**“Who is to Blame?” The Signs of the Times, 8, 5.**

E. J. Waggoner

There are very many people who want peace, but they want it after their own ideas. It is quite common for people who have taken a wrong course, to lay the blame of the trouble that inevitably follows upon some one who, so far from following in the wrong, has endeavored to set things right. They say, “If you will let us alone, there will be no trouble.” Many children are very patterns of propriety so long as everything goes to suit them, but when their tracks are crossed, there is trouble. Then the trouble is charged, not to their own perverseness, but to their parents, or those who try to check their wrong-doing. It is a painful fact that these children do not always lose this trait when they grow up. It is not easy to live under condemnation, and, therefore, the natural mind seeks an excuse for sin, and an *excuse* is not very hard to find. {SITI February 2, 1882, p. 55.1}

An instance in point is seen in the case of Ahab. His course is briefly stated in the following scripture: “And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him.... And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.” 1 Kings 16:30-33. Elijah was a man of God, who dared to stand boldly for the worship of the true God, even though he were the only one in the nation who was not an idolater. His life alone was a constant rebuke to the wicked king, and his testimony was plain. Through him the Lord spoke and said that on account of the wickedness of Israel there should be no rain throughout the land. This came to pass, and great suffering necessarily followed. {SITI February 2, 1882, p. 55.2}

But did Ahab acknowledge that he himself was the cause of all this? Hear him. “And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” 1 Kings 18:17. Like a petulant child, he blamed the one who was trying to save him. But Elijah stated the case in its true light when he answered: “I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.” Verse 18. {SITI February 2, 1882, p. 55.3}

But human nature is the same now as in the days of Ahab. A few months ago the following paragraph appeared in a report of labor, which a first-day preacher sent to the organ of his denomination:- {SITI February 2, 1882, p. 55.4}

“Our next was at Battle Creek. This is the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventists. As Saturday is one of the busiest days of a city, and Sabbath, [Sunday], the great working day of the Adventists, and as the ungodly are embolden to respect neither, it is hard to tell in Battle Creek whether it is Saturday, Sunday, or Monday. Thus the Seventh-day system spreads infidelity.” {SITI February 2, 1882, p. 55.5}

Note the parallel. Ahab led Israel into idolatry. Elijah fearlessly preached and practiced the religion of the true God. The result of this was that many of the people halted “between two opinions.” 1 Kings 18:21. They did not believe anything. In the modern instance the Seventh-day Adventists teach, and try to conscientiously live out, the commandments of God. This includes the observance of God’s Sabbath, the day which he rested upon, blessed, sanctified, called his own, and commanded all men to observe. See Genesis 2:2, 3; Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:13, and many other texts. The great mass of mankind, following in the wake of papal lawlessness and assumption, trample upon God’s holy day, and exalt a rival in its place. In consequence of this, some people accept neither. They do not take the trouble to examine for themselves to see which is right, and reject both as of no consequence. {SITI February 2, 1882, p. 55.6}

Now who is to blame for their infidelity? Is it those who are walking according to God’s rule, or those who walk in a way of their own devising? In the case of Ahab and Elijah all will agree. Elijah did right. He is looked upon by all Bible readers as a model of integrity; and such he was. All the trouble and unbelief that existed is chargeable solely to Ahab’s wicked course, and to those who followed him. Would it not, then, be more in accordance with the facts to say that first-day keeping, or at least Sabbath-breaking, leads to infidelity? If God’s word remains the same now that it was four thousand years ago, it would. He gave the Sabbath as a sign, that men might know that he was the true God. Exodus 31:13; Ezekiel 20:20. If men had always kept the Sabbath of the Lord, remembering that it is the memorial of his creative power, there would never have been any idolatry or infidelity. {SITI February 2, 1882, p. 55.7}

The question to be decided is simply this: Does it make a wrong thing right, for a majority to practice it? Is it better to disobey God with the many, or to obey him with the few? Will God alter his laws, and make wrong right, because the majority do wrong? His word says: “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.” Exodus 22:2; and, “Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished.” Proverbs 11:21. It is safe to believe these statements, in spite of the assertions of men to the contrary. Although the gospel of Christ is a gospel of peace, it does not contemplate a peace purchased by a sacrifice of right-doing. Christ foresaw that men would be shaken when they saw divisions on account of his doctrine, and he forewarned his disciples in Luke 12:51-53. Let men deplore divisions, and let them endeavor to promote harmony; but let them labor only for Bible union, and not fear to say, with Joshua, “Choose you this day whom ye will serve; ... but as for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord.” {SITI February 2, 1882, p. 55.8}

