**“An Unwarranted Conclusion” Bible Echo and Signs of the Times 3, 5.**

E. J. Waggoner

The *Congregationalist* a short time ago gave a brief notice of the Bible-class which was regularly held by Dr. Meredith, in Tremont Temple, Boston, noting especially the teaching of one of the International lessons. In this notice we find the following:- {BEST May 1888, p. 66.1}

“In teaching this lesson, as well as one or two others lately, Dr. Meredith has expressed the opinion that we are not living in the last days of the world, but says he expects it to continue for centuries and ages, adducing as evidence of this the immense quantity of coal and minerals of various kinds stored up in the bowels of the earth apparently for the use of mankind.” {BEST May 1888, p. 66.2}

It is astonishing that Bible students will call such statements as this “evidence” that we are not in the last days. While we would not call Dr. Meredith a scoffer, he certainly is in the line of the fulfillment of Peter’s prophecy that in the last days men shall say, “Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation” (2 Peter 3:4), and thus himself furnishes evidence that we are in the last days. {BEST May 1888, p. 66.3}

The argument, for such we will call it by courtesy, is this: Because there is an abundance of fuel in the earth, therefore it must be consumed. It would be just as reasonable to say that because a man has enough wheat in his barn to last him ten years therefore he must of necessity live until he has consumed it all. The Doctor forgets that sometimes those things which are designed for the use of man are made the instruments of his destruction. {BEST May 1888, p. 66.4}

When the word was created it was a watery mass. Peter says it was “standing out of the water and in the water.” 2 Peter 3:5. By the word of the Lord the waters were gathered together unto one place and the dry land appeared. Much of this water was stored in the bowels of the earth. It was doubtless there for man’s use, just as now we draw from the earth water to supply our needs. Now suppose we imagine Noah preaching that in a few years the Lord would destroy the earth. Up speaks some wise philosopher and says: “That cannot be, for there are vast quantities of water stored up in the earth for man’s use, and the earth cannot be destroyed until all that water has been consumed. But the water supply can never be exhausted, and therefore the world can never be destroyed.” No doubt he would have been applauded by the people for his wisdom. Nevertheless, “the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.” 2 Peter 3:6. And the water which was stored within the earth, together with that which came from heaven, was the means by which the earth was destroyed. {BEST May 1888, p. 66.5}

The apostle says that those who deny the Lord’s soon coming are willingly ignorant of the facts which we have just related. He says: “But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” 2 Peter 3:7. In this we cannot fail to see that the apostle draws a comparison between the future destruction of the earth by fire, and its former destruction by water. Just as the water out of which the earth was formed, and which was stored within the earth, caused its destruction, even so now the combustible material stored within the earth, will, together with the fire that comes down from God out of heaven, cause the earth to be dissolved. {BEST May 1888, p. 66.6}

It is a very unsafe thing to draw conclusions from nature, contrary to the statements made in the Bible. It is true that God has abundant provision for the support of mankind on this earth for ages to come. But he has never pledged himself to support a people who are unworthy of support. When the people of the earth have forgotten him, or while professing to know him deny him by their works, he will count them as chaff fit only for the flames, and by the very things wherein they trust, he will destroy the world and them that dwell therein, and will create a new heavens and a new earth, wherein the righteous shall dwell. {BEST May 1888, p. 66.7}

E. J. WAGGONER.