**“The Object of the Sabbath” The Signs of the Times, 19, 44.**

E. J. Waggoner

“The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” Mark 2:27. The Pharisees had laid down rigid rules as to how the Sabbath should be kept. There was no allowance for difference in circumstances, but these rules were to be carried out by everybody on every occasion. Being only human rules they could not be adapted to the condition of men. With them the Sabbath of their own making, not the Sabbath of the Lord, was everything and man was nothing. It was far better in their eyes to let a man die than to do anything for his relief on the Sabbath day. Thus they made the Sabbath a burden, whereas God gave it to man for a blessing. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.36}

The Saviour’s statement that the Sabbath was made for man does not at all convey the idea that it is a plaything for man; that man can do as he pleases with it; but it does show that it is designed for man’s welfare. Man’s welfare is the great consideration. It is man that God cares for. He has not made institutions and arbitrarily commanded man to keep them, so that it makes no difference what the man may suffer, if only the institution be preserved intact. God is not a tyrant. It is true that he has made institutions, the Sabbath among them, and that he designs that they shall be kept; but only because the keeping of them is beneficial for man. God in his wisdom has devised such institutions that the observing of them just as he has commanded, is the only way in which man can attain the highest good, and experience its fairest blessings. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.37}

“The Sabbath was made for man.” Mark well the fact that this statement by the Saviour did not introduce a new order of things. He did not say that the Sabbath which God gave in the beginning had been a hard yoke, but that he had come to modify it, so that men might do with it as they chose, keeping it if convenient, and dispensing with it if they saw fit. No; “the Sabbath was made for man.” When God gave it to man in Eden, as well as when he spoke the fourth commandment upon Mount Sinai, it was designed as a blessing for mankind. God, who made man, knew what he needed, and in the Sabbath he gave him that which would lift him to the original possible place. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.38}

It is true that Christ did tear away from the Sabbath the senseless and burdensome restrictions which the Jews had placed upon it, by which the Sabbath was broken instead of kept; but in so doing he merely let the institution shine forth just as God gave it. He did not in the least remove any of the sanctions which had been thrown around it by the Lord; for Christ “came not to destroy.” Men cannot make a rule so broad and comprehensive that it can cover every possible case; in very law of man there must be exceptions or else someone must suffer. But not so with God’s law; he knew how to make laws and institutions that would be applicable in every case, and yet work injustice to none. There cannot be any circumstances in which it is not the duty of man to keep the Sabbath day; yet in no case will the keeping of it work injury to anyone. On the contrary, it is only in the keeping of the Sabbath that the greatest blessings come to man. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.39}

“And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” Genesis 2:3. God does not ask man to make the day holy; he did that himself. God blessed the seventh day. It is asked, “How could God bless a day, so that it would be any more holy than another day?” That we cannot tell. One might as well ask us how God could create the world. We know nothing about how the thing was done; all we know is the fact. Of that we are very sure, because the Bible tells us. The seventh day,-not simply the Sabbath institution,-is blessed. It and it alone, of all the days of the week, has a blessing placed upon it. It is different from all the other days of the week. Therefore in the keeping of the Sabbath there is a blessing to be found. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.40}

We do not mean that people may not be blessed upon other days of the week, for not only the Christian, but even the ungodly, will receive blessing from God on very day of the week. The Christian may, and often does, receive a large measure of the Spirit on any working day; but all that does not take the blessing of the Sabbath. On the seventh day, which it is observed as God designs, there is a blessing to be obtained, that cannot be obtained on any other day. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.41}

It is quite commonly taught that if men keep another day than the seventh, they will experience the same blessing. As evidence of this, we are told by strict observers of the first day of the week that they have all the blessing on that day that they could possibly have on the seventh day. But this they cannot know, because they have never kept the seventh day. That they do experience a blessing in their worship, need not be denied, but that they do not experience the blessing of the Sabbath, is as sure as the Bible. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.42}

The reason why is very simple. A thing can never be found where it is not. A man cannot be found in London if he is in Liverpool. One may go to the Cape of Good Hope in search of the North Cape, but he will never find it there. He will find a cape, but it will not be the North Cape. Now the Lord has blessed the Sabbath day, the seventh day. He has never blessed any other day. The blessing which he placed on the seventh day in the beginning has never been taken off. It could not by any possibility be taken off. Therefore if one wants to find the blessing of the Sabbath day he must find it in the keeping, according to the commandment, of the seventh day. Many will not believe this; they think that it is foolish to suppose that there is any difference in days. But whoever tries it, not in form merely, but in Spirit, keeping in reality the Sabbath of the Lord, will know that it is so. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.43}

