**“The True Israel” The Signs of the Times, 23, 9.**

E. J. Waggoner

“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.” Romans 9:6, 7. {SITI March 4, 1897, p. 130.1}

These words of the apostle Paul should be sufficient to clear up all mystery in the minds of Bible believers concerning who are the “Israel” of to-day. It is plain that all theories and all claims based upon literal descent from Abraham are of no value. It is of no consequence to us to know who are the natural seed of Abraham to-day, or what is to become of them in the future. No promise of God made to Israel was fulfilled through the simple process of natural descent. {SITI March 4, 1897, p. 130.2}

The line of descent from Abraham which God recognizes is not a natural line, but a spiritual one. He has never recognized any line but the spiritual one, even from the days of Abraham himself. Of this fact there are many proofs. When Ishmael was born, and Abraham desired that he might live before God as the heir of the promise (Genesis 17:18), the Lord said to him, “Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.” And when, after the birth of Isaac, Sarah desired the son of Abraham by the bondwoman to be cast out because of his mocking, the Lord said to Abraham, “In all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.” {SITI March 4, 1897, p. 130.3}

Ishmael was the father of a great nation; and we read the Abraham had other sons beside Ishmael and Isaac; but to these he gave gifts and sent them away, and Isaac alone was is heir. So there were several sons of Abraham, but only one heir; multitudes of natural descendants, but only a certain line of them whom God recognized as his children. {SITI March 4, 1897, p. 130.4}

Isaac was chosen as the heir because he was the child of promise. The Scripture commentary upon this 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.” So then the line of descent was reckoned from God himself. Between God and the carnal nature there could be no possible union, and therefore no child of the flesh could be a son of God. Isaac was the child of promise; that is, he was born *through faith* in the promise of God made to Abraham, and thus he became a son. No person was ever a son of God who did not become so by faith. It has been possible for all the fallen sons of Adam to become sons of God by believing, as Abraham did, on “Him that justifieth the ungodly.” By so doing they are “born again” into the line of the true descendants of Abraham,—into the family of God. And the same privilege is open to every man to-day. {SITI March 4, 1897, p. 130.5}

The distinguishing mark of this line of descent from Abraham is righteousness; and his descendants compose together a “righteous nation,”—the only righteous nation this earth has ever known. Of them it will be said in the final day of reckoning, “Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.” Isaiah 26:2. This righteousness is by faith; for we read that “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness;” and also, “To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Romans 4:3, 5. And thus, as the apostle states in another place, “They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.” And the same are also the sons of God; for “as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” John 1:12, 13. {SITI March 4, 1897, p. 130.6}

Faith, and faith alone, stands out through all the history of Israel as the means by which the heirship of the promises of God was received. Abraham had faith in God, and God gave him the covenant of circumcision, “a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe.” Romans 4:11. But when the Israelites signally failed in faith, at Kadesh-barnea, and were turned back from the land of promise to wander in the wilderness, circumcision ceased among them, and was not renewed until, under the command of Joshua, they again stood on the borders of Canaan. Tho they were the *literal* descendants of Abraham, and of Isaac, the child of promise, the Lord refused to recognize them as the children of Abraham, because of their unbelief. {SITI March 4, 1897, p. 130.7}

John the Baptist, also, and the Saviour, plainly told the Pharisees that they were not the children of Abraham. Said John, “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. Thus he declared that natural descent from Abraham counted for nothing. And the Saviour said of them, “If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham,” and also, “Ye are of your father the devil.” They had not been born of God, and therefore were neither the children of God nor the children of Abraham. {SITI March 4, 1897, p. 130.8}

As the natural seed of Abraham were not counted as children without faith, so, on the other hand, those who were not the *natural* seed could become united to Israel by faith. Any stranger could come and join himself to them and be counted as one of them. The promises of God were as specifically made to the stranger who came and united with Israel, as to the natural descendants themselves. God did not separate the Israelites from the other nations for the purpose of going off by himself with a certain people to favor them, and shutting the others out. He separated them from the wickedness of the nations around them, that they night not be contaminated thereby; but he excluded no one from joining them and sharing with them in all their blessings. He designed to magnify his name in them before all the world, that men might be drawn to them with a desire to obtain knowledge of him. {SITI March 4, 1897, p. 130.9}

