**“Studies in Romans. Who Are Israelites?” The Signs of the Times, 22, 27.**

E. J. Waggoner

The ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of Romans are devoted especially to the answer to this question, so that only a portion of it can be dealt with in this article. The matter has, however, been so clearly indicated in the studies of the second, third and fourth chapters, that we may pass over this ground more rapidly than we otherwise should. This does not mean that the chapters themselves should be dismissed with slight study, for there is no part of the Bible that has more to yield to the patient student; but our work of leading the student to it may be the more quickly done, in consequence of what has already been done. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.1}

At first sight it would seem that the subject of the epistle is entirely changed. A more general view will show us that the apostle here carried out the original subject, showing who are heirs of God’s promise, and how only it is to be obtained. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.2}

**Paul’s Love for His Brethren**

“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh; who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, at this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth); it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will be hardeneth.” Romans 9:1-18. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.3}

This is a long portion of Scripture for study, but if it is diligently questioned, to see exactly what it says, it will not be found so difficult as it is usually thought. We can put only a few of the many {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.4}

**Questions on the Text**

that might and should be asked. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.5}

What burden does the apostle say that he carried continually? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.6}

“I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.7}

For whom did he have this sorrow? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.8}

“For my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.9}

How great was his love and sympathy for them? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.10}

“I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.11}

Who were these brethren? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.12}

“Israelites.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.13}

What privileges did they have? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.14}

“The adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises,” and “the fathers.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.15}

What other great honor was theirs? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.16}

“Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.17}

If their condition was so bad, notwithstanding all the promises, how could the integrity of God’s word be shown? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.18}

“For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.19}

Who only of Abraham’s descendants are the seed? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.20}

“In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.21}

What is said of the children of the flesh? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.22}

“These are not the children of God.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.23}

Who are the seed? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.24}

“The children of the promise are counted for the seed.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.25}

What shows that the children are “born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.26}

“When Rebecca also had conceived, ... the children being not yet born.... it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the young.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.27}

How did the verdict in after years agree with this? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.28}

“Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.29}

Is there then unrighteousness with God? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.30}

“God forbid.” Not by any means. He “without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s works.” 1 Peter 1:17. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.31}

On what then does every man’s salvation depend? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.32}

“It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.33}

For what purpose did God say to Pharaoh that He had raised him up? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.34}

“That I might show My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.35}

What is the conclusion? {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.36}

“Therefore He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.37}

Both Jews and Greeks.-Altho Paul was “the apostle of the Gentiles,” he did not forget his “kinsmen according to the flesh.” Wherever he went he sought out the Jews first, and preached to them. To the elders of Ephesus he said, “I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Acts 20:20, 21. Paul’s solicitude for all classes, even for those who were personally strangers to him, shows, more than anything else, his likeness to the Lord Jesus Christ. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.38}

Israel’s Advantage.—“What advantage then hath the Jew?” “Much every way; chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.” Romans 3:1, 2. So here we read a wondrous list of things that pertain to Israel: the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises. A terrible thing it is indeed to prove unfaithful amid such inestimable privileges! {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.39}

“Salvation Is of the Jews.” *—* Thus said Jesus to the woman of Samaria at the well. John 4:22 “Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came.” The Bible was written by Jews, and a young Jewess was the mother of our Lord. As man, Christ was a Jew, of the tribe of Judah. When we read that “we are saved by His life,” we know that it is by His life as a Jew. There is no divine gift and blessing for man that was not “to the Jew first,” and for the knowledge of which we are not indebted to the Jews. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.40}

Nothing from the Gentiles.-The Apostle Paul says of the “Gentiles in the flesh,” that they are “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.” Ephesians 2:11, 12. The covenants, the promises, even Christ himself, all belong to the Jews, and not to the Gentiles. Therefore whoever is saved must be saved as a Jew. “God at the first did visit the Gentiles *to take out of them a people* for his name.” Acts 15:14. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.41}

Accursed from Christ.-It makes no difference whether we use the word “accursed,” or “anathema,” or “separated.” All mean the same thing, and express the most deplorable condition. To be without Christ is to be without hope and without God in the world. Ephesians 2:12. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.42}

It was in that condition that Paul would have been willing to be placed for his brethren according to the flesh, if it would have done them any good. What does that show? Simply this, that Israel according to the flesh was, and is, in just that condition accursed from Christ, “having no hope, and without God in the world.” But since all the promises of God are in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:20), those who are separate from Christ have no part in the promises; and therefore we learn anew the fact that Israel after the flesh, as a nation of earth, have not and never had any claim upon God above other nations; that God never made any special promises to Israel after the flesh, more than to any other people. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.43}

