**“The Day of the Sabbath” The Signs of the Times, 15, 34.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, 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; .. for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” {SITI September 2, 1889, p. 472.42}

Language could not be framed so as to express more clearly the fact that the Sabbath of the Lord was permanently fixed upon a definite specified day. The last charge to be brought against the fourth commandment is that of indefiniteness. If it is not definite, then language cannot be made to convey ideas. {SITI September 2, 1889, p. 472.43}

But many of the “inventions” that men have “sought out” is the theory that the commandment does not prescribe the observation of a certain day recurring at regular intervals, but that it enjoins the observance of one-seventh part of our time. The term “sought out” if fitly applied to this invention, for no trace of this theory appears in the commandment. It was brought to light about two hundred years ago as the only alternative of those who wished to persuade themselves and others that they were keeping the commandment, while at the same time they were observing a day of their own choosing. But this is one of the thinnest disguises ever invented. It is a very easy matter to show its absurdity, as we will demonstrate. Notice carefully the following argument:- {SITI September 2, 1889, p. 472.44}

If God sanctified an indefinite seventh part of time, he must of necessity have left it optional with man to choose which day he would keep; the only thing commanded would be rest; man could suit his own convenience as to time. It would then follow that whatever day man should choose to rest upon, *that* would be the portion of time sanctified; and thus the act of the Creator would be dependent on the act of the creature. But it is not at all consistent with the dignity of even a human lawgiver to make the meaning of his enactments contingent on the caprice of the people; much less would such a course reflect honor upon the government of God. {SITI September 2, 1889, p. 472.45}

But this is not the worst result that would naturally follow. If an indefinite seventh part of time were sanctified, then not only would it be left to man to choose the day for rest, but each individual would be at liberty to rest upon the day which might please his fancy. One man might take the seventh day, and another might take the fourth, and then, according to this theory, not one-seventh but two-sevenths of the time would be sanctified. Or, to suppose a case which would be very likely to happen if men should actually try to put their theory into practice, every day in the week might be kept by different individuals, and then it would appear that in the beginning God had sanctified or set apart *all* the time! But in that case what would become of the theory that he sanctified only a seventh? We submit to anyone that this is not a forced conclusion; if the conclusion is absurd, it simply proves that the theory is question is absurd. {SITI September 2, 1889, p. 472.46}

But before men reach this point in their endeavors to evade the law of God, they usually recover their reasoning faculties to some extent, and say that it is necessary for all men to keep one and the same day. The exigencies of business require it. Then we ask, Who shall appoint the day? What man is there whose judgment all will follow? There is no man or class of men whose authority even a majority of persons will acknowledge, so as to defer to it. In a case that is left open, every man is on an equality with every other. There is positively no way out of this dilemma but to admit that the commandment plainly declares,-that God, I the beginning, decided definitely which day of the week should be observed. So we see that the one-seventh-part-of-time theory is an impossibility when reduced to practice. And even if it were possible for all men to agree upon some day of their own choosing, that day would be *their* Sabbath, and not the Sabbath of the Lord, which the commandment enjoins. {SITI September 2, 1889, p. 472.47}

But some will say, “Granting that a definite day was set apart, how can we tell which one it was?” This must be an easy question to answer, else it were useless to have a definite day appointed. The commandment says, “The seventh day is the Sabbath.” Mark, *the* seventh day, not *a* seventh day. The seventh day of what? Not of the month, for that would not meet the demand for a rest after six days of labor. For the same reason it cannot mean the seventh day of the year. It must mean the seventh day of a period of time of which seven days is the sum. But this is the week; and we therefore are shut up to the conclusion that the commandment enjoins the observance of the seventh day of the week. A really candid thoughtful person could not decide otherwise. {SITI September 2, 1889, p. 472.48}

For further proof that the seventh day of the week is meant read Luke 23:54-56; 24:1. The sacred historian after describing the crucifixion and burial of Christ says: “And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day *according to the commandment*.” Now if we can find what day it was on which they rested, we shall know beyond all doubt which day is “the Sabbath-day according to the commandment.” The next verse says: “Now upon *the first day of the week*, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared.” To avoid any possibility of cavil, we turn to Mark 16:1, and there read that this visit took place “when the Sabbath was past.” Luke, then, has given us in consecutive order the record of three days as follows: Christ was crucified on “the preparation day;” the day following was the Sabbath, upon which the women rested “according to the commandment;” and the next day was the *first day of the week*. This proves unmistakably that the Sabbath of the commandment is the seventh day of the week. E. J. W. {SITI September 2, 1889, p. 472.49}

**“Making Trouble” The Signs of the Times, 15, 35.**

E. J. Waggoner

“And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” 1 Kings 18:17. This question was asked when Elijah met Ahab as he and his servants were searching for water. What had Elijah done, that he should be accused of troubling Israel?-He had rebuked them for their idolatry, into which they had been led by Ahab and his father. In consequence of the almost universal wickedness, Elijah had declared, from the Lord, that there should be no rain. For three years there had been no rain, and yet the idolatry did not cease, nor did Ahab abate his wickedness. To some people it would seem that Elijah’s preaching was in vain, and that, since no one heeded it, it would have been better to leave the people to worship their idols in peace. And no doubt Ahab voiced the sentiment of many of the people, when he accused Elijah of being the author of all their trouble. {SITI September 9, 1889, p. 472.50}

