**“Studies in Romans. Jew and Gentile” The Signs of the Times, 22, 1.**

E. J. Waggoner

In these verses we have had some sharp questions to those who are “called Jews,” that is, who profess to be followers of the Lord. Mere form and profession do not constitute one a proper teacher of the truth of God. He who does not exhibit in his life the power of that which he professes, is only a detriment to the cause. In the verses now before us we have a brief but explicit statement concerning {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.1}

**Circumcision and Uncircumcision. Romans 2:25-29**

“For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore, if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfill the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.2}

**Questioning the Text**

What does the apostle say of circumcision? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.3}

“Circumcision verily profiteth.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.4}

When does circumcision profit? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.5}

“If thou keep the law.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.6}

What does circumcision sometimes become? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.7}

“Thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.8}

Under what circumstances does this take place? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.9}

“If thou be a breaker of the law.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.10}

What if the circumcised one keeps the righteousness of the law? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.11}

“Shall not is uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.12}

What is the relative standing of the uncircumcised law keeper and the circumcised law breaker? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.13}

“Shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil, the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.14}

Who is not a real Jew? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.15}

“He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.16}

What is not circumcision? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.17}

“Neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.18}

Who is the true Jew? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.19}

“He is a Jew, which is one inwardly.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.20}

Where is real circumcision? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.21}

“Circumcision is that of the heart.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.22}

Of what does it consist? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.23}

“In the spirit, and not in the letter.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.24}

Where is the glory and praise of real circumcision? {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.25}

“Whose praise is not of men, but of God.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.26}

Definition of Terms.-The two terms “circumcision” and” “uncircumcision” are here used not only to indicate the rite and the absence of it, but also to designate two classes of people. “The uncircumcision” evidently refers to those who were called gentiles, those who worshiped other gods. This use of the terms is very plain in the following passage: “When they saw that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the Gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter (for he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles); and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.” Galatians 2:7-9. Here we find that the terms “uncircumcision,” “gentiles,” and “heathen,” all refer to the same people. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.27}

Just what was the profit of circumcision, we are not told in this chapter. The statement of the fact was enough for this place, for the only point in the mind of the writer was to show what circumcision is, and who are the really circumcised. A great deal depends upon these few verses. They should be studied carefully, because upon them depends the proper understanding of a large portion of the prophecies of the Old Testament. If these verses had received the consideration that they ought to have by professed Bible students, there would never have been any “Anglo-Israel” theory, and the unprofitable and misleading suppositions about the return of the Jews to Jerusalem before the coming of the Lord would never have been made. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 2.28}

What Is Circumcision? —This question is answered in plain language in Romans 4:11, where the apostle, speaking of Abraham, the first one who was circumcised, says: “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.” To the question, “What is circumcision?” the answer must therefore be, The sign of circumcision is a seal of righteousness. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 3.1}

Circumcision Made Uncircumcision.-This being the case, it is evident that where there was no righteousness, the sign of circumcision was worthless. So the apostle says, “If thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.” As in the previous verses we learned that the form without the fact amounts to nothing, so here we are told that the sign without the substance is of no account. It is very easy for a poor man to put out a sign advertising boots and shoes; but to fill the shop with goods requires capital. If he has the sign, but has no boots and shoes, he is worse off than if he had no sign. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 3.2}

The Mistake of the Jews.-The Jews made a mistake of supposing that the sign was sufficient. They finally came to hold the idea that the sign would bring the reality, just as many professed Christians in these days suppose that the performance of certain rites will make them members of the body of Christ. But circumcision of the flesh alone could represent no righteousness, but sin. See Galatians 5:19-21. As a matter of fact, many of those whom they despised as “uncircumcised” were thus in reality “circumcised,” while they themselves were not. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 3.3}

Circumcision of the Heart.-Real circumcision is a matter of the heart, that is, of the inner life, and not at all of the flesh. The apostle plainly declares that what is outward in the flesh is not circumcision, that is, which consists only in outward form; but “circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter.” This is stated as a general truth. This was not a new departure in the days of Paul, but was the case from the beginning. In Deuteronomy 30:6 we read the words of Moses to the children of Israel: “And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.” All true Jews recognized that true circumcision was only of the heart, for Stephen addressed those who rejected the truth as “stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears.” Acts 7:51. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 3.4}

Righteousness in the Heart.-The psalmist says, “Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts.” Psalm 2:6. Mere outward righteousness is nothing. See Matthew 5:20; 23:27, 28. It is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness. Romans 10:10. When Moses, at the command of the Lord, rehearsed the law to Israel, he said: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart.” Deuteronomy 6:5, 6. There can be no righteousness that is not the real life. Therefore, since circumcision is but a sign of righteousness, it is evident that there can be no real circumcision except circumcision of the heart. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 3.5}

Circumcised by the Spirit.—“For we know that the law is spiritual.” Romans 7:14. That is, it is the nature of the Holy Spirit, for the word of God is the sword of the Spirit of God that can put the law of God into the heart of man. Therefore true circumcision is the work of the Holy Spirit. Stephen called the wicked Jews uncircumcised, because, said he, “Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.” Acts 7:51. It seems evident, therefore, that, although the word “spirit” in Romans 2:29 is not spelled with a capital, it refers to the Holy Spirit and not merely to the spirit of man. Remember that circumcision was given as the seal of righteousness by faith, and that the inheritance promised to Abraham and his seed was through the righteousness of the law (Romans 4:11, 13), we shall see that circumcision was the pledge of the inheritance. The apostle also says that we obtain the inheritance in Christ “in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.” Ephesians 1:10-13. The possession promised to Abraham and to his seed was assured only through the Spirit of righteousness; therefore, from the very beginning there was no real circumcision that was not of the Spirit. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 3.6}