In the wish that Paul expressed, he showed how completely he was given up to the Lord, and how much he shared in his Spirit. Christ gave himself for men, consenting even to be separated from God, in order that he might reach and save the lost. There is none other name under heaven whereby men can be saved, and consequently Paul’s being accursed would not have saved his brethren, as he very well knew. But he simply showed how desperate was the case of the Jews, and how great was his solicitude. While no human sacrifice can avail, men are privileged to share Christ’s sufferings for others. Paul says of himself, “who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body’s sake, which is the church.” Colossians 1:24. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 418.44}

Circumcision Made Uncircumcision.-We have before read the words, “If thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.” Romans 2:25. This language was addressed to the Jews, who in the same connection were charged with breaking the law. Romans 2:17-24. In the thirty-first verse of this present chapter we also are told that Israel did not attain to the law of righteousness. And the reason is that they did not accept Christ, through whom alone the righteousness of the law can be obtained. So again we find that Israel, Paul’s “kinsmen after the flesh,” were not Israelites at all, but Gentiles, separate from Christ, “having no hope, and without God in the world.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 419.1}

No Failure in the Promise.-This is a sad state of things. All the promises belong to Israel, and there is nothing from God for any other nation, and yet the very people known as Israel are accursed from Christ. Nevertheless the word of God has not failed, “for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.” The unbelief of some can not make the faith of God without effect. Romans 3:3. If every literal descendant of Jacob were lost, that would not weaken in the least God’s promises to Israel, since the true Israelites are only those who believe the promises. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 419.2}

The Seed of Abraham.—“In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” Isaac was the child of promise; therefore those who believe the promises of God are the seed of Abraham. To the Jews who were self-satisfied because of their descent, John the Baptist said, “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. He could do that as easily as he could make man in the beginning from the dust of the earth. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 419.3}

The Flesh and the Promise.—“They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” This text alone should forever set at rest the speculations about the return of the Jews to old Jerusalem, in order that God’s promises may be fulfilled. Still more should it put an end to the absurd notion that any nation, as England or America, constitutes Israel, and is heir to those promises of God. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 419.4}

God’s Foreknowledge.-When the children were not yet born, and had done neither good nor evil, it was said of them, “The elder shall serve the younger.” God knows the end from the beginning, and could tell what each one would do. The choice was in accordance with what is said of God, “who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” 2 Timothy 1:9. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 419.5}

“Esau Have I Hated.” —This was not written until many years after the death of both Jacob and Esau. “Was not Esau Jacob’s brother? saith the Lord; yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.” Malachi 1:2, 3. Of his descendants it is said that they shall be called, “The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever.” Verse 3. And why? “Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever.” Amos 1:11. Jacob, on the other hand, while no better by nature than Esau, believed the promises of God, and was by them made partaker of the divine nature and thus an heir of God and a joint heir of Jesus Christ. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 419.6}

No Unrighteousness with God.-Mark well verses 14-17 for evidence that there is no arbitrariness in God’s choice. It is all of mercy. “He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” So it is all of “God that sheweth mercy.” The earth is full of the mercy of the Lord (Psalm 119:64), and “His mercy endureth forever.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 419.7}

God’s Purpose for Pharaoh.-The case of Pharaoh is cited by the apostle as an illustration of the statement that “it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” “For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee, and that My name might be declared throughout all the earth.” {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 419.8}

It is immaterial whether this refers to the bringing of Pharaoh to the throne, or to the preserving of him up to that time. One thing is certain: it does not teach us, as is commonly supposed, that God brought Pharaoh to the throne for the purpose of wreaking his vengeance upon him. It is astonishing that any professed Christian could ever have dishonored God by such a charge against him. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 419.9}

The purpose of God in raising Pharaoh up, or causing him to stand, was that he might show to him and in him his power, and that his name might be declared throughout all the earth. This purpose was accomplished in the destruction of Pharaoh because of his stubborn resistance. But it would have been accomplished just as well, and much better for Pharaoh if he had listened to the word of God. Pharaoh saw God’s power, but would not believe. If he had believed, he would have been saved, because the power of God is salvation to every one that believeth. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 419.10}

Pharaoh had an imperious will. His one great characteristic was steadfastness, pertinacity degenerating into stubbornness. But who can estimate the power for good that Pharaoh would have been if his will had been yielded to the Lord? To yield to the Lord would have meant a great sacrifice, as men count sacrifices, but no greater than that which Moses had made. Moses had given up the same throne, to cast in his lot with God’s people. A wonderful and honorable position was offered to Pharaoh, but he knew not the day of his visitation. It involved humiliation, and he rejected it. As a consequence he lost everything; while Moses, who chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, and to share the reproach of Christ, has a name and a place that will endure throughout eternity. The mercies of God rejected turn into curses. “For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein.” Hosea 14:9. E. J. W. {SITI July 9, 1896, p. 419.11}

**“Studies in Romans. ‘Accepted in the Beloved’” The Signs of the Times, 22, 28.**

E. J. Waggoner

In our last study, embracing the first part of the ninth chapter of Romans, we learned something further in regard to God’s purpose and election. We learned that the Jews by nature were never any more the people of God than any other people, and that apart from Christ they were as much accursed as were the veriest heathen that ever lived. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 434.1}