There is an Israel of God to-day, as there ever has been; and now, as then, it is open to all persons of whatever race or ancestry to unite themselves to it. There is nothing exclusive about it; it is as free as the offer of salvation. The condition of union with Israel now is the same that is ever was,—belief in God. “They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.” The same promises of God to ancient Israel hold good to-day; the advantages of union with Israel are the same. But there is no promise to the merely natural descendants, and no advantage in being connected with Abraham, Isaac or Jacob through the flesh. The Israel of God is to-day the remnant of the “righteous nation,” that have gathered out in all ages from every race, and kindred and tongue, by the power of God’s grace, through faith. “Israel” stands for those who by faith have power, as Jacob did, with God, and prevail. All these are children of God; and only these has God recognized in past time as Abraham’s children, or does recognize as such to-day. They are those whom Christ has redeemed. “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” E. J. W. {SITI March 4, 1897, p. 130.10}

**“Heresy and Heretics” The Signs of the Times, 23, 10.**

E. J. Waggoner

The word “heretic” occurs but once in the Bible; the word “heresy” occurs four times, once in the singular, and three times in the plural. The full meeting of the word “heresy” is very concisely put by Mr. Gladstone, in his article on “The Place of Heresy and Schism in the Modern Christian Church,” in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century*. He says of heresy, “It means self-chosen and self-formed opinion. The Gospel is not chosen or formed by us: but fashioned by God, and tendered for our acceptance.” {SITI March 11, 1897, p. 2.1}

That is the whole case in a nut-shell. God is the only Source of truth. Only those are heretics who will not accept the word of God. He who accepts God’s will as final is not an heretic, although he may be alone in his belief. Since God, and not the church, is the standard authority, and the source of truth, a man is not necessarily an heretic because he is not in harmony with what is called “the church.” As a general thing it is the majority of “the church” who are “heretics,” that is, choosers of their ways rather than of God’s, while those who cling closely to the word of God are the few. {SITI March 11, 1897, p. 2.2}

God is no respecter of persons; all are alike before Him. Therefore one man has as much right to choose for himself as any other, or as all other men. Therefore heresy is not a term that can properly be applied to a man because of any relation that he sustains to “the church.” Heresy can exist only in relation to God. {SITI March 11, 1897, p. 2.3}

This fact was recognized by the Apostle Paul when he was accused before Felix. He did not admit that he was an heretic, but said, “After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers,” and then showed that he was not an heretic, by adding, “believing all things which are written in law and in the prophets.” Acts 24:14. {SITI March 11, 1897, p. 2.4}

As no one on earth has the power to define and set the limits of the truth of God, no one has the authority to declare any other one an heretic. Men have no right to go beyond the inspired instruction, “Preach the word.” If the church of Christ does this, it may leave the responsibility of choosing for themselves or allowing God to choose for them, to those who hear; and to God may be left the responsibility of deciding who has chosen well. {SITI March 11, 1897, p. 3.1}

**“The Turkish-Armenian Question” The Signs of the Times, 23, 11.**

E. J. Waggoner

**A Consideration of Some Neglected Truths**

For a long time, especially for the last eighteen months, the attention of the whole civilized world has been directed to the events taking place in Turkey. The Armenian massacres have been discussed in doubtless every pulpit in Christendom, and the papers, both secular and religious, have overflowed with accounts, comments, and suggestions. Indeed, one expects to see in his daily paper a column devoted to the situation in Turkey or to the relation of the Powers to it, just as regularly as to the state of the market. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.1}