Circumcision through Christ.—“Ye are complete in [Christ], which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” Colossians 2:8-11. Circumcision must have meant as much when first given as it ever did. Therefore from the very beginning it meant righteousness through Christ alone. This is sufficiently shown in the fact that circumcision was given to Abraham as the seal of the righteousness which he had by faith, and that “he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.” Genesis 15:6. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 3.7}

Who Are the Circumcision? —This question is answered in Philippians 3:3: “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” And this is but saying in other words what we have in our text, “Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Nobody therefore was ever really circumcised who did not believe and rejoice in Christ Jesus. That is the reason why Stephen called the unbelieving Jews “uncircumcised.” {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 3.8}

Meaning of Circumcision.-We have not space to go into this question in detail, but the above texts put us on the track. A careful study of the chapters in Genesis which speak of God’s covenant with Abraham will also help to clear up the matter. We learn in Genesis 15 that God made a covenant with Abraham on the basis of his faith. The sixteenth chapter tells how Abraham listened to the voice of his wife instead of the voice of the Lord, and sought to work out the promise of God through the flesh and made a failure. His son was to be born of the Spirit, and not after the flesh. See Galatians 4:22, 23, 28, 29. Then the seventeenth chapter shows the revival of Abraham’s faith, and the renewal of the covenant, with circumcision as the seal. A portion of flesh was cut off to indicate that he was to have no confidence in the flesh, but was to expect righteousness and the inheritance only through the Spirit of God. The descendants of Abraham would thus have a continual reminder of his mistake and would be admonished to trust the Lord and not themselves. But they perverted this sign. They regarded it as indicating that they were better than other people, instead of looking upon it as an evidence that “the flesh profiteth nothing.” But the fact that the Jews perverted and misunderstood the sign does not destroy its original meaning. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 4.1}

Who Are Jews? —We have seen in a quotation from the second chapter of Galatians that the term “uncircumcised” refers to those who do not know the Lord, or who are “without God in the world.” See Ephesians 2:11, 12. The Jews are “the circumcision.” But only those who rejoice in Christ Jesus are the circumcision, who have no confidence in the flesh. Therefore the real Jews are none other than Christians. “He is a Jew, which is one inwardly.” There never was a real Jew in the sight of God who was not a believer in Christ. And every true believer in Christ is a Jew in the Bible sense of the term. Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, rejoiced in Christ. See John 8:56. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 4.2}

A Mark of Separation.-Many have entertained the notion that circumcision was given as a distinguishing mark between the Jews and the Gentiles. The fallacy of this idea is sufficiently shown by a study of the giving of circumcision, and by the statement of the apostle Paul of what it really signified. Others suppose that it was given to keep the Jews separate, so that the genealogy of Christ could be ascertained. This also is simply an unfounded guess. Christ was to come from the tribe of Judah, but as all the tribes were circumcised, it is evident that circumcision could not by any means preserve his genealogy. Moreover, circumcision in the flesh never did make any separation between the Jews and the Gentiles. It did not keep Israel from idolatry, and it did not keep them from joining the heathen in their idolatrous practices. Whenever the Jews forgot God, they mingled with the heathen, and there was no difference between them and the gentiles. Circumcision did not separate them. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 4.3}

Still further, God did not wish the Jews to be separated from the Gentiles in the sense that they were to have no dealings with them. The object of his calling out the Jews from Egypt was that they should carry the Gospel to the heathen. He did wish them to be separate in character, but outward circumcision could never effect this. Moses said to the Lord, “Wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.” Exodus 33:16. The presence of the Lord in the heart of men will separate them from all others, although they live in the same house and eat at the same table. But if Christ is not in the heart of a man, he is not separated from the world, though he may have been circumcised and may live a hermit. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 4.4}

Literal and Spiritual Seed.-Much of the confusion that has existed in regard to Israel has arisen through a misunderstanding of these terms. People suppose that to say that only those who are spiritual are really Jews is to deny the literalness of the seed and of the promise. But “spiritual” is not opposed to “literal.” That which is spiritual is literal, and real. Christ is spiritual, but he is the real, literal Seed. God is spiritual, and is only Spirit, yet he is not a figurative Being, but a real, literal God. So the inheritance of which we are heirs in Christ, is a spiritual inheritance, yet it is real. To say that only those who are spiritual constitute the true Israel is not to modify or turn aside the Scriptures, or to weaken in any way the directness and force of the promise, because the promise of God is only to those who have faith in Christ. “For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.” Romans 4:13. “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:29. E. J. W. {SITI January 2, 1896, p. 4.5}

**“Examining Ourselves” The Signs of the Times, 22, 2.**

E. J. Waggoner

We are to examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith. It is not to find out what is in the heart, because no man on earth can find out what is in the heart. The man who starts out to do that is going to be terribly deceived; for “the heart is deceitful above all things,” and it will deceive him every time. But the Lord says, “I the Lord search the heart.” He makes known to every man the fruit of his ways, and we want to have confidence enough in him to let him do the searching of the heart. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.1}

