain’s offering foreshadowed nothing of Gospel import, as did Abel’s.

There is no evidence that the two brothers were in disagreement concerning the obligations of the Ten Commandments. They both seemed to have acknowledged that they were sinners, and needed God’s graces. But one chose to hide from the reality of what it was to take to restore them and sanctify them – the lifeblood of the Son of God.

This same distinction between the characters of those two brothers is seen in those who acknowledge the Ten Commandments, but reject the reality of what is happening under the antitypical ceremonial law, and those who humble themselves under the reality of Christ’s continuing passion in the fresh atonement he provides for those who in penitence seek His intercession in their behalf.

Regarding the mark of the beast, we have been told,

“The light we have received upon the third angel’s message is the true light. The mark of the beast is exactly what it has been proclaimed to be. Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, nor will it be understood until the unrolling of the scroll.”
Testimonies, Vol. 6, p. 17.

As this statement was made well over one hundred years ago, and the leadership is not teaching anything more in regards to the mark of the beast than they were when the statement was made, are we to conclude that the scroll has not unrolled any further in all of that time? It is either that, or that the scroll has unrolled but the leadership has failed to receive the new light. It is evident from what the authors of the book under consideration say therein about the Law of Moses being nailed to the cross that they have not progressed with the unrolling of the scroll in this regards. To understand this, let us look at a turning point in our history.

1888 TWICE REJECTED

In 1888, at the General Conference meeting in Minneapolis, an ongoing controversy reached a head. For a number of years some of the SDA leaders had been debating the exact relationship of the law and the Gospel, in particular, the meaning of Galatians 3:24, 25, which reads

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”

The older, commonly held view was that the “schoolmaster” was the Law of Moses (also known as the ceremonial law) – the thing that was “against us,” and thus nailed to the cross. The new view was that it was the whole Law that acted as a “schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ” – the Ten

Commandments pointing out the standard of righteousness and defining sins, and the ceremonial law pointing out, in types, the plan of salvation brought by Christ's intercession.

History has shown that the new view was generally rejected by the church leadership (as seen in their current publication, *Ten Commandments, Twice Removed*), though the new view is also given some general weight, but not allowed to be brought to its full conclusions. Speaking on this issue, Ellen White said,

“The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. 3:24). In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

“An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis AGAINST the Lord's message through Brethren [E.J.] Waggoner and [A.T.] Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world.” *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, p. 234, 235.

While she said that the “schoolmaster” referred “especially” to the “moral law,” the Ten Commandments, she also said,

“I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: BOTH the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments. Christ was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy.” *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, p. 233.

We have seen previously that the ceremonial law of types began shortly after the fall of Adam and Eve, and was the only means appointed to keep fresh in men's minds Christ's sacrifice for the salvation of man – that it, along with the Ten Commandments is the “schoolmaster” given to bring us to Christ. So why would there have been a controversy over this simple truth? Because of the ultimate conclusion to which it leads, and the fact that the theories built upon erroneous views would have had to be abandoned. Speaking of “new wine,” Jesus said,

“No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.” Luke 5:39

Therein is a reasonable excuse for people not immediately coming up to the new light. But the Spirit of prophecy further illuminates what was really transpiring then. That is, it wasn't just men being uncomfortable in unfamiliar surroundings, but a much deeper problem, as we read,

“In Minneapolis God gave precious gems of truth to His people in new settings. This light from heaven by some was rejected with all the stubbornness the Jews manifested in rejecting Christ, and there was much talk about standing by the old landmarks.

“But there was evidence they knew not what the old landmarks were. There was evidence that there was reasoning from the Word that commended itself to the conscience; but the minds of men were fixed, sealed against the entrance of light, because they had decided it was a dangerous error removing the “old landmarks” when it was not moving a peg of the old landmarks, but they had perverted ideas of what constituted the old landmarks.—MS 13, 1889 (see also CWE, p. 30). *Biographical Sketches*, Vol. 3, p. 403.

She then goes on to state what she considered the “landmarks”

“The passing of the time in 1844 was a period of great events, opening to our astonished eyes the cleansing of the sanctuary transpiring in heaven, and having decided relation to God's people upon the earth, [also] the first and second angels' messages and the third, unfurling the banner on which was inscribed, “The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”

“One of the landmarks under this message was the temple of God, seen by His truth-loving people in heaven, and the ark containing the law of God. The light of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment flashed its strong rays in the pathway of the transgressors of God's law. The nonimmortality of the wicked is an old landmark. I can call to mind nothing more that can come under the head of the old landmarks. All this cry about changing the old landmarks is all imaginary.

“Now at the present time God designs a new and fresh impetus shall be given to His work. Satan sees this, and he is determined it shall be hindered. He knows that if he can deceive the people who claim to believe present truth, [and make them believe that] the work the Lord designs to do for His people is a removing of the old landmarks, something which they should, with most determined zeal, resist, then he exults over the deception he has led them to believe.—Ibid. (see also CWE, pp. 30, 31).

“The remark was made, “If our views of Galatians are not correct, then we have not the third angel's message, and our position goes by the board; there is nothing to our faith.”

“I said, “Brethren, here is the very thing I have been telling you. This statement is not true. It is an extravagant, exaggerated statement. If it is made in the discussion of this question I shall feel it my duty to set this matter before all that are assembled, and whether they hear or forbear, tell them the statement is incorrect. The question at issue is not a vital question and should not be treated as such.”—Ibid. (see also 3SM, pp. 174, 175). *Biographical Sketches*, Vol. 3, p. 404, 405.