It is therefore not necessary in this place to devote any space to the detailing of the outbreaks and massacres. No neglect has been shown in keeping them before the public in all their awful enormity; no details have been omitted, that would tend to excite the horror of the reader or hearer. While we do not repeat the reports of these massacres, we shall, for the purpose of our present study, assume that they are all true, both as to the numbers of Armenians slain, and as to the cruelties perpetrated. It might be well, however, to remember that in these reports we have the testimony from only one side,—that of the Armenians and those who are prejudiced against the Turks,—yet we will not now stop to question their truthfulness; let each one think that the outrages are as fearful as his imagination has pictured them. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.2}

**A Still More Terrible Thing**

The taking of human life under any circumstances is an awful thing. To read of men being shot and stabbed, of human bodies mangled and bleeding in the streets, or kicked to one side as though they were dogs, is horrible; yet no description can equal the reality. So we say that people do well to shudder as they read of wholesale slaughter. But fearful as the massacres in Turkey may have been, there is something to which we do not see anybody’s attention specially called, which is still more shocking, so much more shocking that there can be no comparison. What is that thing?—it is *the almost universal cry for vengeance*, the demand for war,—for more killing,—that has issued and is still issuing from the lips and pens of professed followers and ministers of Christ. We do not wish to call attention to any individual, but only to the thing, and therefore we shall not give the names of those whose utterances we quote. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.3}

One man, who shows his strong religious sentiments by the statement, “We want a leader filled with the Holy Ghost, whose only fear is to displease God,” writes thus to a leading religious journal:— {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.4}

Sir, I am the father of a family, but my sons and I are only waiting the call to go out. In God’s name let us raise an army of volunteers, and wipe out the awful stain upon our fair island home of accomplices in crime, and *sweep the old murderer and all his tribe into the sea*. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.5}

Another person, a woman, a regular correspondent of the same religious paper, quotes the story of two English captains who received some Armenian refugees on board their ships in the Bosphorus, and then when the Turks demanded the refugees, hoisted the British flag, upon which the Turks went away. Then she says:— {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.6}

How fervently one wishes for a moment that they had fired upon our flag! It would have been the signal for instant war! {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.7}

**Gross Perversion of the Gospel**

We have before us a report of a great representative meeting of Wesleyan Methodists, that was held in the historic City Road Chapel a few weeks ago. The writer says that, it was a meeting that showed, above all things, in how large a degree the best conscience of the people is permeated with the idea that the ethical principles of the Sermon on the Mount are applicable in all their simplicity even to the complex problems of international relations, and then follow these words:— {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.8}

The immediate outcome was a resolution assuring Her Majesty’s Government of united and vigorous support in any steps it may take to bring to a speedy end these disgraceful and unparalleled atrocities. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.9}

That by this resolution was meant support even in the event of war, is clearly shown by what preceded. One speaker said that “if necessary, England must stand alone in order to bring to an end this chapter of Eastern misrule.” This, as another truly said, would doubtless “provoke a European war,” yet even this the reverend gentlemen assembled were ready to accept, for still another said, “With Russia or without her, with the Concert of Europe or without it, we can, we must, we will, deliver the Armenians.” {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.10}

Remember now that to “deliver the Armenians” means war. If one Power should undertake it alone, without the concurrence of the other Powers, it would result in a general war of all the Powers ranged against one another according to their several interests; if there were agreement, then the war would be against the Turks alone; but in any case there would be war. Remember also that this war is just what ministers of the Gospel were and are still pleading for; and remember also the statement that the meeting showed “in how large a degree the best conscience of the people is permeated with the idea that the ethical principles of the Sermon on the Mount are applicable in all their simplicity to the complex problems of international relations,” and it will be seen how greatly men have allowed their passions to cloud their perception of the simplicity of the Gospel as set forth in the Sermon on the Mount. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.11}

Jesus said, in the Sermon on the Mount, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.” And further, “I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Matthew 5:38, 39, 44, 45. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.12}