When we find out that we are in the faith, we shall not be afraid to truth the Lord to search the heart and make known the sin. If we be in the faith, we know that Christ died for sinners, in order that they might be separated from sin. Therefore he is more interested in having us know the sins, so as to give them up to him, than we are to know them. It is not an unheard of thing, by any means, to find professed Christians who do not know that the Lord loves them when in sin, and so they are always afraid of the Lord, from a sense of their sinfulness. Are you in the faith? If so, you will accept the knowledge of sin as the result of the revelation of the righteousness which will take away that sin, and rejoice in the Lord. E. J. W. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.2}

**“Studies in Romans. The Sum of the Matter” The Signs of the Times, 22, 2.**

E. J. Waggoner

We have now finished the study of the first two chapters of the book of Romans, and it is time to take a brief review. It is not really correct to say that we have finished the study of these two chapters, because we can never finish the study of any portion of the Bible. After we have put the most profound study upon any portion of the Scripture, the most that we have done is only a beginning. If Newton, after a long life of study of natural science, could say that he seemed to be as a child playing on the seashore with the vast ocean before him unexplored, with much more aptness can the same be said by the greatest student of the Bible. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.3}

Let no one therefore think that we have by any means exhausted this portion of the book. When the reader has the text well in mind, so that he can quite distinctly recall any passage at will, and can locate it with reference to the connection, he has just got where he can begin to study with real profit. Therefore let the reader who is anxious to acquire an understanding of the Scriptures for himself, dwell upon the words as though he were digging in a sure place for treasure. An inexhaustible treasure awaits his search. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.4}

We found that the first portion of the first chapter, containing the salutation, some personal remarks, and the statement of the theme, really contains an epitome of the whole Gospel. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.5}

Leaving out the introduction, we might say that the first chapter is devoted to a statement of the origin of heathenism, and the condition of the heathen world. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.6}

The second chapter is really summed up in the first verse, “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.” The remaining verses are but an amplification of this statement. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.7}

Thus, we find that there is no exception to the fact that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Hearing and knowing the truth is not a substitute for practicing it. God is no respecter of persons, but will punish sin wherever it is found. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.8}

Accepted with God.-In the house of Cornelius the apostle Peter made a statement: “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.” Acts 10:34, 35. There are men in heathen lands who may never have heard the name of God, or seen a line of his written word, who will be saved. God is revealed in the works of creation, and they who accept what they see of him there are accepted with him as surely as they who have learned much more of him. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.9}

**Objections Answered**

The first part of the third chapter of Romans consists of questions and answers. The thoughtful reader of the epistles of Paul must have noticed the frequent occurrence of questions in the midst of an argument. Every possible objection is anticipated. The apostle asks the question that an objector might ask, and then answers it, making his argument more emphatic than before. So in the verses next following it is very evident that the truths set forth in the second chapter would not be very acceptable to a Pharisee, and he would combat them with all his might. That the questions raised by the apostle are not difficulties that lie in his own mind; this is clear from the parenthetical clause in verse 5, “I speak as a man.” With this in mind, we may read Romans 3:1-18:— {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.10}

“What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid; yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man.) God forbid; for then how shall God judge the world? For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner? And not rather (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just. What then? are we better than they? No, in nowise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes.” {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.11}

As this text consists almost wholly of questions and sharp, clear answers, we shall not, as heretofore, specially question the text. Read it carefully. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.12}

“The Oracles of God.” —An oracle is something spoken. That which was emphatically spoken by the mouth of the Lord is the Ten Commandments. See Deuteronomy 5:22. Stephen, speaking of Moses receiving the law, said, “This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; who received the lively oracles to give unto us.” Acts 7:38. The Ten Commandments are primarily the oracles of God, because they were uttered by his own voice in the hearing of the people. But the Holy Scriptures as a whole are the oracles of God, since they are the word of God, spoken “in divers manners” (Hebrews 1:1), and because they are but an expansion of the Ten Commandments. Christians are to shape their lives solely by the Bible. This is seen from the words of the apostle Peter: “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.” 1 Peter 4:11. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 18.13}

The Law an Advantage.-There are many who think that the law of God is a burden, and they imagine that the advantage of Christians is that they have nothing to do with it. But on the contrary, John says, “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3. And Paul says that the possession of the law was a great advantage to the Jew. So Moses said: “What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?” Deuteronomy 4:8. All who truly love the Lord, count it a great blessing to have God’s holy law made plain to them. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.1}

“Committed.” —The advantage of the Jew was not simply in the fact that to them were made known the oracles of God, but that “unto them were *committed* the oracles of God.” The Revised Version has it, “They were intrusted with the oracles of God.” That is, the law was given to them to hold in trust for others, and not simply for their own benefit. They were to be the missionaries to the whole world. The advantage and the honor conferred upon the Jewish nation in intrusting them with the law of God to make it known to the world, can not be estimated. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.2}

Tell It to Others.-When Peter and John were arrested and threatened for preaching Christ, who is simply the living law in perfection, they said, “We can not but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” Acts 4:20. They who appreciate the gift which God commits to them must tell it to others. Some think that it is useless to carry the gospel to the heathen when they hear that God justifies the heathen who walk according to the little light that shines to them just the same as he does the person who walks according to the light that shines from the written word. They think that the wicked heathen are in no worse case than the unfaithful professed Christians. None who appreciate the blessings of the Lord could think so. Light is a blessing. The more people know of the Lord, the more they can rejoice in him, and all who truly know the Lord must be desirous of helping to spread the “good tidings of great joy” to all the people for whom it is designed. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.3}