We learned also that although God did make choice of certain ones, specially named, who afterwards attained great eminence as children of God, the choice was not arbitrary. Jacob was chosen before he was born, but no more than all other men are. God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, “according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.” Ephesians 1:3-7. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 434.2}

“So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, that showeth mercy.” As proof of this, the apostle cited the case of Pharaoh, who was chosen in Christ just as much as Jacob was, and just as much as we are. He was chosen to the praise of the glory of the grace of God, that he might show forth the excellencies of the Lord; but he obstinately refused to submit. But God will be praised even by the wrath of men, if they are not willing to praise Him voluntarily, and so God’s name and power were made known through Pharaoh’s stubbornness. It would have been better if the proud king had yielded himself to the design of God, instead of having that design worked out in spite of him. But the lesson that we are to learn is that every man in every nation under heaven has been chosen in Christ, and that none have been chosen in any other way, and that this choice is that they should be adopted as sons. In this choice the Jews have no advantage over others, but are on an equality with them, as is further shown by the remainder of the chapter:— {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 434.3}

“Thou wilt then say unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As He saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not My people, and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved; for He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah. What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling-stone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” Romans 9:19-33. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 434.4}

We will omit the usual questions on the text, leaving the reader to press that matter as closely as possible, and will proceed at once to note a few of the lessons set forth in the text. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 434.5}

Replying Against God.-This is a very common thing, and its commonness has caused most people to lose sight of its wickedness. The man who begins indignantly to ask, “Why does God do so and so?” or to say, “I can’t see the justice in such a course,” as though he were especially and personally affronted, makes it impossible for himself to understand even that which a mortal may comprehend of God. It is very foolish and wicked to blame Him because we are not equal to Him in wisdom. The only way to come to the knowledge of the little that may be understood of God is to settle it once for all that He is just and merciful, and that everything He does is for the good of His creatures. Reverence, and not clamorous questioning, becomes a creature in the presence of the infinite God. “Be still, and know that I am God.” Psalm 46:10. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 434.6}

The Potter and His Vessels.-The one who thinks himself competent to criticise the Lord thinks that he has a sure case against him in verses 21-24 of this chapter. “Surely,” says he, “this text teaches us that God has made some men to be saved, and others to be destroyed.” Most certainly we find nothing of the kind! There is a vast difference between what the text actually says, and what men imagine that it says. The potter has power over the clay, and so the Creator has power over his creatures, of natural and unquestionable right. Consider the figure. The potter has power over the clay to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor. Very true; but who in the world ever heard of a potter who busied himself making vessels for the sole purpose of destroying them? He makes vessels of different kinds for various purposes, but they are all intended for use, and not for destruction. So God never made anyone for the purpose of destroying him. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 434.7}

God’s Longsuffering.-The fact that God does not plan the destruction of any one is shown in that He hesitates long before allowing any to suffer the destruction which their own evil deeds have justly earned. He “endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.” They fitted themselves for destruction after their hardness, by treasuring up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath. Romans 2:5. Note that God endured with much long-suffering these “vessels of wrath.” Now we are to “account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.” 2 Peter 3:15. He “is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” Verse 9. The fact, therefore, that God endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, even after they were fitted to destruction, shows that he longed for their salvation, and would give them every possible chance for it. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 434.8}

“Whom He Hath Called.” *—* God’s long-suffering is also for the purpose of making known the riches of His glory “on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory.” And who are these? “Even us, whom He hath called.” And who are they who are called? Are they of some particular nation? “Not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.” The entire chapter is a vindication of God’s choice of men even before their birth, as illustrated in the case of Jacob; and this verse shows that the choosing of Jacob did not mean that God had special privileges for the Jewish nation, but that He bestows His favors impartially on Jews and Gentiles alike, if they will accept them. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 435.1}

God’s People.-This is still further shown by verses 25, 26: “As He saith also in Osee [Hosea 1:9, 10], I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.” God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. The apostle Peter described this visit in these words: “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.” And further, “We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.” Acts 15:7-11. And so “there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.” Romans 10:12. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 435.2}

The Remnant.—“Isaiah also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.” Therefore “at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.” Romans 11:5. No matter how many there may be who can trace their genealogy to Jacob according to the flesh, it is only they who are willing subjects of the grace of God who will be saved. There is positively no chance for boasting save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 435.3}

The Gentiles Ahead.-The Jews professed to keep the law, but did not; the Gentiles were not associated with the law, yet they met its requirements. Now, if the reader will recall Romans 2:25-29, he will see that real circumcision consists (and always did consist) in keeping the law. Therefore since the Gentiles by their faith kept the law, and the Jews through their lack of faith did not keep it, it appears that they had changed places; the Gentiles were really “Jews,” and the Jews by nature were the same as the heathen. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 435.4}

