**“The True Peace Conference” American Sentinel 14, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

There is a council of peace continually in session, and it is the only council that can accomplish definite results. “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the Man whose name is THE BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord; even He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory; and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” Zechariah 6:12, 13. The true counsel of peace is between God and Christ on the throne of God in heaven. The God of peace has sent Jesus, “the Prince of peace,” who is “our peace,” preaching peace, “peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near.” Isaiah 57:19. {AMS July 13, 1899, p. 419.1}

Christ has left His peace with men, but not as the world gives it. Whoever will let the peace of God rule in his heart (Colossians 3:15), by receiving and trusting absolutely in the Word of God, will be kept by “the peace of God which passeth all understanding.” Philippians 4:6, 7. This is the peace of righteousness, which comes from hearkening to the commandments of God. Isaiah 48:18; Romans 5:1. Only God can impart this peace, and it is the only peace that is peace indeed. It is perfect peace, and it is as lasting as eternity. {AMS July 13, 1899, p. 419.2}

Now it is not this peace that the delegates of the nations have met to confer about at The Hague, and consequently they are imagining a vain thing. If it were the true peace that they were conferring about they would be having a religious meeting pure and simple seeking the blessing of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. “What a strange thing that would be for a congress composed of delegates from all the nations,” all will exclaim. Indeed it would be a strange thing, and an impossible thing; for if they were assembled for that purpose, their action could not be representative. Each one could secure peace for himself only, as an individual. Their action would bind nobody else. It would be a grand thing, however, if they would seek peace in that way, for then something would be accomplished; a few men, at least, would secure peace. {AMS July 13, 1899, p. 419.3}

“There is no peace, saith my Lord, to the wicked.” Isaiah 57:21. It is only by personal faith in Christ that righteousness comes; therefore it is evident that to nations on this earth there can never be peace. Only by submitting to the mild sway of Him that sitteth on the throne in the heavens, and acknowledging and keeping His laws, can there be peace. That would result in there being only one King over all, which will be the case in the world to come, when “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.” Revelation 11:15. {AMS July 13, 1899, p. 419.4}

It is not necessary, therefore, not even profitable, to call a conference of all the nations, in order to have peace. Each person may have a successful peace conference by himself, wherever he is God has spoken peace, and Christ has been sent with the message. We have only to listen and accept. “I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints.” {AMS July 13, 1899, p. 419.5}

**“Paganism and Sunday” American Sentinel 14, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

**“Present Truth.” (London, Eng.)**

The *Church Family Newspaper* of the 16 June contains the following bit of information appropriate to the season:- {AMS July 13, 1899, p. 422.1}

“The near approach of Midsummer Day calls to mind the fact that that day and the preceding eve, now dedicated to St. John the Baptist, have been regarded as a holy season even from remote pagan times. There seems to be little doubt that one custom which was observed in our own time, and may he still In remote parts of Ireland and Scotland-that of lighting, fires on the hills on Midsummer Eve-had come down to us from the time when the sun-god Bel, or Baal, was worshipped in these islands. Such fires were common over the greater part of Europe-from the cold borders of Lapland to the Levant.” {AMS July 13, 1899, p. 422.2}

The same custom is continued till the present time in Norway and Sweden, where Midsummer Day is quite a holiday. In connection with the foregoing, the following from the same paper, with regard to Stonehenge in Salisbury Plain, fits very well:- {AMS July 13, 1899, p. 422.3}

There is now no doubt of the character of this mighty ruin. Baal worship was at one time almost the universal religion, and this was one of the great temples. It was oriented so that the rays of the rising sun at midsummer should fall upon its sacred altar. It would be rash to guess its age for it may be older than the time of Elijah. Very little is known of the religious teaching of the Druids, but they were believed to have been Baal, that is, suit worshippers.... Sixty years ago I heard boys sing in the streets a song which is a portion of a Druidical hymn to the rising sun. In English it sounds like nonsense, and they had no idea what they were saying; it was a wonderful survival of pagan Britain, and Elijah may have heard this chorus, sung by the priests of Baal, three thousand years ago. In one or two remote parts of Britain, the custom of commemorating the triumph of the sun on June 21 still continues, with dancing and bonfires. The peasants are probably innocent of the origin of this custom. {AMS July 13, 1899, p. 422.4}

Many people are observing pagan customs, wholly ignorant of their origin, thinking indeed that they are Christian because “the Church” has adopted them and sanctions them. How many realise the connection between Christmas and Midsummer Day? The observance of the latter is admitted to be solely of pagan origin Sun worshippers celebrated it as the day of the greatest triumph of their god, the day on which the sun was longest and highest above the horizon. Just six months later, after a period of progressive daily decrease of sunshine, when the sun seemed to be going away, they celebrated the time of the beginning of its return, its birth, as they called it. {AMS July 13, 1899, p. 422.5}

Now when the bishops of the early church, more anxious to secure a large following than to win men from the superstitions of paganism, saw how firmly the heathen were wedded to these sun-festivals, they resolved to adopt them, so that the heathen could profess Christianity without making any violent change in their habits and customs. But of course it would not do to continua them as emblems of the worship of the ruler of the day. So, remembering that Jesus was just six months younger than John the Baptist, they hit on the plan of calling Midsummer Day the birthday of John the Baptist, and the winter celebration the birthday of Jesus, quieting their consciences, if they had any conscience in the matter, by the fact that Jesus is “the Sun of righteousness.” So we have Christmas, a purely heathen festival, firmly fixed in the Church. When so much of sun worship had been adopted, it was but a short step to the adoption of Sunday, “the venerable day of the sun.” {AMS July 13, 1899, p. 422.6}