God’s Faithfulness.—“What if some were without faith? Shall their want of faith make of none effect the faithfulness of God?” A very pertinent question. It is an appeal to the faithful of God. Will he break his promise, because of man’s unbelief? Will he be unfaithful because man is unfaithful? Will our wavering cause God to waver? “That can not possibly be;” for this is the force of the expression which is incorrectly rendered, “God forbid.” God will be true even though every man be a liar. “If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he can not deny himself.” 2 Timothy 2:13. “Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.” Psalm 36:5. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.4}

Power and Faithfulness.-Some one might hastily affirm that this overthrows the previous statements, that only those who have faith are heirs of the promise; for “how can it be that only the faithful are Abraham’s seed, and thus heirs, if God will fulfill his promise even though every man disbelieves?” Very easily, when we consider the Scriptures and the power of God. Listen to the words of John the Baptist to the wicked Jews who could be fitly characterized only as “vipers:” “Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” Matthew 3:9. God will bestow the inheritance only on the faithful; but if every man should prove unfaithful, he who made man of the dust of the ground can of the stones raise other people, who will believe. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.5}

God Justified.—“That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.” God is now accused by Satan of injustice and indifference, and even of cruelty. Thousands have echoed the charge. But the judgment will declare the righteousness of God. His character, as well as that of man, is on trial. In the judgment every act, both of God and man, that has been done since creation will be seen by all in all its bearings. And when everything is seen in that perfect light, God will be acquitted of all wrongdoing, even by his enemies. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.6}

Commending God’s Righteousness.-Verses 5 and 7 are but different forms of the same thought. God’s righteousness stands out in bold relief in contrast with man’s unrighteousness. So the caviler thinks that God ought not to condemn the unrighteousness which by contrast commends his righteousness. But that would be to destroy the righteousness of God, so that he could not judge the world. If God were what unbelieving men say he ought to be, he would forfeit even their respect, and they would condemn him more loudly than they do now. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.7}

“I Speak as a Man.” —Was not Paul a man? Most certainly. Was he ever anything other than a man? Never. Then why the expression, “I speak as a man”? Because the writings of Paul, like those of the ancient prophets, were given by inspiration of God. The Holy Spirit spoke by him. We are not reading Paul’s view of the gospel, but the Spirit’s own statement of it. But in these questions the Spirit speaks as a man; that is, the Spirit quotes the unbelieving words of man in order to show the folly of that unbelief. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.8}

Unbelieving Questions.-There is a great difference in questions. Some are asked for the purpose of gaining instruction, and others are asked for the purpose of opposing the truth. So there must be a difference in answering them. Some questions deserve no more notice than would be given the same unbelief if uttered as a positive statement. When Mary asked, “How shall this be?” (Luke 1:34) with a desire for further information, she was told how. But when Zacharias asked, “Whereby shall I know this?” (Luke 1:18), thus plainly showing his disbelief of the angel’s words, he was punished. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.9}

Wickedness Exposed.-When the objector says, “If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?” the swift retort comes, in effect: “You might rather say, what you really mean is, Let us do evil that good may come.” The real intent of these unbelieving questions is that what which is called evil is really good; people are really righteous, no matter what they may do, so that good will at last come out of evil. This is the substance of modern Spiritualism and of Universalism, which teach that all men will be saved. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.10}

Evil not Good.-There are many besides Spiritualists who virtually say, “Let us do evil that good may come.” Who are they? All who claim that man is able of himself to do any good thing. The Lord declares that only God is good, and that good can come only from good. See Luke 18:19 and 6:43-45. From man only wickedness can come. Mark 7:21-23. Therefore he who thinks that of himself he alone can do good deeds, really says that good can come from evil. The same thing is said by the one who refuses to confess that he is a sinner. Such an one is placing himself above God, for even he can not make evil into good. God can make an evil man good, but only by putting his own goodness in place of the evil. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.11}

“All under Sin.” —The objector is silenced by the exposure of his infidel sentiments; the damnation of those who hold such positions is just; and now the conclusion is emphatically stated, namely, that all men, both Jews and Gentiles, are alike under sin. Thus the way is fully prepared for the further conclusion that there is but one way of salvation for all men. The one who has been brought up within the sound of church bells and who hears the Scriptures read every day, has the same sinful nature and the same need of a Saviour, that the savage has. No one can justly despise another. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.12}

All Out of the Way.-When the apostle wrote concerning both Jews and Gentiles, “They are all gone out of the way,” he was but repeating what Isaiah had written hundreds of years before: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” Isaiah 53:6. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 19.13}

“The Way of Peace.” —“The way of peace have they not known” because they refused to know the God of peace. It has already been shown that God’s law is his way; therefore, since he is the God of peace, his law is the way of peace. So he says, “O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” Isaiah 48:18. “Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them,” or, “they shall have no stumbling-block.” Psalm 119:162. So he who prepares the way of the Lord, by giving knowledge of remission of sins, guides our feet into the way of peace (Luke 1:76-79), because he brings us into the righteousness of God’s law. {SITI January 9, 1896, p. 20.1}

E. J. W.

**“Blessed Are They that Mourn” The Signs of the Times, 22, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.” Matthew 5:4. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 33.1}