Missing the Mark.-The Jews followed after the law of righteousness, but did not attain to it. Why not? “Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.” How forcibly this sets forth that of which the entire epistle is a demonstration, namely, that faith does not clear one from its transgression, but that by faith alone can the law be kept! The Jews are not blamed for following after the law of righteousness, but for not following after it in the right way. It is not by works, but by faith, that the works which the law requires can be attained. That is to say that bad works can not produce good works; good can not come of evil. There is no discount upon good works. They are the most necessary things in the world. They are the result of the keeping of the law by faith. But there can not by any possibility be good works without faith; for “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” Romans 14:23. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 435.5}

The Stumbling-Stone.-Do not fail to connect the last part of this chapter with the first part. Remember that the beginning presents Israel according to the flesh as accursed from Christ. To them pertained, among other things, the giving of the law, but they came miserably short of it. Why? “For they stumbled at that stumbling-stone.” What stumbling-stone? Christ. They were in the very same condition that so many people are to-day, they would not believe that the promises of God to Israel were wholly and solely in Christ. They thought, as many professed Christians now do, that God honored them for their own sake, without any regard to Christ. Christ is the stumbling-stone over which all stumble who regard the promises to Israel as made to a certain earthly nation, to the exclusion of all others. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 435.6}

A Sure Foundation.-Strange to say, that very stumbling-stone is a stepping-stone, and a sure foundation. That over which some fall, is the means of lifting up and building up others. “The ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein.” Hosea 14:9. Christ is a rock of offence to those who disbelieve, but a sure foundation to those who have faith. He is “the Holy One of Israel,” “the King of Israel,” “the Shepherd of Israel,” and at the same time the fold, and the door into the fold. Without him there could be no such thing as a nation of Israel. Those who think to claim an inheritance in Israel because of their birth and without respect to Christ, will be ashamed at the last because whosoever comes not in at the door, the same will be proved to be “a thief and a robber.” But “whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame,” because his faith will show him to be Abraham’s seed, and thus an heir of God according to the promise. E. J. W. {SITI July 16, 1896, p. 435.7}

**“Studies in Romans. The Glorious Gospel” The Signs of the Times, 22, 29.**

E. J. Waggoner

Let it be remembered that the ninth chapter of Romans sets forth the condition of Israel according to the flesh-they who are called Israel. They are “accursed from Christ.” They “followed after the law of righteousness,” but did not attain to righteousness, because they sought it not by faith, but by works. The Gentiles, therefore, gained the precedence over them, because they sought righteousness in the right way, namely, by faith. Thus were fulfilled the words of Christ to the self-righteous Jews: “The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you;” and again, “The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” Matthew 21:31, 43. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.1}

But the Lord did not cast off his people because they stumbled at the Stone which he had placed for a foundation. He endured with much long-suffering even the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. So the apostle continues:— {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.2}

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God’s righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven (that is, to bring Christ down from above); or, Who shall descend into the deep (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with they mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the Gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.” Romans 10:1-21. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.3}

This is quite a long portion of scripture, yet it is all so closely connected that it seems necessary to consider the whole at one study. Of course our study must be only in outline, just to prepare the way for further study; and we can afford room for only a few of the usual {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.4}

**Questions on the Text**

What was Paul’s earnest desire for Israel? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.5}

“That they might be saved.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.6}

What good thing did he testify that they had? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.7}

“They have a zeal of God,” or *for* God. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.8}

But in what essential thing was it lacking? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.9}

It was “not according to knowledge.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.10}

Of what were they ignorant? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.11}

“Ignorant of God’s righteousness.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.12}

What did this ignorance lead them to do? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.13}

To seek “to establish their own righteousness.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.14}

What was the result? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.15}

“They did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.” R.V. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.16}

Where only can the end of the law be found? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.17}

“Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.18}

What is the description of the righteousness which is of faith? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.19}

“The word is very nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.20}

On what terms will anyone be saved? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.21}

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.22}

How then does righteousness come? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.23}

“With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.24}

Who will be saved? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.25}

“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.26}

What is necessary in order that men call on the Lord? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.27}

That they should believe. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.28}

And what is necessary in order that they may believe? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.29}

That they should hear. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.30}

And how only can they hear? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.31}

When some are sent to preach. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.32}

Has this condition been met? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.33}

“It is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.34}

Have men obeyed this Gospel message? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.35}

“Isaiah says, “Lord, who hath believed our report?” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.36}

How do faith and hearing come? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.37}

“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.38}

Although they have not all believed, have they not all heard? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.39}

“Yes verily.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.40}

What evidence is there of this? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.41}

“Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.42}

What was the result of this preaching? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.43}

“I was found of them that sought Me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.44}

Did God therefore leave Israel to their own destruction? {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.45}

“To Israel He saith, All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.46}