It was Christ who blessed and sanctified the seventh day. Since it was by him that all things were created, it is evident that he must also have rested at the close of the six days of creation. He created, he rested, he blessed, and he sanctified. Therefore the blessing of the Sabbath day is the blessing of Christ. The blessing of Christ is to turn man away from iniquity. Acts 3:26. The Sabbath, therefore, is for the purpose of turning man away from their sins-not simply from the sin of Sabbath breaking, but from all sin. How can this be? A few words will indicate the answer, which will be treated further in another paper. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.44}

The Sabbath is the memorial of creation. The Sabbath was made for the reason that in “six days the Lord made heaven and earth and all that in them is.” Exodus 20:11. And from the fact that every day man may see something of the works of the Creator, the Sabbath is given for the especial purpose of keeping God in mind as the great Creator. But for the Sabbath rest, men would forget God. And forgetting God, they fail to avail themselves of his power, in overcoming sin. So we have the words of the Lord as to why the Sabbath was given: “Moreover also, I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” Ezekiel 20:12. God sanctified the Sabbath for man, that man might know that he is the One that sanctifies from sin. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.45}

It was Christ that blessed the Sabbath, and sanctified it, so that the seventh day is the Lord’s day. The blessing of the Sabbath is the blessing of Christ, and that is sanctification, for Christ is “of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” 1 Corinthians 1:30. Here again we see that the Sabbath means sanctification. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.46}

The Sabbath is the memorial of creation, but redemption is creation. David prayed “Create in me a clean heart.” Psalm 51:1. “If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature.” 2 Corinthians 5:17. The gospel “is the power of God unto salvation,” (Romans 1:16), and the power of God is seen only in the things that he has made. Verse 29. So the power of the gospel is the power that created the worlds. Therefore, the Sabbath, in commemoration of creation, makes known to man the power of God to save from sin. As it calls to remembrance the power of God as shown in the works of his hands, it reminds us of the words of the apostle: “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:8-10. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.47}

This, and this alone, is the object of the Sabbath. This object can be gained only by the keeping of the Sabbath in just the way that God designed from the beginning that it should be kept. More in this line may be given in the next paper. {SITI September 11, 1893, p. 420.48}

 **“Civil Government and the Decalogue” The Signs of the Times, 19, 45.**

E. J. Waggoner

The advocates of Sunday legislation are earnestly trying to find a basis for their proposed action, in the fourth commandment. It is true that that commandment says nothing about the first day, which is the only day that Sunday reformers would consent to have the State set apart, while it does specifically enjoin the observance of the seventh day; and it is also true that if they could find in the fourth commandment some authority for Sunday observance, that would show beyond the possibility of cavil that their movement is simply an effort to secure religious legislation; but some of these things move them. They have, however, through the kind offices of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, *American Sentinel*, and other publications, been brought to see that civil governments have to do only with civil matters; and, therefore, in order to have some reason for their work, they are claiming that there are civil elements in the ten commandments, inasmuch as some of those precepts relate to man’s duty to his fellowman. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 420.49}

There has been in the past a great deal of unnecessary discussion over the two tables of the Decalogue. It has been rightfully claimed that with the first table of the law civil governments have nothing to do; and the Sunday law people themselves more than half believe this. Rev. W. F. Crafts, who has stood by the American Sabbath Union, has spent a great deal of time in trying to readjust the tables of the law, so as to make the actions of his association consistent with the principles just stated. Instead of dividing the Decalogue into two tables, the first containing four commandments, and the second the last six, which is the most common division, he makes the division just after the first clause of the fourth commandment, putting the bulk of the fourth and the last six, into the second table. Of course this is entirely arbitrary, having no authority but Mr. Craft’s assertion; but serves to show that Mr. Crafts appreciates the truth of the statement that civil governments have of right nothing to do with the table of the Decalogue. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 420.50}

But that statement tells only a part of the truth, and is misleading; for the fact is that civil governments have nothing whatever to do with any of the ten commandments, whether in the first table or in the second. The discussion as to the two tables of the law is entirely unnecessary, and will be seen to be so when the character of the whole is so understood. The proposition which we down is this: Civil laws are not based upon and do not derive their force from, the divine law; and civil government has nothing whatever to do with any commandment of the Decalogue. This we think can readily be made to appear. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 420.51}