There are two questions that one naturally wishes to have answered when reading this text, namely, What mourners shall be comforted? and, When shall they be comforted? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 33.2}

Note the fact that the promise is unlimited. Christ said that he was sent “to comfort all that mourn.” Isaiah 61:2. God is no respecter of persons. He does not single out special cases to be the recipients of his grace. This promise is for every mourner. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 33.3}

The first and most natural thought suggested by the word “mourn” is of sorrow caused by affliction and bereavement. That the Lord comforts such mourners is shown by his whole earthly life, and is specially manifest in the case of the widow of Nain, and at the grave of Lazarus. He has comfort for every manner of grief. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 33.4}

But death is the result of sin. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.” 1 Corinthians 15:56. If it were not for sin, there would be no mourning. Therefore the Lord specially comforts those who mourn for their sins. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 33.5}

One thing, however, is necessary, and that is that the mourners should know this promise. It is self-evident that in order to be comforted one must know where comfort is to be obtained. The mourner must believe this promise of the Lord, and become acquainted with him through it. There is absolutely no limit to the promise, and no other qualification than that the mourner should believe and know the Lord. Whoever accepts the word of the Lord in good faith, shall be comforted, no matter for what he mourns. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 33.6}

When shall they be comforted? Let the Scriptures answer: “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.” 2 Corinthians 1:3-5. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 33.7}

Whoever is afflicted for any cause whatever, may know if he will that he is afflicted with Christ. “In all their affliction he was afflicted.” Isaiah 63:9. Even tho the affliction be directly because of sin, we may have the same assurance, for we are told, “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,” and, “For the transgression of my people was he stricken.” Isaiah 53:7, 8. The thought alone that Christ bears with us the burden of grief or temptation, is enough to make it light, because it draws our minds away from ourselves. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 33.8}

But Christ can not be divided. The one who has Christ has him for all that there is in him. Therefore if our faith grasps him in his sufferings-that is, if we remember that “he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows,” so that we bear them only in him-then it is most certain that we shall have at the same time all the comfort there is in him. As “the joy that was set before him” enabled him to endure the cross, and despise the shame, so the joy that there is in him enables us to rejoice in tribulation. E. J. W. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 33.9}

**“Studies in Romans. A Wonderful Manifestation” The Signs of the Times, 22, 3.**

E. J. Waggoner

The portion of Romans thus far studied has shown us both Jews and Gentiles in the same sinful condition. No one has anything whereof to boast over another. Whoever, whether in the church or out, begins to judge and condemn another, no matter how bad that other one may be, thereby shows that he himself is guilty of the same things that he condemns in the other. Judgment belongs alone to God, and it shows a most daring spirit of usurpation for a man to presume to take the place of God. Those who have the law committed to them have a wonderful advantage over the heathen; nevertheless they must say: “Are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.” Romans 3:9. And now we come to the beginning of {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.1}

**The Grand Conclusion. Romans 3:19-22**

“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.2}

What do we know? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.3}

“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.4}

To whom does it speak? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.5}

“To them who are under [within the sphere of] the law.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.6}

What is the object of its speaking? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.7}

“That every mouth may be stopped.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.8}

Under what circumstances only may every mouth be stopped? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.9}

“All the world may become guilty before God.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.10}

What then is the conclusion? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.11}

“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.12}

Why not? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.13}

“For by the law is the knowledge of sin.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.14}

What is now manifested? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.15}

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.16}

How is righteousness manifested? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.17}

“Without the law.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.18}

Whose righteousness is it that is thus manifested? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.19}

“The righteousness of God.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.20}

What credentials has this righteousness? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.21}

“Being witnessed by the law and the prophets.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.22}

Where is it manifested? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.23}

“Unto all and upon all them that believe.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.24}

How is it manifested? {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.25}

“By faith of Jesus Christ.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.26}

Within the Law.-This is not the place to consider the force of the term “under the law,” since it does not really occur here. It should be “in the law,” as in Romans 2:12, for the Greek words are the same in both places. The words for “under the law” are entirely different. Why the translators have given us “under the law” in this place, and also in 1 Corinthians 9:21, where the term is also “in the law,” as noted in Young’s Concordance, it is impossible to determine. There certainly is no reason for it. The rendering is purely arbitrary. What the verse before us really says is, “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are in the law,” or, “within the sphere or jurisdiction of the law.” This is an obvious fact, and in view of what immediately follows, it is a very important fact to keep in mind. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.27}

“What the Law Saith.” —The voice of the law is the voice of God. The law is the truth, because it was spoken with God’s own voice. In the covenant which God made with the Jews concerning the Ten Commandments, he said of the law, “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice.” etc. Exodus 19:5. The commandments were spoken “in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice.” Deuteronomy 5:22. Therefore when the law of God speaks to a man, it is God himself speaking to that man. Satan has invented a proverb, which he has induced many people to believe, to the effect that “the voice of the people is the voice of God.” This is a part of his great lie by which he causes many to think themselves above the law of God. Let every one who loves the truth, substitute for that invention of Satan the truth that the voice of the law of God is the voice of God. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.28}