**“What They Are Doing?” The Signs of the Times, 8, 6.**

E. J. Waggoner

In accordance with our design to note the progress of the Sunday movement, we give below a few extracts from the Oakland *Times* report of a mass-meeting held Sunday, January 29, in the First Congregational Church of this city. The meeting was largely attended, and the leading ministers of the city were among the speakers. The animus of the movement is better shown by these speeches, than by anything else. {SITI February 9, 1882, p. 67.1}

“Mr. Whitney, President of the Home Protection Association, introduced Rev. Dr. Todd, who said that there is a law on the statute book requiring us to observe the Sabbath [Sunday] and it should be enforced. There is a law on the statute books which prevents the killing of game during certain seasons. The law is enforced, and recently a young nimrod was fined sixty dollars for shooting game. The movement in regard to the Sunday law is not transient, but is deeply rooted and the nation will prevail in that matter. If a stranger visits your house you are not required to break any of your household regulations. America established the Sabbath as a household regulation, and we should observe it.” {SITI February 9, 1882, p. 67.2}

“Rev. Dr. Sprecher was introduced and argued that the law is not contrary to the genius of our government. There is not a nation that can exist without a religion. It is necessary in the organization of a nation that the prevailing religion of the people should be recognized. People must be protected in the exercise of their religion. That is a part of the rights of the people. This is a Christian nation and the laws are made to respect and protect the people in the exercise of their religion. The Sunday law is in perfect keeping with the Constitution of the United States. This is a Christian country and the law was made for the protection of the Christian people.” {SITI February 9, 1882, p. 67.3}

No comments are needed on the above paragraph. They contain the same sophistries which the advocates of the Religious Amendment to the Constitution have always used. The following, however, is something of a new departure that is not new to the students of prophecy. After reading it, please turn and read Revelation 13:16, 17. {SITI February 9, 1882, p. 67.4}

“Dr. McLane delivered a brief address in which he said that home protection is going to be a power in politics. He had been dealing with a person who opens on Sunday, but he had paid him his last rent. He wanted the breeze to blow into the stores, and exhorted the audience not to deal with those who do business on Sunday. The politicians were handled without gloves and the reverend gentleman made an eloquent appeal in behalf of the Home Protection Association.” {SITI February 9, 1882, p. 67.5}

And this, they tell us, is religious liberty! If it is, may we be delivered from religious persecution. It will not be a difficult matter for any reader to decide whether this movement is in the interests of temperance or of the Sunday. Much enthusiasm was manifested at this meeting, and a large amount was contributed for the aid of the Association. {SITI February 9, 1882, p. 67.6}

As showing the feeling of the opposite party, the following account of a trial in San Leandro, Alameda Co., is in point. The proprietor of a hotel, together with twelve other business men, was arrested for keeping open on Sunday. His was to be the test case. An immense crowed attended the trial. Able lawyers had been secured by both sides. The jury, after a consultation of about five minutes, rendered a verdict of “Not guilty.” An uproar immediately ensued. The crowd threw their hats into the air, and cheered again and again. In their frantic joy, benches were kicked over, and the Judge was powerless to secure order. After adjournment the hilarity was kept up for several hours. {SITI February 9, 1882, p. 67.7}

It will be seen that the feeling is intense on both sides. The conflict will be a bitter one. We know from the word of God what the final result will be, and need waste no time in speculation. Our only business should be to spread the light of truth. Let us do this with our might. E. J. W. {SITI February 9, 1882, p. 67.8}

**“Our Position” The Signs of the Times, 8, 7.**

E. J. Waggoner

We are well aware that some honest people, knowing our temperance principles, wonder that we are opposed to the Sunday law; and others, not so honest, have seen fit to revile us, classing us with the lowest rabble, and accuse us of favoring intemperance. To both classes we repeat what we have before stated: The law is not a liquor law, but a Sunday law; it is not in the interest of temperance, but of the Sunday; it is given in the code under the general heading of offenses against religion, and prescribes that *all places of business* shall be closed on the “Christian Sabbath.” A strict endorsement of the law would affect saloon keepers less than any other class of men. {SITI February 16, 1882, p. 78.1}

This being the case, it is not at all inconsistent with our temperance principles for us to decline to help enforce the law. Indeed, should we join with its friends, we should be recreant to our faith, and violate our own convictions of right; for the Lord has said: “Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work.” The command to keep holy the seventh day is imperative; *permission*, at least, equally emphatic, is given to labor on the six days, Sunday included; and a permission from God is of more weight than a command from man. We do not try to force any body to keep the Sabbath of the Lord; why, then, should we give the Sunday greater prominence? Would not such an act be in violation of the spirit of the commandment, even though we outwardly observed the seventh day? It certainly would. {SITI February 16, 1882, p. 78.2}