Zeal without Knowledge.—“It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing.” Zeal is very necessary to the accomplishment of anything; but zeal without knowledge is like a wild horse without bit or bridle. There is plenty of activity, but it is of no use. Or it is like the man who displays great zeal and earnestness in reaching a certain place, but who is traveling in the wrong direction. No matter how zealous a man may be, he will never reach a place that is north of him by traveling southward. Ignorance nullifies zeal. “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” Hosea 4:6. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.47}

Israel’s Ignorance.-They were “ignorant of God’s righteousness.” It is a kind of ignorance that did not cease with the generation then living, and which is not confined to any certain people. But that which made it so much worse in this instance was that this ignorance of God’s righteousness was coupled with the highest profession of serving him. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.48}

God’s Righteousness.-The righteousness of God is something besides a name. It is something far different from a form of words, or even the mere statement of a law. It is nothing less than the life and character of God. As there can not be sweetness apart from something that is sweet, so there is no such thing as abstract righteousness. Righteousness must necessarily be connected with some living being. But God alone is righteous. See Mark 10:18. Therefore wherever righteousness is, there God must be active. Righteousness is the essential characteristic of God. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.49}

Form and Fact.-The Jews had “the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law;” but they had not the truth itself. The law of God, as written on the tables of stone, or in a book, is as perfect as it could possibly be. But there was just the same difference between that and the real law that there is between a photograph of a man and the man himself. It was but a shadow. There was no life in the written characters, and they could not do anything. They were simply the statement of that which exists only in the life of God. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.50}

Empty Righteousness.-The Jews very well knew that the words on the stone or in the book could not do anything; and since they were ignorant of the righteousness of which those words were but the description, they went about to establish a righteousness of their own. This they would never have done if they had not been ignorant of God’s righteousness. Of that the psalmist says, “Thy righteousness is like the great mountains.” Psalm 26:6. They were trying to produce from themselves the essential attribute of God. Such an effort, no matter how great the zeal, could end only in miserable failure. Saul of Tarsus was “more exceedingly zealous of the traditions” of the fathers than any others of his class, yet when he came to a right understanding, those things that were gain to him he was obliged to count but loss. That is, the more he did to establish his own righteousness, the worse off he became. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.51}

Submitting to Righteousness.-If the Jews had not been ignorant of God’s righteousness, they would not have attempted to establish a righteousness of their own. They tried to make God’s righteousness submit to them, whereas they should have submitted to it. God’s righteousness is active. It is his own life. Just as the air will rush into any place where there is an opening, so the righteous life of God will fill every heart that is open to receive it. When men try to handle the law of God, they invariably pervert it, and fit it to their own ideas; the only way to have its perfection appear is to submit to it, allowing it to rule. Then it will work itself out in the life. “It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good-pleasure.” Philippians 2:13. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 451.52}

The End of the Law.—“Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” 1 Timothy 1:5. Charity is love, and “love is the fulfilling of the law.” Romans 13:10. Therefore the end of the law is its perfect fulfilment. That is self-evident. It makes no difference in what sense the word “end” is taken. Suppose it be used in the common sense of “object.” It is very plain that the things which it requires shall be done. Or use the word “end” in the ordinary sense of the farthest extent, and we have the same thing. You arrive at the end of a law only when you reach the utmost limit of its requirement. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.1}

Christ the End of the Law.-We have seen that the end or object of the law is the righteousness which it requires. So it is said that Christ is the end of the law “for righteousness.” The law of God is the righteousness of God. See Isaiah 51:6, 7. But this righteousness is the real life of God himself, and the words of the law are only the shadow of it. That life is found only in Christ, for he alone declares the righteousness of God. Romans 3:24, 25. His life is the law of God, since God was in him. That which the Jews had only in form, is found in fact only in Christ. In him the end of the law is found. Does any one say that “the end of the law” means its abolition? Very well; when they find the abolition of Christ, they will have found the abolition of the law, and not before. Only a study of the life of Christ will reveal the righteousness which the law of God requires. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.2}

To Whom? —To whom is Christ the end of the law for righteousness? “To every one that believeth.” Christ dwells in the heart by faith. Ephesians 3:17. The perfect righteousness of the law is found only in him. It is in Him in absolute perfection. Therefore since Christ dwells in the heart of the believer, in Him only is the end of the law attained. “This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.” John 6:29. “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.3}

Doing to Live and Living to Do.-The righteousness which is of the law, that is, men’s own righteousness (see Philippians 3:9), is on the principle of doing something in order to live. The mere statement of the case is sufficient to show its impossibility; for life must necessarily precede action. A dead body does not do something in order that it may live, but it must be given life in order that it may do something. Peter did not tell the dead Dorcas to do some more charitable work, to sew some more garments, in order that she might live, but in the name of Jesus he restored her to life, in order that she might pursue her good works. The man that doeth those things shall live in them, but he must first live before he can do them. Therefore the righteousness which is of the law is but an empty dream. Christ gives life, even the eternal and righteous life of God, which works righteousness in the soul that it has quickened. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.4}