1. The law is a unit. It is, as a whole, the expression of God’s will, the transcript of his character; and therefore whatever is true of one part of the law is true of the whole. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 420.52}

2. The inspired declaration is that “the law is spiritual.” Romans 7:14. This is spiritual not merely of the first four commandments, but of the whole law. Let us consider this point. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 420.53}

While it is true that the first four commandments pertain to our duties to God exclusively, and the last six relate to duties that also affect our fellows, it is not true that there is any less morality or spirituality in the last six than in the first four. Although they define human duties, there is in them no human element. They are spiritual, and of obedience to them must be spiritual. Anything else is not obedience. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 420.54}

Take for illustration our Saviour’s comments on certain commandments, recorded in Matthew 5:20-28. In that passage we see that a word may be sufficient to constitute violation of the sixth commandment, and that the seventh may be broken by a single look, or even a thought. It is worthy of note that the commandments whose breadth the Saviour thus indicated, are found in the second table. Now what did he do?-He simply showed what those commandments require. From his words we learn that the commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” forbids malicious thoughts and words. He who indulges in these does not keep the commandment at all, although he may never have laid violent hands on any man. The commandment which says, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” forbids impure desires. It does not stop short of that. He who indulges in these violates the seventh commandment, although he may have lived a hermit all his life. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 420.55}

From the words of the apostle Paul, and the illustrative application of Jesus, we learn that the law-including every commandment-is wholly spiritual. If it is not kept spiritually, it is not kept at all. There is no such thing as degrees in the commandments, so that a man may keep them half way, and receive credit therefor, as seems to be supposed by those who talk about keeping the law outwardly. It is true that, as the greater includes the less, strict compliance with the letter of the law is demanded, and is necessarily included in spiritual obedience; but the man whose apparent conformity to the law is only outward, has not yielded any obedience to it whatever. The law is wholly spiritual, wholly divine. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 706.1}

3. But civil government is not spiritual. No one can gainsay this proposition. Inasmuch as civil government cannot enforce spirituality, and cannot make men spiritually minded, it has no right nor power to require spirituality. “God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” A spiritual ruler justly requires spiritual obedience. He can punish for violations of a spiritual law. But a civil ruler cannot execute spiritual law. Therefore the proposition is proved that civil government has nothing whatever to do with spiritual law, and such a law is the Decalogue. This proposition becomes self-evident as soon as one views the law of God in the light in which he himself sets it forth. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 706.2}

We can say, then, without the slightest fear of successful contradiction, that human laws are not based upon, and do not derive their force from, the divine law. The State rightfully makes laws against the taking of human life, but not in any sense as an enforcement of the divine commandment, or of any part of it. Does anybody suppose that a murderer who is legally hanged for his crime, will receive less punishment in the great Judgment day than if he had escaped the civil penalty?-Of course not. Man punished him for his inhumanity; God punishes for immorality; and the sixth commandment of God’s law is not human, but divine. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 706.3}

The great cause for confusion lies in a wrong use of terms. Like the hypocritical Pharisees of old, men have come to confound morality and respectability. A man who does nothing to shock the sensibilities of his neighbors, and who does not interfere with their rights, is called a moral man, when in fact he may be grossly immoral. He is a good citizen, but if he is not pure at heart, he is not a keeper of the divine law in any sense whatever. The law is spiritual, and that which is not spiritual is not to the slightest degree obedience to it. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 706.4}

If National Reformers and national Sunday-law advocates had any just conception of the nature of divine law, they would cease their insane attempt to make men moral by law, or to enforce the law of God. But because they have no real knowledge of divine government, and fancy themselves competent to act as its high executive officers, they also lose sight of the prime object of civil government, and ruthlessly trample upon human right. {SITI September 18, 1893, p. 706.5}

 **“True Sabbath Keeping” The Signs of the Times, 19, 46.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” Genesis 2:1-3. Accordingly we read, “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.” Exodus 20:10, 11. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.6}

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.” Exodus 31:12, 13. And again, “If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable...Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord.” Isaiah 58:13, 14. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.7}