That is all that is in the Sermon on the Mount that is especially applicable to this question, yet so far have professed Christians lost sight of its principles, that they can complacently cite their clamors for bloodshed and revenge as being an illustration of those principles. Indeed, it is from religious teachers and the religious press that the demand for vengeance principally comes, because they regard the case as one of religious persecution and therefore as especially concerning them. Now let the candid reader pause and think seriously, and say if such a perversion of the Gospel is not the most fearfully deplorable thing that could possibly happen. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 162.13}

The killing of a few thousands of people by men who do not profess to be Christians, is horrible enough; but more horribly wicked still is it when professors and ministers of the Gospel everywhere fill the minds of the people with the idea that war and vengeance are in harmony with and manifestations of the fundamental principles of Christianity. Such teaching only serves to nourish and glorify the natural fierceness which the Bible says will be characteristic of the last days; and with the people become fully imbued with it, there will be needed only a spark to set the whole world ablaze with the fire of hell. When the name of Christ, the Prince of Peace, is used as a war cry, where shall we look for peace on earth? {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.1}

**The Vengeful Spirit**

It seems as though Christendom were becoming intoxicated with the spirit of vengeance, so that the most peaceably inclined men have lost their senses. One religious paper reprints some floating newspaper stories derogatory to the character of Turks in general, and then exclaims editorially:— {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.2}

Ought such a nation to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the earth? {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.3}

and that but expresses the general sentiment among preachers and people. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.4}

Just analyze this: “Ought such a nation to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the earth?” is the same as, “Ought such people to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the earth?” and that includes thousands of individuals, and of each of whom it is virtually said, “Ought such a person to be tolerated for a moment on the face of the earth?” That is to say, the spirit of intolerance is already so firmly rooted in the hearts of professed Christians, that they do not wish to tolerate for a moment the existence of those whom they, taking the throne of judgment, have decided to be unfit to live. What is that but charging God with laxness in the discharge of His duty, because He suffers wicked men to live? {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.5}

How different from the Spirit of Christ. When He was rejected by the Samaritans, and two disciples wished to command fire to come down and consume the inhospitable people, He rebuked them, saying, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” Luke 9:51-56. The Spirit of desiring to be the instruments of God’s vengeance has always been more prominent than the desire to be instruments of His mercy, and when it is once cherished it inevitably results in getting ahead of the Lord, and being both judge and executioner. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.6}

**The True Christian Spirit**

But we have a still stronger rebuke of this bitter, warlike spirit. When Jesus had been betrayed into the hands of His enemies, and a mob of man came to seize Him and put Him to death, Peter drew a sword in His defense. The blow just missed the head of one of the gang of murderers, and cut off his ear. “Then Jesus said to him, Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Matthew 26:51, 52. And then, as an evidence that He came not to take life but to save it, Jesus healed His wounded enemy. Luke 22:50, 51. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.7}

If there was ever a time when it was right to resist oppression and injustice, it was then. Jesus was innocent, as even His judges declared. Here was the worst kind of religious persecution. Every indignity, insult, and outrage was heaped upon Jesus, yet He opened not His mouth, and forbade His followers to fight in His defense. How then can any of His followers fight in defense of themselves, or even of their brethren who are persecuted? The disciple is not greater than his Lord. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.8}

Peter was well-meaning and sincere in his defense of the Lord, and so would we fain believe are those who now counsel drawing the sword in behalf of the Armenians. But Peter did not then know the spirit of the Gospel. He was not converted, and within a few hours after his impulsive defense he denied that he knew the Lord. His example is not one to be followed by disciples of Christ. When he became converted, he learned to know the Lord, and then he wrote:— {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.9}

“If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” 1 Peter 2:20-23. Christians are called to follow Christ’s example, and to suffer unjustly, without complaining, much less resisting; yet all over the world professed Christians are denying this calling. Why is it?—It is because a spirit, not from the Lord, is seeking to drive them to destruction, for Jesus said, “All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” If Satan can only succeed in filling Christians with such zeal for any cause whatever, and no matter how worthy, that they will fight for it, He knows that their destruction is sure. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.10}