Christ the Word.-Verses 6-8 of this chapter are a direct quotation from Deuteronomy 30:11-14. Moses had been rehearsing the law to the people, and exhorting them to obedience, and told them that the commandment was not “far off,” so that they needed to send some one to bring it to them, “but the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.” Paul, writing by inspiration of the Spirit, quotes the words of Moses, and shows that they refer to Christ. Christ is the Word, the commandment, which is not “far off,” which needs not to be brought down from heaven, nor to be raised from the dead. Let the reader compare these two portions of Scripture very carefully, and he will clearly see that the real commandment of the Lord is nothing less than Christ. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.5}

Law and Life.-This truth was not necessarily hidden till the New Testament was written. The thoughtful Jew in the days of Moses could clearly understand that only in the life of God could the righteousness of the law be found. Moses said: “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live; that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him; for he is thy life, and the length of thy days.” Deuteronomy 30:19, 20. In setting the law before the people, Moses set before them the life of God, and that is to be found only in Christ. “I know that his commandment is life everlasting.” John 12:50. “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” John 17:3. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.6}

The Word Very Near.-Remembering that the word is Christ, we read, “The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach.” Is Christ so near as that? Indeed he is; for he himself says, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.” Revelation 3:20. It is not alone to the good that he is near, but he is “not far from every one of us.” Acts 17:27. So near is he that “in him we live, and move, and have our being.” We can not reach out our hand without finding him. Christ is in the heart even of wicked men, waiting for them to recognize the fact that already exists, and will in all their ways acknowledge him; then He will dwell in their hearts “by faith.” He will then direct them in all their ways. In nothing is the love of Christ more fully shown than in His dwelling with sinful men, and enduring all their hatefulness, in order that by his patience he may win them from their evil ways. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.7}

Belief in the Resurrection.—“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” He “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” Romans 4:25. And “He died for all.” He tasted death for every man. Therefore He was raised for the justification of every man. To believe in the heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, is to believe that he justifies me. The one who does not believe that Jesus does cleanse him from sin, does not really believe that God has raised him from the dead; for we can not believe in the resurrection of Jesus, without believing that for which He was raised. The resurrection of Jesus is much less generally believed than is commonly supposed. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.8}

Not Ashamed.-The root of the word “believe” indicates a foundation, something upon which one can build. To believe on Jesus is to build upon Him. He is the tried Stone, the sure Foundation, the Rock. Isaiah 28:16. Whosoever builds upon Him will not be obliged to flee in confusion when the rain descends, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon his house; for He is the Rock of Ages. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.9}

No Difference.-The keynote of the Gospel call is “whosoever.” “God so loved the world, that he gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16. “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:17. “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” No distinction is made; “for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek.” Read again the second and third chapters of Romans, and the fourth also. Indeed, the whole book of Romans gives a death-blow to that wicked idea that God is partial, and that he favors some people more than others. The idea that God has special blessings for one nation of earth that he has not for others, no matter whether that one nation be called Jews, Israelites, Anglo-Saxons, Englishmen, or anything else, is a direct denial of the gospel of the grace of God. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.10}

The Gospel to All.-The thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth verses show the steps necessary for salvation. First, men must call upon the Lord. But in order to call upon him, they must believe in him. But they can not hear without someone being sent. But preachers have been sent, yet all have not believed and obeyed, although they have all heard. What have they all heard?—They have all heard the word of God. In proof of this, the apostle says that faith comes by hearing the word of God, and adds: “Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” All in the world have heard, and there is no excuse for unbelief on the part of any. Read again Romans 1:16-20. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.11}

Glorious Preachers.-The Gospel of Christ is “the glorious Gospel.” It shines its way into the heart. See 2 Corinthians 4:4. So it is fitting that those who preach it should be arrayed in glory. The sun, moon, and stars are the beautiful “preachers” whose words have gone to the ends of the world. They preach the glorious Gospel of Christ. They are a continual example of the right way to preach the Gospel they shine forth the glory of God. So the apostle says to us who have heard and believed the word, “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of the darkness into his marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9. The Gospel is the revelation of God to men. “God is light,” therefore the proclaiming of the Gospel consists in showing forth His light. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 5:16. E. J. W. {SITI July 23, 1896, p. 452.12}

**“Studies in Romans. All Israel Saved” The Signs of the Times, 22, 30.**

E. J. Waggoner

We now come to the eleventh chapter of Romans, the closing up of the special discussion of Israel. In each of these three chapters we are plainly shown that the Gentiles, if they believe, have an equal share with the Jews, and that the latter forfeit all the privileges of the people of God through unbelief. Nothing could show more plainly than do these chapters that all men are on a level, and that the promises of God are to all who believe, irrespective of birth or nation. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 468.1}