So we see that the problem was that some thought that their foundation stood upon something

which, in reality, it didn't. That is, their view of Galatians (that the law which was said to be the "schoolmaster" was only the law of Moses, and not the whole law) was not really an "old landmark," but rather just an old *relic* that they had been carrying around and placing upon high shelves to be admired as something of value, when in reality it was just a vessel of tin. But, as they had built all kinds of other theories around it, they felt that if it fell to the wayside, then so would the errors they had built around it and had come to be accepted as being truth. And therein was the real difficulty – they would have had to unlearn some things, and learn some new ones.

Other than that, what else were they afraid of? Just this – the logical conclusion to which the "new light" would have led them – that it was our sins (the curse of the law), and not the law of Moses (including the Bible feast days) which were nailed to the cross and taken away thereby. And, if the feast days were not nailed to the cross, what then is the Christian's relationship to those *shadows*? Were they, like the Sabbath, places of rest and repose from the fiery trials of this sin-cursed world?

The learned among them knew that Christmas was an adaption from Paganism, yet they still observed it to some degree. The same was true of Easter. Even today, when Adventists observe the memorial of Christ's resurrection, they do so at the time commanded by the Roman Catholic Church, rather than by the Hebrew calendar. For more on this please see our study [Calendar in the Heavens, New Years, New Moons, Passover, and Pentecost](#).

They also knew that the Catholic Church boasts of changing many times and laws besides the Sabbath. Had they accepted the new light, they would have understood the reality that Paul was counseling the Corinthians to literally keep the Passover in the Spirit of Christ (1 Cor. 5:7, 8) under the New Covenant, rather than continuing to spiritualize away those verses.

The same stands true today. What other honest conclusion can be had from these things?

What was the result of the leaders not allowing the fullness of the new light to shine? Said Ellen White,

"If the people of God had gone to work as they should have gone to work right after the Minneapolis meeting in 1888, the world could have been warned in two years and the Lord would have come." *General Conference Bulletin*, 1892.

So what can be said about the current situation of the leaders still clinging to the old error? It is written,

"So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Rev. 3:16, 17.

What a sad state of affairs – to be "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" and not even know it! But there is a remedy –

“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:31, 32.

As it is only the truth which is able to set people free from the bondage brought on them by false teachings, mixing truth with error cannot accomplish the goal of setting people free. So, if the leaders held back the Lord’s work in 1888 because they wouldn’t come up to the true light of the relationship of the Law to the Gospel, what is the Lord to do now that they have had over 100 years to come up to the light, yet still refuse to give up their private opinions? Will they not take to heart the words spoken to Saul which were the result of his doing things according to his own thinking?

“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.” 1 Sam. 15:23.

They well know that it is written specifically of them,

“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth, because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wrethed, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Rev. 3:15-17.

What is it going to take to awaken them to the fact that they have not the covering of the truth they need to represent the great Lawgiver in all of His glory? By saying that the law of Moses (the ceremonial law) was that which was “against us” and “contrary to us,” they are, in effect, saying that God set a trap for His people Israel and forced them to fall into it. So they, like so many of their adversaries, are appearing to set the God of the Old Testament against the God of the New Testament. And if that is the foundation upon which their kingdom stands, then they should truly bear in mind that

“Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth.” Luke 11:17.

Speaking of the seriousness of the situation at Minneapolis Ellen White related the following:

“When I purposed to leave Minneapolis, the Angel of the Lord stood by me and said: ‘Not so: God has a work for you to do in this place. The people are acting over the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. I have placed you in your proper position, which those who are not in the light will not acknowledge; they will not heed your testimony; but I will be with you; My grace and power shall sustain you.’

“In solemn words the angel continued, opening up still further the true situation there at Minneapolis

“It is not you they are despising, but the messengers and the message I sent to My people. They have shown contempt for the word of the Lord. Satan has blinded their eyes and perverted their judgment; and unless every soul shall repent of this their sin, this unsanctified independence that is doing insult to the Spirit of God, they will walk in darkness. I will remove the candlestick out of his place except they repent and be converted, that I should heal them.

“They have obscured their spiritual eyesight. They would not that God should manifest His Spirit and His power, for they have a spirit of mockery and disgust at My word. Lightness, trifling, jesting, and joking are daily practiced. They have not set their hearts to seek Me. They walk in the sparks of their own kindling, and unless they repent, they shall lie down in sorrow.—Letter 2a, 1892.” *Biographical Sketches*, Vol. 3, p. 406, 407.

“The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. None but those who have been overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony will be found with the loyal and true, without spot or stain of sin, without guile in their mouths. We must be divested of our self-righteousness and arrayed in the righteousness of Christ.” *Selected Messages*, Vol. 2, p. 380.

“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Heb 10:31.

While many have come to accept the common saying, “Let us agree to disagree,” and others say that the Gospel is broad enough for us to have divergent opinions, such is not what God wants for His people, for it is written,

“Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.” Isa 52:8.

“Is Christ divided?” 1 Cor. 1:13.

We know the answer to that rhetorical question – of course Christ is not divided! Then why are His called ones? We know the answer to this also, so there should be no need to restate it.

“Those who belong to Christ’s army must work with concerted action. They cannot be faithful soldiers unless they obey orders. United action is essential. An army in which every part acts without reference to the other parts, has no real strength. In order to add new territory to Christ’s kingdom, His soldiers must act in concert. ...He calls for a united army, which moves steadily forward, not for a company composed of independent atoms. The strength of His army is to be used for one great purpose. Its efforts are to be concentrated upon one great point – the magnifying of the laws of His kingdom before the world, before angels, and before men.” *Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7-A, p. 156.

Keep in mind that it is not in magnifying anyone's private opinion of His law, but His law in verity – all of it.

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” 1 Cor. 1:10.

Such is my prayer, and the Lord's promise,

So let it be,

[Doug Mitchell](#)

June 7, 2006