Every Mouth Stopped.-The law speaks that “every mouth may be stopped.” And so every mouth would be, if men would only consider that it is God that is speaking. If men realized that God himself speaks in the law, they would not be so ready to answer back when it speaks to them, and they would not frame so many excuses for not obeying it. When some servant of the Lord reads the law to people, they often seem to think that it is only man’s word to which they are listening, and so they feel themselves privileged to parley, and debate, and object, and to say that, although the words are all right, they do not feel under obligation to obey, or that it is not convenient. They would not think of doing this if they heard the voice of God speaking to them. But when the law is read, it is the voice of God now just as much as it was to the Israelites who stood at the base of Sinai. People often open their mouths against it now, but the time will come when every mouth will be stopped, because “our God shall come, and shall not keep silence.” Psalm 50:3. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.29}

The Law’s Jurisdiction.-What things soever the law says, it sa to them who are within its sphere, or jurisdiction. Why? “That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” How extensive, then, is the jurisdiction of the law? It includes every soul in the world. There is no one who is exempt from obedience to it. There is not a soul whom it does not declare to be guilty. The law is the standard of righteousness, and “there is none righteous, no, not one.” {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.30}

No Justification by the Law.—“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” One of two things must be the case whenever a man is justified by the law, namely, either the man is not guilty, or else the law is a bad law. But neither of these things is true in this case. God’s law is perfectly righteous, and all men are sinners. “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” It is obvious that a man can not be declared righteous by the same law that declares him to be a sinner. Therefore it is a self-evident truth that by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.31}

A Double Reason.-There is a double reason why no one can be justified by the law. The first is that all have sinned. Therefore the law must continue to declare them guilty, no matter what their future life might be. No man can ever do more than his duty to God, and no possible amount of good deeds can undo one wrong act. But more than this, men have not only sinned, but they are sinful. “The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Romans 8:7. “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye can not do the things that ye would.” Galatians 5:17. Therefore, no matter how much a man may try to do the righteousness of the law, he will fail to find justification by it. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.32}

Self-justification.-If one were justified by the deeds of the law, it would be because he always did all that the law requires. Note well that it would be he that did it, and not the law. It would not be that the law itself does something to justify the man, but that the man himself does the good deeds required. Therefore if a man were justified by the law, it would be because he has in him by nature all the righteousness that the law requires. He who imagines that he can do the righteousness of the law, imagines that he himself is as good as God is, because the law requires and is a statement of the righteousness of God. Therefore for a man to think that he can be justified by the law, is to think that he is so good that he needs no Saviour. Every self-righteous person, no matter what his profession, exalts himself above the law of God, and therefore identifies himself with the Papacy. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.33}

Righteousness without the Law.-Since because of man’s weak and fallen condition no one can get righteousness out of the law, it is evident that if any man ever has righteousness he must get it from some other source than the law. If left to themselves and the law, men would truly be in a deplorable condition. But here is hope. The righteousness of God without the law or apart from the law, is manifested. This reveals to man a way of salvation. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 35.34}

Righteousness “Manifested.” —Where?—Why, of course where it most needs to be manifested, in people, that is, in a certain class described in the next verse. But it does not originate in them. The Scriptures have already shown us that no righteousness can come from man. The righteousness of God is manifested in Jesus Christ. He himself said through the prophet David: “I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest.” Psalm 40:8, 9. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 36.1}

“Witnessed by the Law.” —Let no one imagine that in the Gospel he can ignore the law of God. The righteousness of God which is manifested apart from the law, is witnessed by the law. It is such righteousness as the law witnesses to, and commends. It must be so, because it is the righteousness which Christ revealed; and that came from the law, which was in his heart. So, although the law of God has no righteousness to impart to any man, it does not cease to be the standard of righteousness. There can be no righteousness that does not stand the test of the law. The law of God must put its seal of approval upon every one who enters heaven. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 36.2}

Witnessed by the Prophets.-When Peter preached Christ to Cornelius and his family, he said, “To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.” Acts 10:43. The prophets preached the same Gospel that the apostles did. See 1 Peter 1:12. There is but one foundation, and that is “the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” Ephesians 2:20. This also suggests another thought about “witnessed by the law.” It is not simply that the righteousness which is manifested in Christ is approved by the law, but it is proclaimed in the law. In the portion of Scripture specifically known as “the law,” the portion written by Moses, Christ is preached. Moses was a prophet, and therefore he testified of Christ the same, “for he wrote of me.” John 5:46. More than this, the very giving of the law itself was a promise and an assurance of Christ. This will appear when we come to the fifth chapter of Romans. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 36.3}

The Righteousness of God.-While there is no chance for the despiser of God’s law to evade its claims under cover of the expression, “the righteousness of God apart from the law,” there is also no need for the lover of that law to fear that the preaching of righteousness by faith will tend to bring in a spurious righteousness. Such is guarded against by the statement that the righteousness must be witnessed by the law, and further by the statement that this righteousness which is manifested apart from the law is the righteousness of God. No one need fear that he will be wrong if he has that righteousness! To seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness is the one thing required of us in this life. Matthew 6:33. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 36.4}

“By Faith of Jesus Christ.” —In another place Paul expresses his desire when the Lord comes to be found “not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” Philippians 3:9. Here again we have “the faith of Christ.” Still further, it is said of the saints, “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12. God is faithful. 1 Corinthians 1:9. Christ is faithful, for “he abideth faithful.” 2 Timothy 2:13. God deals to every one a measure of faith. Romans 12:3; Ephesians 2:8. He imparts to us his own faithfulness. This he does by giving us himself. So that we do not have to get righteousness which we ourselves manufacture; but to make the matter doubly sure, the Lord imparts to us in himself the faith by which we appropriate his righteousness. Thus the faith of Christ must bring the righteousness of God, because the possession of that faith is the possession of the Lord himself. This faith is dealt to every man, even as Christ gave himself to every man. Do you ask what then can prevent every man from being saved? The answer is, Nothing, except the fact that all men will not keep the faith. If all would keep all that God gives them, all would be saved. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 36.5}