Since this chapter is long, and we wish to present it all at one view, we do not reproduce the text, but urgently request the reader to study the chapter through carefully, reading it several times, before going further. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 468.2}

Not a Castaway.-The Apostle Paul knew that God had not cast off his people, the lineal descendants of Abraham, and his proof was the fact that he himself was accepted with God. If the Jewish nation had been cast off by the Lord, then there would have been no hope for Paul, because he was “an Hebrew of the Hebrews.” The words “God forbid” mislead some people. The idea obtains that Paul was praying that the Lord would not cast off his people, lest he also should be cast away. Instead of “God forbid,” read, “by no means.” Then all is clear. Thus: “I say then, Hath God cast away his people? By no means.” How do you prove that? Why, “I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.” {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 468.3}

Who Are Rejected? —Although God had not cast away his people, they were in a bad way. The fact that God had not cast them off, did not prove that they would be saved. Paul intimated that there was danger that even he, after he had preached to others, might be a castaway. 1 Corinthians 9:27. The case, however, lay wholly in his own hands. There was no danger that God would cast him away against his will. We have the words of the Lord, ‘Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out.” John 6:37. And all may come; for he says also that “whosoever will” may come. God casts no one off; but if they utterly reject him, then, since he forces no one, he has no alternative but to leave them to themselves. “Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; ... therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.” Proverbs 1:24-32. God stretches forth his hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people (Romans 10:21), and they have it in their own power to say if they will be saved. God accepts everybody; the only question is, Will they accept him? {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 468.4}

The Remnant.-In the illustration from Elijah’s time, we learn something further about the matter of acceptance and rejection. It seemed then as though all Israel had departed from the Lord, but there were seven thousand men who had not acknowledged Baal. “Even so at this present moment there is a remnant according to the election of grace.” The grace of God appears to all men, and is extended to all. Those who accept the grace are the elect, no matter of what tribe or nation they are. Although the plan of salvation embraces all the world, it is a sad fact that but few of any people or generation will accept it. “Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.” {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 468.5}

The Olive Tree.-While there are single expressions in the eleventh chapter of Romans that are difficult to understand, the chapter as a whole is very simple. Under the figure of an olive tree, the people of God are represented, and by the figure of grafting, the relation of all men to God is shown. Before going into the particulars of this illustration, we must for a moment consider the {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 468.6}

“Commonwealth of Israel.” —In the second chapter of Ephesians we learn that as Gentiles, the Ephesians had been “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,” “having no hope, and without God in the world.” That is, those who are not of the commonwealth of Israel are without God; or, those who are without God are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. Now Christ is the only manifestation of God to man, and “he came unto his own, and his own received him not.” John 1:11. Therefore the mass of the Jewish nation were without God, just as surely as the heathen were, and consequently were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. The same chapter of Ephesians tells us that Christ came to reconcile both Jews and Gentiles unto God, showing that both were separate from him. Still further in the same chapter we learn that the commonwealth of Israel is the “household of God,” and is composed of saints, those who are reconciled to God. Only such are not “strangers and foreigners” from Israel. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 468.7}

The Origin of Israel.-The name originated that night when Jacob wrestled with the Lord, and finally by his faith obtained the blessing that he sought. He could not gain anything whatever by his physical strength; indeed, one touch by the Lord was sufficient to make him utterly helpless; but it was when, in his utter helplessness, he cast himself in simple faith on the Lord, that he gained the victory, and was named Israel prince of God. This title was applied to all his descendants, although it strictly belonged only to those who had living faith in God, just as we use the term “Christian” of those who are in “the church,” with no thought of asserting that they really know the Lord. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 468.8}

A Righteous Nation.-Much is said of the unbelief of the children of Israel; but there were times when they as an entire nation had faith to a marked degree. One instance will suffice at present. “By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.” Hebrews 11:30. Thirteen times the whole host marched round the city, seemingly to no purpose, without a murmur. Such faith showed that they were then a righteous nation, in close union with God; because, “being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1. Then their name truly indicated their character; they were Israelites indeed. They were walking “in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham.” {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 468.9}

Severed Branches.-But they did not keep the faith. “We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.” Hebrews 3:14. This they did not do, and so they became “without Christ,” “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.” Ephesians 2:12. In Romans 11:17 the apostle asks, What “if some of the branches be broken off?” etc., not meaning, however, to imply that some were not broken off, as we learn from what follows. For he says, “Because of unbelief they were broken off” (verse 20), and again, “God hath concluded them all in unbelief” (verse 32), thus showing that all were broken off. So we find the people who were “beloved for the fathers’ sakes” (verse 28) and who had at one time in their history been “children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:26) reduced through their unbelief to the level of those who had never known God. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 469.1}