As to our convictions on the subject of temperance, they may be learned from the columns of the SIGNS. We are for prohibition. We shall not cease to expose the evils of the liquor traffic, so far as lies in our power. But inasmuch as Sunday is in no sense a sacred day, we cannot become a party to a transaction that will elevate it over other purely secular days. The following paragraph from the *Lever*, a paper wholly devoted to the cause of temperance, expresses our sentiments exactly. We hope no one will accuse the *Lever* of being in league with saloons and brothels:- {SITI February 16, 1882, p. 78.3}

“We do not believe, however, that any journal which does not openly and flatly denounce saloonism on week days as well as Sundays will ever command any very vast amount of respect when it pleads in favor of the suppression of Sunday saloonism. The fact is, murder is just as foul a crime when committed on Thursday as when committed on Sunday; and what we want is an open, frank, decided, emphatic, unequivocal, Anglo-Saxon denunciation of saloons and saloonism everywhere and all the time.” {SITI February 16, 1882, p. 78.4}

One word more in general to our relation to the Sunday question. We are opposed to the law merely from principle, not for pecuniary gain. We do not, however, intend to make any demonstration against it, or say anything in any way derogatory to those who favor it. We are not in sympathy with the so-called “League of Freedom.” While they join hand in hand, for selfish purposes; and while in the church “there is a conspiracy of her prophets,” we, remain neutral, so far as acts of opposition or friendliness are concerned. But the command has been given concerning the Sabbath question: “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” Isaiah 58:1. We may not neglect this command and remain guiltless. Having the light, it is our duty, not only to walk in it, but to let it shine for others. We must let the people know the claims of God’s law, and those of its rival, that they may choose whom they will serve; and this we shall continue to do “with malice toward none; with charity for all.” E. J. W. {SITI February 16, 1882, p. 78.5}

**“A Few Indications” The Signs of the Times, 8, 8.**

E. J. Waggoner

It is unfortunate for those who claim that the present Sunday agitation is only a temperance movement, that the facts do not agree with their statements. The law itself, as has been shown, is purely a Sunday law; and the speeches of some of the leaders in the movement, show that their object is the better observance of the Sunday by all classes. The terms “sanitary regulation,” “police regulation,” and “temperance movement” are given to the law, in order that it may be popular with a certain class who do not readily discern its real import. {SITI February 23, 1882, p. 91.1}

Brother Frank Lamb, who has been laboring in Castroville and vicinity, this winter, related to us the following incident that came under his personal observation, which shows the spirit that actuates some, at least, of the defenders of the Sunday: In the course of his labor a German, who was a blacksmith by trade, commenced to keep the Sabbath. It was necessary, however, that he devote six days to his labor, and as he now closed his shop on Sabbath, he opened it on Sunday. The next day one of the trustees of the Presbyterian Church had him arrested for working on Sunday. He was convicted, and sentenced to pay a fine of twelve dollars, or spend twelve days in jail. He chose the latter. The jail accommodations, however, were so wretched, that after four days’ imprisonment he paid the remainder of his fine and was released, and returned to his work, still determined to keep the commandment-to work six days and rest the seventh. {SITI February 23, 1882, p. 91.2}

Soon after this, a minister of the Presbyterian Church-a man of standing in the community-preached a sermon on the enforcement of the Sunday, in which he said that no sacrifice was too great for the Government to make in enforcing the Sunday Law, even to the taking of life! {SITI February 23, 1882, p. 92.1}

It cannot be urged that such utterances as these are contrary to the spirit of the movement. At the last mass-meeting held in Oakland, one of the leading ministers advised his hearers to deal with none who would not close on Sunday. He said that he had been dealing with a man who kept open on Sunday, but should do so no more. It was not that the man was engaged in an illegitimate business, but that he engaged in it on Sunday. {SITI February 23, 1882, p. 92.2}

It is true that there are many who deprecate any such language-who respect the religious convictions of others. There are those who think that the movement can be confined to the closing of saloons. Such will sometime see their mistake. It does not take long for such a movement to pass beyond the control of the conservative few. It is easier to start a fire than to put it out. {SITI February 23, 1882, p. 92.3}

But we have no idea that even these conservative ones will take warning. We do not write with any such object. The “sure word of prophecy” shows that a religious persecution will come, and we see at present the premonitory symptoms. We would do nothing either to help or hinder the movement, except to sound the warning cry, that in that time of trouble all who will, may have the truth of God for their shield and buckler. E. J. W. {SITI February 23, 1882, p. 92.4}