**The Wicked, Devastating Sword**

Mark the word “all.” There is no exception. *“All* they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” One of our poets has pleaded that {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.11}

The just, the holy, the benignant sword might be drawn in behalf of the Armenians, and professed Christians have applauded the sentiment; but the sword is always unjust, unholy, and devastating. It makes no difference who handles it. The sword vigorously wielded by the hands of professed Christians will work as much havoc and destruction as in the hands of infidels, as history abundantly proves, and therefore it is just as cruel and unholy. The fact that a man calls himself a Christian, does not make it any more a righteous deed for him to cleave another man’s head with the sword, than it would be if a Turk did the same thing. How can anybody think that that which is wicked on the part of a Mohammedan is righteous on the part of a Christian? Is it so that Christians have a monopoly of crime in this world? and that no one but Christians can murder their fellow-beings with impunity? Does the reputation that a man has determine the character of the deed he commits? If a man that is known to be a good man commits a murder, does that make the murder a righteous righteous act? and is murder sinful only when perpetrated by men of previous bad reputation? That is the theory upon which is based the outcry against slaughter by the Turks, and the demand for the slaughter of the Turks. But it is a horrible doctrine. No; “he that doeth righteousness is righteous,” and “every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin.” When professed Christians do the deeds, and even overpass the deeds of the heathen, they nullify their profession, and place themselves in the ranks of the heathen. They are then worse than the heathen, because their high profession makes the insolence of their evil deeds the greater. Oh, the pity of the thing, that such a spirit should be consecrated by the name of Christianity! {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 163.12}

**Who Makes Them to Differ?**

The prevailing idea seems to be that it is far worse to kill Christians than to kill non-Christians. Thus there is a great outcry when Armenians are killed, and on the contrary rejoicing when Turks are killed. Who has ever heard any sorrow expressed for the thousands of Turks who were butchered in the crusades? A religious paper that is loud in its outcry against Turks who kill, publishes without protest as a matter of simple history, the following:— {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.1}

The founder of the reigning House of Montenegro was Daniel Petrovitch. He was elected Metropolitan in 1696, uniting in himself both the temporal and spiritual powers. On Christmas night, 1702, he cut to pieces all the Turks he could find in his dominions. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.2}

It is doubtful if there would be much if any indignation anywhere in Christendom if the Armenians should now slaughter the Turks in a similar manner. Indeed, the comments that followed the attack upon the Ottoman Bank furnish a case in point. At first it was thought to be a master stroke on the part of the Armenians; but afterwards, when the theory was circulated that the affair was planned by the Turks, then it was denounced as a dastardly outrage. It is on the same principle that when white men with machine guns kill several thousand blacks, it is a brilliant victory, and when the blacks retaliate upon a few dozen white that they succeed in overpowering, it is a cruel massacre. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.3}

A well-known prelate has expressed regret that the Spirit of the Crusades has been allowed to die out to the extent that it has, yet he can scarcely be ignorant of the fact that in those Crusades Mohammedans were butchered without mercy, simply because they were Mohammedans. The following brief extract describing the entry of the “Christians” into Jerusalem, amply shows the spirit and work of the Crusades:— {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.4}

The Saracens gave way before them. They retreated through the streets, fighting at intervals until they were driven into the precincts of the mosque of Omar. Blood flowed in the gutters, and horrid heaps of the dead lay piled at every corner. None were sparred by the frenzied Christians, who saw in the gore of the infidels the white way of redemption. Ten thousand dead, scattered through the city, gave token of the merciless spirit of the men of the West. Another ten thousand were heaped in the reeking courts of the great mosque on Mount Moriah. “God wills it,” said the pilgrims.... The Spirit of the massacre is well illustrated in a letter which the Christian princes sent to the Pope. The devout writers say: “If you wish to know what we did to the enemies we found in the city, learn that in the portico of Solomon and in the temple our horses walked up to the knees in the in pure blood of the Saracens.” {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.5}

The Crusaders are applauded, while the Turks, who have not equaled them in ferocity, are execrated. Why this difference? {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.6}