Grafted Branches.-All the branches of the olive tree Israel were broken off through unbelief. To supply their places God took branches from the wild olive tree the Gentiles and grafted them on. This grafting was “contrary to nature” (verse 24), since it was wholly a work of grace. If it had been according to nature, then the branches would have borne natural fruit, and there would be no gain from the grafting, since the natural fruit was bad. See Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 2:1, 2. But a miracle was wrought by grace, and the branches that were grafted in partook of the nature of the root. The fruit of the grafted-in branches is no more natural, but that of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22, 23. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 469.2}

A Reunion.-We must remember that God did not cast off his people. They fell away through unbelief. “They also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in; for God is able to graff them in again.” Verse 23. The Jew has as good a chance as the Gentile. “There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.” Romans 10:12. Christ came “that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross,” and “through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” Ephesians 2:16, 18. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 469.3}

No Change of Plan.-Let us not forget that in thus grafting in the Gentiles to take the place of rebellious Israel, there has been no change in God’s plan. It was all included in the original promise to Abraham. “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached the Gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.” Galatians 3:7, 8. In the beginning God made Adam, the father of the human race. Adam was the son of God (Luke 3:38); therefore all his descendants are by right God’s people. He did not cast them off because they sinned. His love embraced the world (John 3:16), and it did not contract in the days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The only advantage of Israel was that they had the privilege of carrying the glorious Gospel to the Gentiles, for whom it was always designed as much as for them. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 469.4}

Visiting the Gentiles.-The Gentiles, as well as the descendants of Jacob, were from the beginning intended to become Israel. This was shown at the conference in Jerusalem. Peter told how he had been divinely sent to preach the Gospel to them, and that God put no difference between them and the Jews. Then James said: “Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” Acts 15:14-18. See also Amos 4:11-15. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 469.5}

From the above we learn that the “tabernacle of David,” the house or kingdom of David, is to be restored through the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, and that this is according to the mind of the Lord from the beginning of the world. What these scriptures need is not comment, but believing thought. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 469.6}

“The Fullness of the Gentiles.” — “Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.” Romans 11:25. Until the fullness of the Gentiles “be come” into what place? Into Israel, of course; for it is by the bringing in of the fullness of the Gentiles that “all Israel shall be saved.” When will the fullness of the Gentiles “be come” in? The Lord himself furnishes the answer: “This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Matthew 24:14. God is visiting the Gentiles, “to take out of them a people for his name.” By them Israel is to be made full or complete. As soon as this work of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles is finished, then the end will come. There will then be no more preaching to anybody, not to the Gentiles, because they will all have made the final decision; and not to the Jews, because then “all Israel shall be saved.” There will then be no more need of the Gospel; it will have accomplished its work. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 469.7}

All through Christ.-Note carefully verses 25-27. When the fullness of the Gentiles shall have been brought in, “all Israel shall be saved.” Indeed, it is only by the bringing in of the Gentiles that all Israel will be saved. And this will be a fulfillment of that which is written, “There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” Only through Christ can Israel be saved and gathered; and all who are Christ’s are Israel; for “if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:29. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 469.8}

Taking Away Sin.-There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, who shall turn away ungodliness from Israel. Christ is “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” John 1:29. “He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” 1 John 2:2. The high priest Caiaphas spoke by the Spirit “that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.” John 11:51, 52. So Peter, speaking in the temple at Jerusalem, said: “Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindred of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” Acts 3:25, 26. The blessing of Abraham is the forgiveness of sins through Christ; and people of all nations become Israelites indeed by the taking away of iniquity. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 469.9}

All of Faith.-It was through faith that Jacob became Israel. It was through unbelief that his descendants were broken off from the stock of Israel. It is through faith that the Gentiles are grafted in, and only by faith that they stand; and it is through faith that the Jews may become reunited to the parent stock. Faith in Christ is the only thing that makes one an Israelite, and only unbelief cuts one off from being an Israelite; this was fully shown by Christ when he marveled at the faith of the centurion, saying; “I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness.” Matthew 8:10-12. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 469.10}

All in Prison.—“God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.” The word “conclude” means literally “to shut up,” as indicated in the margin. He hath “shut them all up together.” So in Galatians 3:22 we read that “the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” And the next verse speaks of all being “shut up” and guarded by the law. Both Jews and Gentiles “are all under sin.” Romans 3:9. All are shut up in prison together, with no hope of escape except by Christ, “the Deliverer,” who proclaims “liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” Isaiah 61:1. He comes as the deliverer “out of Zion,” bringing the freedom of “Jerusalem which is above.” Galatians 4:26. All therefore who accept the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, are the children of Jerusalem which is above, heirs of heavenly Canaan, members of the true commonwealth of Israel. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 469.11}

Wonderful Knowledge.—“By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities,” says the Lord. Isaiah 53:11. Thus by forgiving sins he will build the walls of Jerusalem (Psalm 51:18), and restore her captive children. “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and His ways past finding out!” Let no one, therefore, presume to criticize God’s plan, or to reject it because he can not understand it. “For who hath been his counselor?” “For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen.” E. J. W. {SITI July 30, 1896, p. 470.1}