Within and Without.-This righteousness of God, which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, is unto, literally into, and upon all them that believe. Man’s own righteousness, which is of the law, is only on the outside. Matthew 23:27, 28. But God desires truth in the inward parts. Psalm 51:6. “These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart.” Deuteronomy 6:6. And so the promise of the new covenant is, “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.” Jeremiah 31:33. He does it, because it is impossible for man to do it. The most that men can do is to make a fair show in the flesh, to gain the applause of their fellow men. God puts his glorious righteousness in the heart. But he does more than that, he covers men with it. “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.” Isaiah 51:10. “He will beautify the meek with salvation.” Psalm 149:4. Clothed with this glorious dress, which is not merely an outward covering, but the manifestation of that which is within, God’s people may go forth, “fair as the moon, clear as the sun; and terrible as an army with banners.” E. J. W. {SITI January 16, 1896, p. 36.6}

**“Studies in Romans. The Justice of Mercy” The Signs of the Times, 22, 4.**

E. J. Waggoner

The last lesson showed us that since all men are declared guilty by the law, there can be no righteousness in the law for any man, and that, as a consequence, if men were left alone with the law, there would be no hope for any. The law is only the written statement of the righteousness of God, and therefore can impart no righteousness; but God is a living God, and his righteousness is a living righteousness; his Spirit has all-pervading power, and therefore he can put his own righteousness into and upon all that believe; for faith is the reception of God into the heart. In the reception of this righteousness {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.1}

“There is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Romans 3:22-26. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.2}

**Questioning the Text**

How is the righteousness of God manifested apart from the law? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.3}

“By faith of Jesus Christ.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.4}

In whom is it manifested? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.5}

“Unto all and upon all them that believe.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.6}

What distinction is made between people? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.7}

“There is no difference.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.8}

Why not? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.9}

“For all have sinned.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.10}

In sinning, of what have men come short? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.11}

“All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.12}

While in this state, what do those who believe receive? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.13}

“Being justified.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.14}

How justified? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.15}

“Freely.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.16}

By what? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.17}

“By his grace.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.18}

Through what? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.19}

“Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.20}

How did this come about? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.21}

“Whom God hath set forth.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.22}

What for? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.23}

“To be a propitiation.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.24}

By what means? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.25}

“Through faith in his blood.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.26}

What does he declare? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.27}

“To declare his righteousness.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.28}

Whose righteousness does he declare? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.29}

God’s righteousness-the righteousness of him who set him forth. See Psalm 40:6-10. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.30}

For what is God’s righteousness declared in Christ? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.31}

“For the remission of sins that are past.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.32}

Of what is this a manifestation? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.33}

“The forbearance of God.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.34}

Why is it that God’s own righteousness is declared for the remission of sins? {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.35}

“That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.36}

“No Difference.” —In what is there no difference? There is no difference in the way in which men receive righteousness. And why is no difference made in the manner of justifying men? Because “all have sinned.” Peter, in relating to the Jews his experience in first preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, said, “God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.” Acts 15:8, 9. “Out of the heart of men,” not of one class of men, but of all men, “proceed evil thoughts,” etc. Mark 7:21. God knows the hearts of all men, that all are alike sinful, and therefore he makes no difference in the Gospel to different men. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.37}

“One Blood.”—This lesson is one of the most important to be learned by the missionary, whether laboring at home or abroad. Since the gospel is based on a principle that there is no difference in men, it is absolutely essential that the gospel worker should recognize the fact, and always keep it in mind. God “hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.” Acts 17:26. Not only are all men of one blood, but they are also of “one kind of flesh.” 1 Corinthians 15:39. The great burden of the Epistle to the Romans, as has appeared up to this point, is to show that so far as sin and salvation therefrom are concerned, there is absolutely no difference between men of all races and conditions in life. The same Gospel is to be preached to the Jew and to the Gentile, to the slave and to the freeman, to the prince and to the peasant. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.38}

Coming Short. —People are fond of imagining that what are called “shortcomings” are not so bad as real sins. So it is much easier for them to confess that they have “come short” than that they have sinned and done wickedly. But since God requires perfection, it is evident that “shortcomings” are sins. It may sound pleasanter to say that a bookkeeper is “short” in his accounts, but people know that the reason for it is that he has been taking that which is not his, or stealing. When perfection is the standard, it makes no difference in the result, how much or how little one comes short, so long as he comes short. The primary meaning of sin is “to miss the mark.” And in an archery contest, the man who has not strength to send his arrow to the target, even though his aim is good, is a loser just as surely as he who shoots wide of the mark. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.39}

“The Glory of God.” —From the text we learn that the glory of God is his righteousness. Notice, the reason why all have come short of the glory of God is that all have sinned. The fact is plain that if they had not sinned they would not have come short of it. The coming short of the glory itself consists in sin. Man in the beginning was “crowned with glory and honor” (Hebrews 2:7) because he was upright. In the fall he lost the glory, and therefore now he must “seek for glory and honor and immortality.” Christ could say to the Father, “The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them,” because in him is the righteousness of God which he has given as a free gift to every man. It is the part of wisdom to receive righteousness; and “they that be wise shall shine.” {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.40}