In the Philippine Islands the Spaniards are at this very time slaughtering their Mohammedan subjects by the hundreds, showing no mercy to prisoners, but perpetrating the grossest cruelties. Yet there is no demand for the wiping out of the Spanish nation. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.7}

At the same time that the troubles were taking place in Turkey, English soldiers in Africa, under the direction of the Government, were slaughtering African natives. The white man’s machine guns mowed down the comparatively unarmed blacks making “a mere jujube of black humanity.” When the natives fled and took refuge in caves, these were blown up with dynamite; men, women, and children, torn and mangled, were thus buried, both dead and alive in one common grave. These reports come not from the victims, but from the victors; yet we hear of no meetings called to protest, nor any claims that English people are too wicked to be allowed to live, as indeed they are not. The same course has been pursued with the Indians in America, until now there are but few left. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.8}

We do not cite these things as accusations, but simply for the purpose of asking why it is so much worse for Turks to kill people than it is for English and Americans; why that which is denounced as an outrage when done by Mohammedans is a thing for applause when done by professed Christians. Truly, the times are sadly out of joint. Why is it so much worse for Mohammedans to kill Christians than for “Christians” to kill Mohammedans? Can anybody tell. Is it worse to kill a Christian, who has hope in his death, then to cut short the probation of one who does not know the Lord? Think of the awful responsibility men take upon themselves when they set themselves not merely to execute God’s judgment on the ungodly, but to anticipate Him, and to send them into eternity while He is waiting for them to repent. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.9}

**A Mistaken Idea**

Thus far, in order that the case might stand in the strongest possible light, we have taken it for granted that the trouble in Turkey is simply religious persecution. The prevailing sentiment is thus expressed:— {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.10}

The recent atrocities are an exhibition of Moslem fanaticism and hatred of Christians, which the Powers strangely permit. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.11}

Now anybody who will take the trouble to think calmly and seriously, can satisfy himself that this is not at all the case. One simple fact alone is sufficient evidence. The Greek Church is just as much Christian as is the Armenian, yet it is a well-known fact that in all the troubles in Turkey, the Greeks have not suffered. In the midst of the greatest excitement in Constantinople, if a man were arrested, or were in danger of death, he would secure his instant release by showing that he was a Greek. If the Turks were persecuting Christians, why should they be so careful not to molest the Greeks? {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.12}

Again, there are many Roman Catholics in Turkey, yet there has been no proceeding against them. We mention these three bodies-Armenians, Greeks, and Roman Catholics-together, because they are very similar. While the Armenian Church is nominally Christian, it is a well-known fact that it is most intolerant of Protestants, as much so as is the Roman Catholic. Protestant work in territory exclusively Armenian is attended with as much difficulty as in Spain. That is no reason why they should be killed, or why those who are suffering should not be assisted; but it may help some who assist the needy to do so on the simple ground that they are needy mortals, and not under the mistaken notion that they are suffering for conscience’ sake. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.13}

In September last, just after the last outbreak, the writer witnessed a baptismal scene at Constantinople. It was at a time when the Turkish soldiers were patrolling the streets night and day; one could not turn a corner without seeing a squad of them. In the open day, without asking permission of anybody, a company of Christians went through the streets to the sea, to witness the immersion of some believers. The place of baptism was about midway between the Mohammedan mosques, and within bowshot of each. About half of the company were Armenians, the rest Greeks, and the administrator of the rite was an Armenian. Such a company walking together very naturally attracted a little attention, and a policeman asked what it meant. Upon being told, he said that was all right, and paid no more attention. At the sea there were Turks standing near, witnessing the baptism, and yet there was not so much as a disrespectful or irreverent word or gesture. There could not have been better decorum in any city in the world. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.14}

It might be well to add that the body represented on that occasion are not revolutionists, and are known to have no connection whatever with politics, but are content with being simply Christians. This is why they have had no difficulty. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.15}