But what did Elijah say? “And 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.” Here Elijah threw the entire responsibility upon Ahab and his family, because they had led the people into idolatry. How could that be, when the people were enjoying peace and quiet until Elijah came with his stern message? The reason is, the people were violating God’s commandments, a thing which always brings his displeasure. The judgments of God will inevitably be visited upon those who persist in violating his law. But God never punishes any people until he has faithfully warned them of their sin. This was the part which Elijah had to perform. He was God’s messenger. After he had warned them to no purpose, a slight manifestation of God’s wrath against ungodliness was made. But who was responsible for this manifestation of wrath? Was it Elijah? All will agree, with Elijah, that the responsibility rested upon those who had done the wrong. The case against them is clear. {SITI September 9, 1889, p. 472.51}

Now another point. Since even the people of Israel could not be induced to leave their idols and serve Jehovah (for although they did acknowledge that the Lord is God, they went back into idolatry, and were destroyed as a nation in consequence), would it not have been better to leave them alone? If they were determined not to serve Jehovah, was it not wrong for Elijah to cause them to lose confidence in Baal, by showing his lack of power? Who will say, Yes? Not one. Baal-worship would them no good, and they might better worship nothing. There was no power in Baal to reward them for worshiping him, or to protect them from the wrath of Jehovah, and therefore they might as well be atheists as to serve Baal. No person will have the hardihood to say that the worship of Baal was any improvement on no worship at all. Now for the parallel. {SITI September 9, 1889, p. 472.52}

In these days we find that a large majority of people professing Christianity call the first day of the week the holy rest-day-the Lord’s day. But God says, “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work.” Moreover, as he commanded the people anciently to break their images, so he commands people to trample upon Sunday as a day of rest saying, “Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work.” “Six days thou shalt work but on *the* seventh day thou shalt rest.” Exodus 34:21. {SITI September 9, 1889, p. 472.53}

But now it comes to pass that when the truth on the Sabbath question is preached, while very many acknowledge, and many more are convicted at heart, that the seventh day-Saturday-is the Bible Sabbath, very few have the courage of their convictions, and walk in obedience to the commandment. Still further, the most of those who are convinced that the seventh day is the Sabbath, and who do not keep it, having seen the utter absence of any Bible proof to sustain the Sunday-sabbath, very naturally lose much of their respect for that day. And on this account it is often said that the preaching of the seventh-day Sabbath has an injurious effect; it unsettles the faith of many in regard to their present practice, while few make a radical change. We now ask, Is this an injury? and if it is, who is responsible for the injurious effects? {SITI September 9, 1889, p. 472.54}

Is it more pleasing in the sight of God to keep Sunday than to regard no day as holy? To keep the first day and violate the seventh, is direct disobedience to God’s law. Any transgression of the law is sin. To break the Sabbath and keep no day at all, is also direct violation of the law. This also is sin. Who can say that the latter sin is worse than the former? And if it be decided that the second is the greater sin, what is the advantage, since both are sins? God does not tell us to choose the smaller of two sins, but to put away all sin. {SITI September 9, 1889, p. 472.55}

Question: Is it simply a spirit of worship that is required by the first commandment, or is it the worship of a special object? You say, It is the worship of one particular Being,-the Lord of heaven and earth. Then the design of the commandment can in nowise be met by worshiping some other object? Of course not; for that commandment particularly forbids the worship of anything except the true God. Well, the fourth commandment requires the observance of a special day of the week-the seventh-and forbids the observance of any other. The commandment does not simply require rest in the abstract, but rest on the day which he has appointed. To offer him any other day, is simply to ask him to be satisfied with a counterfeit. {SITI September 9, 1889, p. 472.56}

When a laborer goes to his employer’s office to receive his wages, he confidently expects to receive the amount before agreed upon, in good coin. Will he be satisfied with counterfeit money? By no means. But will not the counterfeit money be better than nothing? Not a bit; indeed, it may prove to be worse than no money; for while he cannot purchase a morsel of bread with it, he may get into serious trouble if he attempts to pass it. We think the illustration will hold good in every particular when applied to the Sabbath question. The seventh day is the genuine Sabbath; it has God’s stamp upon it. The Sunday is only a base counterfeit; it bears none of the marks of genuineness. Now while this counterfeit Sabbath is worth nothing, it may get us into serious trouble if we persist in attempting to pass it instead of the genuine. See Revelation 14:9-12. As with the counterfeit coin, so with the counterfeit Sabbath,-*honest* ignorance that it is counterfeit may be accepted as an excuse; but when the man is told, or has an opportunity to know, that the coin is counterfeit, what excuse can he make? His unbelief will not save him. {SITI September 9, 1889, p. 472.57}

The one who detects a counterfeit coin, and informs the one who holds it that it is of no value, is not called a troublesome fellow, although he materially mars the peace of the possessor of the coin. The one who made the base coin, and they who persist in circulating it, are the real enemies of their fellows. So those who make know the truth concerning the Lord’s Sabbath and its counterfeit are the friends, not the enemies, of their fellowmen. They are obeying the commandment of God: “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” {SITI September 9, 1889, p. 472.58}

The man who detects the counterfeit coin in his neighbor’s possession does not offer a good one in its place; but those who show the worthlessness of the Sunday-sabbath, offer in its stead the Sabbath which bears the stamp of Jehovah, and which will be accepted at the gate of heaven. If men refuse to accept the genuine, and go without any, it is their own fault. When the true Sabbath is presented, “Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it; and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.” Isaiah 56:2. E. J. W. {SITI September 9, 1889, p. 472.59}