“Being Justified.” —In other words, being made righteous. To justify means to make righteous. God supplies just what the sinner lacks. Let no reader forget the simple meaning of justification. Some people have the idea that there is a much higher condition for the Christian to occupy than to be justified. That is to say, that there is a higher condition for one to occupy than to be clothed within and without with the righteousness of God. That can not be. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.41}

“Freely.” —“Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” That is, let him take it as a gift. So in Isaiah 55:1: “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” It was the Epistle to the Romans that accomplished the Reformation in Germany. Men had been taught to believe that the way to get righteousness was to purchase it either by hard work or by the payment of money. The idea that men may purchase it with money is not so common now as then; but there are very many who are not Catholics who think that some work must be done in order to obtain it. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.42}

Making Prayer a Work.-The writer was once talking with a man in regard to righteousness as the free gift of God, the man maintaining that we could not get anything from the Lord without doing something for it. When asked what we must do to win forgiveness of sins, he replied that we must pray for it. It is with this idea of prayer that the Roman or Hindu devotee “says” so many prayers a day, putting in an extra number some days to make up for omissions. But the man who “says” a prayer, does not pray. Heathen prayer, as for instance when the prophets of Baal leaped and cut themselves (1 Kings 18:26-28), is work; but true prayer is not. A man comes to me and says that he is starving. Afterwards he is asked if anything was given him, and he says that he received some dinner, but that I made him work for it. When asked what he had to do for it, he replies that he asked for it. He could hardly make any one believe that he worked for his dinner! True prayer is simply the thankful acceptance of God’s free gifts. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.43}

Redemption in Christ Jesus.-We are made righteous “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” That is, through the purchasing power that is in Christ Jesus, or “through the unsearchable riches of Christ.” Ephesians 3:8. This is the reason why it comes to us as a gift. Some one may say that everlasting life in the kingdom of God is too great a thing to be given to us for nothing. So it is, and therefore it had to be purchased, but since we had nothing that could buy it, Christ has purchased it for us and he gives it to us freely, in himself. But if we had to purchase it from him, we might as well have bought it in the first place, and saved him the task. “If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” Galatians 2:21. “Ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ.” 1 Peter 1:18, 19, R.V. The blood is the life. Leviticus 17:11-17. Therefore the redemption that is in Christ Jesus is his own life. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 51.44}

Christ Set Forth.-Christ is the one whom God has set forth to declare his righteousness. Now since the only righteousness that is real righteousness is the righteousness of God, and Christ is the only one who has been ordained of God to declare it upon men, it is evident that it can not be obtained except through him. “There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 52.1}

A Propitiation.-A propitiation is a sacrifice. The statement then is simply that Christ is set forth to be a sacrifice for the remission of our sins. “Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Hebrews 9:26. Of course the idea of a propitiation or sacrifice is that there is wrath to be appeased. But take particular notice that it is we who require the sacrifice, and not God. He provides the sacrifice. The idea that God’s wrath has to be propitiated in order that we may have forgiveness finds no warrant in the Bible. It is the height of absurdity to say that God is so angry with men that he will not forgive them unless something is provided to appease his wrath, and that therefore he himself offers the gift to himself, by which he is appeased. “And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death.” Colossians 1:21, 22. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 52.2}

Heathen and Christian Propitiation.-The Christian idea of propitiation is that set forth above. The heathen idea, which is too often held by professed Christians, is that men must provide a sacrifice to appease the wrath of their god. All heathen worship is simply a bribe to their gods to be favorable to them. If they thought that their gods were very angry with them, they would provide a greater sacrifice, and so human sacrifices were offered in extreme cases. They thought, as the worshipers of Siva in India do to-day, that their god was gratified by the sight of blood. The persecution that was carried on in so-called Christian countries in times past and is to some extent even now, is but the outcropping of this heathen idea of propitiation. Ecclesiastical leaders imagine that salvation is by works and that men by works can atone for sin, and so they offer the one whom they think rebellious as a sacrifice to their god not to the true God, because he is not pleased with such sacrifices. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 52.3}

Righteousness Declared.-To declare righteousness is to speak righteousness. God speaks righteousness to man, and then he is righteous. The method is the same as in the creation in the beginning. “He spake, and it was.” “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 52.4}

God’s Justice in Redemption.-Christ is set forth to declare God’s righteousness for the remission of sins, in order that he might be just and at the same time the justifier of him who believes in Jesus. God justifies sinners, for they are the only ones who need justification. The justice of declaring a sinner to be righteous lies in the fact that he is actually made righteous. Whatever God declares to be so, is so. And then he is made righteous by the life of God given him in Christ. The sin is against God, and if he is willing to forgive it, he has the right to do so. No unbeliever would deny the right of a man to overlook a trespass against him. But God does not simply overlook the trespass; he gives his life as a forfeit. Thus he upholds the majesty of the law, and is just in declaring that man righteous who was before a sinner. Sin is remitted sent away from the sinner, because sin and righteousness can not exist together, and God puts his own righteous life into the believer. So God is merciful in his justice, and just in his mercy. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 52.5}

*“There’s a wideness in God’s mercy,  
Like the wideness of the sea;  
There’s a kindness in his justice,  
That is more than liberty.”  
E. J. W. {SITI January 23, 1896, p. 52.6}*