Another instance will show that the Turkish opposition is against those who are plotting insurrection, and not against those who are teaching the Gospel. A young man, an Armenian residing in Scutari, was in Stamboul, and not being known to the police there, was arrested as a possible revolutionist. He told the police that he was a Sabbatarian, and they brought him to the house where the Sabbatarians were known to be assembled holding religious services, to see if it were so. When they were assured that he spoke the truth, he was released. But that was not all. The young men engaged the policeman in religious conversation, and the writer twice passed the door of the room where they were, and saw that Mohammedan Turkish policeman sitting on a divan with the Christian Armenian, each with a Bible in his hand, reading. The thought would not be repressed, that if all profess to be Christians had used the sword of the Spirit instead of the carnal weapon in their dealings with the Turks, there might be a different story to tell. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.16}

**Is the Gospel for the Turks?**

It is said, as proof that the Turks are animated solely by hatred of Christians, that people have been promised their lives on condition that they would turn Mohammedan, and give up the name Christian. That is very probably true. When revolution and anarchy are upheld and applauded throughout Christendom, what wonder is it if the Turks should, to a certain extent at least, associate Christianity and anarchy together? When to be a “Christian” is considered, and with good reason, synonymous with being an enemy of the Turks and the Turkish Government, the repression of revolution would very naturally be considered as simply the repression of too active Christianity. In such case it could easily be that real Christians, who hold the name as something more than a national sign, might suffer because they would not give up their faith, the Mohammedans not being able to distinguish between them and those who use the name as a cover for anarchy. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.17}

In prophetic vision the Apostle John saw “ a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues,” standing before the throne of God, clothed with white robes, and bearing palms of victory over sin and Satan. Revelation 7:9. That is positive evidence that there will be Turks in heaven. Yet one would not gather from reading the religious press, that there was any possibility of salvation for a Turk. It may be said that the Turks are bitterly prejudiced against Christianity. That is true, and who could expect it to be otherwise? Christianity is to them embodied in the boasted “Christian nations” of Europe, and none of these have ever done anything to recommend the name. But that is not all. Those religious bodies, professing to be Christian, of which the Turks have most knowledge, are the Greek and Armenian churches, and in one important particular the Mohammedan has good reason to believe that his religion is superior to theirs; for he sees the members of those bodies bowing down to and adoring images and pictures, while the Mohammedan abominates the worship of titles. But even this is not the worst. From the time of the Crusades professed Christians as a rule have regarded the Turks with lofty contempt, as beings to be execrated and driven off; now, all Christendom is ringing with unchristian cries for vengeance upon the Turks, and even their utter extermination. Can it be wondered at that the Turks are not drawn towards Christianity, or that they are suspicious of foreigners? But when the just Judge of all the earth punishes the Turks for their misdeeds, who dare say that none of their blood will be upon the garments of those who bear the name of Christian? We appeal to individual Christians to clear themselves, by being Christlike in their words and acts, from all responsibility for Turkish indifference to Christianity. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 164.18}

**The Great Deception**

There is a cause for this present cry against the Turks. That it is not caused by the Spirit of Christ, needs no argument. What spirit it is that is even now working, may be seen by remembering what it is desired to do with the Turks. The least thing that is demanded, is that they be driven from Europe. Such atrocities, it is said, ought not to be allowed on European soil. But will they be any better on Asiatic soil?—Certainly not. Then what would necessarily be the next step after driving them from Europe-manifestly, to drive them from Asia, that is, from the earth, so far at least as their existence as a nation is concerned. This is even now demanded. Their overthrow will be the last act in the scheme to place the world under the dominion of so-called Christian powers, thus to fulfill the dreams of a temporal millennium, in which so many have indulged. But each one of these “Christian Powers” will wish to have the supremacy, and so the armies of all will be assembled in Palestine, the centre of the Sultan’s Asiatic dominion,—when the last struggle takes place. That gathering is thus described in prophecy:— {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 165.1}

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty... And he they gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” Revelation 16:13-16. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 165.2}