The object of quoting these texts is to show that the Sabbath which we are commanded to keep is the Lord’s Sabbath. It is not the Sabbath of any man, nor of any set of men. It is not the Sabbath of any nation or people. It is the Sabbath of the Lord. He alone made it, and he alone has the right to command its observance. He who does not keep the Sabbath is answerable to God alone. People who keep a Sabbath of their own making feel very much affronted if everybody else does not pay the same respect to the day that they do. Their solicitude is not so much for the day as that their own feelings shall not be hurt. But they who truly keep the Sabbath of the Lord do not think of such a thing as trying to compel others to do the same. We shall soon see why. They feel solicitous that the people shall not disobey God, but their knowledge of what true Sabbath keeping is teaches them that it is as impossible to force one to keep the Sabbath as it is to force one to love the Lord. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.8}

The word “Sabbath” means “rest.” On the seventh day God rested, therefore it is the Sabbath of the Lord. The Sabbath is God’s rest. To keep the Sabbath of the Lord is to keep the rest of the Lord. It is to rest with the Lord. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.9}

The Sabbath was given to man in Eden. Sin had not entered into the world and the curse was unknown. Man was given work to do, but it was not wearisome labor. Work is not a part of the curse, but weariness from labor is. If man had not fallen, he would have had work to do throughout eternity, but he would never have known anything of weariness. Yet he would have had the Sabbath of the Lord, and would have kept it. But after he had sinned, then the Lord said to him, “Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground.” Genesis 3:17-19. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.10}

From this fact it is clear that is not designed for merely physical rest. It was given to men when it was not designed that he should ever become physically tired. It is true that in his fallen condition he may derive physical rest from ceasing work on the seventh day, but the object of the Sabbath is something far higher than that. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.11}

Again, let us remember that the Sabbath which we are to keep is the Lord’s Sabbath. It is the Lord’s rest. God rested after the six days of creation, and we are to rest with him. But the creation of the heavens and the earth did not tire the Lord. “Hast thou not know? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?” Isaiah 40:28. Now since we are to keep the rest of the Lord, it is evident that the Sabbath is for something else than mere bodily rest, for that is not what God took. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.12}

Still further, “God is Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth.” John 4:24. I have given the marginal rendering of the Revised Version, which is literally exact. There is no article in the original, and there is no reason why there should be; for God is not one of many spirits, but he is Spirit. There is none besides him; every other being derives its existence from him. Let it not be thought, in passing, that because God is Spirit, therefore he is not a real being. Spiritual does not mean immaterial. God is a spiritual being, yet Christ is “the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance.” Hebrews 1:3. Christ’s body was certainly a spiritual body after his resurrection, yet he was a real being, and could be handled. This much so that no one will get the idea that God is not a real person. Spiritual and immaterial are by no means synonymous terms. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.13}

Now, then, with the fact clearly before us that God is a spiritual being, let us again consider the nature of his rest, or Sabbath. It must of necessity have been spiritual rest. And that is the nature of the rest that we are to enjoy in the Sabbath day. And what is spiritual rest?-It is that rest which the Spirit of the Lord gives. And what is that?-It is rest from sin. The simple reading of two or three texts make this plain. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.14}

“For we ourselves were aforetime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.” Titus 1:3-6, Revised Version. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.15}

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.” 1 Peter 1:22. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.16}

“For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” Romans 8:6-8. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.17}

Christ said, “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.” John 6:63. And again, “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.” John 15:3. It is the word of Christ, which we well know to be the Creator, that cleanseth us from sin. That word is able to build us up and give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. See Acts 26:32. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.18}

It was by the same word that the heavens and the earth were created. The word that made and upholds all things is the word that by the Gospel is preached unto us. When God ceased speaking, and the heavens and the earth stood in all their perfection, he rested, but his word continued in force. It is because his word never ceases to exist, that everything is upheld. We may say that when God rested, it was upon his own word. So whether we keep his Sabbath, or not, we rest upon his word, which created all things, and which upholds them. We know that that same word is able to uphold us and keep us from falling. We rest in the full assurance that we shall be made and kept righteous by the same power that created the heavens and the earth. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.19}

From this it can readily be seen how that one who really keeps the Sabbath of the Lord, will delight himself in the Lord. He will know and be sharing the rest which God, the Creator, calls all to share, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. Nothing less than this is Sabbath keeping. It is true that Sabbath keeping involves rest from our own work on the seventh day, but he who does no more than this does not keep the Sabbath of the Lord. As the Sabbath was the seal of a perfect creation, so it is also the seal of a perfect new creation in Christ Jesus. {SITI September 25, 1893, p. 706.20}