Here we are plainly told what spirit brings the kings of the earth together at that place. That deception we see working even now; for that Christendom is being deceived is painfully evident. If men were not already grossly deceived, how could they *in the name of Christ* counsel war? How could they so misrepresent true Christianity before the world as to claim that the blood even of martyrs demands revenge by the sword? Is it not a terrible deception that is even now closing in upon the world? What an awful thought, that every man, be he minister of the Gospel or not, who is upbraiding the powers for naught concerning the Turks, is simply an unconscious agent of Satan to gather the kings of earth to that great battle which is to result in the ruin of all. God grant that many who have thoughtlessly been led away by a popular clamor, may recover themselves from the snare of the devil before it is too late, and show to the world, including the Turks, that Christianity means to be like Christ. We have full faith that this prayer will be answered. E. J. W. {SITI March 18, 1897, p. 165.3}

**“Boldness to Enter” The Signs of the Times, 23, 12.**

E. J. Waggoner

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.... let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.” Hebrews 10:19, 22. “That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.” Luke 1:74, 75. As we have access by Christ unto the Father, of what need we be afraid? {SITI March 25, 1897, p. 2.1}

One who has free access to the palace and the table of royalty will not tremble with fear in the presence of some lower officer of State. Such an one enters the presence of the highest in the kingdom, and it is only a light matter to come before ordinary people. {SITI March 25, 1897, p. 2.2}

How can it be that one who has boldness to enter into the presence of the King of kings, even into his secret chamber, not merely into the outer court, but into the “secret place of the Most High,” and not only to enter there, but to abide, as a friend who has a right there,—how can such an one be afraid of anything else in the universe? We have that privilege, and the Lord desires us to use it. {SITI March 25, 1897, p. 2.3}

How would any parent feel, who has a parent’s heart, if his children should start with fear when he came into the room? If when they wanted something they should come cringing in a fearful manner, as tho they did not know whether or not they had a right to live? We like them to have that confidence in us that they will come with boldness and ask for that which they want, knowing that it will be given them if it is for the best. {SITI March 25, 1897, p. 2.4}

So we can imagine how God must feel to have those for whom he has done everything, for whom he has given his life to bring all things to them, and has given them all things before they asked, fearing to come to him to claim anything, almost apologizing for their very existence. He does not want us to be afraid of him. {SITI March 25, 1897, p. 2.5}

The Lord came down to earth to show us how gentle he is. He lived and talked with people. He sat down by the wayside with them. He took children in his arms and blessed them, and they were not afraid of him. Whosoever will receive the kingdom of God must receive it as a child, with trusting confidence. He is goodness, and mercy, and tender-heartedness itself. He is pleased at our very boldness. {SITI March 25, 1897, p. 2.6}

The boldness is not presumption; it is not arrogance. No one who is puffed up with pride, who is haughty, can ever come into the presence of the Lord with boldness. The pride and arrogance of men is simply the result of their separation from him. When they put him far off, and hide him from them, they can be very bold. But when they come into the presence of God, every mouth will be stopped. It is impossible for one to come into the presence of the Lord with arrogance, knowing that he is in his presence. {SITI March 25, 1897, p. 3.1}

But the believer may come with boldness, lifting up the head. It shows that we believe that he is a God who keeps his word, that he is just what he is, a God of tenderness and infinite loving-kindness. And dwelling in the secret place, and abiding under his shadow, there is no fear. “Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.” “Thine heart shall meditate terror,” but there will be no fear in it. {SITI March 25, 1897, p. 3.2}

If we can endure the time of greatest trouble, such as is here described, when destruction shall be over all the land, then we can have no fear now. No matter what persecution might be stirred up, we are free in the Lord, without fear, because we are walking and talking with the Lord; enduring as seeing him who is invisible. We can stand in the presence of authorities and kings, if need be, to answer for the faith, and not be afraid; because we are living in the presence of the King of kings. E. J. W. {SITI March 25, 1897, p. 3.3}